

EPHESIANS

AN INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY

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EPHESIANS

AN INDUCTIVE BIBLE STUDY



GRACE
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CONTENTS

| | |
|---|-----|
| EPHESIANS SURVEY..... | 6 |
| LESSON 1 - EPHESIANS 1:1-14..... | 11 |
| LESSON 2 - EPHESIANS 1:15-23 & 3:14-21..... | 19 |
| LESSON 3 - EPHESIANS 2:1-10..... | 29 |
| LESSON 4 - EPHESIANS 2:11-3:13..... | 37 |
| LESSON 5 - EPHESIANS 4:1-16..... | 47 |
| LESSON 6 - EPHESIANS 4:17-32..... | 55 |
| LESSON 7 - EPHESIANS 5:1-14..... | 63 |
| LESSON 8 - EPHESIANS 5:15-6:9..... | 71 |
| LESSON 9 - EPHESIANS 6:10-24..... | 81 |
| EPHESIANS SYNTHESIS..... | 89 |
| APPENDICES | |
| A. BIBLE STUDY TOOLS OVERVIEW..... | 95 |
| B. ADDITIONAL STUDY RESOURCES..... | 100 |
| C. NEW TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY..... | 101 |

WELCOME

Welcome to our study of Ephesians, a book that highlights the high calling and conduct of the church, the corporate body of Jesus Christ. Throughout this rich book, we will learn about the church's inherited stewardship, multi-ethnic identity, distinct lifestyle, and spiritual opposition.

The nine lessons in this packet are designed to walk us through this challenging book of the Bible. In the Survey, we will look at the overall message of the book of Ephesians. The next nine lessons will focus on studying key passages in detail. Then in the Synthesis, we will summarize what we have learned for future reference.

In studying each passage in detail, we will be learning and using a number of basic Bible study methods. These methods fit under three fundamental skills that are meant to be practiced in order each week.



OBSERVE

What do I see?



INTERPRET

What does it mean?



APPLY

How does it work?

These skills are summarized in the “Bible Study Tools Overview” that you can flip back through during your study. You can find it along with other advanced Bible study skills in the Appendix for those who want to go deeper in their study.

As you use this packet to study Ephesians, please keep in mind a couple of things. There are more questions than you may have time to answer in any given lesson. So focus on the questions that seem most significant to understanding the passage's meaning. And make sure that you don't skip your own observations of the passage as this is the most important step of Bible study.

EPHESIANS SURVEY

See the Big Picture

P R A Y

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you know of, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word, and asking for His Spirit to illuminate your study.

S U R V E Y : What is the big idea?

Surveying a book like Ephesians allows you to grasp the big picture and the overall storyline of the book before getting caught up in the details. This survey provides a helpful road map to guide your study during the coming weeks. **So begin this crucial first step by taking the next thirty minutes to read straight through Ephesians without stopping.** Then, answer the questions below before moving on to the next page.

1. How would you describe Paul's relationship to these believers?

2. What are the major themes or big ideas in this book? (Hint: Look for repeated words and ideas.)

3. Now that you have read through the entire book, what are Paul's purposes in writing it? Be as specific as you can.

4. Based only on Ephesians, how do calling and conduct relate to one another?

BACKGROUND

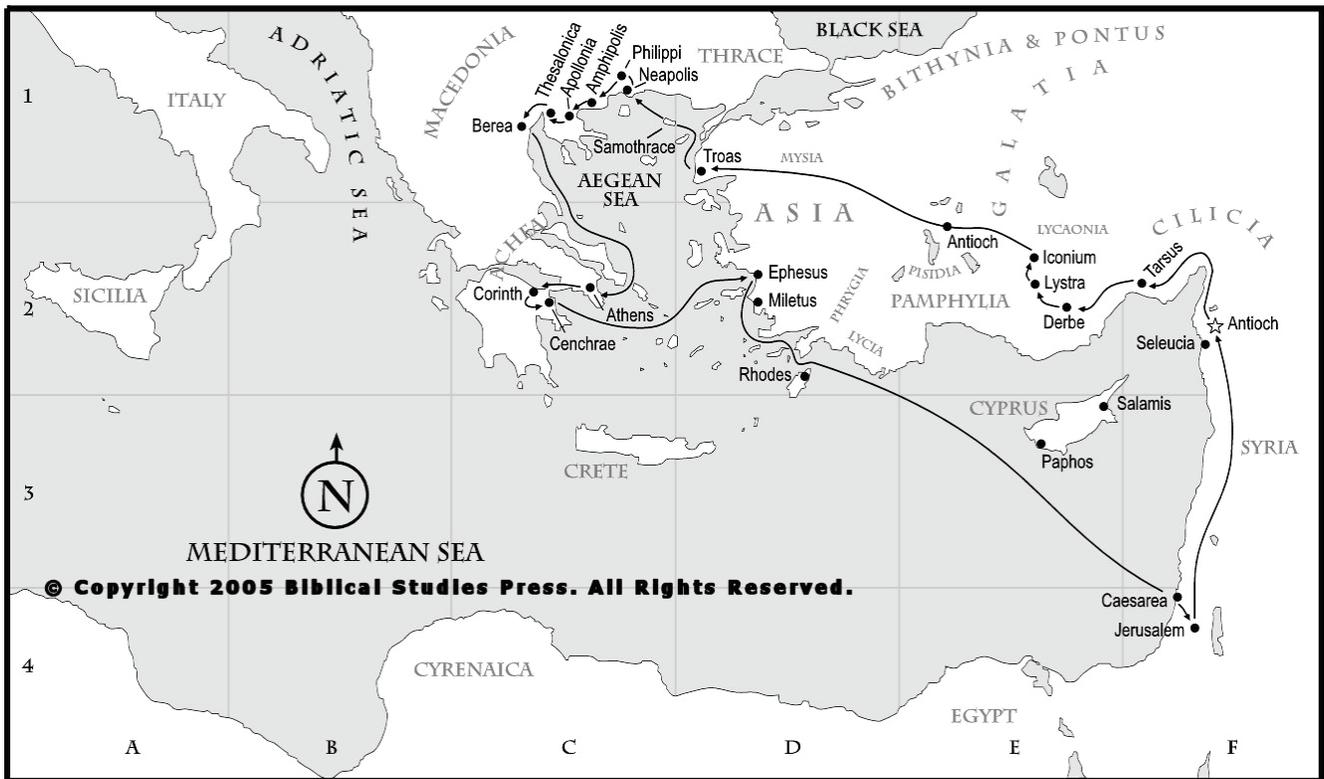
Once you have completed the introductory questions on the previous page, read this background article on the book of Ephesians (portions compiled from *The Bible Knowledge Commentary* and *Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary*).

