



from MilktoMeat

Phase 02

# Walking in The Truth

" I have no greater joy than this:  
to hear that my children are  
**walking in the truth.** "

[3 John 1:4]

| Aware | Alive | **Awake** | **Free** | Faithful | Fruitful |



# We proclaim Christ

by warning and teaching all people with all wisdom  
so that we may present every person mature in Christ.

## Toward this goal we also labor,

struggling according to his power  
that powerfully works in us.

| COLOSSIANS 1:28-29 |



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For more information about Truth Seekers Fellowship call or write

Truth Seekers Fellowship

5390-1 Estate Office Drive

Memphis, TN 38119

Tel: 901/866.685.3385

Fax: 901.685.1291

email: [connect@tsfmemphis.org](mailto:connect@tsfmemphis.org)

You can also visit us on the web at: [www.tsfmemphis.org](http://www.tsfmemphis.org)

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## 1.1 **How Do You Use This Study?**

This workbook picks up where our Phase 1 workbook *Discovering the Way* left off. For a more extensive discussion of the MilktoMeat curriculum, please see the first session in that workbook.

Each lesson contains several key elements:

- » **Key Question > Core Truth** | At the beginning of each lesson we have a Key question that focuses on the major goal for our study that week. There is also a core truth that seeks to give a summary answer to our key question.
- » **To Remember** | At the beginning of each lesson there is a short verse from the Bible that we suggest you commit to memory. You can then meditate, think about, these truths throughout the week.
- » **WORDwork** | Each week, there are four (on a couple of weeks, five), two page lifeWORK assignments you can read and complete over the course of four (or five) days. These assignments are short and should not take you more than about 15 to 30 minutes a day. You can complete this study without doing these assignments, but you will not get as much out of the course. This study is designed to help you build a living and personal relationship with God in Christ and this means developing daily habits to cultivate an awareness of His presence. *One of our goals is to teach you how to take responsibility for your walk with the Lord.* This means equipping you to be a “self-feeding” follower of Christ.

These weekly readings will be based around a three step process:

### **Observation & Interpretation** | *What do we see and hear? and What does it mean?*

In this step we read the Scripture in order to hear from the Lord. This is not just “studying” the Word; this is learning to hear the word and asks the right questions. We want first to discover what the text meant to its original hearers, then we can understand its significance for us.

### **Correlation & Generalization** | *How does it all fit together? and What are the core truths?* After we know what the text means, we want to fit it into the Larger Story of the Bible. We also want to understand the core truths that are highlighted.

### **Application & Implementation** | *How does this work in life? and How will it work in MY life?* It is not enough just to read and hear the Word, we want to live according to the Way of True Life it leads us in. In this final step, we consider how what we have read should change the way we think about our view of God, the World, the Kingdom to Come and our relationship to all three.

This process will help you cultivate good Bible reading and study skills. We will talk more about this process as we go along.

- » **Journaling** | We would recommend that you start a Journal in which you record your questions, observations, prayers etc., that come up in the course of your study. We will have some guided journaling assignments along the way. A Journal is a

great way to see the progress that you make as you are seeking to make your journey worthy of your destination.

» **Class time** | Each week, we will meet for about an hour in our class time to discuss what we have been learning during the week. These weekly discussions will be based on the **WORDwork assignments**.

» **Our Goal** | We hope that this study will be more than another program for you; *We pray that it will be an introduction to a new way of life.*

## 1.2 **The Next Steps:**

***Every Bible student is a Bible teacher in training.*** Our prayer is that the Father will bring people into your life with whom you can share the things you have learned in this study. We hope this study will motivate you to push further into your own journey with Christ and that you will become His willing student, hungry to know Him more deeply and personally so that you will be fully equipped to share Him with others.

# Session 1

## What Does it Mean to Walk in The Truth?

How Do We Live in A Way that is Pleasing to God?

**Key Question:** **How do we live in such a way that is pleasing to God the Father in Christ?**

**Core Truth:** We have already been completely accepted in Christ, welcomed into the glorious eternal fellowship of the Father, Son and Spirit, through faith in Christ. In this new relationship, we have a **New Position** and **Identity** that equips us to live an entirely new way of life that is pleasing to The Father and soul-satisfying to us.

**To Remember:** “And everyone who has this hope focused on Christ purifies himself, just as Jesus is pure.” [1 John 1:3]

**Objective:** In this study unit we are going to be considering two intertwined threads of reality that shape the journey of our lives: 1) What God the Father has **freely granted** to us in Christ through the Spirit, and 2) How we **respond** to His gracious gifts. Because of what Jesus has done for us, the Father is now pleased to call us His children as we receive Christ through faith. The Spirit now works within us, shaping us into people who truly reflect the truth, goodness and glory of the Lord Jesus.

## WORDwork / Day 1

What Do We See and Hear? and What Does It Mean?

### 1.1 What is the Hope that is set before us?

**1 John 3:1-3** See what sort of love the Father has given to us: that we should be called God's children—and indeed we are! For this reason the world does not know us: because it did not know him. **2** Dear friends, **we are God's children now**, and what we will be has not yet been revealed. We know that whenever it is revealed we will be like him, because we will see him just as he is. **3** *And everyone who has this hope focused on him purifies himself, just as Jesus is pure.*

- ? 01 According to verse 1, how has the Father given His love to us?
- ? 02 Why do you think John emphasizes the fact that we are God's children now?
- ? 03 What is the meaning of "what we will be has not yet been revealed"? Who will we be like when we "see him just as he is"?
- ? 04 Can you explain verse 3 in your own words?

John was overwhelmed with the truth that God loved us so much that He would actually welcome us into His eternal family!!! For all of us who have placed our faith, our trust and confidence in Jesus to be our one and only Savior, the Father has given us His love in the form of a new name: **God's Children.**

This awesome position in God's family also defines our *identity* – **we are God's children now.** In Christ, you are a child of the One True God and there is no honor or privilege greater than being part of His Eternal Family. This new identity should saturate and permeate every inch of our thoughts, desires and emotions. Before we move on, consider this:

**Key Realization:** Our **IDENTITY** is formed by our relationships with others. *Who you are is shaped entirely by your personal relationships.*

In this study, we are going to look at 12 primary blessings give us a new identity in Christ. In many ways, this blessing of being included in God's family by our *new spiritual birth* and *adoption* is the culmination of all the other blessings that we will hear about in this unit. There is no greater thing that can be said about you than, "*You are a child of God.*" The other blessings either support this primary idea or equip us to live in the reality of this great and glorious calling.

