

## Your Complete Story : Part 2

November 6, 2011

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### EPHESIANS 1:7-14

#### This Week's Core Competency:

**Identity in Christ-** I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

*But to all who did receive Him, He gave them the right to be children of God, to those who believe in His name, (John 1:12)*

#### Using This Study

##### ❶ EXAMINE His Word

What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

##### ❷ EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

##### ❸ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.

#### Introduction

Recently, I saw a news piece on Good Morning America. They reported that currently, the US Treasury has 16 billion dollars in savings bonds that have already reached their maximum value, but have not been claimed! They explained that the average sum in unclaimed bonds is approximately \$1,000.00. They spotlighted a woman from West Virginia named Vickie Shaluta. Her mother, who had Alzheimer's disease, had died about a year before. She had died penniless...or so Vickie thought. Recently, the state of West Virginia contacted Vickie to let her know that her mother had purchased savings bonds many years ago. Unbeknownst to her, these bonds had been maturing. The culmination of this short news brief was when the West Virginia State Treasurer presented Vickie with a check for over \$14,000.00!

Part of what made this segment so appealing was the idea that any of us could have unclaimed money. Think about it. Millions of Americans have some settlement or cash benefit which they either do not know exists or do not realize that they are entitled to receive. Sadly, many Christians are in this same predicament. Ephesians 1:3 says that we have been "blessed in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ." That means that we have untold heavenly riches which God intended for us because we are united with Christ. These blessings are for us to enjoy now because Jesus has done everything necessary for us to "claim" them.

#### This Week

As you study this week, consider the great lengths to which God our Father went to lavish the riches of his blessings on us. It was his will and his pleasure to do so, at great cost to himself, through the death of his Son, Jesus. Embrace these blessings. Thank God for them, and claim them as your own.

## ① EXAMINE His Word

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What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in the passage.

### Read Ephesians 1:7-14

7 We have redemption in Him through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace

8 that He lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.

9 He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure that He planned in Him

10 for the administration of the days of fulfillment—to bring everything together in the Messiah, both things in heaven and things on earth in Him.

11 We have also received an inheritance in

Him, predestined according to the purpose of the One who works out everything in agreement with the decision of His will,

12 so that we who had already put our hope in the Messiah might bring praise to His glory.

13 When you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed in Him, you were also sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.

14 He is the down payment of our inheritance, for the redemption of the possession, to the praise of His glory.

## ② EXPLORE His Word

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What does God MEAN?

- In verse 8, Paul says that God “lavished (his grace) on us.” What is God’s grace?
  - How is this different from mercy?
  - Please explain what God’s grace being lavished on us means, why it was necessary, and to whom this applies (who is “us” from the above quotation).
- What do you think Paul meant when he refers to “the mystery of his will” in verse 9? (See Ephesians 3:2-6)

3. In verse 11 (and verse 4), the NIV says we were chosen. This also carries the idea of being made heirs. Look up the following scriptures and tell how they relate to our being chosen or made heirs in Christ.

Deuteronomy 7:6-9 (old covenant)

Isaiah 49:6-7

1 Peter 2:9-10

Galatians 3:29-4:7

Romans 8:14-17

4. a) What is the believer's inheritance?

b) Do believers have access to their inheritance now? Explain your answer.

c) What practical steps will you take in light of this?

5. Christians or believers are sealed with the Holy Spirit (verse 13). Look up the verb to seal. How does the definition change or enhance the meaning of this verse?
6. Read Galatians 5:16-26. In light of the Holy Spirit living in you, as a believer, how can you allow the Spirit to bring forth fruit in your life?
7. Ephesians 2:18 says, "For through him (Christ), we have access to the Father by one Spirit." How will you take full advantage of the fact that you have open access into the awesome presence of God, your heavenly father?

## **③ EMBRACE His Word**

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Why does this MATTER to me?

### **Summarize your thoughts on the passage:**

Write about what God wants you to KNOW...

Write about how God wants you to FEEL...

Write about what God wants you to DO...

## **Sermon Notes**

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# 30 CORE Competencies

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## 10 Core Beliefs

**Trinity** *2 Corinthians 13:14*

I believe the God of the Bible is the only true God - Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

**Salvation by Grace** *Ephesians 2:8-9* I believe a person comes into a right relationship with God by His grace, through faith in Jesus Christ.

**Authority of the Bible** *2 Timothy 3:16-17*

I believe the Bible is the Word of God and has the right to command my belief and action.

**Personal God** *Psalms 121:1-2*

I believe God is involved in and cares about my daily life.

**Identity in Christ** *John 1:12*

I believe I am significant because of my position as a child of God.

**Church** *Ephesians 4:15-16*

I believe the church is God's primary way to accomplish His purposes on earth today.

**Humanity** *John 3:16*

I believe all people are loved by God and need Jesus Christ as their Savior.

**Compassion** *Psalms 82:3-4*

I believe God calls all Christians to show compassion to those in need.

**Eternity** *John 14:1-4*

I believe there is a heaven and a hell and that Jesus Christ is returning to judge the earth and to establish His eternal kingdom.

**Stewardship** *1 Timothy 6:17-19*

I believe that everything I am or own belongs to God.

## 10 Core Practices

**Worship** *Psalms 95:1-7*

I worship God for who He is and what He has done for me.

**Prayer** *Psalms 66:16-20*

I pray to God to know Him, to lay my request before Him and to find direction for my daily life.

**Bible Study** *Hebrews 4:12*

I read the Bible to know God, the truth, and to find direction for my daily life.

**Single-mindedness** *Matthew 6:33* I focus on God and His priorities for my life.

**Spiritual Gifts** *Romans 12:4-6*

I know and use my spiritual gifts to accomplish God's purposes.

**Biblical Community** *Acts 2:44-47*

I fellowship with other Christians to accomplish God's purposes in my life, others' lives, and in the world.

**Giving Away My Time** *Colossians 3:17*

I give away my time to fulfill God's purposes.

**Giving Away My Money** *2 Corinthians 8:7*

I give away my money to fulfill God's purposes.

**Giving Away My Faith** *Ephesians 6:19-20*

I give away my faith to fulfill God's purposes.

**Giving Away My Life** *Romans 12:1*

I give away my life to fulfill God's purposes.

## 10 Core Virtues

**Joy** *John 15:11*

I have inner contentment and purpose in spite of my circumstances.

**Peace** *Philippians 4:6-7*

I am free from anxiety because things are right between God, me, and others.

**Faithfulness** *Proverbs 3:3-4*

I demonstrate loyalty in my relationships with others in response to God's loyalty to me.

**Self-Control** *Titus 2:11-13*

I have the power, through Christ, to control myself.

**Humility** *Philippians 2:3, 4*

I choose to esteem others above myself.

**Love** *1 John 4:10-12*

I sacrificially and unconditionally love and forgive others.

**Patience** *Proverbs 14:29*

I endure patiently under the unavoidable pressures of life.

**Kindness/Goodness** *1 Thess. 5:15*

I choose to do the right things in my relationships with others.

**Gentleness** *Philippians 4:5*

I am thoughtful, considerate and calm in dealing with others.

**Hope** *Hebrews 6:19-20*

I can cope with the hardships of life and with death because of the hope I have in Jesus Christ