AUTHORSHIP

Paul was born in Tarsus into Roman citizenship (Acts 22:28) and later educated under the illustrious rabbi, Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). Zealous for the Law, Paul became the chief persecutor of the early church until his conversion when Jesus Christ appeared to him on the road to Damascus (Acts 9). Immediately, Paul began to proclaim Jesus as Savior, eventually focusing several missionary journeys to the Gentiles throughout Asia Minor. During his journeys, he traveled to Ephesus and ministered there for almost three years (Acts 20:31). After Paul departed from Ephesus, he left Timothy behind to combat false teaching (1 Timothy 1:3). At some later point, Paul wrote this letter while in prison either in Caesarea or Rome as one of his many "Prison Epistles" in A.D. 60-62. Despite recent debate that the book was written by someone who did not use his own name but instead claimed to be Paul, there is no strong reason to reject Pauline authorship of the book.

RECIPIENTS

Ephesus was a leading city on the west coast of Asia Minor. It essentially linked the western and eastern portions of the Roman Empire on the main highway and even possessed the most favorable seaport in the province of Asia. Due to its location within the Empire, Ephesus exerted great influence culturally, economically, and religiously. With a population over 300,000 people, Ephesus contained a theatre that seated an estimated 25,000 people. It became the center for worship of the goddess Artemis (Diana in Roman mythology), which often included temple prostitution. Her temple ranked as one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World and became not just a center for worship but also the primary banking institution for all of Asia Minor. As a result, Paul's apostolic ministry that turned people to Christ and away from Artemis represented a significant financial threat to temple-related businesses like that of the silversmith, Demetrius (Acts 19:23-41). Ephesus also became a center of occult practice as many used magic, witchcraft, and sorcery to manipulate hostile spiritual powers to their advantage (Acts 19:11-20).



The Mediterranean region as Paul traveled to Ephesians for first time. *From the NET BIBLE on Bible.org.*

PURPOSE

Paul’s letter to the Ephesian believers does not seem concerned with any particular heresies as we see in Galatians and Colossians, nor with any particular occurrences of immorality as 1 Corinthians. Rather, Paul’s purposes are to declare the glory of God and the extravagant riches given to the Church. Paul focuses on the call, identity, and conduct of the Church, the body of Christ, throughout this rich epistle.

OUTLINE THE BOOK

Having read the background article on the book of Ephesians, now skim through Ephesians one more time and create your own title for each of the major sections below (you can divide these into smaller sections, each with its own title, if you wish). Do not use the titles in this packet or in your Bible. Create your own titles that capture your understanding of the main idea of each section.

MY EPHESIANS OUTLINE...

➤ 1:1-14

➤ 4:1-16

➤ 1:15-23

➤ 4:17-32

➤ 2:1-10

➤ 5:1-14

➤ 2:11-22

➤ 5:15-33

➤ 3:1-13

➤ 6:1-9

➤ 3:14-21

➤ 6:10-24

LESSON 1

Rejoice in Blessing

EPHESIANS 1:1 - 14

PRAY

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you can recall, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word, and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

MEMORIZE

Ephesians 1:3 -- Write it out to get your memorization started.

What Do I See?

OBSERVE *Refer to Appendix*

EPHESIANS 1:1-14

¹Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are at Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus: ²Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ³Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, ⁴just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and blameless before Him. In love ⁵He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, ⁶to the praise of the glory of His grace, which 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 ⁸which He lavished on us. In all wisdom and insight ⁹He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him ¹⁰with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things on the earth. In Him ¹¹also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, ¹²to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ would be to the praise of His glory. ¹³In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation—having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS:

1. Underline or highlight the names of God you observe in this passage. This should include names of any individual members of the Trinity.
2. List all of the “spiritual blessings” you see in this passage given by God to believers.

OBSERVATIONS

w 1-3

w 4-7

w 8-10

w 11-14

What Does it Mean?

INTERPRET *Refer to Appendix*

1. Refer back to your list of “spiritual blessings” mentioned in this passage. What role does each Person of the Trinity (the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit) play in providing us these blessings?

2. What does “redemption” mean (see Romans 8:23; Colossians 1:14; Hebrews 9:15; 11:35)? What did it cost and who paid the cost? What motivated this cost to be paid for us?

3. What does it mean to be “sealed with the Holy Spirit” (1:13)? What must a person do to receive this? How does this sealing relate to our inheritance and redemption?

4. What does Paul mean by “adoption as sons” (See Romans 8:15-17.)? How did it occur?

5. According to 1:4-6; 11-12; and Romans 8:23-30 ...

- What does it mean to be “chosen” or “predestined” by God?

- When did God predestine us?

