



## Kurt's distillation of Ephesians Chapter One

From: Paul — a messenger picked by God

To: God's holy people

Grace and peace to you from God.

Praise to God who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing. He chose us to take part in him before the creation of the world! He planned, empowered, and freely adopted us as His; simply because that was his great desire and will. Through Jesus, we have total renewal, and forgiveness, as a free gift that He

lavished on us.

God made known to us his plan, that He would bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth, and then He accomplished it through Jesus. We were also in that plan, a plan that our very existence would praise God's greatness. And you were included in the plan when you heard the good news of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked with a seal guaranteeing your inheritance.

For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith and your love, I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. I keep asking that God may give you wisdom and vision, so that you may know Him better; that you know the hope to which He has called you, the riches of His inheritance, and His incomparably great power for us who believe.

### Icebreaker

Do you remember what you were like as an 8 year old? What were you into ie. Dinosaurs, cars, legos, Barbie?

### Conversation Starters

1. Have you ever had an overwhelming new idea? One that you couldn't help but talk about? Share with the group.
2. Kurt said personal piety (personal holiness, saintliness) can be a structure that we build to try to reach God on our own. But, when is personal piety a good thing —doing the right thing should be good, right? How does it get from good to not so good?
3. When you grew up, who were the “good guys” and who were the “bad guys”? How has that changed? How has that stayed the same?
4. Are there things that at one time you thought the Bible said or meant that you now aren't sure that it does?
5. How can we continue to be on the lookout for thoughts and opinions that we are adding on to God's plan that are really man-made structures?
6. Ephesians 1:18 says, “I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you...” What would that mean for you?