#### 1.1.1 When we see Christ face to face, we will be like Him.

Notice also that You and I will one day be just like Christ!!! One day we will be free of sin and made perfect—our *condition* (the reality of our day to day living) will be brought to full balance with our *position* in Christ. This perfection will not happen until we see Christ face to face. In Romans 8, we hear:

**Romans 8:28-29** And we know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to his purpose, 8:29 because those whom he foreknew he also predestined *to be conformed to the image of his Son*, that his Son would be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

Don't get hung up in that "predestination" language at this point (it is not as bad as it sounds); we will consider those truths in this study. For now simply take note that God is working all things together for our good so that we will ultimately be *conformed to the image of Christ*. This means, just as John is explaining, that God the Father desires that we be like Jesus in all things. One day, this will be completely true of us. For now, Father-God is shaping us and molding us into people who will fully bear the image and likeness of Jesus Christ.

### 1.1.2 **Jesus Christ is our Hope.**

For now, we hope toward that day. And it is this hope that brings our purity. Read again what John says in 3:3 above: "*And everyone who has this hope focused on him purifies himself, just as Jesus is pure.*" In order to understand this statement, first of all remember how we have defined hope:

**Key Definition:** **Hope** is the confident expectation our lives will turn out well because God will be who He promises to be and do what He promises to do. Hope is built on the foundation of God's past works, yet always looks to the future completion and perfection of these works.

There are some old sayings like, "We become what we behold" or "We become what we worship." These are true statements. Consider the times that the Scriptures call for us to "look" to Christ and focus on Him and to "see" what God has done and is doing to us in Christ:

**Hebrews 12:2** Let us run the race ... **keeping our eyes fixed on Jesus, ...**

**2 Corinthians 5:17** So then, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; what is old has passed away - *Behold, [LOOK!]* what is new has come!

**Colossians 3:1-3** Therefore, if you have been raised with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 3:2 *Keep thinking about things above*, not things on the earth, 3:3 **for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God.**

Right now, in the here and now, if you are *in Christ* (we will discuss what this means in this study), you are a new creation; your old way of life dead in Adam is gone and you have a new Origin and a new Destiny and therefore a whole new Meaning and Purpose for life. Christ Jesus Himself gives shape to the reality of this new life. We are called to focus hopefully on Him. As we do this, our thoughts, desires and emotions are purified and we are transformed to reflect more and more of Christ's own truth, goodness and glory.

## WORDwork / Day 2

How Does this All Fit Together? and What are the Key Truths?

### 1.2 **What is Faith and Why is it Important?**

**Hebrews 11:1 (NET)** Now faith is being sure of what we hope for,  
being convinced of what we do not see.

**Hebrews 11:1 (KJV)** Now faith is the substance of things hoped for,  
the evidence of things not seen.

Throughout MilktoMeat we explore the relationship of Hope>Faith>Love. These three virtues are intertwined and inseparable. In our first unit, *Discovering the Way*, we focused on Hope as being the “first thing” that our Father gives us through the Message of the Gospel (see Colossians 1:4-6). Yesterday we reviewed the foundational role Hope plays in our lives. Now we are going to focus on understanding Faith.

#### 1.2.1 **Faith is Assurance based in God’s Faithfulness.**

As a starting point, take note in the verses above that Hope *comes before* Faith —*faith is being sure of what we hope for. We hope before trust.* We don’t want to press this point too far because these ideas are so closely linked together. But it is important to note that faith is in some sense a response to our hope. Faith brings assurance to the things that we hope for. Faith says that since God Himself is faithful, the things that He has promised to us *are as good as done*. Faith is being sure that God will be faithful to us based on what He has said and promised to us.

#### 1.2.2 **Faith is the “evidence” of God’s Invisible work.**

Notice also that faith “gives us proof of what we cannot see.” This will become an important truth to unpack as we move along. The writer of Hebrews gives us some practical application by going on to say,

**Hebrews 11:3** By faith we understand that the worlds were set in order at God’s command, so that the visible has its origin in the invisible.

We did not see God speak all things into creation, but we have faith (we trust) in God who told us that this is the way things happened. Much of the work that Father-God is doing within us, in Christ is *invisible*. As we have already heard, when we received Christ by trusting Him alone as our Savior, the Holy Spirit came to dwell within our hearts. We did not “see” this happen, nevertheless, we are called to trust that this is true. The very fact that we can believe this is part of the *evidence* that the Father gives to confirm that this is reality.

With these basic things in mind let’s give a general definition of faith:

**Key Definition:** **Faith** is placing our ultimate and final confidence (trust) in God The Father, Son and Spirit as they oversee and direct our lives. Faith brings assurance to our hope. Faith is the evidence that Father-God is working in Christ through the Holy Spirit in and through us.

### 1.2.3 **Faith is the instrument of God's power protecting us.**

Let's take these truths a little further. Take a look at this:

**1Peter 1:3-5** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! By his great mercy he **gave us new birth** into a **living hope** through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, 1:4 that is, into an inheritance imperishable, undefiled, and unfading. It is reserved in heaven for you, 1:5 **who by God's power are protected through faith** for a salvation ready to be revealed in the last time.

Here Peter is talking about the full and complete reality of our salvation. For Peter (and all the New Testament writers) our Salvation will not be perfectly complete until we are present with Christ in redeemed, glorified bodies. Yet even now, we have been given a *new birth* (A New Origin) and a *new inheritance* that is protected in Heaven for us (A New Destiny). Our Hope is focused toward this New Heavenly Inheritance. While we are here on Planet Earth, we live in the reality of our New Birth, looking toward the Hope of our New Inheritance.

But how can we be sure that we will make it to this New Inheritance? Peter gives us a wonderful answer: *we are being protected in the present time by God's power through our faith!* Faith is the "tool," the instrument that God uses to implement His protective power in our lives. We will develop this as we move along.

### 1.2.4 **Our Faith pleases God.**

**Hebrews 11:2-6** For by it [Faith] the people of old received God's commendation. ... 11:6 Now without faith it is impossible to please God, for the one who approaches Him must believe that He exists and that He rewards those who seek him.

The last thing that we need to remember about faith is that it is what sets us in a right relationship with God. We are commended by God on the basis of our faith, trust, confidence in Him. We please God through faith. This is an important truth to keep in mind throughout this study. The most pleasing thing that we do is to trust our Father who has given us all things in Christ through the Holy Spirit.

As we close out today, you can think about Hope>Faith>Love in terms of our Journey here on Earth. In **HOPE** we see the Future Reality of the Glorious fulfillment of our lives at the end of our Earthly journey in Christ. By **FAITH** we engage the journey hopefully, even taking great risk, because we are confident in God. Along the way we are able to follow Christ's example of **LOVE**, even to the point of self-sacrifice, because we know that this present life is not all that we have.