- Why did God predestine us? In other words, what is the purpose of His choice?

- Why does any of this really matter? Is predestination just a big theological debate, or does it have a practical application to our lives?

6. Should we be looking for apostles like Paul to lead us today? Why or why not? To answer this question look up 1 Corinthians 9:1-2; 12:28-30; 2 Corinthians 12:12; Galatians 1:1; Ephesians 2:19-22; and 3:1-7 and consider these questions:

- What is the basic meaning of the title “apostle”?

- What qualifications did an apostle need?

- What were the responsibilities of an apostle?

How Does it Work?

APPLY

REFLECT ON YOUR LIFE:

1. God wants the truth of these spiritual blessings to affect our lives. How should these truths...

- Affect your self-worth or opinion of yourself?

- Benefit you when you go through hard times or commit sin?

2. Spend a few minutes thanking God for these spiritual blessings.

RELATIONAL APPLICATION *Refer to Appendix*

Fill in the graph below by answering these questions:

- What is the most significant truth or principle you learned in this lesson?
- How does this truth impact the four relational spheres of your life?

- How can I engage the world around me?

- How does this truth affect my relationship with God?

WORLD
GOD

MAIN TRUTH:

- How can I integrate this truth into my work or ministry?

- How does this truth challenge me regarding my family/friends?

MINISTRY/WORK
FAMILY/FRIENDS

LESSON 2

Pray with Power

EPHESIANS 1:15 - 23 & 3:14 - 21

PRAY

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you can recall, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word, and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

REFLECT

Think about your current prayer life. What do you ask God for? Are you requesting the best, most important things or secondary things most of the time? How do you know what's best to ask Him for?

MEMORIZE

Ephesians 1:18-19a -- Write it out to get your memorization started.

What Do I See?

OBSERVE *Refer to Appendix*

EPHESIANS 1:15-23

¹⁵For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; ¹⁷that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. ¹⁸I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you will know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might ²⁰which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²²And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, ²³which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS:

1. List the specific things Paul prays for in 1:15-23 and 3:14-21.

2. List some of the similarities and differences you notice between Paul's prayers in 1:15-23 and 3:14-21.

3. What key words do you notice in this passage? These are words that are theologically significant or that set the theme or big idea for the passage.

OBSERVATIONS

v v 15-16

v v 17-18

v v 19-21

v v 22-23

OBSERVATIONS CONTINUED

EPHESIANS 3:14-21

¹⁴For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, ¹⁶that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. ²⁰Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, ²¹to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

OBSERVATIONS

wv 14-15

wv 16-17

wv 18-19

wv 20-21

- What is the significance of being “at the right hand” of God? (See Acts 5:31; Hebrews 1:3-13.)

4. Rewrite Paul’s prayer for the Ephesians in 1:15-23 in your own words. What, specifically, does he ask God for? (Hint: Try to define the meaning of phrases like “a spirit of wisdom and of revelation” and “the eyes of your heart may be enlightened.”)

5. What effect can our prayers have on the lives of others or our own lives (See Luke 11:9-10; 2 Corinthians 1:8-11; James 4:2; 5:14-18.)?

6. How does this passage relate to the previous passage? In other words, how does the content of Paul’s prayer in 1:15-23 relate to the believers’ blessings in 1:1-14?

7. How does Paul’s long description of Christ in 1:21-23 relate to our practice of prayer?

RELATIONAL APPLICATION *Refer to Appendix*

Fill in the graph below by answering these questions:

- What is the most significant truth or principle you learned in this lesson?
- How does this truth impact the four relational spheres of your life?

- How can I engage the world around me?

- How does this truth affect my relationship with God?

WORLD
GOD

MAIN TRUTH:

- How can I integrate this truth into my work or ministry?

- How does this truth challenge me regarding my family/friends?

MINISTRY / WORK
FAMILY / FRIENDS

LESSON 3

Stand in Grace

EPHESIANS 2:1-10

PRAY

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you can recall, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word, and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

MEMORIZE

Ephesians 2:8-9 -- Write it out to get your memorization started.

What Do I See?

OBSERVE *Refer to Appendix*

EPHESIANS 2:1-10

¹And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, ²in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. ³Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. ⁴But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), ⁶and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷so that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; ⁹not as a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS:

1. List all of Paul's descriptions of the former life of his audience (2:1-3). What used to be true of them?

2. What has God done for us according to verses 4-10? In particular, look for verbs that describe His actions towards us.

3. What key words do you notice in this passage? These are words that are theologically significant or that set the theme or big idea for the passage.

OBSERVATIONS

vv 1-3

vv 4-5

vv 6-7

vv 8-10

What Does it Mean?

INTERPRET *Refer to Appendix*

1. What does Paul mean by “dead” in 2:1 (See Genesis 2:16-17; Isaiah 59:2; Romans 5:12-21; 7:8; Ephesians 4:18; 1 Timothy 5:6.)?

2. Who is the prince of the power of the air (See 6:11-12.)? What power and authority does he have now (See 2 Corinthians 4:4; 1 John 4:4; 5:19.)?

3. What is “wrath” and what does it mean to be “by nature children of wrath” in 2:3?

4. Based on your answers to the above questions, describe a person’s condition without Christ. Do non-Christians realize their condition? Why or why not?

5. According to verses 4-7, what motivated God to save us?

6. Define the following key words in this passage:

- “Grace” (See Romans 5:15-17.)

- “Works” (See Romans 4:1-5 and Titus 3:5.)

- “Saved” (See 1 Timothy 1:15-16.)

- “Faith” (See Ephesians 1:13.)

7. God’s salvation of us is described with three main verbs in verses 4-6. For each one, define exactly what Paul means. See Romans 6:1-14 for help in defining these terms.

