

THE PERSONHOOD



PRECEPT

EPHESIANS 1:1-2

¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:

² Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

PROMISE

Understanding how the God of this universe views us changes our view and picture of ourselves. It also changes how we view God and others. Many people struggle with their identity and life in general because they do not trust what God thinks of them. God knows who we really are and we matter to Him. The moment we say yes to God and surrender our lives to Him, everything changes from the way we see ourselves to the way we think, act, and relate to others.

In Ephesians 1, Paul introduces himself and identifies his authority in a way instructive for believers: he is an apostle of Christ Jesus (his common designation for himself) "by the will of God" (Ephesians 1:1). Paul is not an apostle by his own hard work or will, but God has willed for him to be saved, sanctified, and sent to the people of God for their good. At the beginning of a chapter that focuses on who God is and who that makes His people, even Paul's greeting is full of meaning for us today.

We must know that we are who we are and where we are today because of the will of God. When we become followers of Christ, He changes us and puts us in places where He can use us for His glory. Some people find this hard to believe, but if we are true believers of Christ, we can be assured that God is taking care of all the details of our lives. We only see a piece of the puzzle, He sees the whole picture and puts the pieces in the right places. Our part is only to enjoy the process and continue obeying Him in all things.

How Paul addresses his letter is also instructive: he calls the Ephesians "saints" who are "faithful in Christ Jesus" (verse 1). It is clear from Paul's larger use of this word that by "saints," he is not referring to their moral achievements or what they have done. Paul not only connects the church in Ephesus to the larger people of God since Israel, but he also wants to identify them as a people chosen, formed, redeemed, and sanctified by God. We are the saints, the holy people of God through Christ Jesus who are called to be part of His divine family. That is our identity the moment we put our faith in Jesus. We must understand that we are called to be faithful by doing His will in our lives. In small or big things, we must remain faithful for He is faithful and He will reward us in the end.

In the last line of Paul's introduction, his greeting is his customary one: grace and peace. Grace is the unmerited favour of God while peace is the Shalom of God, He Himself is the Prince of peace. Paul's message to the Ephesian congregation and to us today is the good news that God in Christ has forgiven us by grace and has brought us into a new family, the body of Christ. The church is the body of Christ, this is God's gift to us so let us embrace the family that we have in church and love and encourage one another.

We are holy and faithful by the grace of God, so let us make Jesus the Lord of our our lives and He will take us and make us the people He wants us to become, by His powerful and amazing will.

PRACTICE

1. Who You Are. Do you have any doubts about who God says who you are? How does the way Paul describes believers in Ephesians 1:1 change how you think about yourself and your fellow Christians?

2. Will of God. Do you believe that you are where you are today by the will of God? Why or why not?

PRAYER

I. Missionaries

- Pray that the Lord may fill each of them with the knowledge of God's will in all wisdom & spiritual understanding.

II. Canada

- Pray that all of Canada may fear the Lord and for the Prime Minister to seek the wisdom and counsel of God.

III. Edmonton

- Pray for protection for all the residents of our city. Pray that our city may be free from the scourge of crime & violence.

IV. World

- Pray that the world may know Christ, the absolute truth of God's Word, and His salvation that is free for all.

V. Comfort

- In troubled times, let us turn our hearts to God and His ways so that He may give us comfort and peace.

VI. Healing

- Pray for healing for the earthquake survivors in Syria & Turkey as they recover and piece their lives together.

VII. Courage

- Pray for courage to those caught up in tragedy and disaster. May God's mercies be with them.