

04/18/2009

Say Yes to God: Growing Deeper in God's Grace
"Who Do You Think You Are?"
Ephesians 1:1-14

THE BIG IDEA:

There are so many things in our lives that seek to define us and tell us who we are. But God has something to say about that! Throughout Ephesians, and especially in these opening verses, Paul helps us to begin to see that God's opinion of us is shaped by his love and grace in Jesus Christ. Allow his words to begin to redefine you and help you grow deep in his grace!

OPEN WITH PRAYER

GETTING STARTED

1. "One Minute Drill": Give each person one minute to share a defining moment in their life and why it was an important moment (i.e. "The day I got my first car" or "The day I met Christ").

LEARNING & APPLYING GOD'S WORD

Together, read Ephesians 1:1-14

2. Briefly re-cap Steve's message for those in your group who couldn't make it to church on Sunday. (Reminder: you can listen to the sermons on-line at http://www.bidwellpres.org/audio/morning_sermons or podcasts on iTunes: search the iTunes store for Bidwell Presbyterian Church)
3. According to verses 3-6, what are the blessings that God gives us? What do these verses tell us about the character and nature of God?
4. How did God choose to communicate his love and purpose in our lives? (Hint: read verses 6-7!) What else did God do in and through Christ according to verses 9-14?
5. C.S Lewis said in his magnificent sermon, *The Weight of Glory*, that he had recently read that the fundamental thing is how we think about God. His reaction to that statement was very strong: "By God Himself it is not! How God thinks of us is not only more important but infinitely more important." What does this passage tell us about how God thinks of us? Look especially at verses 3-9 and 11-12.
6. Paul tells us in verse 5 that in love, God adopted us as his sons and daughters. What does it mean to be a "child of God"? What does it mean to have our identity rooted in what God thinks of us rather than what we think of ourselves?

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7. What are some things that can give us identity or self-worth? What's the danger of basing our self-identity on anything except what God thinks of us?

LIVING OUT "REAL LIFE"

8. What are some things that you have based your identity and self-worth on in the past?
God wants to begin to redefine our self-image for us through his grace.
How would you like him to do this for you this coming week?

SHARING AND PRAYER (Prayer Requests)