

READ

Ephesians 1:3-14

CONSIDER

As we begin our new sermon series, *Together We Pray*, our hope is that we cultivate a culture and practice of prayer as a congregation. In diving deeper and being rooted in Scripture, we begin to approach prayer from the basis of who God is and what He has done, is doing, and will do. Prayer is a vital and essential conduit for us as we mutually seek to be the church that the Holy Spirit is shaping us to be.

In verse 4 of our passage today, we understand the way we approach the throne of grace is as chosen sons and daughters of God. The Greek reads more literally as it includes a couple words that provide an important nuance for us to consider. *He predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ IN HIM*. The apostle Paul regularly writes about being in Christ and accentuates the intimacy we have with God.

In love and “in the One He loves”, God chose and predestined us for adoption. It mirrors Jesus’ own baptism or transfiguration, where a voice declares from heaven that this is my beloved. That is the extent in which we are reconciled in our relationship with God and invited to extend His reconciliation with others.

As we pray together over the next couple months, would we do so remembering the intimate relationship we have with God in Christ, how our holiness is expressed in the love we have for one another, and how accepting His invitation to join Him in redeeming all things is the way in which we bring glory to His name.

Looking forward to seeing you all on Sunday!

Pastor Jon Nip

PRAY

Gracious God, you are deserving of all praise and blessing because you are the One who has blessed us first. Show us what it means to be your adopted sons and daughters and to know that our identity and hope in you is sealed eternally by your grace. Would you reveal and empower us to be participants in your mission in the world, taking captive every opportunity, circumstance, and decision to love you deeper and love those you have brought into our lives for your glory and Kingdom sake.

DIVING DEEPER

What do our prayers reveal what we believe about the character and nature of God?

How can the desire to love God and others more be the place we approach the circumstances and decisions we pray over?

How does our identity of being blessed, chosen, and redeemed in Christ lead us to an intentional discipling, missional, and intergenerational life?