



Introduction

Ephesians

Welcome to the INTRUTH Bible Study on Ephesians.

Studying the Word of God transforms lives!

The Bible is God's message of redemption, as well as our instruction book for life. God wants us to search the Bible so we can understand the TRUTH of His character and His desire for us. Ephesians, in particular, was written to strengthen the faith of the believers in Ephesus by explaining the nature and purpose of the church - the body of Christ.

This study includes 5 lessons, a cover sheet and a dictionary. Each lesson has a memory verse, 16-20 questions, a Take Away and a Blessing. They are written with the New Living Translation (NLT), but any translation will add to your experience.

These lessons are beneficial to anyone but are geared toward 10-15 year olds. This age group is experiencing major changes developmentally - physically, emotionally, socially and spiritually. It is a time of having questions about God, about self and about where they fit in the world. These lessons were created to help students think critically and wrestle through who they are and what they believe.

Teenagers are inundated with technology but starving for relationship. If possible, complete the lesson on your own and then discuss it together to learn from each other.

In the book of Ephesians, we see how the gospel story affects believers' everyday lives. Paul's letter deals with topics at the very core of what it means to be a Christian—both in faith and in practice. The first three chapters of Ephesians are doctrinal, while the last three are practical. In order to live out God's will for us in our lives practically, we must first understand who we are in Christ doctrinally.

May the Lord use these lessons to help you develop a personal, life-long love for God's Word and encourage you to connect in a community that prays, supports and shares life together!

Enjoy!



Ephesians



THEME VERSE: "God saved you by his grace when you believed. And you can't take credit for this; it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done, so none of us can boast about it. For we are God's masterpiece. He has created us anew in Christ Jesus, so we can do the good things he planned for us long ago."
Ephesians 2:8-10

Author

Paul - while under house arrest as a prisoner in Rome.

Date

About 60 A.D., around the same time he wrote Colossians and Philemon.

Setting

Ephesus, prosperous port city in the Roman province of Asia Minor.

Purpose

To strengthen the faith of the believers in Ephesus by explaining the nature and purpose of the church - the body of Christ. Ephesians deals with topics at the very core of what it means to be a Christian—both in faith and in practice.

Key Points

Christ, the Center - Jesus is the focus of history as well as the head of his body, the church. Because Christ is central to everything, His priorities must be central to us.

New Family - Because God through Christ paid our penalty for sin and forgave us, we have been reconciled to him. Being united with Christ means that we are one family in Christ. Because we all belong to him, we have the responsibility of living together in harmony.

Christian Conduct - Paul encourages all Christians to make wise decisions. With that goal in mind, God provides his Holy Spirit to enable us to live his way.

Outline

Opening greeting - Ephesians 1:1-2.

Christ redeems all things - Ephesians 1:3-14.

Paul gives thanks and prays for the Ephesians - Ephesians 1:15-23.

Redemption has been accomplished - Ephesians 2:1-3:13.

Prayer for Ephesians' strength, praise to God - Ephesians 3:14-21.

Specific instructions for Christian living - Ephesians 4:1-6:10.

Putting on the Full Armor of God - Ephesians 6:10-20.

Conclusion and blessing - Ephesians 6:21-24.



Dictionary

Ephesians

apostle	human messenger of God chosen by God to speak and act for Him.
authority	right to exercise power over someone else; Jesus is the ultimate authority in any Christian's life.
believe	to accept as true or real; trust; have confidence in; have faith in; make a commitment to. Faith.
call	appointment from God to serve Him in a specific way for a specific purpose.
Bible	God's autobiography; God's plan for the world; a love letter to us; an instruction manual on how to act and live.
Christ	Jesus Christ; anointed Son of God; the Savior of the world. Paid the complete penalty for sin for the whole world.
Christian life	a living, daily relationship with God through Christ.
circumcision	"cutting around"; physically - mark on men of Israel that God had chosen them to belong to Him; spiritually - cutting out sin - thoughts, attitudes and actions that are against God.
conform	agree, follow, act according to socially acceptable standards; become similar in character.
darkness	absence of light; symbol of all that is evil, wrong, or opposed to God; characteristic of sin.
disciple	"student"; a learner. Disciples of Jesus Christ want to think and live like Him.
eternal life	life that begins when a person turns from sin in commitment to Jesus. Supreme quality of life on earth as well as unending life with God.
faith	trust, loyalty, belief; accepting God's Word as fact; deciding to surrender and live your life to follow Jesus.
faithful	people who put faith in Christ; set apart; alive spiritually.
fear of the Lord	to respect who God is, what He says, and what He does; a respect that leads to obedience and love of God; profound reverence and awe toward God; true honor, devotion, obedience and love of God.
flesh	sinful condition of humans; anything worldly in contrast to anything spiritual or godly.
freedom	from and through Christ; He sets believers free from the power of sin, death, guilt, shame, all accusations and condemnations.
Gentile	any person who is not a Jew.
glorify	public display of the infinite beauty and worth of God; our praise and worship; our lives living for Him, His way.
glory	splendor, beauty and radiance of God's presence.