- “Made us alive together with Christ”

- “Raised us up with Him”

- “Seated us with Him” (See also 1:20.)

8. How does 2:10 relate to 2:8-9? In other words, how do good works relate to our salvation (See also Titus 2:11-14.)?

RELATIONAL APPLICATION *Refer to Appendix*

Fill in the graph below by answering these questions:

- What is the most significant truth or principle you learned in this lesson?
- How does this truth impact the four relational spheres of your life?

- How can I engage the world around me?

- How does this truth affect my relationship with God?

WORLD
GOD

MAIN TRUTH:

- How can I integrate this truth into my work or ministry?

- How does this truth challenge me regarding my family/friends?

MINISTRY/WORK
FAMILY/FRIENDS

LESSON 4

Invest in Family

EPHESIANS 2:11 - 3:13

PRAY

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you can recall, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word, and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

BACKGROUND

The “Barrier of the Dividing Wall”

Almost 1500 years before Jesus came God gave His chosen people, the Jews, a book of commandments through their leader, Moses, which we call the “Mosaic Law.” God meant for this Law to make the Jewish people an attractive light and an example of righteousness to the Gentile nations of the world so that Gentiles would be drawn to worship the One True God. But in the centuries before Jesus came, the Jews sabotaged God’s intention by creating their own tradition around the Law, adding such numerous and complex requirements that most people, even most Jews, couldn’t hope to obey it all. For the scholarly Jews who could keep this tradition (the “Pharisees” and “scribes”) this led to an attitude of superiority and racial pride. To the Gentiles, this tradition only drove them further from God and stirred up hatred towards the Jews. But then Jesus came and not only strongly rebuked the Pharisees for their oppressive tradition, but in His death fulfilled and abolished the Mosaic Law (Rom 10:4; Gal 3:13). With the Law now set aside, the basis for the Jews’ oppressive tradition was gone. Now both Jews and Gentiles can become followers of Christ on equal terms – the “dividing wall” has been broken down.

MEMORIZE

Ephesians 2:19 -- Write it out to get your memorization started.

What Do I See?

OBSERVE *Refer to Appendix*

EPHESIANS 2:11-22

¹¹Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called “Uncircumcision” by the so-called “Circumcision,” which is performed in the flesh by human hands— ¹²remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. ¹⁴For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, ¹⁵by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, ¹⁶and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. ¹⁷AND HE CAME AND PREACHED PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; ¹⁸for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God’s household, ²⁰having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, ²¹in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, ²²in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS:

1. Make two lists. In the first, write down all of Paul's descriptions of the Gentiles' former status and condition before Christ. In the second, write down all of Paul's descriptions of their new status and condition now that Christ has come.

2. What key words do you notice in this passage? These are words that are theologically significant or that set the theme or big idea for the passage.

OBSERVATIONS

vv 11-13

vv 14-16

vv 17-19

vv 20-22

OBSERVATIONS CONTINUED

EPHESIANS 3:1-13

¹For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles— ²if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you; ³that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. ⁴By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; ⁶to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, ⁷of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power. ⁸To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, ⁹and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; ¹⁰so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him. ¹³Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory.

OBSERVATIONS

w 1-3

w 4-7

w 8-10

w 11-13

What Does it Mean?

INTERPRET *Refer to Appendix*

1. Create and answer any two of your own interpretive questions from this passage. For instructions, see page 96.

a)

b)

2. According to this passage, what changes resulted from Christ's work on the Cross?

3. What does Paul mean by saying that in the past Gentiles, non-Jews like most of us, lived without hope and without God? To find out, answer the questions below. Use the following passages to develop your answers: Genesis 12:1-3; Exodus 19:5-6; Numbers 15:14-16; 1 Kings 8:41-43; Psalms 147:19-20; Isaiah 56:6-7; Acts 14:16-17; 17:24-31; Romans 3:1-2; 9:3-5.

- Did God care about Gentiles during Old Testament times?

- Could Gentiles have a relationship with God during Old Testament times? If so, what did God require of them?

- What exactly did Jews possess that Gentiles lacked?

4. Paul uses the analogy of a “body” in 2:19-22 to characterize this new community of Jews and Gentiles. What does this figurative language teach us about the church body?

5. According to Ephesians 3:3-6, what does Paul mean by the word “mystery”? What exactly was the mystery that has now been revealed?

6. According 3:8-12, why did God create the church? In other words, what role does the church play in God’s plan for human history?

How Does it Work?

APPLY

REFLECT ON YOUR LIFE:

1. Where do you see examples of inequality or discrimination in society today? What can believers do to heal these divisions?

2. Do you approach your spiritual life and your relationship with God primarily as an individual pursuit or as something you do in community with other believers? Why?

3. This week, what specific thing can you do to promote the unity of the church? Do you need to apologize to someone, forgive someone, encourage someone, serve someone, etc?

RELATIONAL APPLICATION *Refer to Appendix*

Fill in the graph below by answering these questions:

- What is the most significant truth or principle you learned in this lesson?
- How does this truth impact the four relational spheres of your life?

- How can I engage the world around me?

- How does this truth affect my relationship with God?

WORLD
GOD

MAIN TRUTH:

- How can I integrate this truth into my work or ministry?

- How does this truth challenge me regarding my family/friends?

MINISTRY/WORK
FAMILY/FRIENDS

LESSON 5

Walk in Unity

EPHESIANS 4:1-16

PRAY

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you can recall, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word, and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

MEMORIZE

Ephesians 4:1-2 -- Write it out to get your memorization started.

What Do I See?