Take a minute to review what you have read today. Mark some of these key passages in your Bible. Could you explain what Faith is to someone else?

## WORDwork / Day 3

How Does this All Fit Together? and What are the Key Truths?

### 1.3 **How Does Our New Identity in Christ satisfy our Deeper Desires?**

In our Phase 1 Study *Discovering the Way*, we briefly touched on the idea that our three greatest and deepest needs/desires as human beings are *security, satisfaction/fulfillment* and *significance*. In this study, as we discover all that has been given to us in Christ, it seems to good to set up a framework in which to think about how all of these blessings address our deeper desires..

#### 1.3.1 **You are SECURE in Christ. (Hope)**

We need to know that someone is watching out for us; we need to know that someone “has our back.” We can know that we are SECURE in Christ because of His great love for us. We just saw how we have been called to hope. Our hope comes out of our confidence that God will fulfill His promises to us in Christ. Because our life is held in the hands of our Heavenly Father, we can know that we are secure, now and forever:

**John 10:27-30** (Jesus said) My sheep listen to my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. 28 I give them eternal life, and they will never perish; *no one will snatch them from my hand.* 29 My Father, who has given them to me, is greater than all, and *no one can snatch them from my Father’s hand.* 30 The Father and I are one.”

*Security is not the same as safety however.* In this life, we may be faced with many hardships, challenges, and failures. We may even be persecuted for our faith. Yet none of this can separate us from the love of God for us that is in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:38-39). In Christ, we find the security that our souls long for.

**Hebrews 13:5-6** Your conduct must be free from the love of money and you must be content with what you have, for he has said, “*I will never leave you and I will never abandon you.*” 6 So we can say with confidence, “*The Lord is my helper, and I will not be afraid. What can man do to me?*”

#### 1.3.2 **You can be completely SATISFIED in Christ. (Faith)**

We want our lives to be fulfilling. Most of us deal with our own failures and shortcomings in a way that beats us down. As we will see, God the Father will be pleased to give us to His Son as His eternal inheritance! (Ephesians 1:18). Jesus Himself will be pleased to receive us as His eternal inheritance (Hebrews 2:11-13). If God our Father and Christ our Lord accept us in this way, how can we not be satisfied with Him and with what He is doing in and to us!?

Our experiencing satisfaction in this life is very much related to the idea of *contentment*. Hear what Paul said in Philippians:

**Philippians 4:12-13** I have experienced times of need and times of abundance. In any and every circumstance *I have learned the secret of contentment*, whether I go satisfied or hungry, have plenty or nothing. 13 *I am able to do all things through the one who strengthens me.*

Paul understood that His life on this earth was only temporary and that his greater, truer life was being kept secure in the Heavens with Christ. With the mindset he could be satisfied – content – with his circumstances. We too need to learn the “secret of contentment.” If our “wildest dreams” could be satisfied here on Earth, we have not dreamed big enough. The life and the glory that awaits us when we fully experience the divine fellowship of Father, Son and Spirit will make everything on this earth look ridiculously poor:

**Romans 8:18** For I consider that our present sufferings cannot even be compared to the glory that will be revealed to us.

*Living a life of satisfaction and fulfillment in this life is not grounded in what we have, but in who we know.* Because we are secure in God’s love in Christ and know that this life is not the end, we can be satisfied with the reality that no matter what happens to us here, there is a better life coming.

### 1.3.3 **You can know that you are SIGNIFICANT in Christ. (Love)**

We want to know that our lives will count for something. Nobody (except someone who has lost all hope) would want a tombstone that reads, “Here lies nobody who did absolutely nothing.” *We want our lives to matter.*

In Christ we know that our lives can and *will be* significant. Through the Gospel, God the Father is calling us to Himself so that we may share completely in His glorious life:

**2Thessalonians 2:14** To this he called you through our gospel, *so that you may possess [partake of] the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

This present life is really a training ground for the full reality of the eternal life to come. We who are “in Christ” are being shaped into people who will be able to reign with Him in His Future Earthly and Eternal Kingdom:

**2Timothy 2:12** If we endure, *we will also reign with him ...*

**Revelation 5:9-10 5:10** You have appointed them (the people that Christ has redeemed) as a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and *they will reign on the earth.*”

Truly, in Christ, we are God’s beloved children now and He is shaping us into the people that He desires for us to be. His work will not fail and one day we will inherit all that has been promised to us. In Christ we are secure, satisfied and significant.



Make a list of your own hopes and fears and notice how they are based on these three core desires that we have discussed today.

## WORDwork / Day 4

How Does This Work in Life? and How Does This Work in My Life?

### 1.4 So How Do We Walk in the Truth?

**2 John 1:4** I rejoiced greatly to find some of your children *walking in the truth*, just as we were commanded by the Father.

**3 John 1:3-4** For I rejoiced greatly when the brothers came and testified to your truth, as indeed you are walking in the truth. *4 I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.*

Simply put, “walking in the truth” is *living life in such a way that we reflect and exhibit who we are in Christ in all that we are and do*. We are loved by God with a love that is beyond our comprehension; we should be people who are characterized by that same amazing love. We have been forgiven by God in Christ; this calls us to be people who forgive. We have received God’s mercy and grace in Christ; we should be people who are characterized by mercy and grace. The blessings that God has given us in Christ are all blessings that shape who we are and what we do.

All of the blessings that we are going to discuss in this study are what some refer to as “birthright blessings.” All of these blessings came to us the very minute, the very second that we became aware of God’s work in our life and in hope placed our final and ultimate confidence and trust (faith) in Him.

There will be times when you are depressed, frustrated, and beat down by the circumstances of your earthly journey. When those times come, that is when you should set your mind on all the things that God has given you *in Christ* – all the things that we will explore in this study. Rediscovering “every spiritual blessing in Christ” that you have either ignored or overlooked or forgotten will remind you that you now possess all you need to make each day an adventure instead of an ordeal.

Living with this VISION of who we truly are in Christ will transform our lives. As we keep our hope fixed on Jesus, we are purified by God’s power and grace as we make our journey toward our conclusion in Him. As we think on Him and as we grow in His grace and Knowledge (2 Peter 3:18) we will become more and more like Him in the way we live our lives. We are making a choice to turn from our old way of life to follow the Way of New Life that is found in Christ.

**Colossians 3:1-4** Therefore, if you have been raised with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 3:2 Keep thinking about things above, not things on the earth, 3:3 for you have died and your life is hidden with Christ in God. 3:4 When Christ (who is your life) appears, then you too will be revealed in glory with him.



We have been completely accepted by God in Christ through our faith in Him. Now, we desire to be pleasing to Him in all things by means of the blessings that He has given us to do this very thing.