God	The One who is all-powerful; all-knowing; present everywhere at once; unchanging; above the bounds of time; absolutely right to govern His creation; Holy.
God's will	the design and desire of God for all of His creation; way believers are to live.
Good News/ gospel	"good news"; story of Jesus' birth, life, death, and resurrection. The message that God sent His Son Jesus to take away our sins by dying on the cross and resurrecting to life again to save all who trust in Him.
grace	God's free and undeserved love toward sinful humans that never quits. God's favor. Gift to believers.
heart	inner thoughts and feelings; the real me living inside that thinks, feels, and decides; my character or personality.
heaven	God's home and where those who have believed in Jesus as their Savior go when they die. heavenly realm as real as the natural realm; determines what takes place in the natural realm; invisible but visible through faith.
hell	a place of punishment for those who die without believing in Jesus Christ as their personal Savior.
holy/holiness	set apart for use by God; a continual work by the HS in the lives of Christians. A life like God wants you to live.
Holy Spirit (HS)	Holy Spirit (HS) God's Spirit. Lives within all Christians to help them, communicate God's truth to them, convict them of sin, convince them that God's ways are right, empower them to obey Jesus and comfort them when sad.
hope	believe with confidence that God will accomplish what He has promised; that God will be faithful to do what He said He would do; that we trust God even if we never find out why something happens.
humility	a modest view of one's own importance; seeing ourselves as God sees us; recognizing that all we have comes from God.
Israelites	God's chosen people; Jews; God promised the land of Israel to these people.
Jesus	The Christ; anointed Son of God; true Messiah; Savior of the world. Paid the complete penalty for sin for the whole world.
Jews	refers to all descendants of Abraham; Israelites; Hebrews.
judgment	act or process of judging - only God's to decide and carry out.
Kingdom of God	Jesus' reign now and a future time when Jesus will rule over all humanity. Jesus has come but He will come again.
Law, Old Testament (OT)	regulated almost every aspect of Jewish life. God gave the Law to help His people survive and to keep a relationship with Him. Jews created and added many man-made laws. People thought they were living holy lives by just obeying all these rules.
law	word used to describe God's rules for living; commandments; makes people aware of sin and their sinfulness. With Jesus, the way we approach God and understand the law changed from the Law Old Testament.
light	opposite of darkness; makes things visible and clear to see; represents what is good, pure, true, and holy.
mercy	deep caring, loving, forgiveness, and kindness when it is not deserved.

Messiah	Jesus Christ. Messiah is a Hebrew word for the person chosen by God to die for our sins.
obey/obedience	believing and doing what God says; living like Him; pleasing Him; serving Him; getting to know better. Obeying God shows our trust in Him and His will.
Paul	originally Saul, leader of anti-Christian movement. Met Jesus and became Paul, the apostle to the gentiles. Acts 20.
peace	God-given contentment which results in total confidence in God for everything.
persecution	treating someone in a cruel way because he is different.
power	strength; authority. God revealed His power through history, acts of nature, individual lives, and the Holy Spirit.
reconciled	restored relationship; bring back together again.
redeem/ redemption	buy back; to rescue with a ransom; Jesus paid the price for our release from sin - He redeemed us. relationship God wants a close, personal, daily relationship with you.
repent	regret something you have done; ask God to forgive you; and want to change your ways; turn away from sin.
resurrection	to come back to life after being dead.
righteous/ righteousness	being in a right relationship with God; without guilt or sin. God declares believers not guilty/ righteous because of their faith in Jesus.
saint	see faithful.
salvation/saved	rescued or delivered from the penalty and power of sin in your life because you believe that Jesus, God's Son, came to earth and died on the cross to pay the penalty for your sins. He resurrected to life again to save all who trust in Him. Saved.
Satan	God's enemy; powerful angel who rebelled against God and was cast out of heaven; tempts people to sin.
Savior	Jesus Christ is "The Savior" because He delivers us from being punished for our sins.
servant	one who belongs to another; serves another; also called slave in the Bible.
sin	any action or attitude that falls short of God's perfect standard; separates us from a holy God. When we sin we show contempt for God. Sin keeps the world from working as God originally intended it to.
sovereign	having complete power and authority.
Spirit	see Holy Spirit (HS).
submit	to submit to others means respecting a person's authority; to submit to God means surrendering our own will to His; submitting is ongoing with every choice.
temptation	anything that attracts a person to do something unwise, wrong, or opposed to God's will.
transformation	God's promise and His work in believers' lives - radical and thorough change, both outward and inward to be more like Jesus.
Truth	God's Word is truth. It comes from God and can be trusted; genuine; honest; reliable; Jesus is called the Truth.

unity	harmony; in agreement; together with like purposes.
wisdom	God-given understanding; the ability to distinguish between right and wrong; comes from God.
worship	giving reverence and honor to God; expressing our love and praise to Him.
world	the values and ways of life found in the world that oppose the ways of God. People who live as though there is no God

God's Purpose and Power



MEMORY VERSE: “(God) is so rich in kindness and grace that he purchased our freedom with the blood of his Son and forgave our sins.” Ephesians 1:7

DAY 1 EPHESIANS 1:1-8— God Gives Spiritual Blessings

1. What does Paul want Jesus to give the believers of Ephesus? vv. 1-2
Why are these two gifts from God essential in the life of a believer?