OBSERVE *Refer to Appendix*

EPHESIANS 4:1-16

¹Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing tolerance for one another in love, ³being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all. ⁷But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. ⁸Therefore it says, "WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH, HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES, AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN." ⁹(Now this expression, "He ascended," what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, so that He might fill all things.) ¹¹And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, ¹²for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; ¹³until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; ¹⁵but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him who is the head, even Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS:

1. One of the most helpful things we can do to discover an author's meaning is to observe key connecting words that link one sentence or paragraph with another, such as therefore, but, as a result, so that, for, and however. Read through the passage again, and circle all the connecting words you see.

2. What key words do you notice in this passage? These are words that are theologically significant or that set the theme or big idea for the passage.

OBSERVATIONS

vv 1-6

vv 7-10

vv 11-13

vv 14-16

What Does it Mean?

INTERPRET *Refer to Appendix*

1. Create and answer any two of your own interpretive questions from this passage:

a)

b)

2. What does it mean to “walk in a manner worthy of the calling?” To answer this question, consider the following ...

- What does Paul mean by the word “walk” in this context? Why does he use this verb?

- Based on your study of chapters 1-3, what “calling” does Paul have in mind in this passage?

- Why would this calling motivate us to obey Paul’s command to “walk... worthy?”

- What does a worthy walk look like according to this passage and 4:17; 5:2, 8, 15?

3. According to this passage, along with Romans 12:3-8; 1 Corinthians 12:1-30; 1 Peter 4:10-11...

- Create your own definition of the term “spiritual gifts.”

- What specific spiritual gifts are mentioned in the New Testament?

- What was Christ's ultimate purpose in giving these gifts?

- Should we expect to see all of these gifts in our church today? Why or why not?

4. Looking at verses 12-16, restate Paul's goal for the church body in your own words.

5. Why does Paul emphasize "love" so much as he discusses the nature and activity of God and the spiritual life of the believer in Ephesians (see 1:4, 15; 2:4; 3:17, 19; 4:2, 15-16; 5:2, 25-33; 6:23-24)?

6. According 3:8-12, why did God create the church? In other words, what role does the church play in God's plan for human history?

7. What is Paul talking about in verses 9-10? How does this digression contribute to his argument in this passage?

RELATIONAL APPLICATION *Refer to Appendix*

Fill in the graph below by answering these questions:

- What is the most significant truth or principle you learned in this lesson?
- How does this truth impact the four relational spheres of your life?

- How can I engage the world around me?

- How does this truth affect my relationship with God?

WORLD
GOD

MAIN TRUTH:

- How can I integrate this truth into my work or ministry?

- How does this truth challenge me regarding my family/friends?

MINISTRY/WORK
FAMILY/FRIENDS

LESSON 6

Don't Turn Back

EPHESIANS 4:17-32

PRAY

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you can recall, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word, and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

MEMORIZE

Ephesians 4:32 -- Write it out to get your memorization started.

What Do I See?

OBSERVE *Refer to Appendix*

EPHESIANS 4:17-32

¹⁷So this I say, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, ¹⁸being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; ¹⁹and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. ²⁰But you did not learn Christ in this way, ²¹if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, ²²that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, ²³and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. ²⁵Therefore, laying aside falsehood, **SPEAK TRUTH EACH ONE** of you **WITH HIS NEIGHBOR**, for we are members of one another. ²⁶**BE ANGRY, AND** yet **DO NOT SIN**; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷and do not give the devil an opportunity. ²⁸He who steals must steal no longer; but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need. ²⁹Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, so that it will give grace to those who hear. ³⁰Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³²Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS:

1. Create a list of all of Paul's commands in verses 25-32. What idea or thought connects most of these commands together?

2. As you did last week, read through the passage again, and circle all the connecting words you see. Also, list any key words you notice in the passage.

OBSERVATIONS

vv 17-20

vv 21-24

vv 25-28

vv 29-32

What Does it Mean?

INTERPRET *Refer to Appendix*

1. Create and answer any two of your own interpretive questions from this passage:

a)

b)

2. What progression do you notice in Paul's description of how Gentiles walk (verses 17-19)? What is the significance of this progression?

3. What does it mean to be "renewed in the spirit of your mind" (See Romans 12:1-2; 2 Corinthians 3:18.)?

4. What is the significance of "therefore" in verse 25? In other words, how do the truths of verses 22-24 relate to the relational commands of verses 25-32?

5. From the context, how could we grieve the Holy Spirit? Does this "grieving" last forever (Hint: Justify your answer from other verses in Ephesians)?

6. What should be a Christian's attitude toward anger (See also Proverbs 16:32 and James 1:19-20.)? What is the right way to deal with anger? What is the wrong way to deal with it?

7. Verses 22-23 present a significant interpretive challenge. In Greek, they can be translated either as commands ("lay aside the old self ... be renewed ... put on the new self") or as factual statements of past realities ("you have laid aside the old self ... you are being renewed ... you have put on the new self").

- First, why does this problem even matter? Is there any practical significance to our lives if Paul meant one instead of the other?

- List the strengths of each view. Pay special attention to the surrounding context of Ephesians. Consider also two similar passages – Romans 6:6 and Colossians 3:9.

- Which option do you think is best and why?

8. Based on your answer to the previous question, define the following terms and determine whether they refer to an individual person or to a group of people.

- "Old man/self" (See Romans 6:6-7; Colossians 3:5-9; and Galatians 2:20.)

- "New man/self" (See Ephesians 2:15; Colossians 3:9-14; and 2 Corinthians 5:17.)

RELATIONAL APPLICATION *Refer to Appendix*

Fill in the graph below by answering these questions:

- What is the most significant truth or principle you learned in this lesson?
- How does this truth impact the four relational spheres of your life?

- How can I engage the world around me?

- How does this truth affect my relationship with God?

