

In Christ (Part 2)

TEACHING NOTES

KEY VERSES

Ephesians 1:3-23


KEY THEMES

Our position in Christ


Our identity in Christ

Our position in Christ (Ephesians 1:3-14)


In Christ


 We have everything we need to live a godly life (Ephesians 1:3)

By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence. - 2 Peter 1:3


 We are chosen by God to be holy (Ephesians 1:4)

 We are blameless (Ephesians 1:4)


 We are adopted and made daughters and sons (Ephesians 1:5)

 We are shown grace and accepted (Ephesians 1:6)

 We are purchased, redeemed and forgiven through his blood (Ephesians 1:7)


 We are given wisdom and the ability to understand God's mystery (Ephesians 1:8)

 We have unity in Christ (Ephesians 1:10)

 We have an inheritance (Ephesians 1:11)

 We are saved and belong to Him (Ephesians 1:13)

 We have the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13)

 We are sealed with the Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance (Ephesians 1:14)

 **Growth in the knowledge of God (Ephesians 1:17)**

 **Light in our hearts (Ephesians 1:18)**

 **God's power in us (Ephesians 1:19-20)**

 **God's power in the Church (Ephesians 1:21-23)**

Lesson objective: *To grasp the truth of what we have and who we are in Christ*

PERSONAL STUDY**Prepare your heart and mind**

Begin this time of study with prayer. Ask God to help you push away distractions and focus on Him. Ask Him to bless this time by providing clarity and revealing truth.

Member of God's family

Out of His great love for us, God cancelled our debt and gave us right standing with Him through Jesus Christ (Justification). We learned in studying the Old Testament that God, our owner, requires our justification, but it does not stop there. In Christ, God, our father, justifies and adopts us into His family. The children of God must identify with their adoption to fully realize all they have in Christ through the Father.

**Read John 1:12**

What makes us children of God?

In the Old Testament, God limited access to His presence to a high priest once a year. But in the New Testament, all that changed when Christ removed our sin completely. You may remember that the curtain separating the Holy of Holies from the rest of the Tabernacle was torn down the middle. What does this signify?

Not only do we have total access to God, but we can now come boldly and confidently into God's presence (Ephesians 3:12).

How do you take advantage of this privilege we've been given?

**Read Romans 8:15**

How have you come to know God as your heavenly father?

**Read Ephesians 1:4-5**

Why did God choose to adopt us?

Notice that God willfully and joyfully brought us into His family. Having established that we are God's children, our adoption affirms that God is now our Father. We are no longer children of Adam, our "birth father." Let's take time to consider our adoption and what it means.

**Read Romans 8:17**

Along with being God's adopted children, what other title are we given?

In Hebrews 1:2 we see that God promised everything to His Son as an inheritance, therefore, as co-heirs with Christ, we too get everything!

Read each scripture below. Restate the blessings that come with the Father-child relationship with God.

Psalm 103:13 –

Psalm 86:15 –

Matthew 6:31-32 –

Matthew 7:11 –

1 John 5:13 –

Reflection

By his divine power, God has given us everything we need for living a godly life. We have received all of this by coming to know him, the one who called us to himself by means of his marvelous glory and excellence – 2 Peter 1:3

Use the space below to write your response to your Father about: His love for you, our adoption into His family, and your bountiful inheritance (blessings).

Key verse

Put to memory Ephesians 1:13. Place the provided scripture card somewhere you can see it throughout the day.

And now you Gentiles have also heard the truth, the Good News that God saves you. And when you believed in Christ, he identified you as his own by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom he promised long ago.

Prayer time

Close this time of study in prayer. Ask God to continue to teach about what it means to be His child.

Study 2**Prepare your heart and mind**

Open your time with God by asking Him to help you focus on what He has for you.

How are you experiencing His incomparably great power in your life?

The pursuit of the Christian life is not about trying to become God's insider. Yet many people believe, if they try hard enough, they will move into God's inner circle where they will have access to a carefree and easy life. We think of ourselves as royal servants trying to earn a more favorable position closer to our Master. Every day we try to work hard and get noticed for serving well, hoping He will notice, love, and appreciate us more. But this isn't the nature of things at all. The reality is that in Christ we are already in this position of favor with God. The pursuit of our lives ought to be living out of what we've been given. As believers, we too often forget what we have in Christ. He has already given us the best seat at the table, the position of great esteem. Through Christ we are God's children. The inheritance we receive is exceedingly great. And we are given an advance portion of that inheritance through the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:3-14). The Holy Spirit allows us to experience the incomparably great power of God in our lives regularly. Ephesians 1:19-21 says, *"this is the same mighty power that raised Christ from the dead and seated him in the place of honor at God's right hand in the heavenly realms. Now he is far above any ruler or authority or power or leader or anything else—not only in this world but also in the world to come."*

How do we experience this power in our lives? We make room for the Spirit through surrender. John the Baptist's response to Jesus provides a great example of this idea of surrender. He could have tried to maintain his ministry after Jesus came along. He could have become jealous when his disciples informed him *"Rabbi, the man you met on the other side of the Jordan River, the one you identified as the Messiah, is also baptizing people. And everybody is going to him instead of coming to us."* (John 3:26) How did John respond? He understood the situation the way we should understand our relationship with the Holy Spirit. John said, *"He must become greater and greater, I must become less and less."* (John 3:30)

In a sentence or two, describe how you understand your relationship to the Holy Spirit.