2. What has God given to believers? Why? v. 3
What do you think these blessings include?

3. What did God do even before He made the world?
v. 4

v. 5

4. God's plan for you includes salvation, personal transformation, and a relationship with Him.
What does this tell you about His interest in your life?

5. What do verses 7-8 mean to you?
Also see redemption, salvation and wisdom in the Ephesians Dictionary.

DAY 2 EPHESIANS 1:9-14—The Mystery of God's Will

6. God's great plan and purpose which was once hidden is now revealed to us in Jesus. What do you learn about His plan from:

v. 10

v. 11

v. 12

v. 13

7. What does the Holy Spirit guarantee? Why did God give believers the Holy Spirit? v. 14

8. What do verses 10-14 say to you about who you are and what your purpose is?

DAY 3 EPHESIANS 1:15-20—Everything God Gives Believers

9. What has Paul been praying for the believers in Ephesus? Why?

v. 17

v. 18

vv. 19-20

10. Which of the things Paul prays for do you most need to pray for? Why?

DAY 4 EPHESIANS 1:20-23—The Great Power of God

11. What do you learn about Jesus? vv. 20-21

12. What is the relationship between Jesus and the church (all believers)? vv. 22-23

13. How is the church (believers) “*made full and complete?*” v. 23

DAY 5 EPHESIANS 1 — Wrap Up

14. How aware are you of the spiritual blessings you receive from God?

15. Why is it so important for us to know and understand who God is; to have a confident hope and purpose; and to understand God’s mighty power within us?

TAKE AWAY

Where do you need God’s help? He will provide you with what you need. Ask God to help you claim and apply His blessing/promise to your situation.

BLESSING

God’s power raised Jesus from the dead - and is now in you!

God's Purpose and Power

Ephesians is one of the most encouraging books in the New Testament. Paul, the writer, also wrote 13 of the 27 books of the New Testament. The purpose of the book of Ephesians was to warn the church elders about the false teachers that were teaching a false gospel and to maintain their first love that they held when they first became believers.

Ephesus was the capital of the Roman province of Asia Minor and a center of pagan worship. Ephesus was an important commercial center that ranked close to Alexandria in Egypt in importance and as an educational and political base.

Paul wrote this letter from Rome, where he was under house arrest (Acts 28:16), probably in AD 63, the same year he wrote Philemon and Colossians.

Paul's letters have one major theme — Jesus Christ. Paul was against anyone who taught the false doctrine that people can add anything to what God has already done to provide salvation. The best way to combat false doctrine is to speak and live the truth. God's grace and power that are in Jesus Christ - and us when we are "in Him"- enable us to fulfill His purpose for us.

The book of Ephesians begins with a song of praise and thanksgiving to God whose purpose is to bless His people with every spiritual blessing. God the Father (1:3-6), God the Son (1:7-12), and God the Holy Spirit (1:13-14) are all graciously involved in the blessings meant for us. When God's purpose is fulfilled in us, He receives praise (1:6, 12, 14).

Our salvation — is an integral and crucial part of God's total plan for the redemption of His creation. The sovereign work of God the

Father is set in the past. He "chose us" before He created the world; the specific purpose for which He chose us was to "be holy and without fault" (1:4). He "decided in advance" ("pre-destination" 1:5); before we were born He planned to adopt us. That relationship to God assures special privileges and is accomplished through His Son. The subject of "pre-destination" troubles many but it is an act of God on our behalf. Paul is speaking of a sovereign choice in the past by a loving God — a choice not based on human merit, but on His grace.

Christ had to become our redeemer so the Father could graciously choose to adopt us. Through the shedding of His blood, we have received forgiveness of sins (Hebrews 9:22). Redemption and forgiveness are ours because of "his grace, which he showered upon us" (1:7-8). These are spiritual gifts, not material gifts. Verses 11-12 repeat the reason for our choosing and predestination — it is to bring praise to Christ.

In verse 13, Paul mentions the third Person of the Trinity — the Holy Spirit, emphasizing His role as a guarantor of future promise. He is the seal with which we are marked when we believe. In the first century, a seal was familiar as a ring or hard object engraved with initials to leave an impression in soft wax. A seal was used as a sign of ownership or a mark of authenticity. The Holy Spirit guarantees that God will fulfill His promises.

Paul speaks of "our rich and glorious inheritance" (1:18) and "his incredible great power for us who believe" (1:19). This power is the same power God showed by raising Jesus from the dead to sit at his "right hand" (1:20) in heaven, above all authorities, rulers, powers, and dominions.

God stands ready to use this power to

over everything. Until then, we must understand the things God says are already true of us. Claim the power God says is already yours — to make right choices and to live in a way that brings glory to Him. Express His love to others, and relax in His love for you. Praise Him for His grace and His glory. Everything God has given to us has been given “in Christ.” When we have Jesus Christ, we have every-thing — gifts and fruits of the Spirit (Romans 12:6-8; Galatians 5:22-23), holiness and forgiveness now, and heaven itself one day.

Paul closes this chapter by stating Christ's supremacy over all creation both now and in the future.

