



EPHESIANS 1

IN HIM
I AM

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Know: Read Ephesians 1

Note: Read slowly, carefully marking keywords

- In Him
- Blessed
- Chose, Predestined
- Inheritance
- His Will
- Holy Spirit
- Knowledge of Him

Observation: Study notes below for context.

What: What is God's will for your life?

Read chapter one of Ephesians and mark keywords. Take special note of the words listed above. Throughout the study, mark the phrase "in Him."

"In Him" is the thread throughout this entire letter. Paul wants us to understand our union with God through Jesus. He spends half of His letter emphasizing who we are and what we have in Christ Jesus before he moves into the "doing."

Before we can ever "do," we must know it was "done." Religion is the language of "do." Grace is the language of "done." We will expound on this as we go along.

God's Will

In today's pre-work assignment, I asked, "What is God's will for your life?" This is the question most people ask. Almost every young person trying to navigate life wants to know this. Paul began his letter by saying that he was an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God.

Apostle means "sent one."

Before Paul was an apostle of Jesus, he was a "sent one" of the Jewish religious system. He was assigned to break up the "heretical" new faction of Christ-followers. Paul understood his assignment. He understood authority and how one functioned under that authority, which made him the perfect candidate for apostleship when Jesus met with him. When Paul was taken by

surprise on the road to Damascus, Paul's conversion and entry into ministry was a lateral move. There was a waiting time when Paul had to unlearn religion, but his function as an apostle was one he already understood.

Once, when I was young, a pastor told me, "If you ever see someone functioning in a role in their life and you have a longing to do the same, that might be where you are called to." I began to notice a longing to do what writers and teachers were doing. I studied them, applied myself to learn, and, most importantly, took note of their character and my own. I probably could have stepped into it sooner, but I wanted to be intentional in every season of my life so that when I did begin, there was a depth of character that could withstand the challenge of the task.

Paul, as an apostle, turned the world upside down. Paul was also beaten, persecuted, imprisoned, and martyred. Yet, there was a rest within him. He knew God's will for him, but because He was fully rested in Christ and who he was in Him, strength, humility, and joy were associated with his calling. Even when he was in prison, he knew how to rest. His finest letters, such as the one you are studying, were written while in prison because Paul was fully persuaded that he was in the will of God.

There is a season of waiting that is productive. Before we step into greater things, the waiting is where the real work happens.

A beautiful Oak tree in the summertime is the byproduct of the nourishment it receives during the winter when its roots are strengthened.

Be patient in the waiting if you have a call on your life for ministry. Be intentional in that waiting. No leader is worth following if they do not have some scars. No leader can sustain the wounds that come without the character needed for healing. Character is formed by learning to follow and being patient in growth. If you have not first known to follow someone, you will never be able to lead well.

Concerning God's will for your life today, the answer is very simple. The word for "will" in Greek is *thelema*, which means: "the purpose of God to bless mankind through Christ." In other words, God's will is that you manifest Christ wherever you are. When you wake up, begin the day by dialoguing with the Father. You are a son/daughter. Be son-conscious and ask God what assignment He has for you that day. Live fully present in that reality and do it.