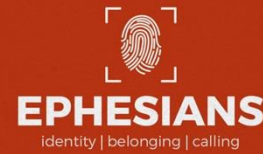


2. GIFTS OF HIS GRACE

Two Truths and a Lie:

In this activity, every person says three things about themselves, but two of the statements must be true and one must be a lie. The goal of the game is for the rest of the group to guess which statement is false. For example, you might say, "I play the guitar, I've never been on a plane and I can't swim." One of these is a lie...

Think of a time when you felt a sense of belonging/not belonging to a group of people. What did that feel like?



The letter to the Ephesians celebrates the beauty of the church—the Bride of Christ. From our perspective the church isn't so pretty... But heaven sees more. Heaven sees the church as cleansed and made holy by Christ. (Lucado, M., 1998).

1. **Read Romans 1:3-14** – taking the time to reflect upon phrases and words used, new things learned, repeated phrases, words you're not sure the meaning of, and listening to what God is saying.
2. List anything in this chapter that remains unclear or new for you.
3. What in these verses convicts you most? Challenges you most? Compels you to action the most? Blesses your socks off most? Why?
4. Make a list of the spiritual blessings that we have by being 'in Christ'.
5. Compare this with Peter's list in 1 Peter 1:3-9. How does the context make this even more significant?
6. God forgives our sins through the blood of Christ. What difference does that make in our daily life?

7. What is special about the fact that God deliberately *chooses* us as his people (election)? (see vs 5, 11; Romans 8:29-30; 1 Thess 1:4; Romans 11:5-6)?
8. How does God *choose* people?
9. Notice the connection that this *choosing* is 'according to His will' vv 1,5,9, yet a person is responsible to believe (1:13): 2 Thessalonians 2:13 (NLT) ¹³ As for us, we can't help but thank God for you, dear brothers and sisters loved by the Lord. We are always thankful that God chose you to be among the first to experience salvation—a salvation that came through the Spirit who makes you holy and through your belief in the truth.
10. To help us understand election better, consider the ultimate goal of election, vs 6 "... to the praise of His glorious grace". So however we view *election* it is ultimately to 'the praise of His glorious grace.'
11. There is something about the words 'belong' 'adopted' 'accepted'. What do they speak to you and how should they shape who we are as a church?
12. In what way is the Holy Spirit God's mark of ownership on us?

Prayer

Thank you, God, for choosing us. May we be spurred on by your love to do great works, yet never substitute those works for your great grace. May we always hear your voice. Keep us amazed and mesmerized by what you have done for us. Max

Journaling

Take a few moments to record your personal insights from this lesson.

What situations will I face more effectively this week if I remember that I am chosen and valued by God?