God is working out a plan of redemption that will be completed when Christ assumes Lordship

Notes

A New Life Through Christ



MEMORY VERSE: “God saved you by his grace when you believed... it is a gift from God. Salvation is not a reward for the good things we have done.” Ephesians 2:8-9

DAY 1 EPHESIANS 2:1-7—Made Alive with Christ

1. What does Paul tell us we were like before we became Christ followers?
v. 1

v. 2a

v. 3

2. Who is the devil/satan? What does he do? v. 2b

3. What did God do for us (*“dead because of our sins”*)? Why? vv. 4-5

4. What happened to us (believers)? v. 6

5. What can we be examples of? v. 7

DAY 2 EPHESIANS 2:8-18—Saved By Faith

6. What is God’s gift to believers? vv. 8-9

7. What is our part in responding to what God has done for us?

8. What is salvation not a reward for? Why?

9. What are we to God? Why did He create us anew? v. 10

10. How would the following affect the way you live your life:
thinking of yourself as God's masterpiece?

knowing He has things planned for you to do?

DAY 3 EPHESIANS 2:11-18—Need for Reconciliation

11. How did the Gentiles live before knowing Jesus? vv. 11-12

12. Now that the Gentiles have been united with Christ, what has Jesus done? vv. 13-14

13. God had the Jews live differently for His purposes until Jesus came. Through Jesus, salvation is possible for everyone. How did Jesus do this? vv. 15-16

14. What can happen now? vv. 17-18

DAY 4

EPHESIANS 1:20-23—The Great Power of God

15. In closing, Paul gives three pictures that illustrate the unity of believing Jews and Gentiles.

What are your thoughts on being included in each?

Heavenly citizenship:

Members of God's family:

We are His house (with Jesus as the cornerstone):

16. Read verse 22. How aware are you of the Holy Spirit's dwelling inside you? How have you seen the Spirit work in your life?

DAY 5

EPHESIANS 2—Wrap Up

17. How does salvation take us to good works?

18. How is Jesus the only hope for everyone?

TAKE AWAY

Choose to believe what God says about you, and know that you've been created to do good things! What good work is God giving you to do, with His power, this week?

BLESSING

Jesus Christ died so you could be reconciled with Him!

A New Life Through Christ

Ephesians chapter 2 emphasizes the theme of being rescued and made right with God (salvation) by grace through faith in Christ Jesus. First, Paul describes the process of salvation as the result of God's grace through faith (Ephesians 2:1–10). Man's effort, and goodness, are completely ineffective in our salvation. Second, Paul transitions to a focus on unity in Christ (Ephesians 2:11–22). This includes tearing down the previous divide between Jews and Gentiles who are now one spiritual family.

The first section (Ephesians 2:1–10) Paul reminds the Ephesians of their former condition: "You were dead because of your disobedience and your many sins" (2:1) and "in obeying the devil" (2:2). This is true of all believers before coming to faith in Christ (Ephesians 2:3). Yet God's mercy (Ephesians 2:4) has made us alive in Christ (Ephesians 2:5). This is Paul's first mention of being saved by grace. The contrast between death and life offers a stark contrast between the unsaved and saved.

God has a perfect right to heap judgment on everyone who has ever lived. The only way of escape from deserved judgment was for Him to offer undeserved mercy and favor — His grace. God's unconditional love (Greek *agape*) is an overflowing of His generosity (See 1 John 4:10.) God's love is greater than human love in quantity and quality — different in its very essence. He loves those who do not love Him. The biblical record, from Genesis to Revelation, is the story of God's reaching down to fallen humanity in love. God performs the ultimate miracle. He resurrects the spiritually dead and unites them with Christ. We remain here on earth physically, but our spiritual position is exalted with Christ in the heavenly realms. This elevation is in accordance with God's eternal purpose.

Ephesians 2:6 continues with a focus on believers being raised up with Christ, mentioning grace a second time (Ephesians 2:7). Ephesians 2:8–9 are some of the most well-known words in the Bible, emphasizing salvation by grace through faith. It is not the result of works, so no one has reason to brag. God does not repair the believer; He creates a new person within (2 Corinthians 5:17). A believer is God's product — regenerated, completely made new, in and through Jesus Christ.

Verse 10 ends this section by noting that we are God's workmanship or "artwork" and have been created to do good works. In fact, God prepared in advance for believers to accomplish these tasks. He has work for each person that his or her particular talents, gifts, and experiences have uniquely equipped that one to do.

Paul figuratively puts up a barrier with a sign saying, "Stop, look, think!" to people going mindlessly down the road to destruction. He challenges the Ephesians and us to remember God is rich in mercy and waiting to make us alive. We need only ask.

The second section (Ephesians 2:11–22) transitions to unity in the body of Christ. Writing to Gentiles, Paul notes that they were once called "the uncircumcised heathens" (Ephesians 2:11). They were separated from Christ, without hope and without God (Ephesians 2:12). The phrase "without God" is a translation from the Greek *atheoi*, literally atheists. Yet through Christ they have been "brought near" (Ephesians 2:13). The dividing wall has been taken down (Ephesians 2:14), with the law with its commandments and regulations abolished to make one new family (Ephesians 2:15), creating reconciliation and ending hostility (Ephesians 2:16).

