

# SUNDAY RECAP | CHRIST COMMUNITY CHURCH

The *Sunday Recap* is a quick rundown of our time of worship together on Sunday and a quick look ahead. Our hope is that this will help us continue to reflect on the good news of the gospel all week long. Enjoy!

*RECAP FOR: Sunday, September 16th, 2018*

## Take me directly to:

1. [PREPARE for this Sunday](#)
2. [REFLECT on last Sunday](#)
3. [Further Reflection and Study](#) (resources, questions, etc.)
4. [Resources for Kids \(and Parents\)](#)
5. [Sermon Review](#)

## PREPARE FOR THIS SUNDAY ([back to table of contents](#))

### // Prayer of Preparation //

Good Morning Lord. We come to you this morning with a lot on our minds (as always). As we think about all that concerns us and all we experienced in the past week, help us to see you present in all those things. Remind us that you are in control of all things and reign as King of kings every moment of every day.

As we come to worship you this morning we ask that you quiet our hearts and give us ears to hear you. Remind us of the good news of your faithfulness to us in Christ. For those among us that don't yet know of redemption in Christ, give them faith today, we pray. Nourish our faith this morning as we sing together and listen to you. Thank you for your grace and love for us. Amen.

### // Call to Worship //

Leader: Loving God, we have gathered to meet you.

Congregation: We have come to listen to you, to seek you, to worship you.

Leader: You are the beginning of all things, the life of all things;  
you knew us before we were born.

In you we become; in you we live.

Loving God, you are here and everywhere, around us and within us; you know our inmost thoughts.

Congregation: In you we hope; in you we live.

Leader: You are the source of serenity, giving peace that is beyond our understanding.

Congregation: In you we are still; in you we live.

Leader: Loving God, we live in you; we worship you.

Loving God, you live in us; we worship you. Amen.

[Your Promises](#)

[Rock of Ages](#)

**// Prayer of Confession //**

Leader: Lord, you come to us, but we do not recognize you; you call, but we do not follow;  
you command, but we do not obey,  
you bless us, but we do not thank you.

Congregation: Please forgive and help us.

Leader: Lord, you accept us, but we do not accept others;  
you forgive us, but we do not forgive those who wrong us; you love us, but we do not love our  
neighbors.

Congregation: Please forgive and help us.

Leader: Lord, you showed us how to carry out your mission,  
but we still insist on our own;  
you identified yourself with outcasts, the needy, and the poor,  
but we do not bother to find out what is happening to them;  
you suffered and died for the sake of all,  
but we do not give up our comfortable lives.

Congregation: Please forgive and help us, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.

**// Assurance of Pardon //**

*In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of  
his grace, which he lavished upon us*

*-Ephesians 1:7-8*

[Your Glory, Nothing but the Blood](#)

**// Passing of the Peace //**

As those who all find our hope in the same place- In Jesus Christ, let's take a moment to remind ourselves  
that we are united in him by greeting one another here this morning.

*Pastoral Prayer and Offering*

*Sermon: Blessed in Christ pt.2 (Ephesians 1:7-14)*

[In Christ Alone](#)

**// Benediction //**

Leader: All that you desire is yours in Jesus Christ.

May the Holy Spirit guide you this week and give opportunities to love others with the very love of Christ.

Go in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit.

Peace be with you!

Congregation: And also with you!

## REFLECT ON LAST SUNDAY [\(back to table of contents\)](#)

### // Prayer of Preparation //

Loving God, for each one who leads us in worship today,  
we pray that they may be so filled with your Spirit  
that they will clearly reflect the glory of Christ in all they say and do.  
We pray that everyone in this place will know you are with us  
and be drawn to bring you all honor and praise. Amen.

### [O Come to the Altar](#)

### // Call to Worship //

Leader: Let us worship the eternal God,  
the source of love and life, who creates us.  
Congregation: Let us worship Jesus Christ,  
the risen one, who lives among us.  
Leader: Let us worship the Spirit,  
the holy fire, who renews us.  
Congregation: To the one true God be praise  
in all times and places,  
through the grace of Jesus Christ.

### [Come Thou Fount \(Above All Else\)](#)

### // Prayer of Confession //

**Congregation: Lord God, we have given more weight to our successes and our happiness than to your will.**

Leader: We have eaten without a thought for the hungry.  
We have spoken without an effort to understand others.  
We have kept silence instead of telling the truth.  
We have judged others, forgetful that you alone are the Judge.  
We have acted rather in accordance with our opinions  
than according to your commands.

