

## ICE BREAKER

What was your childhood like for you, the good and/or the bad?

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What part of the message was most encouraging to you? What part do you find challenging?
2. What did You notice about God in the passage? What did you notice about yourself and other people in it?

## GOSPEL EXCHANGE (REDEMPTIVE WORK)

*Jesus asks us to give Him our burdens (Matthew 11:28-29), whatever they may be (a lie we have believed about God or ourselves, our hurt or negative emotions, or even our concerns for loved ones), so He can carry them for us and give us His peace (wholeness and completeness) in exchange.*

What do you want to exchange with Jesus today?

What is the burden? “Lord Jesus, I give you my...”

What’s His gift? “Lord Jesus, I receive your...”

## ACTION QUESTIONS

1. What is one step of obedience you can take this week, based on what you’ve learned today? *(NOTE – You might consider stopping and prayerfully asking God to answer this question for you, taking 30-45 seconds to listen in silence for an answer, then write it down.)*
2. During the coming week, who is someone with whom you can share what you learned today? *(NOTE – Consider repeating the same step with this question as the previous question.)*



## Sermon Study - Conversation Guide

September 10, 2023

“Learning to Be in God’s Family”

Ephesians 1:4-10

This guide is a discipleship tool for personal reflection, family conversations, for home groups, and for Table Talk on Sundays @10:40 am and 12:15 pm on the Lowell Patio

Coastal Community Church  
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**NOTES: Learning to Be in God's Family (Eph. 1:4-10) Andy Rock**

As we continue in the book of Ephesians, Paul is writing to Gentiles (non-Jews) and Jews, who are mashed together as the church, because of the undeniable power and love of Jesus. But the Gentiles aren't Jewish enough for the Jews and the Jews aren't Christian enough for the Gentiles. So, what will Paul tell them?

**1:4 In love, 5 he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.**

In love, God predestined us. What does that mean? Pre-destiny. Your destiny, the arc and meaning of your life and your ultimate destination, is already planned by God. Predestination is not predetermination. God doesn't take away your free will.

Predestined simply means that as you follow Jesus through the twists and turns of life, all the failures and successes, when you look back at your life, you will say, "Jesus, that was all You. You got me to this place, and I give You all the glory."

Our destiny is to be adopted and given the position of a son. Sonship isn't about gender. It's an inheritance, a position, a role in the family. Adoption in the first century usually happened when you were a young adult. Families who had no children needed someone to take over the family business. Why? There were no nursing homes. Having no heir meant your income would dry up and you'd starve to death. Adoption wasn't about love. It was about work, money, and survival.

Adoption these days is often about parents wanting children they can't have themselves. Yet most adopted kids deal with this thought. "If I mess up, if I'm not enough, then this family will leave me as well." And the same was true for people adopted as adults in the first century. "If I mess up, the legal paperwork will be filed, and I'll lose it all." Adoption always comes with the uncertainty of abandonment.

What Paul is communicating is it takes time to learn how to be a part of God's family. Sometimes you're going to feel like God is done with you, that you'll be kicked out if you mess up again. That's a lie from the pit of hell. God chooses you in love and is never tired of choosing you.

You're not adopted because of pity or because you need to earn your place. You've been chosen to be a part of God's family because of love.

You are completely secure in God's love, right now, with all your sin, all your talent and beauty. You are safe and secure. You belong. It takes time to learn that our family of faith does things differently than the world and the family we grew up with; that you are loved and safe. It takes time to learn our new family language called prayer. Don't give up and you will come to receive your inheritance as God's beloved child. What's our inheritance? It's Jesus himself. How much does this cost? Nothing for us.

**1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace 8 that he lavished on us.**

Redemption is Jesus buying us out of our slavery to sin, and the price was His life. We've practiced living like orphans, dead in our sin. God has always been our protector, our Advocate, and friend. The enemy is our accuser, the one who condemns and destroys. But we turned it all upside down and rejected the One who is our life. Yet Jesus redeemed us from our death and raised us up into eternal life with Him. Now Jesus wants to help us to learn how to live as beloved daughters and sons. Why? Here's the mystery and beauty and wonder of the Gospel.

**1:8 With all wisdom and understanding, 9 he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, 10 to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.**

Jesus wants you united with Himself. He...wants...you! When the arc of your destiny is complete, and you are in Heaven, you will look back at your life and see that Jesus did it all. He overcame every sin and every tragedy, even death itself just to have you. Do you know the name your Heavenly Father gives you? Your name is "Beloved."

If you've ever felt unworthy of God's love, today you can let it go. You are chosen, adopted, and part of God's family. You are beloved. You don't have to earn your adoption, you don't have to maintain it, you don't have to keep it up or perform well enough. Your Heavenly Father is head over heels in love with you. You are His beloved child, and you are adopted into His family because Jesus lived and died for you. Jesus is eternal life, and He gave Himself to you. This is your destiny.

**SMALL GROUP GROUND RULES: Tips for great conversation**

- Extroverts: Please allow space and time for introverts to speak.
- Introverts: Please speak up when you have something to contribute.
- Everyone: Show respect by listening to one another, knowing that we all can learn from those who have a different perspective.