

## Hands - application

- Is there anyone we can share the riches of God's grace with this week?  
Perhaps think about inviting someone to the next Big Questions evening on Wednesday.



## Further notes

- This week's Big Question is '*aren't all religions basically the same?*'  
Email Ellen Strain if you intend to come so numbers can be catered for.  
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Spring 2014

6th May

Ephesians 1:1-10

**A Christian Universe**

## Background for leaders

*This week is the start of our series on Ephesians. Paul's letter was to the Christian church at Ephesus, in modern day Turkey.*

*The opening chapter and a half (from 1:1 - 2:10) is one long expression of praise and prayer at the good news of the Gospel. Paul explains what Christ has done for His people, and what the implications are before going on in the rest of the letter to encourage Christians in their response.*

*In this week's passage (1:1-10), Paul begins by reminding the church of the "riches of God's grace". Rather than simply reading to prepare, allow the awesome reality of these words sink in afresh, and be reminded of God's love for you.*

*God is good!*

## Conversation starters

- Last week the Vatican officially declared Popes John Paul II and John XXIII 'saints'. What is a saint? Are we sinners or saints?
- If God were to describe the way he felt towards you in one word, what would He say?  
*Come back and ask this question again after looking at the text!*

## Head - context and culture

*Read Ephesians 1:1-10 — discuss the passage*

- Paul addresses his letter "to the saints". What's the significance?
- What's an Apostle?  
*The word means one who is sent.*
- How would you describe Paul's general tone?
- What has God given us?  
*Grace, peace, blessings, holiness, sonship, redemption, forgiveness...*
- What do you make of the emphasis on God's 'choosing' and 'predestining'?
- What are the mechanics of v7-8? What does "redemption through His blood" mean?
- God's "will" is mentioned twice in the passage - what is His will here?

## Heart - what does this mean for us?

- Paul was commissioned to be an Apostle - where are we being sent to, and do we think of ourselves as missionaries in our contexts?
- Has the Father really given us every spiritual blessing? (v3)
- v4 says God has made us holy and blameless - how does that work? Are we holy and blameless now?
- v10 talks about "when times have reached their fulfilment". Do we tend to live with that end in focus, or does it seem a long way off?
- Based on the passage, what words might God use to describe you?