

You Matter To God

Here is the evidence:

“(v.1) I, Paul, am under God's plan as an apostle, a special agent of Christ Jesus, writing to you faithful Christians in Ephesus. (v.2) I greet you with the grace and peace poured into our lives by God our Father and our Master, Jesus Christ.

The Glory of God

(v.3) How blessed is God! And what a blessing he is! He's the Father of our Master, Jesus Christ, and takes us to the high places of blessing in him. (v.4) Long before he laid down earth's foundations, he had us in mind, had settled on us as the focus of his love, to be made whole and holy by his love. (v.5) Long, long ago he decided to adopt us into his family through Jesus Christ. (What pleasure he took in planning this!) (v.6) He wanted us to enter into the celebration of his lavish gift-giving by the hand of his beloved Son.

(v.7) Because of the sacrifice of the Messiah, his blood poured out on the altar of the Cross, we're a free people—free of penalties and punishments chalked up by all our misdeeds. (v.8) And not just barely free, either. **Abundantly** free! (v.9) He thought of everything, provided for everything we could possibly need, letting us in on the plans he took such delight in making. (v.10) He set it all out before us in Christ, a long-range plan in which everything would be brought together and summed up in him, everything in deepest heaven, everything on planet earth.

(v.11) It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for. Long before we first heard of Christ and got our hopes up, he had his eye on us, (v.12) had designs on us for glorious living, part of the over-all purpose he is working out in everything and everyone.

(v.13) It's in Christ that you, once you heard the truth and believed it (this Message of your salvation), found yourselves home free—signed, sealed, and delivered by the Holy Spirit. (v.14) This signet from God is the first installment on what's coming, a reminder that we'll get everything God has planned for us, a praising and glorious life.

Ephesians 1:1-14
The Message

A CLOSER LOOK AT THE EVIDENCE REVEALS:

- He **blessed** us in every way. (v.3)
"takes us to the high places of blessing in Christ"
- We are **chosen** before creation. (v.4a)
"long before he laid down earth's foundation, he had us in mind"
- We are **designed** to be His children. (v.4b)
"to be made whole and holy by his love "
- He **redeemed** us through Christ's sacrifice. (v.7a)
"because of the sacrifice of the Messiah, his blood poured out on the altar of the Cross, we're a free people"
- We are **forgiven!** (v.7b)
"free of penalties and punishments chalked up by all our misdeeds"
"And not just barely free, either—abundantly free"
- He **thought** of everything and shared his plans with us. (v.9)
"he thought of everything—and—shared his plans with us"
- He shapes our **identity** and **life- purpose** (v.11)
"It's in Christ that we find out who we are and what we are living for"
- Jesus gives us **freedom**. (v.13)
"found yourselves home free—signed, sealed, and delivered"

God rewards those who seek Him. Not those who seek doctrine or religion or systems or creeds. Many settle for these lesser passions. But the reward goes to those who settle for nothing less than Jesus Himself. And what is the reward? What awaits those who seek Jesus?
Nothing less than the heart of Jesus!

What or who are you seeking?