

Ephesians 1:3-23

2/20/18

God's Inheritance

Read Ephesians 1:3-23 once again, paying close attention to the context in which these verses are presented.

Ephesus was not only the thriving center of commercial trade, it was also noted for its magnificent temple, dedicated to the worship of the pagan goddess Diana. Her followers indulged in sexual orgies and other distinctly anti-Christian activities as part of their worship. In fact, the influence of this religion permeated nearly every facet of existence in the city. Followers of Christ faced considerable opposition as they lived in this pervasively wicked environment.

Paul sends this message to them via his friend Tychicus. He lets them know that, despite their hardship, they are set apart for God for service to Him and guaranteed an inheritance. Specifically, in verse 11, they are told that they have a guaranteed inheritance “in Him”. Yet, in verse 18 we are told that God has His own glorious inheritance “in the saints”. This one is easy to overlook. We tend to be focused on how God blesses us. But here, it appears He has provided a blessing for Himself, in the saints.

Further, He wants believers in Ephesus to “know what is the hope to which he has called [them], what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints”.

1. According to this statement, what are the riches that God values most?
2. What does Paul mean when he says that God's inheritance is glorious?
3. Why do you think the world is dazzled by counterfeit glory?
4. Why might an understanding of the context of Paul's letter be particularly meaningful to believers today?