

## Connect Group Discussion Guide – 4/7/2024

### Life in the Light – Ephesians 1

**Video Link:** <https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCQvR0S5fB8AzraGYts4eQfg> (Posted on Monday)

**Audio Only:** On Spotify or Apple Podcasts: Connection Point Podcast

#### Highlights

- Every letter from Paul to the churches is a direct communication urging them to become **Everyday Disciples**.
- Ephesians is one of Paul's prison epistles.
- The city of Ephesus:
  - Paul spent 3 years there.
  - Very important city in the Roman Empire.
    - It was a port, top 5 largest cities in the Empire, about 300K people
      - Know population by size of theatre – held 26K people
  - Center of Roman paganism: multiple gods who interact with people daily
    - Artemis – goddess of fertility; her temple was considered one of the 8 wonders of the world
    - When Paul pointed people to God and not the god, he was called atheist.
- 1<sup>st</sup> three chapters of Ephesians: What God has done for us.
- Last three chapters: our response
- **Ephesians 1:1-3** heavenly realm: our blessing is to come; it's not immediate on earth like the pagans believed
  - If there was a drought and you prayed to the god of rain, it was believed the god would respond on earth right away with rain.
  - **Every spiritual blessing in your life comes from Christ**
- **Ephesians 1:4-6** Before any of creation you were chosen – God said I want to have a relationship with people.
  - We were created on day 6, but we were considered before creation
  - We were going to be adopted; one of God's kids; in a new family.
    - Roman adoption meant you were no longer connected to your birth family; even your parent's debts were no longer yours (which would have been had they died)
  - The plan from the beginning was to erase your debt (of sin) and be part of the family.
  - We were made to have a relationship with the Creator; not just a transaction of salvation
- **Ephesians 1:7-10** Mystery of God's will is, "I want you with Me forever, not just until you die,
- **Ephesians 1:11-12** first – the Jew
- **Ephesians 1:13-14** you also – the Gentile
  - The Holy Spirit marking you with a seal: God is saying, "instead of you being with Me in heaven, I'll be with you on earth, even though you are sinful.
  - The Holy Spirit is an everyday reminder of what is to come.
  - There are some who will fight the sin of your flesh until you die, but the Holy Spirit is a deposit that "holds you" for eternity.
- **Ephesians 1:18-20** Same power God used when he raised Jesus from the dead is from the Holy Spirit living in us.
  - Why would God do that? Because He loves us.
- **Ephesians 1:21-23** Jesus is far above your gods
  - The church – the people of God which is the body.
  - Why would Jesus as the head want a broken body? (People are the body and people are broken and sinful)

- How are we doing as a body?
- Are the head and the body actually connected?
  - You can come every Sunday, serve and give and not be part of the body.
  - The question is, **Are you an Everyday Disciple?**
  - The body slows Jesus down, but He chooses us anyway.
- **How do I “Live in the Light” as an Everyday Disciple?**
  - Everyday Disciples consider what God has done more than what we want Him to do.
    - Do we take the time to consider? Maybe we should read less and consider more?
      - If you spent 30 minutes each day in silence thinking about what God has done, He will change you which will change the way you impact the Kingdom.
    - If what God did for you feels small, your devotion and commitment will be small. Don't minimize what He has done.
    - Ephesians 1 tells us what God has done:
      - Blessed with every spiritual blessing
      - Chose us before creation
      - Adopted us into his family
      - Gave us Jesus
      - Redeemed us by His blood
      - Shared the mystery of His will
      - Gift of the Holy Spirit
      - Gave us access to the same power He used to raise Jesus
    - When you consider this, there is no other thing we could be devoted to
    - When we see what God did for us as gracious, undeserved and something that changes more than just our earthly life, but eternity, there is no other place worthy of our full devotion,
- **Car Conversation: What is something God has done for you?**
- **If God truly did what Ephesians 1 says He did, What is your response?**