**Congregation: Within your church we have been slow to practice love of our neighbors. And in the world we have not been your faithful servants.**

Leader: Forgive us and help us to live as disciples of Jesus Christ, your Son, our Savior. Amen.

### // Assurance of Pardon //

He himself bore our sins in his body on the cross, so that, free from sins, we might live for righteousness;  
by his wounds you have been healed.

— 1 Peter 2:24

## [There is a Peace](#)

### // Passing of the Peace //

The Story of God is that from creation we had peace with God, one another, and nature. But then Adam and Eve sinned and it brought separation and discord in each of those relationships. The good news from Ephesians 1 is that God has brought peace by restoring all things into Christ. As those who have life in Christ, let us greet one another with the peace of Christ this morning.

*Pastoral Prayer and Offering*

*Sermon: Blessed in Christ (Ephesians 1:3-14)*

## [Grace Alone](#)

### // Benediction //

Leader: As those who are "in Christ" go from here with glad and eager hearts.  
Glad for what Christ has done and eager to share that good news with others.  
Peace be with you!

**Congregation: And also with you!**

## FURTHER REFLECTION & STUDY [\(back to table of contents\)](#)

### **Scripture to Meditate On:**

Ephesians 1:1b To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus...

### **Heidelberg Catechism Q & A 32**

**Question:** But why are you called a Christian?

**Answer:** Because by faith I am a member of Christ and so I share in his anointing.

I am anointed to confess his name,  
to present myself to him as a living sacrifice of thanks,  
to strive with a free conscience against sin and the devil in this life,  
and afterward to reign with Christ over all creation for eternity.

(1 Cor. 12:12-27; 2 Acts 2:17; 1 John 2:27; Matt. 10:32; Rom. 10:9-10; Heb. 13:15; Rom. 12:1; 1 Pet. 2:5,9;  
Gal. 5:16-17; Eph. 6:11; 1 Tim. 1:18-19; Matt. 25:34; 2 Tim. 2:12)

### **This Weeks Theological Word and Definition:**

#### *ELECTION*

That eternal act of God whereby He, in His sovereign good pleasure, and on account of no foreseen merit in them, chooses a certain number of people to be the recipients of special grace and of eternal salvation in and by Jesus Christ.

The fact that God chooses some and passes by others does not warrant the charge that He is guilty of injustice. If God owed the forgiveness of sin and eternal life to all men, it would be an injustice if He saved only a limited number of them. But the sinner has absolutely no right or claim on the blessings which flow from divine election. As a matter of fact, he has forfeited these blessings. We must admit that God would have been perfectly just if He had not saved any (Mt. 20:14,15; Rom.9:14,15).

Because our election is "in Christ," we should not search for it in ourselves. Those who cling to Christ can be assured that they are among God's elect people.

(Adapted from Louis Berkhof's Systematic Theology, pp. 114-115)

### Reflection Questions:

- In our Passing of the Peace we heard that we are all one “in Christ.” Consider that for a minute. If that’s true, what are some ways your life could better reflect that reality?
- We saw from Ephesians 1:3-14 that theology produces worship. Do you agree with that? Why or why not? Which is more natural for you- reading and learning theological truths or praising God in worship? (essentially: brain or emotions?) How can you learn from those who gravitate more towards the other?
- We talked about a very heavy topic which Paul presents in Ephesians 1:3- that we who have faith were chosen before the foundation of the world. What about that confuses you? What questions do you have concerning that truth? In what ways can it be a comforting truth?

### Suggested Resources

Articles: [Never Work For God](#) by Steve Brown

[Dead Men Can't Dance](#) by Scott Churnock

[3 Reasons Your Pastor's Sermon Should Always Lead You To Jesus](#) by Adriel Sanchez

Ephesians Series Resources:

[Ephesians Scripture Journal](#) (available on Sundays for \$2)

[Alive in Him](#) by Gloria Furman (available on Sundays for \$5) and accompanying [Study Guide](#) and

## RESOURCES FOR KIDS (and Parents) [\(back to table of contents\)](#)

2-minute Video (because we know that's all the time you have) ;)

[Gospel Principle: Inability](#) with Paul Tripp

### Read Ephesians 1:3–4

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.