Jesus came to reach all people (Ephesians 2:17). In verses 18-19, Paul describes the marvelous privileges of the members of the body, the church: direct access to the Father by the Spirit, fellow citizens of the kingdom, and members of God's household. He writes in 1 Corinthians 3:16 and 6:19 that we are the dwelling place or temple of God's Spirit. The amazing truth is that Christ's atoning work regenerates people spiritually and, at the same time, reconciles them to God and to each other. This is the gospel that has had such an impact on countless people, changing lives and societies, ever since the crucifixion and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

The Bible always speaks of our being reconciled to God. He did not need to be reconciled to us, for His love for us has never changed. Living the victorious Christian life in unity with other believers is not automatic; we make choices every day. As members of God's family, we are brothers and sisters in Christ no matter what racial, national, or physical distinctions we may possess. The Holy Spirit is available to live the life within us that is consistent with the peace to which God has called us.

This united family, the church, is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets with Jesus as the cornerstone (Ephesians 2:20). Everything grows from Him and for Him (Ephesians 2:21–22).

Notes

Living to God's Glory



MEMORY VERSE: "You have been called by God. Always be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love."
Ephesians 4:1-2

DAY 1 EPHESIANS 3:1-13—Paul Is the Messenger to Non-Jews

1. What did God, Himself, reveal to Paul? vv. 3-6
2. Read verses 7-9. How amazing that God gave Paul His plan and used Paul to spread this Good News. What does this tell you about God?
3. What was God's eternal plan that was carried out through Jesus for all the angels to see? vv. 10-11
4. What can we do? Why? v. 12
Do you come to Him this way? Explain.
5. Read verse 13. Paul was being used in a greater way than he ever imagined. In the same way, each of us has a place in the service of God's eternal plan. How can knowing this and working towards it help you guard against losing heart while facing hard things?

DAY 2 EPHESIANS 3:14-21—Paul Prays for the Ephesians

6. What does Paul do as he considers God's great eternal plan, his place in that plan, and how God's work is unstoppable even when Paul is imprisoned? v. 14

7. What does he pray?

v. 15

v. 16

v. 17

v. 18

v. 19

8. Which part of this prayer speaks most to you? Why?

9. What does Paul say that God is able to do? How? v. 20

10. Read verse 21. What we do in His power today will glorify Christ *“through all generations forever and ever.”* What does this mean to you?

DAY 3 EPHESIANS 4:1-6—A Call for Unity

11. Paul has been spelling out in detail all that God did for us, freely by His grace. Now he brings a call to live rightly. How does Paul want believers to live?

v. 1

v. 2

v. 3

12. What does Paul tell us is important in verses 4-6?

13. Why is spiritual unity with believers so important?
What happens if believers do not have spiritual unity?

DAY 4 EPHESIANS 4:7-16—The Way God Works Unity

14. Paul tells us we have each been given a special gift. (verse 7) What are ones listed that Christ gives to the church? What is the responsibility to the one that receives one of these? vv. 11-12
15. What will not and what will happen when we come to unity and become mature in the Lord?
vv. 13-15
16. Read verse 16. Do you see certain spiritual strengths/gifts you have? How can you use them?

DAY 5 EPHESIANS 3:1-4:16—Wrap Up

17. Do you ever live without hope? How does Ephesians 3 encourage you to step out and see God move in big ways in your life.
18. How does chapter 4 speak to you about living with family and friends?

TAKE AWAY

The only thing that can bring you the peace and fulfillment you need is Jesus. He's called you, so live a life that's worthy of that calling. Choose everyday to not be distracted by other things and choose instead to lean into Jesus.

BLESSING

God is able to do more in our lives than we can ask or think!

Living to God's Glory

Chapter 3 speaks again of the mystery God revealed Paul (Ephesians 3:1–13). The second part of this chapter details the new relationship between the Jews and Gentiles as one body (Ephesians 3:14–21).

Chapter 4 describes both the unity of believers and the new hope which Christians have in Jesus. Paul appeals to Christians to live in a way which reflects the grace we've been given by God (Ephesians 4:1-16).

The first part (Ephesians 3:1–13) includes Paul mentioning himself as a prisoner on behalf of the Gentiles (Ephesians 3:1). His attitude is that prison is nothing compared to what God has done for him and will do for him. The gospel was revealed to him as he had previously mentioned (Ephesians 3:3). It was given to him for the purpose of passing it on to others. The application for our lives is obvious: if God has given us something, it is for the purpose of our giving it away.

The mystery he spoke of was that Gentiles are now fellow family members of the church in Jesus through the gospel (Ephesians 3:6). He uses the word mystery deliberately because he is refuting the notions current in his day in the pagan religions. But now, as then, God's revelation are available to all.

Paul was a minister of this gospel according to God's grace (Ephesians 3:7). Though he was the least likely to be in this role, God gave him this calling to share Christ with the Gentiles (Ephesians 3:8). When Paul writes in verse 10 of "unseen rulers and authorities in the heavenly places," he refers to angelic beings as well as demonic powers. And revealing this was part of the eternal plan of God (Ephesians 3:11). Paul makes clear in verse 12 that Christians have free access to God and may approach Him with

confidence.

Paul also asked that his readers not be discouraged by his imprisonment (Ephesians 3:13). The imprisonment Paul described was his first Roman imprisonment, which took place between approximately AD 60 and 62. During this time, Paul was under house arrest while awaiting trial. Despite the confinement, he was able to freely preach the gospel to all who came to him. As a result, even some among Caesar's household came to faith (Philippians 4:22).

