

## **“Identity & Influence”**

August 19, 2018

### **Ephesians 1:1-6**

#### **Background: Ephesus**

- A port city of significant cultural & commercial influence in Asia Minor (on the shores of modern-day Turkey).
- Historically steeped in **paganism, occult practices, immorality, and greed.**
- During NT times, Ephesus was known as **“the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis (Diana)” (Acts 19:35).**
- Paul preached there and **“performed extraordinary miracles” (Acts 19:11).**
- Result: **“Many who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly...the Word spread widely and grew in power” (Acts 19:19-20).**
- Yet, those who profited by selling idols were enraged, starting a riot and attempting to kill two of Paul’s companions. (Acts 19:40).

Ephesus experienced both REVIVAL and RESISTANCE to the move of God. NOW they were in need of a SUSTAINED, CULTURE-TRANSFORMATION

**CORE: People of INFLUENCE must know their IDENTITY.**

#### **THIS IS WHO WE ARE:**

1. We are **“SAINTS”** (v. 1)
  - a. Made clean; blameless; without shame
  - b. Consecrated; set apart and devoted to serve only One
2. We are **“FAITHFUL”** (*Lit.- full of faith in Jesus*) (v. 1)
  - a. Trustworthy; reliable
  - b. Quick to believe; easily persuaded; able to be confided in
3. We are **ABUNDANTLY PROVIDED FOR** (v. 2)
  - a. “Grace...to you”—His supernatural provision of favor, joy, sweetness, and strength
  - b. 2 Corinthians 9:8- **“Grace abounds...at all times having all you need” (Provided for—not impoverished)**
4. We are **POWERFULLY PROTECTED** (v. 2)
  - a. “Peace...to you”—to join together with in unbroken quietness of soul
  - b. Kept safe; confident assurance (*Live protected—not panicked*)
5. We are **“BLESSED WITH EVERY SPIRITUAL BLESSING”** (v. 3)
  - a. There is not a single spiritual blessing that has not been given to us
  - b. They are **“in the heavenly realms (realities)”**
  - c. As **“born again” people** we are a **“new species of being”**—learning to be more at home in the spiritual realm than in the earthly!

6. We are LOVED BY OUR FATHER (v. 4)
  - a. *"He chose us"—voluntarily and wholeheartedly*
  - b. We often think of Jesus as loving and Father as distant
  - c. But, Father is seen *"in the face of Jesus" (2 Cor. 4:6)—"If you've seen Me—seen My Father" (John 14:9)* washing feet, healing, holding
  - d. *Jesus prayed: "That the same love You (Father) have for Me—would be in them." (John 17:26) "Loved them as You love Me" (23)*
  - e. Most feel inferior; He loves them "more" because they're "better"
  - f. **Father loves us exactly the same way He loves His Son. Because He "is love"—not because we are perfect!**
  - g. **AND His love is "in" us—He loves us from the inside—up close & personal—not from a galaxy far, far away!**
7. We are ADOPTED & ACCEPTED THROUGH JESUS CHRIST (v. 5-6)
  - a. **The poisonous fruit of the Tree of Knowledge** makes us think we must **do** something to **earn acceptance**—constant torment trying to **measure up** by **judging one another** and **scoring our performance!**
  - b. **GOOD NEWS! We are fully accepted because of what Jesus accomplished with finality on the Cross! We will eternally ponder the majesty of the Cross—**
    - i. **The PRICE He paid—the value Father placed on your life—you are His "treasured ones"!**
    - ii. **The POWER He released—nothing can separate us from this love!**

**"See what great love the Father has lavished on us, that we should be called children of God! And that is what we are!" (1 John 3:1 NIV)**

- **Meditate** on His Word—declare it—speak to yourself (Body, soul, spirit aligned)
- His word is *"living and active" (Heb. 4:12)*—let it come **alive** in you and **activate** you!