

Jason Huffman
Ephesians 1:1-2
The Saints and Faithful
1/21/24

Discussion Questions:

1. What is a significant challenge with having an earthly and heavenly identity? How can we live well in both?
 2. What do you think about being a “saint in Christ”?
 3. How do you feel about opposition? Do you see it as an opportunity or adversary?
 4. Do you have spiritual conversations with people? When/how?
 5. What especially caught your attention in this study?
-

Teaching Notes:

Paul was called by God by name as an apostle.

If what God says about you is the truest thing about you, what does He say about us?...

- We have a new identity in Christ apart from our old identity without Him.
- We are called by the will of God for the purpose of God to serve God and people.
- We find our purpose most often as we abide in Him.
- We stack rocks with simple acts of love and service to build cathedrals where people can connect with their Creator.

Let's continue our discovery of our identity in Christ...

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

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus.
2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord
Jesus Christ.

First, two identity statements and two locations:

...The saints & faithful (title)...In Ephesus & in Christ.

A saint is a person in Christ.

...it means to be set apart for God...

...All who are in Christ are saints set apart for God.

Faithful is more of an identity than an activity.

The faithful have put their full faith in Christ.

So now we see, this letter is also to all of us...

...We who are in Christ, who have trusted Christ.

But these people also occupy two places...

...they physically live in Ephesus and spiritually in Christ.

We also occupy two places: we live in Orange County & in Christ.

We have an earth born identity and a heaven bound identity.

Let's first look at the physical place...

Paul spent about 3 years in Ephesus before this letter.

He wrote this letter 4-6 years after leaving, around 62 AD.

Ephesus was in the top 5 of largest cities in the known world.

What about where we live?

Orange County has over 3 million people.

I Cor. 16:9 "a great & effective door has opened to me, & there
are many adversaries."

Big Idea: There are always opportunities & adversaries.

We have many opportunities to reach and serve people...
...And there are many adversaries.

But Jesus came to seek and save the lost...
...to bring God's kingdom to earth.

Acts 19

1 And it happened, while Apollos was at Corinth, that Paul, having passed through the upper regions, came to Ephesus. And finding some disciples 2 he said to them, "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" So they said to him, "We have not so much as heard whether there is a Holy Spirit."
3 And he said to them, "Into what then were you baptized?" So they said, "Into John's baptism." 4 Then Paul said, "John indeed baptized with a baptism of repentance, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus."
5 When they heard *this*, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6 And when Paul had laid hands on them, the Holy Spirit came upon them, and they spoke with tongues and prophesied. 7 Now the men were about twelve in all. 8 And he went into the synagogue and spoke boldly for three months, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the kingdom of God.

What can we do as saints and faithful where we live?

1. Meet people & have spiritual conversations.

Paul met these people, talked to them about the Lord and helped them grow in an accurate understanding and relationship w/ God.

But then comes the opposition after those 3 months...

9 But when some were hardened and did not believe, but spoke evil of the Way before the multitude, he departed from them and withdrew the disciples, reasoning daily in the school of Tyrannus.

The opposition is hard hearts and evil speaking.

Paul doesn't quit his calling.

He just finds a new place to fulfill it, at the school of Tyrannus.

What can we do as saints and faithful where we live?

2. Scatter seed and look for good soil.

Invest in those that want to learn, that want to listen.

Look for those that are growing and wanting more.

We still go after lost sheep but if the lost sheep...

...aren't ready to come home, forcing it rarely works.

What was the result of Paul's move? New fruit.

[19:10](#) And this continued for two years, so that all who dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.

Opposition can bring opportunities.

13 Then some of the itinerant Jewish exorcists undertook to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who had evil spirits, saying, "I adjure you by the Jesus whom Paul proclaims."

14 Seven sons of a Jewish high priest named Sceva were doing this. 15 But the evil spirit answered them, "Jesus I know, and Paul I recognize, but who are you?" 16 And the man in whom was the evil spirit leaped on them, mastered all of them and overpowered them, so that they fled out of that house naked and wounded.

3. Walk in real and right relationship with God.

You can't ride someone else's spiritual life.
People don't need more fake Christians.
People don't need more showy spirituality.

People need real Christians with real relationships really walking with God in the real power of the Holy Spirit.

When the Holy Spirit comes upon a believer, they receive boldness & any other gifts God chooses to give to fulfill our callings.

The gates of hell will not prevail against His church...
...But we need His power to advance His kingdom.

God's power isn't for show, entertainment or personal gain.
It is for His glory and His purpose that men might repent and be reunited with their loving Creator.

Lastly, let's look back at v2 in Ephesians...

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

God is our Father, we are His children.
Jesus is our Lord, we are His servants.

4. Enjoy being God's child and the servant of Christ.

With God as our Father and Jesus as our Lord...
...we enjoy grace and peace.

In these identities we can know we are loved, we have purpose, we are protected, and He is well pleased w/us.