# Session 2

## What Does It Mean to Be “in Christ”?

**Key Question:** What is my New Identity and Position in Christ?

**Core Truth:** “In Christ” we are new creations—people with a New Origin, a New Destiny and a New Purpose. We have passed out of Death into New Life, and this New Life is shaped by all that Christ is for us.

**To Remember:** So then, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; what is old has passed away - Behold, what is new has come!  
[2 Corinthians 5:17]

**Objective:** To be “in Christ” is to be completely accepted into the life, love and power of the Trinity. The Father, Son and Spirit have welcomed you in their eternal joy, glory and fellowship through your trust in Christ. As you live in line with the truth of this new position and identity, you will be able to experience more and more of the security, satisfaction and significance that only this relationship with the One True God can grant.

## WORDwork / Day 1

What Do We See and Hear? and What Does It Mean?

### 2.1 **What Have the Father, Son and Spirit Done for Us?**

For today's reading, we are going to focus on an extended passage in Ephesians 1. In this passage, Paul simply overwhelms us with all of the blessings that have come to us because of the Father, Son and Spirit's work for us. Read the passage then answer the following questions.

**Ephesians 1:1-23** From Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints [in Ephesus], the faithful in Christ Jesus. 1:2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

#### >>**We are Blessed by the Father:**

1:3 Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms in Christ.

1:4 For he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world that we may be holy and unblemished in his sight in love. 1:5 He did this by predestining us to adoption as his sons through Jesus Christ, according to the pleasure of his will— 1:6 *to the praise of the glory of his grace* that he has freely bestowed on us in his dearly loved Son.

#### >>**We are Redeemed by the Son**

1:7 In him (In Christ) we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace 1:8 that he lavished on us in all wisdom and insight. 1:9 He did this when he revealed to us the secret of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, 1:10 toward the administration of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ—the things in heaven and the things on earth. 1:11 In Christ we too have been claimed as God's own possession, since we were predestined according to the one purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to the counsel of his will 1:12 so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, would be *to the praise of his glory*.

#### >>**We are Sealed by the Holy Spirit**

1:13 And when you heard the word of truth (the gospel of your salvation)—when you believed in Christ—you were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit, 1:14 who is the down payment of our inheritance, until the redemption of God's own possession, *to the praise of his glory*.

In verse 3, to what extent has God blessed us?

- ? 05 Observe these verses very carefully and in your margin write down a word or a phrase that lists all the things that God has done for us in these verses.
- >In verses 3-6, what has the Father done for you?
  - >In verses 7-12, what has the Son done for you?
  - >In verses 13-14, how does the Spirit work in you?

? 06 Why did God do all of this for us? (Notice verses 4, 6, 7, 12, 14)

### 2.1.1 **You Are Blessed by Father in the Son through the Spirit**

In the Greek text, this passage is just one very long run together sentence. This marvelous text is just an explosion of praise to God. It is as if Paul is so overwhelmed by all that God has done for us as believers that he gets excited and starts talking and doesn't know when to stop. We too should be totally overwhelmed by all that our Father has done for us in Christ through the power of the Spirit. In this study, we are going to work through all that is mentioned in the text. For now, just be overwhelmed by the "Big Picture."

We have divided the text above into three sections that are developed around the work of the One True Triune God in our salvation. Notice the three Big Ideas in this passage:

1. We were **Blessed** by the Father
2. We were **Redeemed** by the Son
3. We were **Sealed** by the Holy Spirit

Paul starts this section: "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." God is blessed in the sense that He is worthy of our praise and thanks. When we say that God is blessed, we are saying that He is worthy to be seen as the source of all that is good, true and glorious. Notice at the end of each section Paul says, "to the praise of the/his glory."

The reason that God should be praised and given thanks is because of His blessing us "with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places." When Father-God blesses us, it means something a little different:

**Key Definition:** **Blessing** | When we are blessed by God, this means that He speaks to us and enables us in a way that equips us to accomplish the purposes for which He has created us.

God has blessed us – He has given us every good thing that we need for our journey here on Earth toward our home with Christ in Heaven. Christ has done all that is necessary so that we can be in right relationship with God. By the work of God's Spirit, we are now equipped with everything that we need spiritually to sustain and complete our journey. There is nothing that you are lacking to complete your journey to Christ. *Spiritually, you are complete.* Peter states this very plainly:

**2Peter 1:3** ... His divine power has bestowed on us everything necessary for life and godliness through the rich personal knowledge of the one who called us by his own glory and excellence.



As you discover all of the blessings that you have in Christ, you should start to commit some of these verses to mind and remind yourself, "In Christ I am redeemed." "In Christ I am forgiven." "In Christ I am alive"... As we learn to see ourselves as our Heavenly Father sees us, we become the people that He desires for us to be.

## WORDwork / Day 2

How Does this All Fit Together? and What are the Key Truths?

### 2.1.2 **You Have been Blessed by the Father**

**Ephesians 1:3** Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms in Christ.

In the passage from Ephesians 1 that we are exploring this week, we see first that the Father has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ. This means that we have all that we need in Christ for our journey here on Earth. When Father-God chose us, He also set certain goals for us; He predetermined that we would be *holy* and *blameless* when we arrive at our final destination in His presence. He did all of this by deciding before anything else that He would adopt us as His children. All of this touches on some sticky issues like choosing and predestination that we will discuss later in this study.

Notice first of all God's motivation in blessing us:

“In **love** ... according to the **purpose** of **his will**, to the praise of his glorious grace ... according to the riches of **his grace** which he lavished upon us, ... in all wisdom and insight according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will ... **to the praise of his glory**”

God does what He does for us by His love and grace to the praise of His glory!!! Something you must understand and accept is that God does not save you first and foremost for your sake; God saves you for His sake. At first this may sound a little harsh—it might even put you off a little. But that is the old way of thinking about things; putting ourselves in the center of the Universe. In order to understand and comprehend all that God is doing in your life you must first understand that it is not all about you. God always acts for the sake of His name because there is no higher goodness, purpose or reason. This is part of His righteousness revealed in His “right motivation.” ***When God acts for the sake of His glory, it results in the greatest blessing for you.***

This study will give you assurance that you do not need to begin looking outside what Father-God makes available in Christ or in new experiences for blessings. You now possess every spiritual blessing the Father has for you this side of Heaven. There is more to come, but everything you need for the present is already with you through the power of the Holy Spirit in Christ!

### 2.1.3 **You Have Been Redeemed by the Blood of Christ the Son**

In this passage, notice how many times Paul says “in Him...” This whole study is going to focus on your *new position* before God “in Christ” and your *new identity* that flows out of this position. Whereas once your position and identity was defined by your fellowship and relationship with your physical fore-father Adam, now “in

Christ” both your position and identity are defined by your fellowship and relationship with God the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.

