

Sermon Study Questions

Sunday, October 27, 2024

1. Read Ephesians 1:1-2.

2. Discuss the historical context and background information concerning the city of Ephesus in the first century. How might the historical context give you better insight into this letter as a whole?

3. Discuss the significance of Paul's title, "Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God." Discuss Paul's life prior to his encounter with Christ in Acts 9 and the change that God brought about in his life. Whether you were converted later in life or have known the Lord from the earliest of days, what are some ways you'd be willing to discuss that God has worked in your life to conform you more and more into the image of his Son, Jesus Christ?

4. What does Paul's title tell us about the authority of his letters?

5. When Paul writes, "by the will of God," how does this in a sense set the trajectory for the rest of the letter to the Ephesians?

6. Paul writes in the second line of verse 1, "To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus." What are some common misconceptions when we hear the word "saint" today? What does it mean to be a "saint" according to God's Word?

7. What does it mean to be "in Christ"? How might the identities of "saint" and being "in Christ" shape us in the way we live our lives?

8. What do the words “grace” and “peace” mean? How do these two words that Paul uses almost seem to foreshadow what he will talk about in the rest of the letter?

9. Where does this grace and peace ultimately come from? Discuss the significance of the fact that as Christians, we have the immense and incredible privilege of calling the Sovereign Creator of the universe “our Father”.

10. Pray!

Reading of the Law

James 1:19, “Know this, my beloved brothers: let every person be quick to hear, slow to speak, slow to anger.”

Prayer of Confession

Heavenly Father, we come before you this morning admitting the fact that we are not always quick to hear, slow to speak, and slow to get angry. Often times, we fail to live up to this command by being quick to speak over others, quick to flare up in anger, and slow to attentively and considerately listen to what others are saying. We don’t always respond with self-control as you command us to do in your Word. Please forgive us now Father, we pray, and by your Spirit would you help us to become a community of people who are in fact slow to speak, quick to listen, and slow to get angry. We thank you for our Lord Jesus Christ who modeled this for us so perfectly in his life and who forgives us in our failure, and it’s in his perfect name we pray. Amen.

Assurance of Pardon

Psalm 103:10-13: “He does not deal with us according to our sins, nor repay us according to our iniquities. ¹¹ For as high as the heavens are above the earth, so great is his steadfast love toward those who fear him; ¹² as far as the east is from the west, so far does he remove our transgressions from us. ¹³ As a father shows compassion to his children, so the Lord shows compassion to those who fear him.”

Westminster Larger Catechism

Q. 151. What are those aggravations that make some sins more heinous than others?

A. Sins receive their aggravations,

1. From the persons offending: if they be of riper age, greater experience or grace, eminent for profession, gifts, place, office, guides to others, and whose example is likely to be followed by others.

2. From the parties offended: if immediately against God, his attributes, and worship; against Christ, and his grace; the Holy Spirit, his witness, and workings; against superiors, men of eminency, and such as we stand especially related and engaged unto; against any of the saints, particularly weak brethren, the souls of them or any other, and the common good of all or many.

3. From the nature and quality of the offence: if it be against the express letter of the law, break many commandments, contain in it many sins: if not only conceived in the heart, but break forth in words and actions, scandalize others, and admit of no reparation: if against means, mercies, judgments, light of nature, conviction of conscience, public or private admonition, censures of the church, civil punishments; and our prayers, purposes, promises, vows, covenants, and engagements to God or men: if done deliberately, wilfully, presumptuously, impudently, boastingly, maliciously, frequently, obstinately, with delight, continuance, or relapsing after repentance.

4. From circumstances of time and place: if on the Lord's day, or other times of divine worship; or immediately before or after these, or other helps to prevent or remedy such miscarriages: if in public, or in the presence of others, who are thereby likely to be provoked or defiled.

Jer 2:8; Job 32:7, 9; Eccl 4:13; 1 Kgs 11:4, 9; 2 Sam 12:14; 1 Cor 5:1; Jas 4:17; Lk 12:47–48; Jer 5:4–5; 2 Sam 12:7–9; Ezk 8:11–12; Rom 2:17–24; Gal 2:11–14; Mt 21:38–39; 1 Sam 2:25; Acts 5:4; Ps 51:4; Rom 2:4; Mal 1:8, 14; Heb 2:2–3; 12:25; Heb 10:29; Mt 12:31–32; Eph 4:30; Heb 6:4–6; Jude 8; Num 12:8–9; Isa 3:5; Prov 30:17; 2 Cor 12:15; Ps 55:12–15; Zeph 2:8, 10–11; Mt 18:6; 1 Cor 6:8; Rev 17:6; 1 Cor 8:11–12; Rom 14:13, 15, 21; Ezk 13:19; 1 Cor 8:12; Rev 18:12–13; Mt 23:15; 1 Th 2:15–16; Jos 22:20; Prov 6:30–33; Ezra 9:10–12; 1 Kgs 11:9–10; Col 3:5; 1 Tim 6:10; Prov 5:8–12; 6:32–33; Jos 7:21; Jas 1:14–15; Mt 5:22; Mic 2:1; Mt 18:7; Rom 2:23–24; Dt 22:22, 28–29; Prov 6:32–35; Mt 11:21–24; Jn 15:22; Isa 1:3; Dt 32:6; Amos 4:8–11; Jer 5:3; Rom 1:26–27; Rom 1:32; Dan 5:22; Tit 3:10–11; Prov 29:1; Tit 3:10; Mt 18:17; Prov 27:22; 23:35; Ps 78:34–37; Jer 2:20; 42:5–6, 20–21; Eccl 5:4–6; Prov 20:25; Lev 26:25; Prov 2:17; Ezk 17:18–19; Ps 36:4; Jer 6:16; Num 15:30; Ex 21:14; Jer 3:3; Prov 7:13; Ps 52:1; 3 Jn 10; Num 14:22; Zech 7:11–12; Prov 2:14; Isa 57:17; Jer 34:8–11; 2 Pet 2:20–22; 2 Kgs 5:26; Jer 7:10; Isa 26:10; Ezk 23:37–39; Isa 58:3–5; Num 25:6–7; 1 Cor 11:20–21; Jer 7:8–10; Prov 7:14–15; Jn 13:27, 30; Ezra 9:13–14; 2 Sam 16:22; 1 Sam 2:22–24

Old Testament Reading

Numbers 6:22-27: “22 The Lord spoke to Moses, saying, 23 “Speak to Aaron and his sons, saying, Thus you shall bless the people of Israel: you shall say to them,

24 The Lord bless you and keep you;

25 the Lord make his face to shine upon you and be gracious to you;

26 the Lord lift up his countenance[a] upon you and give you peace.

27 “So shall they put my name upon the people of Israel, and I will bless them.”