

WITNESS – Reaching out to others **(Aim for 20 – 30 minutes)**

Heavenly Father we take upon ourselves the mantle of authority that Jesus delegates to us and in His name we speak to every household in Hungerford and say to you:-

1 Relationships

We bless you in the Name of the Lord. We bless your marriages that they may be strong and whole. We bless the relationship between each marriage partner that it may be loving, forgiving, merciful and strong. We bless every intergenerational relationship within each household that there may be peace and love and understanding flowing between each one. In Jesus' name we bless every network of wholesome and supportive friendship.

2 Health

We bless your health that you may be strong and well. In Jesus' name we resist any sickness or disease which seeks to invade this parish and to every person in the parish we say, be well, be strong, be healthy. To any who are sick right now we say we bless you in Jesus' name with a speedy recovery.

3 Wealth

We bless your wealth that you may have plenty to replace poverty. We bless you to have enough to live and enough to give. We bless the work of your hands that whatever you turn your hand to which is wholesome may be profitable. We bless every wholesome enterprise that is conducted by you that it may prosper and be successful. We bless the local businesses that they may be successful and profitable.

4 Education

We bless the local schools that they may be secure, safe places for teachers and pupils alike. We bless the children's capacity to learn and develop relationships and we bless their simple trust in Jesus that their trust may grow and become enriched.

5 Church

We speak to the Church and we say we bless you in the Name of the Lord that the Holy Spirit and the Word of God may flow out from you in power. We bless the hearts of all who live in the parish that they may be quickened to hear and respond to the Voice of the Living God. We bless all who live and work here, that the overspill of the blessings of the presence of the kingdom of God may fall upon you. **Amen**

The Purpose of God

Ephesians 1:1–14

1

Purpose:

To consider God's plan and purpose for all of history and all of creation, and the blessings he has given us as part of that plan.

WELCOME (Aim for 10 minutes)

What is one of your goals in life?

WORSHIP – Meeting the Lord **(Aim for 10 – 15 minutes)**

What has been the best thing that has happened since our last meeting?

OR

When have you felt closest to God since our last meeting?

Pray your “thank you” to God

WORD (Aim for 40—45 minutes)

We have a love-hate relationship with God's will. We dearly want to discover it and obey it, to be secure in knowing we are following the path he desires. On the other hand, we definitely don't want to find out what he wants because deep down we suspect it may not be to our liking. In this study we'll see what Paul says about God's will.

1. Read Ephesians 1:1–14. According to verses 3–6, what blessings are ours from the Father?

What other blessings, according to verses 7–12, do we have in Jesus Christ?

2. Which of these is most significant to you? Explain.

3. Ephesians 1:1–14 uses words like *the will of God*, *chosen*, *predestined*, *according to the plan* and *the purpose of his will*. Much emotion can surround the discussion of such words. What is Paul's emotional reaction to being chosen and predestined?

What is yours?

4. In the New Testament, the word *mystery* is not used of some murky idea we can never understand but of a secret which has now been revealed (see 3:4–5). According to 1:9–10, God has blessed us by revealing the ultimate goal of all history. What is it?

5. What would it mean to bring all things under Christ?

6. What blessings do we receive through the Holy Spirit (vv. 13–14)?

7. What motivated God to undertake this plan and give us all these blessings (vv. 5, 9)?

What does it mean to live “to the praise of his glory” (1:6, 12, 14)?

How can we do this?

How has this passage increased your sense of participation in God's total purpose of the universe? Explain.

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