

Who am I?

Ephesians 1.1-3

Key Points:

- Paul writes to the Christians in Ephesus, a major Roman city of some 250,000 people, and the surrounding area. Most likely there would have been more than a hundred well-established house churches.
- Paul addresses the letter to 'the Saints' or 'God's Holy People' in Ephesus. He's starting off with a theme that will continue throughout the letter - answering the question of identity in Jesus - and opens with this significant truth of who the Ephesian Christians, and we, are.
- In v.1, the greek word ἅγιος (pronounced 'hagios') can be translated as 'holy ones' or 'saints'. It signifies those who have been brought into a new relationship with God, consecrated (separated) from our sin and to God as His own people. God's Holy People are not holy because of what they do, or what they feel, or what they look like, but rather because of Jesus. Saints are characterised by their faithful following of Christ. If you believe that Jesus died for you, then you are a saint!!
- When we faithfully follow Jesus, we're acting like who we already are. When we separate (consecrate) ourselves from anything that doesn't glorify God (our sin, selfishness, lies etc.) we're acting like who we already are.
- When we begin to see ourselves as God sees us, everything changes. Part of who we are relates to what He's given us, which is (v.3) EVERY Spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms! If what God says is true about who we are, and about what He's given to us, then we need to dream big! When we act like who God says we are (Saints!) then we're going to be experiencing the spiritual blessings that He's promised.

Questions:

1. What are some of the defining features that make you who you are? What about the person to your left?! (be nice!)
2. Do you have any New Year's Resolutions? Do any of them relate to how you see yourself?
3. What do you think of when you hear the word 'Saint'? Why might this be the case?
4. The word 'saint' is all about being consecrated from our sin, which is achieved by Jesus at the cross & the resurrection, but lived out by us. How might you practically go about living out that truth that you are a saint, a holy one, consecrated from your sin?
5. Who does God say you are? How does this make you feel? Does this always ring true for you?
6. If knowing who God says you are is so important, how can you practically remind yourself and others of these truths?
7. When we faithfully follow Jesus, we're acting like who we already are. What would it look like tomorrow for you to be who God says you are? What does faithfully following Jesus mean for you? What will you do when it gets tough?
8. What are some of the Spiritual Blessings in the heavenly realms that Paul might be referring to in v.3? [C.f. Eph 1.4-14, 1 Cor 12.1-11, Romans 12.6-8, Deut 28.1-12 etc.]