



Meeting Notes: Ephesians 1:1-14 (January 13, 2016)

These notes capture our January 13, 2016 meeting. We opened our meeting in prayer and then began our evening. Topic notes may not be in the order discussed during group, and they are not intended to cover everything discussed. They are intended as highlights to capture the essence of our evening. General notes follow each topic that was discussed. Documents used or created during this meeting are attached.

Current Vision: “2016 – The Year of Becoming Women of Worship Women of Witness”

Memory verse: Ephesians 6:11 – “Put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil” (NKJV)

Our approach: Since Ephesians is a letter, we will approach it as a form of communication, which means, there’s a **messenger** (the apostle Paul), a **message** (what we’re seeking to discover), and an **audience** (the believers in Ephesus). (See attachment 1). Thus, we are looking at “What did the apostle Paul say?” and not “What does it mean to me?” This is so we can put Scripture back into its proper context.

Discussion Topic: Ephesians 1:1-14

- **Our notes:** We took time to examine what message we believe the apostle Paul communicated in Ephesians 1:1-14. Here is what we discovered:
 - (v1). Paul is an apostle because that's what God wanted.
 - (v1). In Christ - being with Him and the sky is the limit when we're connected to Him.
 - (v3). The Father blessed us in heaven with every spiritual blessing in Christ. Every spiritual blessing. What does that mean?
 - (v4). He chose us. He knew us, and He still wanted us.
 - (v4). He chose us to be blameless in His sight. This one struck us because of the impending judgment day. Why? Because there's work we still have to do. However, we also know ALL of this (chosen, in His love, and blameless) is dependent upon being IN CHRIST and not on our works.
 - (v5). We are God's children THROUGH Jesus Christ. Through Jesus, we have the same power He had if we're wide open to Him.
 - (v6). IN CHRIST we have God's grace, freely given. Looking up the original word, the apostle Paul used for grace we discovered “grace”

(G5485) should have a divine influence upon our heart, it should reflect in our life, and it should include gratitude.

- (v7). Set free from what? The penalty of sin, which is death.
 - (v7). Being set free from sin is by His grace
 - (v7). Fully - I have it all. Freely - it didn't cost us anything. He spoiled us with His grace
 - (v9-10). God made us to know and understand that Christ is to rule Heaven and earth. The NIV Study Bible has this note on v10: *"to bring ... under one head.* Paul uses a significant term here that not only has the idea of leadership but also was often used of adding up a column of figures. A contemporary way of putting it might be to say that in a world of confusion, where things do not "add up" or make sense, we look forward to the time when everything will be brought into meaningful relationship under the headship of Christ." (p. 1793)
 - (vv11-13). In vv11-12, the apostle Paul is talking about either the Jews or the disciples, but in verse 13 he includes the rest of us.
 - (v13). We were chosen to receive the Word. After we believed, we were chosen to be marked with a seal by the power of the Holy Spirit.
 - (v14). The Holy Spirit is the guarantee (until we are redeemed). The same Holy Spirit that seals us and marks us as a purchased or ransomed possession of the Lord also prompts us, bears witness to the truth, and convicts our hearts. He's trying to lead us to redemption.
- **Other Nuggets from Our Evening:** Here are some nuggets that helped us to better understand the message being communicated:
 - **God's view of us:** He doesn't see us the way we see us, the same way we see in others what they can't.
 - **Understanding grace.** Our spiritual gifts come through our relationship with Jesus. The Father pours out His grace to us, so we can extend His grace as a gift to meet someone else's need, and then both of us give thanksgiving to God. It's what I refer to as the Grace Triangle that I learned from "God is Charismatic" by Dr. Carl Coke. (see attachment 2)
 - **Understanding redemption.** Adam put us on the auction block of sin. Jesus bought us back with His blood and took us home with Him. However, we have to truly repent in our heart AND believe in Jesus. Basically, Adam opened Pandora's box, so we were ALL in trouble. BUT Jesus put the lid back on so we can get out of trouble IF we follow Him. Sin is like the fog where you have a hard time finding your way out. In sin

you're not thinking about God. You're thinking about you!

- **Dealing with strongholds.** What creeps in CAN be kicked out! That's why strongholds have to be pulled down. They don't go away by themselves!
- **Discernment.** Instead of just going around the mountain, over time, you start to see the turn coming, and you start preparing for it
- **Be careful what we pray for.** We looked at the ramifications of our prayers and the impact they can have on someone else. Did our prayer make someone else's life worse than what ours would have been without what we prayed for? Are there any ripple effects of our prayer? For example, praying for someone to get a heart transplant means someone else has to die! So, their loved ones are now grieving that loss! Likewise, praying about getting a new boss because you don't like the one you have means your prayer could lead to your current boss getting fired. What does his family do if he loses his job? In other words, be mindful of what we pray about, because our selfish prayers can negatively impact others!