Our new position and identity is shaped by the *redemption* that Christ has provided in His blood. As we will hear a little later, to redeem something is to pay a price to set something (or in our case, someone) free from some slavery or obligation.

**1Peter 1:18-19** you were ransomed (redeemed) from the futile ways inherited from your forefathers, not with perishable things such as silver or gold, 1:19 but with the precious blood of Christ, like that of a lamb without blemish or spot.

Jesus has given His own precious blood for us so that we could be set free from the debt and slavery of sin and death. This is a great blessing that we will explore in the rest of this study.

#### 2.1.4 **You Are Sealed by the Holy Spirit**

Finally, Paul lets us see what happened behind the scenes when we heard the Gospel and trusted Christ. At that point, we were sealed by the Holy Spirit in order to guarantee that we would make it to our glorious destination and inheritance in Christ. Here, the idea is that all of this happens at the same instant: we hear, we believe, we are sealed. This is a one time event that happens all at once for every believer.

In ancient times, an official would often need to send official documents to other officials. In order to make sure that the documents were not tampered with, he would seal the documents with wax marked by a signet ring or cylinder seal. If the documents arrived with the seal broken, the servant who was entrusted with the documents would often be put to death. Thus, *the seal became a way to guarantee that the authentic documents reached their destination unaltered*. The seal signified and guaranteed several things:

1. **Security**, as in the case of official documents from a king or ruler,
2. **Authenticity** and Genuineness,
3. **Identity** and ownership.

This is what the Holy Spirit does for us. He marks us as God’s genuine children. He shows that we belong to God. He secures us on our journey to that we make it to our destination. His *presence in us* guarantees that God’s work will be fully completed when we arrive at our eternal inheritance.

God the Father blesses us in Christ. Christ redeems us with His own blood and enables God to welcome us into His family. The Holy Spirit seals us to guarantee that we make it to our final destination. All of this is made real by faith, by trusting the truth of the Gospel. And what motivates God to do any of this? *Because of His great love with which He loved us* (Ephesians 1:4b, 2:4)!!!



These three basic categories of God’s work in our life are a helpful way to “classify” all of the other blessings given to us in Christ.

## WORDwork / Day 3

How Does this All Fit Together? and What are the Key Truths?

### 2.2 What is Position vs. Condition?

**Ephesians 2:6-7** .... He [God the Father] raised us up with him [Christ] and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 7 to demonstrate in the coming ages the surpassing wealth of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

Christ is now in Heaven. He is at the Father's right hand overseeing, sustaining and holding together all of creation, moving all things toward His good and glorious conclusions (see Colossians 1:17 and Hebrews 1:3). He has accomplished His saving work and Has provided us with an eternal redemption. You should be convinced by now that God saves you by His grace – He has made us alive with Christ. But notice what else He has done: *He has raised us up and seated us with Christ in the Heavenly realms!!!*

If you look at your present situation you will very quickly come to the conclusion that you don't look like you are a "heavenly person." But remember, it is your position that determines your identity. Spiritually, God has raised you up to a new glorious life with Christ. You are truly a new creation!!!

This reality is one that we will explore in terms of our **condition** (what is true about us in the present, both good and bad) and our **position** in Christ (what is spiritually true of us even if the full reality is not present **yet**). In Ephesians 2:6, we hear that God *has* (past tense, already done!) "raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the Heavenly realms." This is a spiritual reality even if it is not an experiential reality *yet*.

In Paul's letters, he will often use the phrase "in Christ" or "in Him" to help believers like you and me understand their new identity and position before God. One passage that summarizes this idea well is this one:

**2 Corinthians 5:17** So then, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; what is old has passed away - now look, what is new has come!

It is very important for you to see that Paul's phrase "in Christ" is not simply a preposition—it is a *position*. And your new position "in Christ" brings tremendous blessings for you! Because of what Christ has done for you, you now have an entirely new way of life with a new identity and a new position before God.

Our life is sustained by our vision. Our vision is not just what we see with our eyes, but more importantly, what we "see" with our heart and minds – what we believe to be true about ourselves and our world and realize first in our imaginations. Our spiritual vision comes from what we read and hear in the Word of God. *God has spoken things about us and His words define our present reality*. He has called us; He has given us new names; He has set us apart for Himself. All of this changes who we are

and where we belong. In Christ, you also have been granted everything you need to complete your journey to your eternal destination with Christ. *Your Heavenly Father has blessed you with every spiritual blessing in Christ.*

As we think about our identity being shaped and formed to reflect the glory of Jesus, we must realize that God is emptying us of everything that would hinder us from realizing the joy and power of being “filled” with all of His goodness. He is transforming us into people who reflect His glory in all that we are and do. One day, we will do this completely when we become full partakers of Jesus’ own glory:

**2Thessalonians 2:13-14** But we ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth. 2:14 He called you to this salvation through our gospel, *so that you may possess the glory of our Lord Jesus Christ.*

In the next several sessions, we are going to focus on 12 foundational positional truths that define your identity in Christ. Take a look at these 12 statement:

- 1/ In Christ you are **Chosen.**
- 2/ In Christ You are **Sanctified.**
- 3/ In Christ You are **Reborn.**
- 4/ IN Christ You are **Adopted.**
- 5/ In Christ You are **Justified.**
- 6/ In Christ You are **Redeemed.**
- 7/ In Christ You are **Forgiven.**
- 8/ In Christ You are **Reconciled.**
- 9/ In Christ you are **Delivered.**
- 10/ In Christ you are **Transferred.**
- 11/ In Christ you are **Glorified.**
- 12/ In Christ you are **Set Free.**

These 12 touch on the foundational realities of what it means to have New Life in Christ. However, if you understand these 12 aspects of who you are in Christ, you will be able to understand all the other statements of who we are “in Christ” that we see in the New Testament.



As you read through the New Testament, begin to underline all of the verses that say something about who we are “in Christ.” These verse will become “mile-markers” for you as you read through the Scriptures.

## WORDwork / Day 4

How Does This Work in Life? and How Does This Work in My Life?

### 2.3 **Who are We In Christ?**

On the next two pages there is a chart that contrasts our old way of life, Dead in Adam to the reality of our new life, Alive in Christ. For today, as our application exercise, simply read through this list.

This list will help you see not only what is true about you now, but also gives you a framework for understanding how God the Father is working in Christ through the Holy Spirit to shape you and transform you into a person who truly and completely reflects His truth, goodness and beauty. As you reflect on these things, you may want to pray about these things daily, reflecting on the following requests.



Father, help me to see the reality of my new life in Christ.



