



Sermon Discussion Guide


“Modern Family: The Blessing”

Ephesians 1:1-6

Rev. Ray Cortese, August 23 & 24, 2014

Step 1: Reflect on the Text

Why do we do this first? We always want to start with the Bible. The goal is to meditate on the Word and read it with an ear sensitive to the Holy Spirit’s promptings. Look for words or phrases that stand out through logic, repetition, layout, etc.

-  Read Ephesians 1:1-6. What stood out to you? What did you find interesting and/or important? What was challenging or caused you to have questions?

Step 2: Reflect on the Sermon

INTRODUCTION

- 1 This was the first sermon in a new series on Ephesians. What do you know about Paul’s letter to the Ephesians? How was Ephesus in Biblical times like the United States today? What do we mean when we say, “The indicative precedes the imperative, and the order is not reversible”? (Hint: it relates to the phrase “You don’t sweat it, you don’t get it.”)
- 2 Summarize the *Big Idea* of the sermon in *one phrase or sentence* (Note: this is not the same as listing the main points). In other words, if someone woke you up at 3am on Monday morning and asked, “What was the sermon about on Sunday?” what would you say in the midst of your sleepy haze?

THE ACQUISITION OF THE BLESSING

- 3 In your own words, what does it mean to be “in Christ”/united to Christ? Read and discuss the following question and answer from the Heidelberg Catechism.
Q: How are you made right with God?

A: Only by true faith in Jesus Christ. Even though my conscience accuses me of having grievously sinned against all God's commandments and of never having kept any of them, and even though I am still inclined toward all evil, nevertheless, without my deserving it at all, out of sheer grace, God grants and credits to me the perfect satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ, as if I had never sinned nor been a sinner, as if I had been as perfectly obedient as Christ was obedient for me.

- 4 Why is it wrong to say that salvation is a process? When did you first realize that you were “in Christ”?

THE SCOPE OF THE BLESSING

- 5 Why should those who are adopted by God, and granted access into his family, be humble? Have you seen the fruit of humility in your life?
- 6 Why can't you “unchoose” God? Why will He never “unchoose” you? What kind of security does that produce?

THE IMPACT OF THE BLESSING

- 7 When you experience the power of the gospel, it changes your affections, your priorities, and your actions. How have you seen change in one of these areas?
- 8 Why is worship not a spectator sport? Do you sing in church? Do you like it? Why or why not?
- 9 What was the point of the illustration of the architect in the Soviet Union? How can you give tangible expressions of your faith to those around you?

Step 3: Final Reflections

- ✠ How has your understanding, appreciation, and love for Jesus and the gospel grown as a result of this study?
- ♥ In what areas of faith and practice are you feeling convicted by the Holy Spirit to act as a result of this study?