

RENEW: REDISCOVER

January 27, 2018

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Ephesians 1:3-14

³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴just as he chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world to be holy and blameless before him in love. ⁵He destined us for adoption as his children through Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of his will, ⁶to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. ⁷In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace ⁸that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and insight ⁹he has made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he set forth in Christ, ¹⁰as a plan for the fullness of time, to gather up all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. ¹¹In Christ we

have also obtained an inheritance, having been destined according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to his counsel and will, ¹²so that we, who were the first to set our hope on Christ, might live for the praise of his glory. ¹³In him you also, when you had heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and had believed in him, were marked with the seal of the promised Holy Spirit; ¹⁴this is the pledge of our inheritance toward redemption as God's own people, to the praise of his glory.

PRAY

Christ with me,
Christ before me,
Christ behind me,
Christ in me,
Christ beneath me,
Christ above me,
Christ on my right,
Christ on my left,
Christ when I lie down,
Christ when I sit down,
Christ when I arise,
Christ in the heart of every one who thinks of me,
Christ in the mouth of everyone who speaks of me,
Christ in every eye that sees me,
Christ in every ear that hears me.

—*attributed to St. Patrick (433 CE)*

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Reflect

1. Read the scripture passage carefully and slowly. What word or image stands out to you? Why?
2. What does this passage indicate about “the future”? How might Christ give us a picture of God’s future?
3. The “plan” of God is less about pre-determining the details of each moment and more about the *intention* of God for all things: to be “gathered up” in Christ (v.10). What do you make of this picture of God?
4. What is redemption? How might redemption open up a new future? Do you have a redemption story to share?
5. Why and how do you plan? What do you find refreshing or challenging about planning for the future?
6. What’s it like for you to adjust or change your plans?
7. Have you made any plans for this year? What about plans to grow or enrich your spiritual life?

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