Father, how are you working in my life in the present to help me become who you want me to be.



Father, help me to see how blessed and worthy you are to have my full confidence, commitment and devotion as you seek to shape me according to the perfection of your son.



Father, give me a heart of humility and gratitude as I begin to realize how blessed I am in Christ.

2.3.1 **In Christ, All things are New...**

The Old Life in Adam	vs.	The New Life in Christ
I was born spiritually dead in my sins.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am Spiritually Reborn. (Titus 3:5; 1 Peter 1:3)
I was born into the family of Adam.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am Adopted into God's Family. (Romans 8:15ff; Galatians 4:5)
I was held captive by the god of this age, Satan.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am Delivered into the Kingdom of God's Beloved Son Jesus. (Colossians 1:13)
I was without God and without hope in this world.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am Chosen. (Ephesians 1:4; 2 Thessalonians 2:13)
I was broken by sin and corruption.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am Filled in Christ. (Ephesians 3:19; Colossians 2:10)
I was a citizen of the Dominion of Darkness.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am A Citizen Of Heaven. (Philippians 3:20)
I was a "child of wrath" deserving of God's righteous wrath condemning me for my sins.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am no longer condemned. (Propitiation) (Romans 3:21ff, 8:1ff)
I rejected God's love for me.	<b>But now...</b>	I Know I Am Loved and Can Love Others. (1 John 4:10-11)
I was out of relationship with God, helpless and without hope.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am in Right Relationship with God. (Justified) (Romans 3:24)
I was enslaved to sin, corruption and death.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am Redeemed. (Galatians 3:13; Ephesians 1:7)
I was held captive by Satan, sin and my own evil desires.	<b>But now...</b>	I Have Been Set Free. (Galatians 5:1ff)
I was burdened by the debt of my sin.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am Forgiven. (Ephesians 1:7, 4:32; Colossians 1:14)
I was out of fellowship with God, the source of all life.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am in Fellowship With God. (1 Corinthians 1:9)
I was an enemy of God, hostile to His truth, goodness and beauty.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am Reconciled To God and Have Peace with Him. (Romans 5:1ff.)

I was not acceptable to God due to my own rebellion and sinfulness.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am Accepted By God in Christ. (Colossians 1:12)
I was alienated from God.	<b>But now...</b>	I Have Complete Access To God. (Hebrews 4:16)
I was lost in the darkness of sin.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am Called to be Holy. (Ephesians 1:4; 2 Timothy 1:9)
I was ruined and corrupted by my sins.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am made Holy by the Blood of Jesus. (Hebrews 9:14, 10:14)
I was dead in the "uncircumcision of my flesh."	<b>But now...</b>	I Am Spiritually Circumcised. (Colossians 2:11)
I had no purpose, or mission.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am a Priest in God's New Priesthood. (1 Peter 2:4-10)
I was made powerless and ineffective by the external restraint of the Law.	<b>But now...</b>	I Have Been Freed From The Law so that I may become fruitful in Christ. (Romans 7-8)
I was spiritually powerless to live a life that is pleasing to God.	<b>But now...</b>	I Have Access To Jesus' Resurrection Power by the Holy Spirit. (Romans 6; Philippians 3:10; Colossians 2:12)
I was useless for God's kingdom.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am (and will be) Glorified. (Romans 8:17, 30; Colossians 3:4)
I would have been cast into the Lake of Fire with the Devil and his angels.	<b>But now...</b>	I Am Christ's Inheritance. (Ephesians 1:18; Hebrews 2:13)
I had no inheritance except eternal destruction.	<b>But now...</b>	I Have A Glorious Eternal inheritance. (1 Peter 1:3ff.)

# Session 3

## We Are Chosen and Sanctified In Christ

**Key Question:** What does it mean to be chosen and sanctified?

**Core Truth:** God our Father has initiated toward us in Christ. In fact, the Father always initiates—He always make the first move. Even before we existed, the Father set His affections on us, setting us apart for His unique and glorious purposes.

**To Remember:** “But we ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning for salvation through sanctification by the Spirit and faith in the truth.” [2 Thessalonians 2:13]

**Objective:** One of the most difficult things that we have to wrestle with as human beings is that our lives do not ultimately belong to us. Our lives have been *granted* to us by our Creator, Redeemer and King. Also, we must, at some point, come to the realization that *we are not in control*. We have been created, redeemed and called to play a significant role in the reality that the One True God is moving along. He has chosen us and set us apart for the role that He has prepared for us.

## WORDwork / Day 1

How Does this All Fit Together? and What are the Key Truths?

### 3.1 **You are Chosen in Christ.**

**Ephesians 1:3-6** Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as **he chose us in him** before the foundation of the world, **that we should be holy and blameless** before him. **In love 5 he predestined us for adoption** through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved (Jesus Christ).

- ? 07 In verse 4, when did God “choose” us?  
Meditate on this. What is the significance of this truth?
- ? 08 At the end of verse 4, for what purpose or result did God choose us?
- ? 09 In verse 5 what does God do for us? What does this mean?
- ? 10 At the end of verse 5 and in the beginning of verse 6, why did God do all of this? What was His motivation?

We all want to know that someone cares about us. *We all need to know that we are loved.* In Christ, we have been chosen by God. Our Father-God loved us enough to make the first move toward us to call us back to Himself. Father-God chose to initiate a meaningful and life-transforming relationship with us long before we ever thought about Him. Not only did God choose us, He has also set plans in motion that will guarantee that we end our journey exactly where He wants us to be – in His presence in complete fellowship with Him.

This passage contains some difficult words like “chosen” and “predestined.” Unfortunately, these concepts have caused many people grief when they should have caused great joy. It is going to be beyond the scope of this study to deal with these issues fully, particularly with all the controversy that surrounds them. Here, we just want you to begin to see what a blessing these truths are for you and how they can give you *encouragement* and *security* on your life journey. So let’s first simply hear what is here, accept it in faith and then wrestle with the truth.

#### 3.1.1 **You Were Chosen before the Foundation of the World**

First, God set his mind and affections on us before the “foundation of the world.” God had set us in His purposes before He created this world!!! Even knowing all that would take place—all the sin, rebellion and chaos—He nevertheless loved us and set plans for us that would lead us to Him.

In the Bible, *Father-God is always the one who takes the initiative* with rebellious, helpless and hopeless humanity. In Adam’s rebellion, we were all made sinners. So when God saves, it is not out of an obligation He has to anyone, but on the basis of

His *grace* (recall our definition of grace: *The Father's unearned favor that gives us access to His unlimited power in Christ through the Spirit*). As we have already seen, God does all of this work “In love according to the purpose of his all wise will to the praise of his glorious grace.”