Homework: Since we asked the question, "What does every spiritual blessing mean," use IDA to break down what our spiritual blessings are and how they apply to the here and now.

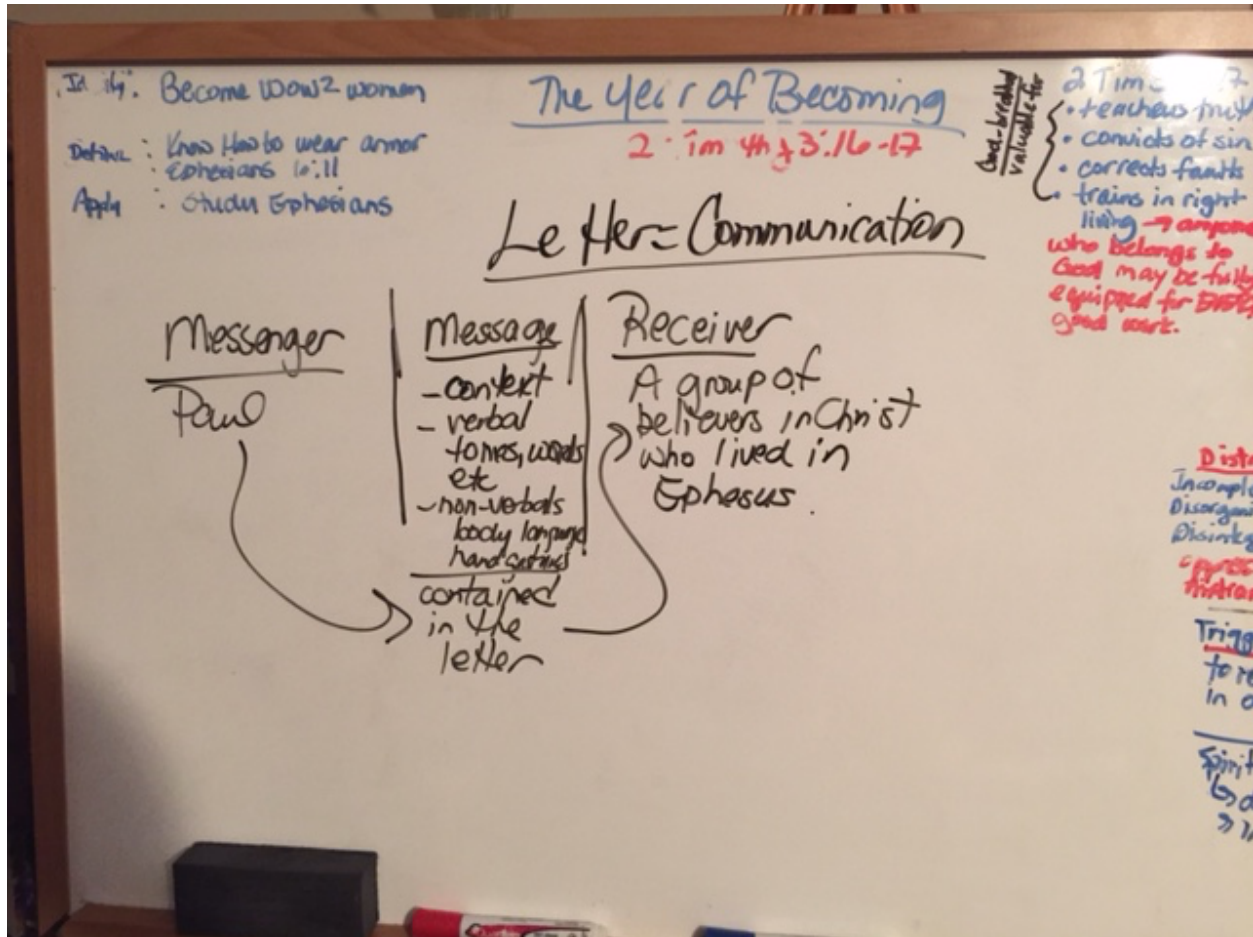
- **IDENTIFY** the spiritual blessings the apostle Paul addressed in vv 1:1-14.
- **DEFINE** what that spiritual blessing is dependent upon (for example, "in Christ," "through Christ,") and anything else you need to know to understand that blessing.
- **APPLY** by using the principle of 2 Timothy 3:16-17 (CJB), asking the Holy Spirit to **teach you the truth** you need to know about our spiritual blessings, to **convict you of any sin** these blessings identify in your life, to **correct any faults** these blessings identify in your life, and to **train you in how to live right** according to these blessings, so that you, as one who belongs to God, can be fully equipped for EVERY good work.