WORLD
GOD

MAIN TRUTH:

- How can I integrate this truth into my work or ministry?

- How does this truth challenge me regarding my family/friends?

MINISTRY / WORK
FAMILY / FRIENDS

LESSON 7

Conform to Christ

EPHESIANS 5:1-14

PRAY

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you can recall, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word, and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

MEMORIZE

Ephesians 5:1-2 -- Write it out to get your memorization started.

What Do I See?

OBSERVE *Refer to Appendix*

EPHESIANS 5:1-14

¹Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; ²and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. ³But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; ⁴and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. ⁵For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷Therefore do not be partakers with them; ⁸for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light ⁹(for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), ¹⁰trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; ¹²for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. ¹³But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. ¹⁴For this reason it says, “Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you.”

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS:

1. As you did last week, read through the passage again, and circle all the connecting words you see. Also, list any key words you notice in the passage.

2. What specific attribute of God does Paul desire us to imitate?

3. What “deeds of darkness” does Paul mention in this passage?

OBSERVATIONS

vv 1-3

vv 4-7

vv 8-10

vv 11-14

What Does it Mean?

INTERPRET *Refer to Appendix*

1. Create and answer any two of your own interpretive questions from this passage:

a)

b)

2. For each of the following sins, (1) provide a brief description of the sin, and (2) describe how it is contrary to Christ-like love...

- Immorality & impurity (1 Corinthians 5:1; 6:15-18; 1 Thessalonians 4:3-5)

- Greed (Colossians 3:5)

- Filthiness, silly talk, and coarse jesting (Ephesians 4:29)

3. What were the “empty words” (5:6) that might have been used to deceive the Ephesians?

4. How should we go about exposing the deeds of darkness (5:11)? Should we be pointing out the sins of our non-Christian friends?

5. How does this passage relate to 4:17-32? In other words, what is the significance of “therefore” in 5:1?

6. For all of us who have ever given in to immorality or covetousness, 5:5 can sound like a pretty terrifying threat! What does Paul mean in this verse? To find out, answer the following questions using context, plus these cross-references: Romans 6:12-13; 7:21-25; 1 Corinthians 6:7-11; Galatians 5:16-21.

- Who is this warning directed toward? How can you tell?

- What is the inheritance that they may miss out on? Is the inheritance equivalent to eternal life, or is it something else?

- Can a person who currently fits the description of v5 have eternal life?

7. Why does Paul include the quotation in 5:14? What point does it make?

How Does it Work?

APPLY

REFLECT ON YOUR LIFE:

1. In what relationship(s) do you struggle the most to imitate Christ's love? How can you respond to this person differently this week in order to better imitate Christ?

2. Take a few moments to expose any secret sins to the light - confess them to your Savior, Jesus Christ.

RELATIONAL APPLICATION *Refer to Appendix*

Fill in the graph below by answering these questions:

- What is the most significant truth or principle you learned in this lesson?
- How does this truth impact the four relational spheres of your life?

- How can I engage the world around me?

- How does this truth affect my relationship with God?

WORLD
GOD

MAIN TRUTH:

- How can I integrate this truth into my work or ministry?

- How does this truth challenge me regarding my family/friends?

MINISTRY/WORK
FAMILY/FRIENDS

LESSON 8

Submit to One Another

EPHESIANS 5:15 - 6:9

PRAY

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you can recall, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word, and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

MEMORIZE

Ephesians 5:17-18 -- Write it out to get your memorization started.

What Do I See?

OBSERVE *Refer to Appendix*

EPHESIANS 5:15-33

¹⁵Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of your time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; ²⁰always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; ²¹and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ ²²Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. ²⁴But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. ²⁵Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, ²⁶so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. ²⁸So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; ²⁹for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, ³⁰because we are members of His body. ³¹FOR THIS REASON A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. ³²This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. ³³Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.

OBSERVATIONS

wv 15-16

wv 17-18

wv 19-21

wv 22-24

wv 25-27

wv 28-30

wv 31-33

OBSERVATIONS CONTINUED

EPHESIANS 6:1-9

¹Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ²HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER (which is the first commandment with a promise), ³SO THAT IT MAY BE WELL WITH YOU, AND THAT YOU MAY LIVE LONG ON THE EARTH. ⁴Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. ⁵Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; ⁶not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. ⁷With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, ⁸knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free. ⁹And masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS:

1. As you did last week, read the passage again, and circle all the connecting words you see. Also, write down any key words you notice in the passage.

2. Notice that Paul contrasts two different ways of life in verses 15-21 (what to do vs. what not to do). List all the characteristics he gives for each way of life.

3. What specific responsibilities does Paul give to each person or group in 5:22-6:9?

OBSERVATIONS

vv 1-2

vv 3-4

vv 5-6

vv 7-9

What Does it Mean?

INTERPRET *Refer to Appendix*

1. Create and answer any two of your own interpretive questions from this passage:

a)

b)

2. What does it mean to be “filled with the Spirit?” (Hint: It must be comparable in some way to the contrasting idea of being “drunk with wine.”)

- Are all believers filled with the Spirit all the time? How do you know?

- What hinders us from being “filled with the Spirit?” (See Galatians 5:16-26.)

- What are some specific examples of Spirit-filled behavior according to the context?

3. What does it mean to “be subject” to someone else (5:21)?

- Can someone else make you submit, or is submission entirely voluntary?

- In what relationships does God expect us to practice submission? (See 1 Corinthians 15:28; Ephesians 1:22; Titus 2:5, 9; 3:1; James 4:6, 7; 1 Peter 2:13, 18; 5:5.)

- What exactly does it mean for a wife to “submit” to her husband?