### 3.1.2 **You Were Chosen to Be Holy and Blameless.**

Paul also tells us the purposes for which God chose us: *to be holy and blameless*. We were all born into this World defiled by the corruption of sin. As a result, we all, by nature, rebelled and fought against God and His truth, goodness and glory. But even before all of this, God had set His mind and heart on us and determined that we would be **holy**—*set apart uniquely for Him and His service*. He has also chosen us to be *blameless* which means that we would be “without defect” or “without blemish” or “perfect” when we finally see Him face to face. We will explore this further tomorrow.

### 3.1.3 **You Were Predestined for Adoption.**

Predestination is another topic that has caused many people grief. This too is unfortunate. *Remember, in this passage Paul is showing us why we are to praise God because of the many ways He has blessed us*. One of the ways that He has blessed us is in predestining us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ.

The Greek word that is used in this verse for “predestine” simply means “*to determine someone's destiny beforehand*.” In His great love for you, Father-God not only chose you, but He also determined beforehand what your destiny—the final conclusion, destination of your life journey—would be. In fact, the grammar of this text seems to indicate that God chose us because He predestined us for certain conclusions. Father-God pre-determined that He wanted to adopt us as His sons and daughters and so to do that He chose us in order to make us *holy* and *blameless*.

Now, take a good look at why God does all of this for us and to us: *His great love for us*. God expresses His love for us in that He began to pursue us and set our course and destiny before the foundation of the world. God has done all of this for us because of His love for us, because of His desire for us, because He was willing to do whatever it would take to call us to Himself for the sake of His good pleasure.

Right here, at the beginning, we need to see what great implications all of these truths have for us: In Christ, your life-journey is *secure*. Your Heavenly Father has already decided and determined where you will end your present earthly journey: *holy and blameless, perfect in His presence*. This is the foundation of our Hope. This is the focus of our Faith. This is the reason for our Love. In the meantime, we cultivate our complete confidence in our Father working in Christ by the power of the Spirit to do in and through us what we cannot do for ourselves!



As you think about what you have heard today, in what ways could these truths build and encourage your faith in the Father, Son and Spirit?

## WORDwork / Day 2

How Does this All Fit Together? and What are the Key Truths?

### 3.2 You are Sanctified in Christ.

**2Thessalonians 2:13** But we ought to thank God always for you, brothers and sisters loved by the Lord, because God chose you from the beginning for salvation *through sanctification by the Spirit* and faith in the truth.

? 11 For what did God choose the Thessalonians “from the beginning”?

? 12 Through what two means did God bring about this salvation according to the end of the verse?

Yesterday, we heard that we have been chosen by God to be *holy* and *blameless*. Today, we want to focus on that word *holy*. In the simplest terms, when God sets something apart for His *unique* purposes, it is *declared* to be holy. The process of setting something apart, declaring it to be holy and purifying it so that it actually becomes pure is called *sanctification*. This is the process that we are now in, in Christ.

Notice also that Paul says the Thessalonians (and us) were chosen by God for salvation from the beginning through 1) the **sanctification by the Spirit** and 2) our **faith** (confidence, trust) in the **truth**. First, take note that it is *the Spirit* who sanctifies you. Secondly, all of this comes to us by our faith in the truth; we heard about this truth in the Gospel.

#### 3.2.1 Sanctification: Past, Present and Future

Being set apart for God is referred to as *being sanctified*. This is both a one time event and a process. Take a look at the following chart:

Past	Present	Future
<b>Positional/Relational</b> Sanctification God <i>has</i> set me apart	<b>Progressive</b> Sanctification God <i>is transforming</i> me so that I can <i>express</i> more of my positional holiness	<b>Complete</b> Sanctification God will make me <i>perfect</i>

#### 3.2.2 Past: In Christ, you have been POSITIONALLY sanctified.

When God saved you “in Christ” He positionally set you apart for His use and purpose—and you became *positionally sanctified*. **You cannot become any more positionally holy than you are right now!!!** To be set apart means to be set apart. This happens one time at your new birth. Consider the following verse:

**Hebrews 10:10** By God’s will we have been made holy through the offering of the body of Jesus Christ once for all.

This aspect of sanctification does not really involve any “moral” component. God simply declares sinners who are morally corrupt to be “holy”—set apart for

His purposes. For this reason, we are referred to as “saints” in the Scriptures. Being a saint is not first about living a “saintly life,” but about being declared “holy” by God your Father.

### 3.2.3 **Present: In Christ, you are being PROGRESSIVELY sanctified.**

*As you grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ, God will empower you to **express** more of your true identity in Christ. This learning to express more and more of who you already are positionally in Christ is what we call progressive sanctification. Learning to cooperate with God’s Spirit produces a life characterized by God’s goodness and glory:*

**1Thessalonians 4:3-7\*** For this is God’s will: *that you become holy* (sanctification), that you keep away from sexual immorality, 4:4 that each of you know how to possess his own vessel in *holiness and honor*, 4:5 not in lustful passion like the Gentiles who do not know God. ... 4:7 *For God did not call us to impurity but in holiness.*

*Positional sanctification occurs in a moment in time whereas progressive sanctification is a process over time. This aspect of sanctification has a moral aspect to it. Now that we have been set apart, we should think and act like Jesus in goodness and purity. This is a lifelong process and will not be completed until we see Him faced to face. This is a process that will conclude in experiencing the full reality of eternal life:*

**Romans 6:22** But now, freed from sin and enslaved to God, you have your benefit *leading to sanctification, and the end is eternal life.*

### 3.2.4 **Future: In Christ, you will be made PERFECT/BLAMELESS.**

God will be faithful to complete the work of sanctification that He has begun in us. Some simply call this glorification. Consider the following verses:

**1Corinthians 1:2-9** ...to the church of God that is in Corinth, *to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, and called to be saints, ... 1:8 He will also strengthen you to the end, so that you will be blameless on the day of our Lord Jesus Christ. 1:9 God is faithful*, by whom you were called into fellowship with his son, Jesus Christ our Lord.

If you know anything about the “saints” at Corinth you will know that they were not exactly models of Christian maturity. They were one of the most immature group of Christ followers in the New Testament. Yet Paul is convinced that even though they had a lot of growing to do, there were still sanctified and called saints and that they would be blameless on the day they saw Christ because God would be faithful to complete the work He had started in them. This should be a great encouragement to us: Father-God will be faithful to us even when we are not faithful to Him!!! We will explore this passage in more detail toward the end of this study.



As you think about being set apart, declared holy by God in Christ, how does it change the way you view yourself to know that your Heavenly Father calls you a saint?

## WORDwork / Day 3

How Does this All Fit Together? and What are the Key Truths?