Next Meeting: Our homework assignment will be our discussion for our next meeting.

Closing: We closed our meeting in prayer with a time of need-specific prayer for the challenges that were lifted up, for the group overall, and as the Holy Spirit led.

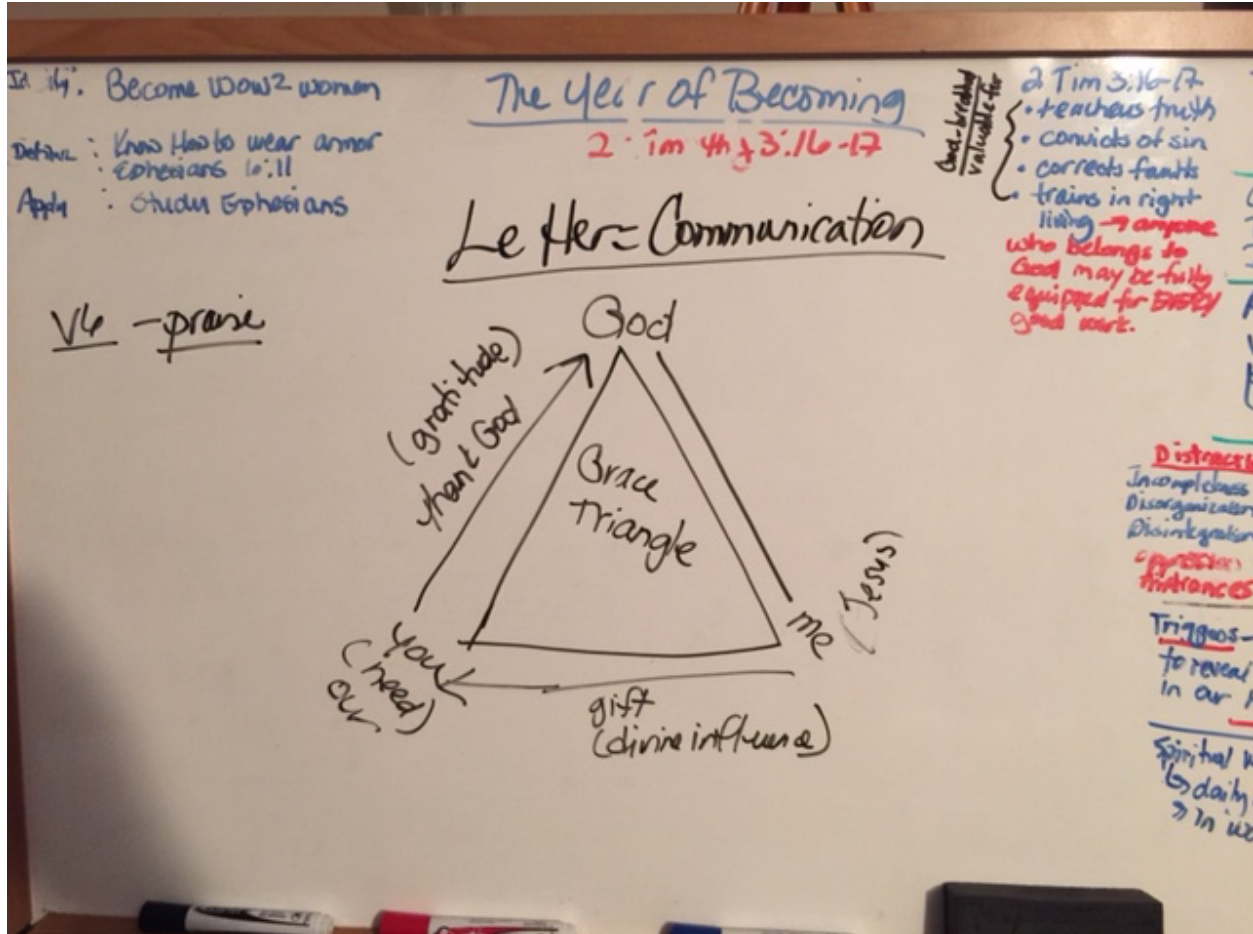
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ATTACHMENT 1: Letter = Communication



All communication has a messenger, a message, and audience. The message being communicated occurs within a certain context and has many verbal and non-verbal influences. In this case, the message we are looking at is in the form of a letter, so we are seeking to gain understanding based upon what was said in the letter and the context in which it was written!

ATTACHMENT 2: Grace Triangle



When I'm in Jesus, God pours out His grace to me. That grace is a divine influence upon my heart to become a gift to meet someone's need. Once that need is met, we both thank God for what He did.¹

¹ Karl D. Coke, *God is Charismatic*, (Redding California: Redirection Publications, 1983).