**SERIES ON EPHESIANS**

**TITLE: "A THEOLOGICALLY RICH GREETING"**

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**LOCATION: SUNDAY SCHOOL AT SANTA CLARITA BAPTIST CHURCH**

I. Introduction

II. Memory Verse:

*Ephesians 1:3*

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

III. Main Idea – The introduction to this letter does not just indicate who wrote the letter and to whom but provides keys to the theological richness of the whole letter.

IV. The Text (1:1-2)

A. The author: The apostle Paul (1a)

i. An apostle of Christ Jesus

- An apostle is "one who is sent by the authority of another," and for Paul, this was of crucial importance, since his message was not his own, but Christ's

ii. An apostle by the will of God

- Paul is stressing that he is compelled to represent Christ, with His full authority, by nothing less than the Sovereign will of Almighty God

B. The recipients: The Ephesians and surrounding churches (1b)

i. Saints

- To be a *saint* means to be "set apart for God's service"
- The root word for *saint* is "holy"

- The background for being a *saint* goes back to the Book of Leviticus
- All Christians are *saints* by calling, not by merit (so it is a privilege)
- All Christians must strive to be holy as befitting to their calling as *saints* (so it is a responsibility)

ii. Believers

- Fundamental to followers of Christ is that they believe what God has revealed

iii. In Christ Jesus

- Used 11 times in 1:3-14 alone! This phrase refers not just to Who we believe in, but Who we live in (John 15:1-11)

C. The greeting: A theologically rich blessing (2)

i. Grace

- Paul changes the common greeting, *chairein* ("greetings," see James 1:1) to the theologically profound *charis* ("grace"), referring to all that God provides for us apart from any merit

ii. Peace

- Peace, meaning spiritual well-being, is the result of grace
- Grace and peace sum up all the blessings available in Christ, that will be unpacked throughout the rest of the epistle

iii. From both the Father and the Son

- The Father is the source of all blessings, while the Son has brought them to humanity