

Ephesians: One New People - One Glorious Calling

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful^(a) in Christ Jesus:

Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. – Ephesians 1:1-2

I. Background

The Gospel of Grace and Peace Changes You; The Gospel of Grace and Peace Changes Me!

II. Gospel Grace: Indicatives Before Imperatives

III. The Importance of Introductions

1. Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God

2. To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus

Step 1: Die

Unfortunately, the first thing you have to do to become a saint is to die. That leaves a lot of us out of the running.

Step 2: Servant of God

First, the person must be thought of as having “heroic virtue;” second, they must be thought of as being in heaven, and third, they must be recognized by the Catholic Church for the sake of the faithful still here on Earth.

Step 3: Venerable

If the person is deemed “Servant of God,” then the findings of the local bishop are sent to Rome. The person is known as “Venerable” if they pass this stage. Miracles are required, and the miracles come for a petitioner praying to the person for help. The miracles must be documented and investigated.

Step 4: Blessed

If a person claims a miracle happened due to intercession by the person in heaven, and it is investigated, confirmed and approved by the pope, then the would-be saint's status is moved to "Blessed." This process is called beatification.

Step 5: Saint

After the four previous steps are completed, there's just one more, but it's a big one. A second miracle must be investigated and confirmed. Once that happens, the person may be named a Saint.

"For a person becomes a saint not by years of hard effort leading to promotion among the spiritual elite when the Christian life ends, but by the spiritual resurrection and transformation with which it begins."¹

3. Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

"Grace is God's amazing favor and love, not only unmerited by us but also actually de-merited."²

I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers,¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him,¹⁸ having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might²⁰ that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places,²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. – Ephesians 1:16-21

For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,¹⁶ that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love,¹⁸ may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled

¹ Sinclair Ferguson

² Sinclair Ferguson

with all the fullness of God. Now (not tomorrow, not next week) to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen. – Ephesians 3:14-21

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