- Why does God call wives to submit to their husbands? Is it because they are somehow inferior to their husbands? Is it based on societal problems in the past (i.e. women were usually not educated in the ancient world)? (See Genesis 1:26-28, 2:18-24; Galatians 3:28-29; 1 Corinthians 7:2-4; 11:3-12; 1 Peter 3:1-7; Philippians 2:5-8.)

4. According to the passage, how can a husband demonstrate Christ-like love for his wife?

- How does a husband’s responsibility to love his wife fulfill the controlling idea of this paragraph to “be subject to one another” (5:21)?

5. At what age are children no longer obligated to obey their parents (6:1)? At what age are they no longer obligated to “honor” their parents (6:2-3)? Are there any reasons for which a child should not obey or honor his/her parents (Matthew 8:21-22; 10:34-39; Acts 4:18-20)?

6. How does 5:15-6:9 relate to what came before it?

7. How do the commands about household relationships (5:22-6:9) relate to 5:15-21? (Hint: Notice that in the NASB text the verb in 5:22 is in italics. This indicates that the verb is omitted from the sentence in Greek and is, instead, implied from the previous verse.)

How Does it Work?

APPLY

REFLECT ON YOUR LIFE:

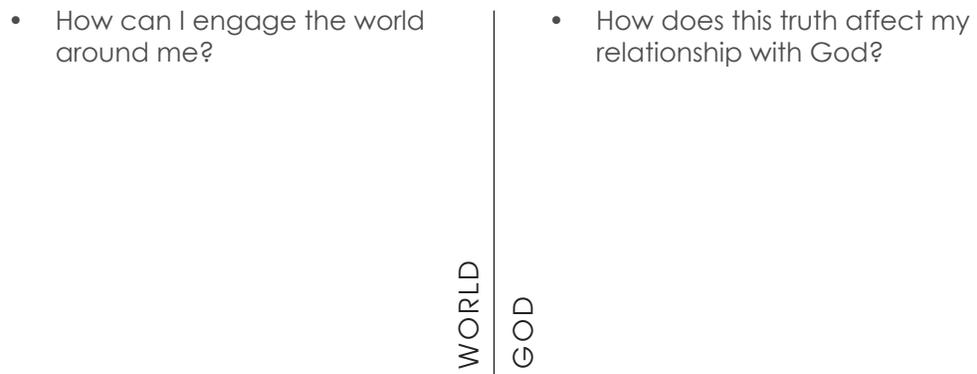
1. In what situations or relationships have you been called upon to submit to someone else? Do you find it easy or hard to submit? Why? How can you better honor and serve in this situation or relationship this week?

2. Look at the family roles/positions mentioned in 5:22-6:9 that relate to your current station in life. What steps will you take this week to “be filled with the Spirit” in each of these roles?

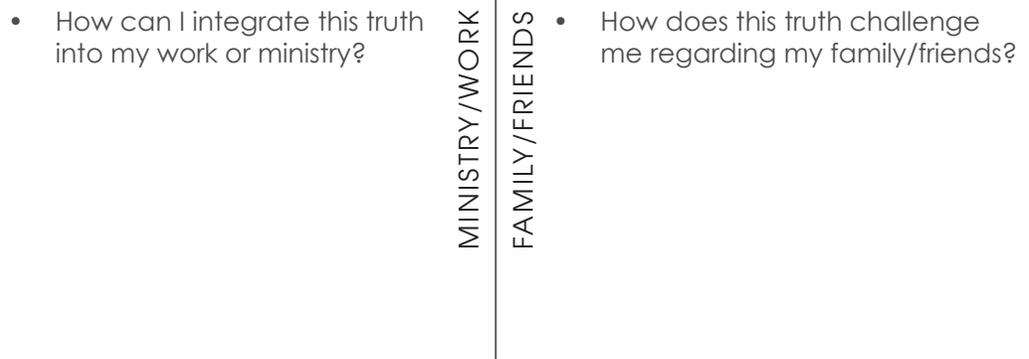
RELATIONAL APPLICATION *Refer to Appendix*

Fill in the graph below by answering these questions:

- What is the most significant truth or principle you learned in this lesson?
- How does this truth impact the four relational spheres of your life?



MAIN TRUTH:



LESSON 9

Prepare for Battle

EPHESIANS 6:10-24

PRAY

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you can recall, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word, and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

MEMORIZE

Ephesians 6:11 -- Write it out to get your memorization started.

What Do I See?

OBSERVE *Refer to Appendix*

EPHESIANS 6:10-24

¹⁰Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might. ¹¹Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. ¹²For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³Therefore, take up the full armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴Stand firm therefore, HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, ¹⁵and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE; ¹⁶in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, ¹⁹and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. ²¹But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you. ²²I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know about us, and that he may comfort your hearts. ²³Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with incorruptible love.

OBSERVATION QUESTIONS:

1. Underline all of the weapons and armor that God has given us to use in spiritual warfare in the passage above.

2. As you did last week, read through the passage again, and circle all the connecting words you see. Also, list any key words you notice in the passage.

3. What do you observe about Paul's call to prayer in 6:18-20?

OBSERVATIONS

wv 10-13

wv 14-17

wv 18-20

wv 21-24

What Does it Mean?

INTERPRET *Refer to Appendix*

1. Create and answer any two of your own interpretive questions from this passage:

a)

b)

2. Where else have we seen the ideas of God's strength or power in Ephesians? To what did that strength refer? How do we gain access of that strength?

3. Who are our enemies (See 2:2; 1 John 5:19; 1 Peter 5:8.)? What specific tactics do they use (See Genesis 3:1-5; Job 1:9-12; Luke 4:1-13; John 8:44; 1 Timothy 4:1-3; 1 Peter 5:8-9.)?