How are you allowing the Holy Spirit to have a voice in your life?

What are a few ways you believe God wants to continue His transforming work in you?

The Role of the Holy Spirit

There is a great deal of confusion about the person and work of the Holy Spirit. Each of us has probably struggled with either unbelief & suspicion about the Spirit or the other extreme of fanaticism about the Spirit's work in our lives. Take a look at the following chart that lays out the role of the Holy Spirit with scriptural support.

Personal Roles of the Holy Spirit	Scriptural Support
Assures us we are children of God	Romans 8:15-16, Galatians 4:6-7
Brings us life and freedom	Romans 8:10-11, 2 Corinthians 3:17
Convicts of sin/witnesses to Christ	John 16:7-11, 1 Thessalonians 1:5
Produces the fruit of the Spirit in believers	Galatians 5:18, 22-26 *The fruit of the Spirit enables us to use the gifts – Romans 12:1-2, 9-21, 1 Corinthians 13, Ephesians 4:1-6
Dwells in believers	John 7:37-39, 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, Ephesians 1:13, Acts 2:1-4, 4:8, 6:3, 6:5, 7:55, 9:17, 10:38, 11:24, 13:9
Empowers us to be God's witnesses	Acts 1:8, Romans 8:26, Ephesians 3:16-19
Fills us with hope, peace, and joy	Romans 14:17, 15:13
Frees us from sin and legalism	Romans 8:2
Gives spiritual gifts	1 Corinthians 12:4-11, Romans 12:6-8, 1 Corinthians 12: 28-31, Ephesians 4:7-12, 1 Peter 4:9-10
Guides and teaches us	Psalms 143:10, John 14-16, Acts 9:31, 13:2, 15:28, 1 Corinthians 2:9-10, 1 John 5:6-8
Helps us speak	Mark 13:11, Luke 12:12
Prays for us	Romans 8:26-27
Purifies hearts by faith	Acts 15:8-9
Transforms us (Sanctification)	Ephesians 3:16-19, Galatians 5:16-26, Romans 8, John 16:13

What are two roles of the Holy Spirit that have been an encouragement in your life?

Which part(s) of the Holy Spirit's role have you overlooked in your life? Look up at least two of the corresponding verses for that role. Write down what these verses mean in your own words.

Write out a short prayer that highlights one or two aspects of the Holy Spirit that you know you need to grasp in your life. Commit to praying that prayer each day this week.

Key verse

Continue working to memorize Ephesians 1:13. Attempt to write it out from memory below.

Prayer time

Give thanks to God for His great power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Thank Him for showing us that the way to victory in this life is through surrender. And give thanks to the Holy Spirit who leads us into all truth.

PARENT GUIDE

Pieces of the Big Picture

Read Ephesians 1:11-14 together as a family.

We have been given God's Holy Spirit not only as proof of our relationship with Jesus, but so we can live out God's character with people around us. In this activity we'll learn about how God helps us to be like Jesus.

Family activity

Materials: a small puzzle and a pencil

Before you begin: Set aside 9 puzzle pieces that fit together. Flip them over, as you'll be writing the fruit of the Spirit on the backside of each piece.

Read Galatians 5: 22-23 together.

Write each fruit that God's Spirit gives to us on the back of the puzzle pieces. Discuss each fruit with your family, and begin fitting the pieces together. Once you've used all the pieces, flip the entire puzzle over to reveal the completed picture. Explain that God's Spirit and the fruit He gives us fit together to reveal a picture of God.

Think about how you see these qualities shown in your home, at school, or work. How does it feel when we experience *kindness*? What is something loving you were part of recently? When was a time you should have showed *self-control*? What quality in this list would help our family get along better?

All of these qualities have been freely given to us, by the Holy Spirit, to help us live out God's character with the people around us.

ADDITIONAL STUDY**Read Ephesians 2:1-22****Observation**

(Who? When? Where? Why? What does it say? What do I notice?)

Interpretation

*(What are the key themes or truths? What is the writer's intended meaning? What is the context?
What questions do I have?)*

Application

(How do I apply it? What does this mean for me?)

