

# EPHESIANS

## THE CHRISTIAN APPROACH TO LIVING

### EPHESIANS 1:1-2

Previously, in last week's introduction to Ephesians, we learned that this particular New Testament book, perhaps more than any other book of the Bible, was written as a sort of "training manual" for the Christian life. In Ephesians, Paul tells us what a follower of Jesus Christ **believes** (chapters 1-3) and how a follower of Jesus Christ **behaves** (chapters 4-6). In other words, the Apostle lays out for us *God's truth to learn* and shows us how to *live truly for God*. With that premise in mind, Paul begins his letter with a greeting to his readers. However, since the letter of Ephesians is also a book of Scripture, then these opening words are no ordinary, "Hi, how y'all doing?" Rather, in the first two verses of chapter one, *using himself as the example*, Paul illustrates and instructs us on **the Christian approach to living**. Today we'll discover six key aspects of the right "life perspective" that God designed to guide us as we follow Jesus daily.

1. (v.1) Paul approached life with a strong sense of ...
2. (v.1) Paul approached life with a rock-solid commitment to ...
3. (v.1) Paul approached life seeing ...
4. (v.1) Paul approached life promoting a ...
5. (v.2) Paul approached life confident that God would enable him to ...

6. (v.2) Paul approached life understanding both sides of a ...

## TODAY'S TAKEAWAYS

When it comes to the Christian Approach to Living ...

You gotta ...

You won't ...

You will never ...

You will encounter & enjoy ...

## FOR THOUGHT & TALK

*In your small group take 5-10 minutes to review the main points of this week's message. Discuss the following questions, taking your time as the Spirit leads, realizing you don't have to cover them all.*

1. Pastor John stated that *it took a man whose life had been changed to write a life changing letter on behalf of Jesus. That man was Paul*. Before you get to your group gathering, read over **Acts 8:1 & 9:1-31**, to get better acquainted with the Apostle Paul's background. Describe the drama in terms of God finally managing to get Paul's attention. What are the differences you see in this man between when he was Saul and once he became Paul? How did God manage to get your attention? What differences has He made in you and is He continuing to make in you?
2. These opening verses of Ephesians make it clear that Paul followed a God-given strategy for approaching life. Why is it important that we (as Christians) also follow this same "approach" to life, rather than just "accept" life as it comes our way? Of the six principles that shaped Paul's life, which one (or two) most spoke to you personally as something that you need to put into practice more?
3. Paul speaks of God as our **Father** and of Jesus as our **Lord**. How do both these terms help define for us what a healthy and happy relationship with God is like? When it comes to God being your **Father**, how have you experienced Him in that manner? When it comes to God being your **Lord**, how have you experienced Him in that manner? What sorts of struggles have you had relating to God in either one of these ways?
4. Paul speaks of God as our **Father** and of Jesus as our **Lord**. How do both these terms help define for us what a healthy and happy relationship with God is like? When it comes to God being your **Father**, how have you experienced Him in that manner? When it comes to God being your **Lord**, how have you experienced Him in that manner? What sorts of struggles have you had relating to God in either one of these ways?