The second part (Ephesians 3:14–21) of this chapter includes a personal prayer by Paul. He bowed on his knees (Ephesians 3:14), asking God to give the Ephesians strength through His Spirit (Ephesians 3:16). He desired for Christ to dwell in the hearts of the church of Ephesus by faith (Ephesians 3:17). His desire was for them to know the depth of Christ's love that surpassed all knowledge (Ephesians 3:18–19).

Paul concludes the chapter with a doxology describing God as one able to do far more than we can ask or think (Ephesians 3:20). God deserves all glory for all things at all times (Ephesians 3:21). This concludes the first half of Paul's letter, with the remaining chapters transitioning to new themes and more practical matters within the church.

The first part of the chapter (Ephesians 4:1–6) begins with Paul urging his readers to live according to the calling they have received as believers (Ephesians 4:1). This includes humility, gentleness, patience, and love (Ephesians 4:2). Unity and peace were essential (Ephesians 4:3), with Paul noting the importance of one Spirit, hope, Lord, faith, baptism, God, and Father of all (Ephesians 4:5–6). Grace is given to each as Christ desires (Ephesians 4:7).

Paul then quotes from Psalm 68:18 (Ephesians 4:8) as the basis for his next teaching. He contrasts ascending and descending. The references are obscure, but the application is clear: victory and gifts. Christ, who has now triumphantly ascended, is giving gifts for the purpose of building up the body and equipping God's people for service. He wants His body to function properly. And He wants the members to be able to stand firmly in the face of false, deceptive teaching that could easily confuse. Maturity and stability are inseparable, and both are essential if Christ's body is to grow.

Verse 11 begins a discussion of church leaders. Paul includes apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. These leaders have one main purpose: to equip believers for the work of ministry (Ephesians 4:12). This work builds up the church, and increases unity, knowledge, and maturity (Ephesians 4:12–13).

Maturity is important because it keeps believers from being “up and down” in their walk with God. It also helps us avoid being deceived by false teachings (Ephesians 4:14). Instead, mature believers can speak the truth in love (Ephesians 4:15), focusing on Christ who keeps the body of Christ together (Ephesians 4:16).

We are united through Christ into the family and fellowship of all believers. We are the body of Christ. We have much diversity within our unity. God has given each of us gifts that complement and enhance the gifts of others. We glorify God by using our unique interests, abilities, and talents in the body of believers. Recognize your uniqueness in the body of Christ. Respect another's uniqueness. Radiate love for each other. Realize harmonious living. Rejoice in the unity we have in Jesus Christ.

Notes

Living in the Light



MEMORY VERSE: “Be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.” Ephesians 4:32

DAY 1 EPHESIANS 4:17-24—Throw Off Old Sinful Nature

1. What does Paul, with the Lord’s authority, tell us? Why? vv. 17-19
2. What stands out most to you about the way unsaved people live? Why?
3. What are believers to throw off? Why? vv. 21-22
4. Read verse 23-24. As new creations, we are totally changed - including our outlook - our values, goals and meaning of life! Why is this only possible through the power of the Holy Spirit?

DAY 2 EPHESIANS 4:25-32—The Way You Should Live

5. What are we not to do? Why?
v. 25

vv. 26-27

6. Verses 28-29 tell us what not to do and what to do instead.

What are the benefits of giving generously?

Why are your words so very important?

7. What brings the Holy Spirit sorrow? v. 30

How does this make you feel?

8. From verse 31, how do you see that these sins:

Interrupt your walk with the Lord?

Undermine the whole body of Christ?

9. How does verse 32 say we should live our lives? Which of these can you do this week?

DAY 3 EPHESIANS 5:1-9—Be People of the Light

10. Read verses 1-2. What is the difference in “imitating God/example of Christ” versus comparing yourself and imitating peers/others?

11. Who will not inherit the Kingdom of Christ and God? vv. 3-5

12. Whom should we not be “fooled by”? Why? v. 6

13. What does this light within us produce? vv. 7-9

DAY 4 EPHESIANS 5:10-20—Be Careful How You Live

14. Read verses 10-14a. How will people's evil intentions be exposed? Why?
15. Read verses 15-18. Why does God want you to be careful how you live?
16. Read verses 19-20. What does *"giving thanks for everything to God in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ"* mean to you?

DAY 5 EPHESIANS 4:17-5:20—Wrap Up

17. How should a Christ follower act differently than those of the world? What happens to believers when we are continually influenced by old habits, the world and Satan?
18. What life do you want to live and what steps can you take to make this choice happen?

TAKE AWAY

You can't change how someone treats you, but try this week to respond to them with kindness.

BLESSING

We are alive in Christ - a new creation!

Living in the Light

The second part of Ephesians 4, verses 17-32) develops the concept of the new life believers have in Jesus. Paul begins to assign specific actions and attitudes to the “new self” all believers ought to take on. The first part of Chapter 5 discusses how believers are to be imitators of God through a focus on the love demonstrated by Christ (Ephesians 5:1–20).