### Questions for Children and Parents to discuss:

- What blessings are you really thankful for (let the kids say whatever comes to their minds- “friends, mom and dad, the trampoline, ice cream, etc.)
- In the bible the Apostle Paul says we have been blessed in Christ. What blessings do we have in Jesus? (forgiveness, new life, adoption, righteousness, salvation, be with Jesus for eternity, etc.)
- How do we know for sure that we are saved? (Try get your child to understand that salvation is about what God has done for us in Christ, not what we do. This is the focus of Ephesians 1:3-14)
- Who do we know that you don't think knows about how great Jesus is? Is God powerful enough to give them belief like he gave us? (A: Of course! Lets pray for them and talk to them!)

### Prayer

Jesus we can't believe we have every blessing because of you. Thank you for making us your own. Thank you for giving us faith. Thank you that we get to be with you forever because you lived the perfect life for us and died the death of sin for us. Make us remember that there is nothing better than being your child. Give us joy in our hearts and help us to share the good news about Jesus with everyone we meet. Amen.

## Sermon Review ([back to table of contents](#))

**Title:** Blessed in Christ, pt.1

**Text:** Ephesians 1:3-6

**Watch:** <https://cccplainfield.org/sermon/blessed-in-christ/>

**Podcast:** <https://cccplainfield.org/subscribe-to-podcast>

“Location, Location, Location”, that’s the magic phrase to understanding real estate and it just so happens to be the most important statement when it comes to understanding the Christian life as well. In this poetic, deep, and beautiful section of Ephesians 1, Paul wants the church to know where they can find the blessings of the gospel. They are all in one single location- “IN CHRIST!” It may sound like a drastic statement, but it’s not going too far to say that the entire Christian life is found in Christ. It’s more than Christ earned these gifts and then gives them to us. He doesn’t give us some gifts, He gives us Himself. He places us in Himself! That is why Paul can say that we have ALL the blessings in the heavenly places. Not a few. Not “most” of them. Not even 90% of them. He has held nothing back. He has no special blessings that are only his to share with the other members of the trinity. He has no locked cabinet that contains a sign “God only heavenly gifts.” Again, remember, we are “IN CHRIST.” If we are IN him, what could be kept from us? What could be lacking?

Imagine this being your daily mantra- “God is not withholding one single heavenly blessing from me today. For in Christ I have every blessing in the heavenly places!”

Paul addresses two questions- 1) How did we get “in Christ”? and 2) What are the blessings “in Christ”? We’ll look at the first question this week and leave the second for next week.

The question is: “How did we get in Christ?” and the answer is simple- “We were chosen (or predestined)”. I know that brings up a lot of questions and a lot of emotions so let’s see what Paul means. Paul tells us WHY, WHEN, and FOR WHAT He chose us.

### WHY?

What we know about God’s choosing is that it is not based on anything inherent in us. It is similar to the choosing of the Israelites-

It was not because you were more in number than any other people that the LORD set his love on you and chose you, for you were the fewest of all peoples, but it is because the LORD loves you and is keeping the oath that he swore to your fathers

Deuteronomy 7:7-8

In other words, I chose you because I chose you. I set my love upon you because I set my love upon you. It had nothing to do with the status of the Israelites. It was about God and his faithfulness to his promise. What we know is it’s by grace and comes from His love (see also Romans 5:8).

### WHEN?

Verse 4 is very clear on this answer. We were chosen “before the foundation of the world.” Just in case we would try to say something like “God chose us because he knew we’d choose him” or something crazy like that, he states specifically- it was before the world existed. It was in eternity past.

Many of us have a problem with that because it removes what we hold so desperately to as good Americans- free will. But the scriptures teach of a will that is not free but bound- bound to sin. Bound to choose self instead of God every time. No one chooses God (Romans 3:10-11). But God, in his love, did not leave us to our helpless estate. He came and rescued. He chose to make dead people alive.

### FOR WHAT?

To be “holy and blameless” and “adopted as sons”. You might want to change that phrase to be “adopted as sons and daughters”, but there is rich theology you miss if you do that. What we need is to be a son like The Son. Paul’s whole point here is that we are “In Christ” and this is an explanation of that. We aren’t adopted as other children, we are adopted into Christ, into the faithful and righteous Son Himself. That is the only way we will be holy and blameless. It is about what Christ accomplished for us, on our behalf.

God has willed it, Christ has accomplished it, and as we’ll see, the Spirit seals it. A beautiful Trinitarian formula. Praise be to our great God who does it all for us. He chose us, adopted us, and blesses us. Nothing of our doing, but don’t let that stop you from enjoying it and sharing it with your neighbor. Amen.