### 3.3 **Your life journey has been pre-set by the Father.**

Today, we want to return to the idea of predestination. In the New Testament, Paul explains at least two “mile-markers” that God our Father pre-determined that we would reach along our journey, that 1) we would be **adopted** by Him and that 2) we would be **conformed** to the image of His Son, Jesus. It is interesting to note that these two “mile-markers” mark the *beginning* and the *conclusion* of our New Life in Christ. These two pre-set “mile-markers” define our New Origin and Destiny.

#### 3.3.1 **You have Been Predestined for Adoption.**

**Romans 8:15** For you did not receive the spirit of slavery leading again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption, by whom we cry, “Abba, Father.”

In Ephesians 1, we hear that we were predestined for “adoption as sons.” Next week, we are going to explore what this means in detail. For now, simply realize that Father-God set this destination, this “mile marker” for you even before you were created. Father-God wanted you to be part of His family and determined beforehand that He would send the Gospel to you so that you could hear about Christ, trust in Him and be welcomed into His family. Now, as Paul says in the Romans passage above, the Spirit has been given to us, enabling us to call God “Pappa!!!” and “Father!!!”

#### 3.3.2 **You Have Been Predestined For Christlikeness.**

In Romans, Paul also reveals another aspect of this predestining work of God. Consider the following passage:

**Romans 8:28-30** And we know that for those who love God all things work together for good, for those who are called according to his purpose. 29 For those whom he foreknew ***he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son***, in order that he might be the firstborn among many brothers.

God predetermined that we will be conformed to the image of His Son. What does this mean? This means that *Father-God has already determined that you will be made just like Jesus in truth, goodness and glory!!!* This will happen. It is part of your glorious inheritance in Him. And notice also that God does this “So that He (Jesus) will be the firstborn among many brothers.” Jesus is the firstborn in our family and He has all the rights and authority of the firstborn son. But instead of hoarding these benefits for Himself, He will share all of them with us. We will consider this a little later.

***\*A note for all the women: the term “brother” is used in the New Testament not just to refer to men but also to women. Since women did not receive a share of the family inheritance in the cultures of that day, the Bible wants women to understand that they too have been included in the inheritance and have been given a***

*share in the family blessings.*

Notice that this predestining speaks to the end of our journey – being conformed to the image of Christ. So what we see in these passages is that God has determined that we would reach two key mile-markers in our journey:

- » **Father-God pre-determined** | that at some point after your physical birth, you would hear the Gospel, believe and thus be adopted as His child. This point covers your New Birth and New ORIGIN as God’s Son/Daughter.
- » **Father-God pre-determined** | that on our journey after our Spiritual Rebirth and Adoption, we would come to our final Destination conformed to the image of Christ, perfect in His presence. This point covers your DESTINY as God’s Child.

Because God our Father has made the beginning and end of our spiritual journey certain in Christ, we can be confident that He will complete all that He has promised to us.

### 3.4 **You are Eternally Secure In Christ.**

One of the key ideas that we want to develop in this study is the reality that you can be confident that you are safe and secure in God’s loving care. Some have called this teaching “once saved, always saved.” Others refer to it as “eternal security.” Whatever it is called, it is the teaching that once you have received Christ by faith, there is nothing that can separate you from His love and that He will complete His work that He has begun in you. Take a look at the following verses:

**Philippians 1:6** For I am sure of this very thing, that *the One who began a good work in you will perfect it until the day of Christ Jesus.*

**1 Thessalonians 5:23-24** Now may the God of peace himself make you completely holy and may your spirit and soul and body be kept entirely blameless at the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ. *24 He who calls you is faithful, and He will in fact do this.*

**1 Peter 5:10-11** And, after you have suffered for a little while, *the God of all grace who called you to his eternal glory in Christ will himself restore, confirm, strengthen, and establish you.* **11** To him belongs the power forever. Amen.

We are still looking forward to the complete experience of salvation—freedom from all sin, corruption and death completely—as a future event. However, we are now confident that God’s faithfulness will not fail and He will complete the work that He has begun and is working in us now. He has predetermined that we would be adopted by Him and He has also predetermined that we will be conformed to the image of His son. With our New Origin and Destiny in Christ, we are confident along the way that nothing can nullify the promises and hope that the Father has given to us.



Does knowing that Father-God has already pre-determined the beginning and end of your journey give you security and peace? Why or why not?

## WORDwork / Day 4

How Does This Work in Life? and How Does This Work in My Life?

### 3.5 **Our Faith Gives Evidence of God's Work in Us.**

One of the most asked questions that we get when talking about God choosing us is, "So how can I be sure that I am chosen?" First of all, remember what we said about faith last week: Faith is the "evidence of things unseen" (Hebrews 11:1). In a sense, *God grants us our faith as the evidence that He has chosen us and is working in us.* Consider this:

**Philippians 1:29** For it has been *granted* to you not only **to believe** in Christ but also to suffer for him ...

Paul tells us that it has been *granted to us to believe in Christ* (and to suffer for Him, but we will get to that later). Our faith, granted to us by God, gives us *evidence* and *confirmation* that He is at work in us. Hear this:

**Ephesians 2:8** For **by grace** you are saved **through faith**, and this is not from yourselves, *it is the gift of God ...*

This whole process of being saved *by grace through faith* is ALL the gift of God. So our faith, our believing the Gospel and trusting Christ is part of the outworking of God's awesome plans for us. Our faith is one of the "every spiritual blessings" that has been given to us in Christ.

*We who believe in Christ can have assurance that we have been chosen by God and that our Father is at work in Christ in us through the presence of the Holy Spirit.* Your faith gives you the conviction that these things are true of you. Another way of saying this is that *God makes His choosing us part of our experience through our faith.*

In all of these passages, we should be overwhelmed by the reality that God chose us!!! You should be overwhelmed by the reality that God chose you!! Consider this:

**1 Corinthians 1:26-29** Think about the circumstances of your call, brothers and sisters. Not many were wise by human standards, not many were powerful, not many were born to a privileged position. 1:27 But **God chose** what the world thinks foolish to shame the wise, and **God chose** what the world thinks weak to shame the strong. 1:28 **God chose** what is low and despised in the world, what is regarded as nothing, to set aside what is regarded as something, 1:29 *so that no one can boast in his presence.*

As we think about all of this, it should become clear that your life does not belong to you. You have been created for a purpose. You have been saved for a purpose. Father-God has chosen you to be His child so that through you, the creation may get a taste of His goodness and beauty. This has come to you not because you earned or deserved it, but because Father loved you and chose you!



How would you have to change your daily mindset to trust that Father-God really is in control of all things and has your best interests in mind?