Ephesians 4:17–32 focuses on the new life believers have in Christ. Believers are to no longer live sinfully “as the Gentiles do” (Ephesians 4:17). In this context, Paul is using the term “Gentiles” to refer to those who do not have a saving knowledge of Christ. Non-believers lack understanding and are separated by God due to a hardness of heart (Ephesians 4:18). They are calloused to sin (Ephesians 4:19). Believers must not be known for this way of life (Ephesians 4:20–21).

Instead, believers put off this “old self” and set their minds on spiritual things (Ephesians 4:23), putting on the “new self” of godly living (Ephesians 4:24). The phrase put off is a translation from the Greek (*apotithemi*) referring to putting off garments. The “old self” is the person you were in your pre-Christian days when you were dominated by sin, influenced by the world, and led by Satan. Now, in Christ, we no longer have to be dominated by this side of us, although it will remain a content fight. We can now choose to live by the Spirit of Christ. Our part is to cooperate actively with the work God is

doing. We choose to obey Him rather than going our own way, which leads away from God.

As part of this “new self,” each believer is called to speak truth to “his neighbor” since we are family (Ephesians 4:25). We are not to sin when angry (Ephesians 4:26), not giving the devil an opportunity or advantage in our lives (Ephesians 4:27). Believers are to work honestly (Ephesians 4:28), speak encouragement (Ephesians 4:29), and not grieve the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30). Believers are called to put away sinful practices and attitudes (Ephesians 4:31), being kind to one another and forgiving, as Christ has forgiven us (Ephesians 4:32).

Ephesians 5:1–20 encourages believers to imitate God like loving children (Ephesians 5:1). Sexual impurity is not to be known among believers (Ephesians 5:3). The same is true of foolish talk (Ephesians 5:4). Non-believers are marked by a persistent pattern of these behaviors (Ephesians 5:5). The Greek word he uses for immorality is *porneia*, from which we get the word pornography. Believers are not to be deceived by lies (Ephesians 5:6) and must not be partners with those who deceive (Ephesians 5:7). Yes, believers once lived in this way, but are no longer walking in darkness (Ephesians 5:8).

Believers are to find out what pleases God (Ephesians 5:10). Believers should take no part in sin, but rather expose sin (Ephesians 5:11). This does not require us to be vulgar

or offensive in discussing sinful acts (Ephesians 5:12). Paul then quotes from what was likely part of an early Christian song in verse 14. He encourages believers to walk with wisdom (Ephesians 5:15).

Believers are to make the most of their time, because the days are evil (Ephesians 5:16). Paul encouraged readers to understand the will of God (Ephesians 5:17) and not become drunk on wine (Ephesians 5:18). Instead, believers are to be filled with the Spirit, praising the Lord and giving thanks to Him (Ephesians 5:18–20). Because they are children of light, Paul urges them to live in a way that is consistent with who they are. That counsel was good for the Ephesians, and it is good for us today.

As we draw closer to Jesus, we will want to be more like Him. When we are filled with His Spirit, we are filled with His light and we will read His Word to find His will for our lives. Living in Him and His glorious light, we respond to Him in obedience. Although obedience is our choice, He enables us to obey. Walking with Him brings great joy, and we give thanks to God the Father for all we have and all we are in Jesus.

Notes

Spiritual Warfare



MEMORY VERSE: “For we are not fighting against flesh-and-blood enemies, but... against mighty powers in this dark world, and against evil spirits in the heavenly places.”
Ephesians 6:12

Verses 22-33 concerns marriage, but this information is useful for all relationships. God made mankind male and female with their distinctive nature and roles so that in marriage they could display Christ and the church. A husband and wife are equal before God with different roles to play and responsibilities to assume.

DAY 1 EPHESIANS 5:21-33—Spirit Guided Relationships

1. Submitting is voluntarily yielding to consider the other’s needs more than your own. Why does verse 21 tell us submit to one another?
2. What does Paul tell us in verses 22? Why? vv. 23-24
3. What are husbands to do? Why? vv. 25a, 28-29
4. How did Christ show His great love for the church (His bride)? vv. 25b-27
5. Read verses 30-33. How would following these commands help marriages?

DAY 2 EPHESIANS 6:1-9—Spirit Guided Relationships

6. What are children to do? Why?

7. Read verse 4. We desperately need strong, godly homes. Share ideas to help parents raise children *“with the discipline and instruction that comes from the Lord.”*

8. Fortunately, in most countries, we no longer have slavery; but the advice in these verses is still appropriate.(school, jobs...) What do verses 5-7a say?

9. What are we to do? What will happen? vv. 7-8

10. When you are in the position of “boss/leader” how should you act? Why? v. 9

DAY 3 EPHESIANS 6:10-20—Fighting Against the Darkness

11. What are we to do? Why? vv. 10-12

12. What is our goal? v. 13

13. What is the armor that God gives us?

v. 14a

v. 14b

v. 15

v. 16

v. 17a

v. 17b

How does each help us?

Know Jesus/Truth and why you believe

Right with God because of our faith in Jesus

Be ready with the Truth and filled with peace

Faith - God will provide everything we need

Hope - are saved and always saved

Bible - able to equip us with what we need

14. How can you put God’s strength and armor to work? v. 18

DAY 4 EPHESIANS 6:19-23—Final Words

15. What does Paul ask? v. 19-20

16. How does Paul end this letter? v. 23-24

17. Paul concludes as he began with reference to grace and peace, two essential cornerstones for the Christian life. What has this study shown you about grace and peace?

