

EPHESIANS

4. ALREADY AND NOT YET PAUL'S PRAYER PART 3 EPHESIANS 1:3-14

Ephesians 1:3-14, in the Greek text, is one sentence and one prayer. Paul seems so excited about God that he doesn't have time for punctuation! He starts and ends with "praise God," and in the middle, he proclaims who God is and what He has done. Paul is trying to get us to see the magnificence of Jesus as the King over all things.

Read Ephesians 1:3-14.

- **What things do you get really excited about?**
- **When was the last time you were so excited you couldn't even get your words out?**

Christianity has the greatest answer to our perception of the world: Jesus is King. The Bible offers a deep explanation as to why our lives and history can look chaotic at times, and also offers the hope and resolution to the story we find ourselves in: Kingship of Christ. The Kingship of Christ has 2 aspects, and they need to be part of what we believe:

1. **Jesus has a coming kingdom (not yet)** – There is a future aspect to His kingdom.
2. **He is King of history right now (already)** – He is alive and working now.

The Father planned our salvation, now Jesus comes and accomplishes it. Jesus came to earth and redeemed us. This means that Jesus came and purchased our salvation, in its entirety, all at once, and yet He continues to make all things new.

- **Try, in your own words, to explain the already-not-yet of Jesus' Kingdom.**
- **How can the "already" and the "not yet" both bring lament and hope to our everyday life?**

God is taking us to a place where there is no pain, but the road to get to the place where there is no pain passes through pain. Tim Keller wrote, "He's steering us to the place where there are no more crosses, where there are nothing but crowns, but on the way, he himself had to go through a cross."

DISCUSSION NOTES

- God's plan includes little things.
- God's plan also includes our choices.
- God's plan includes everything.

With Jesus as King, understanding our place and how we are saved, we are sealed with the Spirit and can know God's promises will come through.

- **Are there any promises of God you are clinging to right now?**
- **What things do you find it hard to believe that God can/will use for His purposes?**
- **How can others encourage you in the trust of God's already and not yet in those questions?**

There are some things that come because of the great truth of already-not-yet:

- **Assurance** – Because salvation begins in God and is accomplished by God, He will finish it.
- **Power** - God's decree for our tomorrows is victory in Him. That means that the burden of "fixing" our life is not on us; God has already decreed it and supplied the power for it.
- **Humility** – We are not saved because we are more humble; we become humble in response to God's seeking and saving of us and His continued work in our hearts. We are Christians by grace alone.
- **Hope** – Knowing God is working in every area of our lives should bring hope.
- **Boldness** – The fact of God's sovereignty was why Paul had the confidence to be a witness.

Sharing Christ with others and praying for them is the way God has ordained people will be saved, even when the work is His.

- **Do you live with the hope that God is working in everything for His glory and your good?**
- **Do you fight temptation in your life with the confidence that comes from knowing God has won the battle?**
- **Do you share with the boldness of knowing that God is sovereign?**
- **How can you be confident in your salvation?**
- **Have you developed a conviction of sin where you begin to lose your taste for it?**
- **Do you see the beauty of Christ and desire Him?**
- **How does the Gospel and an already-not-yet understanding speak to your past, present, and future?**