

PRAYER

- Thank God for His plan for our salvation from before the foundation of the world. Thank Him for blessing you, choosing you, and adopting you into His family.
- Pray that your life would be a grateful response to Christ's finished work on the cross. Pray that you would be holy and blameless because of His work in your life.
- Ask God to make you a testimony of His love, mercy, and grace. Pray for your family and friends to know Christ and His salvation plan. Pray for opportunities to preach the gospel to them this week.

NOTES

THE GREAT EXCHANGE

WEEK 1

Salvation Plan

WARM-UP

- Tell us about the most extensive plan you've ever made. What or who was it for, and how did it go?
- Who is the most detailed person you know? Recall an instance explaining this.
- What's the most special thing a family member or friend has done for you? How did you respond to it, and how did it change your relationship?

WORD

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places . . . **EPHESIANS 1:3**

(Read also **EPHESIANS 1:4-6.**)

Paul wrote a letter to the church in Ephesus, where he had spent considerable time. They were close to his heart and he wrote to them to encourage them to know and live out their faith. This letter to the Ephesians is so well written that some theologians refer to it as the "Queen of the Epistles." In the first few verses of the letter, Paul praises God for all He has done for our salvation, and he goes on to explain what happened when we received Christ Jesus as our Lord and Savior. Paul emphasizes that God planned our salvation since the beginning of time: He has blessed us, He chose us, and He predestined us.



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1 God has blessed us in Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places . . . **EPHESIANS 1:3**

In Christ, we have been blessed with *every spiritual blessing*. We have not done anything to earn these blessings, but in Christ we are privileged to receive them. In fact, if we are followers of Christ, we can enjoy these blessings now. What are some of the spiritual blessings you have received since you became a follower of Christ? According to this verse, how did Paul respond to this revelation of God’s blessing for us?

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2 God chose us to be holy and blameless.

. . . even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. **EPHESIANS 1:4**

God determined His plan for us before the world was created. Our salvation has been planned all along, and we have been chosen to live a life that is pure, holy, and destined for His glory. He picked us out of a life of sin and made us *holy and blameless*, able to stand before Him. This is all His work, not ours. Therefore, we can never take credit for our salvation or leave room for pride. Knowing that God has had our salvation planned all along, how do you think we should respond to His love, mercy, and grace?

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3 God predestined us for adoption.

⁴. . . In love ⁵he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. **EPHESIANS 1:4-6**

Because God loves us—and in spite of our sin and rebellion—He ordained ahead of time to adopt us into His family. According to His plan, He made us His sons and daughters—heirs of His kingdom and qualified to inherit the Father’s blessings. How does a son or daughter relate with a father? How would a stranger or guest relate with the same father? How has your relationship with God grown as you have come to know Him as your heavenly Father?

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APPLICATION

- Do you believe that God predetermined your salvation and made a way for you to know Him? How will you apply what you learned today?
- How will you respond to Christ’s finished work on the cross for your salvation? How will you live out His plan for you to be holy and blameless, starting this week?
- Who can you preach the gospel to this week, telling them about God’s salvation plan because of His love, mercy, and grace? What can you tell them?