DAY 5 EPHESIANS 5:21-6:23—Wrap Up

18. What specific ways can you submit to others (considering their needs more than your own) and live in peace with others this week?

19. We have learned a lot about who we are in Christ, the way we should live and how we should treat each other - all to prepare us for battle. How has studying Ephesians impacted your life?

TAKE AWAY

In life's battles, God furnishes you with armor you need to fight. Sometimes the devil makes you question who you are. Sometimes he comes at you with fear. Sometimes, you fight against things you know are wrong but that are just hard to stop. Stand up and fight knowing you're equipped and that God is on our side.

BLESSING

Let us seek the strength and power of God to live our lives in a manner which is pleasing to God. Truly, these things are impossible apart from Christ, but in Christ we can do all things!

Spiritual Warfare

The second part of Ephesians 5 (verses 22–33) addresses mutual submission between husband and wife. Ephesians 5:22–24 focuses first on wives. They are called to submit to their husbands as to the Lord (Ephesians 5:22), with Paul using the analogy of Christ and the church as an example (Ephesians 5:23–24).

Husbands are then addressed and called to love their wives as Christ loved the church (Ephesians 5:25). They are to love their wives as they do their own bodies, teaching that the man who loves his wife loves himself (Ephesians 5:28). Husbands are to imitate Jesus Christ, the Head of the church, who cherishes and nourishes the church, unselfishly giving Himself for her protection and welfare. In summary, Paul reminds husbands to love their wives as they do themselves and for wives to respect their husbands (Ephesians 5:33).

Chapter 6 offer four primary points closing out Paul's letter to the church in Ephesus. First, he provides instruction regarding children and parents (Ephesians 6:1–4). Secondly, instructions for the relationship between masters and servants (Ephesians 6:5–9). Thirdly, Paul discusses the armor of God (Ephesians 6:10–20). Finally, Paul concludes with final greetings to his readers (Ephesians 6:21–24).

The first section (Ephesians 6:1–4) teaches children to obey their parents. This instruction is based on one of the Ten Commandments (Ephesians 6:2–3). Fathers are not to provoke their children to anger. Instead, they are to raise them according to God's discipline and

instruction (Ephesians 6:4). The pattern for human obedience to one another is Jesus Christ's obedience to His Father. Families survive and thrive when their members function according to God's design, operating in submission to one another under the direction of the Bible and the Holy Spirit. Each member must stand against the rebellion and self-focus so prevalent today.

The second section addresses servants and masters (Ephesians 6:5–9). Servants are to obey their masters with a sincere heart as if serving the Lord (Ephesians 6:5–7). Whatever good they do will be received back (Ephesians 6:8). Masters are to treat their servants in the same way and not threaten them. Masters are to recognize they and their servants have a common Master in heaven that judges fairly (Ephesians 6:9). Slavery was a common practice in Ephesus, so Paul takes the opportunity to encourage Christian slaves to be loyal and obedient to their masters. He is not expressing approval of slavery, nor should we. He was dealing with a fact of life in the first century A.D. As men responded to the gospel, they began to lead changed lives that resulted in the improvement of oppressive social conditions.

The third part (Ephesians 6:10–20) discusses the armor of God. Paul likely has the Roman soldiers' armor in mind as he describes the whole armor of God. It is a picture of Jesus Christ. We stand secure in Him. He is the truth (John 14:6); He is our righteousness (2 Corinthians 5:21); He is our peace (Ephesians 2:14); He is the source of our faith (John 1:12) and our salvation (Luke 2:30); He is the Word of God (John 1:1, 14). When we

trusted Jesus we put on the armor (at the moment of salvation). However, we must appropriate Him on a daily basis so that Satan cannot find a chink in the armor. We must “dress” in His armor every day.

Believers are to be strong in the Lord (Ephesians 6:10) and put on the whole armor of God (Ephesians 6:11) to stand against Satan’s schemes. Our battle is spiritual, not physical (Ephesians 6:12). This armor allows believers to stand firm in the faith (Ephesians 6:13). It includes the belt of truth, breastplate of righteousness, shoes with readiness, the shield of faith, and the helmet of salvation (Ephesians 6:14–17). The Word of God is listed as the one offensive weapon, used both to protect and to strike back against evil (Ephesians 6:17). Believers are to pray at all times, keep alert, and persevere (Ephesians 6:18). Paul also asked his readers to pray for him to speak boldly about Christ (Ephesians 6:19–20).

The final part of this letter (Ephesians 6:21–24) mentions a few final greetings to his readers. Paul says he is sending Tychicus to tell them more about his situation (Ephesians 6:21). His goal was to encourage them during his visit with this letter (Ephesians 6:22).

Paul ends by offering peace, love, and faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (Ephesians 6:23). He ends with his distinctive mention of giving grace to “all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible” (Ephesians 6:24). This love that cannot be corrupted is a true, genuine love that Paul experienced in his time with the Ephesian believers that could not be stopped. It had already spread throughout the entire region and would continue to change lives long after Paul’s letter.

Notes