

Ephesians Study 2

Prayer: Father, help me to hear your Big Story in my real life, even right now.

“It’s as if Paul took time out from his responsibility for straightening up the problems of belief and behavior that cropped up in the various churches and writes out, as clearly and completely as he can what makes church “Church.” And what becomes clear is that church is not what we do. It is what God does and we participate in.” Eugene Peterson, Practicing Resurrection, p. 17.

In this way, we don’t read Ephesians as a blueprint for a perfect church – every church will have issues. We read Ephesians as the revelation of what God is doing that is foundational to any congregation, no matter how imperfectly, neurotically, selfishly and short-sightedly we happen to be living it out. With everything we read in Ephesians, we can be asking these questions: “What is God doing, what is He about?” and “How are we witnesses to it and how do we participate in it?”

We have Ephesians to get a clear imaging of the ways that the Holy Spirit forms the church out of lives such as ours.

Reading and Reflection

Read Ephesians 1: 1-10 aloud, asking yourself, “What is God doing?”

What words stick out to you? What words help you understand more? What words, in your view, are important for the BIG STORY?

Could you take these verses and rewrite it to make it more full for you?

Why does God choose and include us? (vs 9) What does Paul say is God’s big plan here? (vs 10) What would your own words for this plan be?

Read Ephesians 1:11-14 aloud, asking Where do I fit in God’s Big Story? Do you feel a part of it?

What does “marked in Him with a seal, the Holy Spirit” mean for you today? How does that strike you? Does this verse speak to who we are and why we are? What questions does it lead to or leave you with?

How do you see God’s big plan (of bringing everything to unity in heaven and on earth) unfolding in your life? (home, work, church, kids, etc).

Responding to the Text

Do you have a question you could pray? Or a word that is standing out to you? Or a bit of insight you are holding on to? Welcome Jesus into your questioning and your responses.