4. What/when is the "evil day" (6:13)?

5. List each piece of spiritual armor. What does each mean? Be specific (e.g. what is “truth,” and what is the significance of the imagery “having girded your loins with the truth?”). How does each piece of armor contribute to our ability to stand strong in the midst of spiritual warfare? Finally, explain how each piece is received and used (e.g. explain what the “breastplate of righteousness” is, how it helps us stand strong, and how we put it on).

6. Why does Paul’s call to prayer follow his discussion of our spiritual battle and armor? How does prayer relate to this battle?

How Does it Work?

APPLY

REFLECT ON YOUR LIFE:

1. Most of us have never fought in a war, so we don't know what it is like to have our physical lives constantly at risk. However, as we've learned from Ephesians 6, moment by moment our spiritual lives are indeed at risk.

- How aware are you of spiritual opposition in your life? Does it paralyze you or do you rarely consider it?

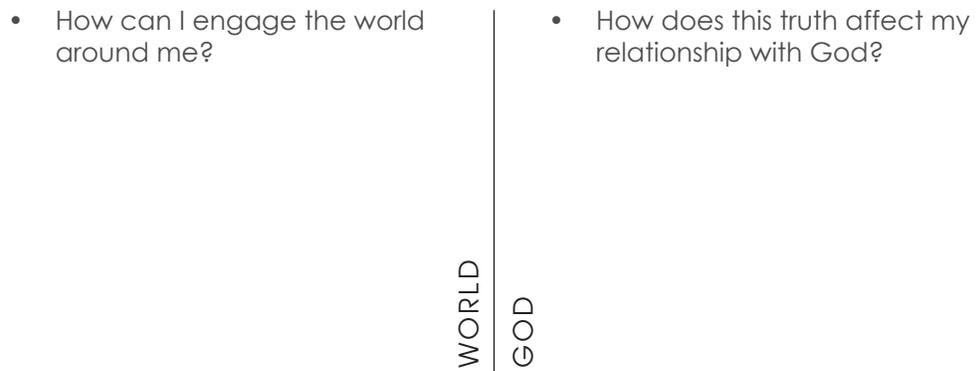
- How can we maintain spiritual vigilance at all times?

- In what ways can your prayer life become more effective in this spiritual battle?

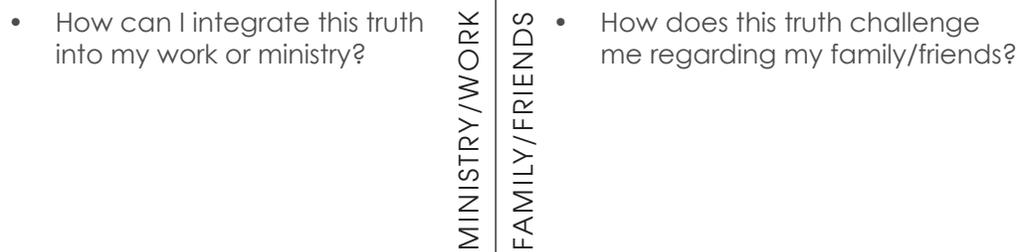
RELATIONAL APPLICATION *Refer to Appendix*

Fill in the graph below by answering these questions:

- What is the most significant truth or principle you learned in this lesson?
- How does this truth impact the four relational spheres of your life?



MAIN TRUTH:



EPHESIANS SYNTHESIS

Put it Back Together

P R A Y

Begin this time in prayer, confessing any sins you can recall, thanking the Lord for the gift of His Word, and asking for His Spirit to guide your study.

M E M O R I Z E

Review your memory verses for each of the previous lessons.

- 1:3
- 1:18-19a
- 2:8-9
- 2:19
- 4:1-2
- 4:32
- 5:1-2
- 5:17-18
- 6:11

Before we get to the synthesis, one word of encouragement: Think about how much you have grown as a student of God’s Word through your study of Ephesians! Each week, you’ve learned more about how to observe, interpret, and apply the Scripture. Those three steps will serve you well as you continue to study God’s Word in the future. Continue to practice and refine those skills so that you become, “a workman who does not need to be ashamed, accurately handling the Word of truth” (2 Timothy 2:15).

WHY DOES THIS MATTER?

1. With the book of Ephesians as a whole in mind, what does it mean that God “called” us? What did He call us out of? What privileges and blessings are included in His call?

2. According to Ephesians, what standards of conduct does God expect of us? In other words, how does He expect those whom He has called to act in this world?

The previous lessons have led us to observe, to interpret, and to apply the entire book of Ephesians. That is no small task! Now it is time to draw our detailed study to a useful conclusion, a process known as synthesis. Our goal is to create an overall summary of the book of Ephesians that we can quickly review any time in the future to remind us of the flow and content of the book.

OUTLINE THE BOOK

The first step of the synthesis is to create your own outline of the book. Review the work you completed each week. Then, create your own brief outline on the next page. Feel free to use any outlining style, but here is an example of how you might start:

1. *Greetings from Paul to the church in Ephesus (1:1-2)*
2. *Praise for God's blessings to the church (1:3-14)*
 - a) *Predestined adoption by the Father (1:3-6)*
 - b) *Gracious redemption by the Son (1:7-12)*
 - c) *Sealed inheritance through the Spirit (1:13-14)*

MY EPHESIANS OUTLINE

The second step of the synthesis is to record what you learned or were reminded of. This is more personal than your outline. Create a list of the theological truths and life lessons you have either learned for the first time or been reminded of from your study of Ephesians. As an example of a theological truth, you might write “I was taught that the Holy Spirit is a pledge or guarantee of our eternal inheritance to come in the future (1:13-14).” As an example of a life lesson, you might write “This book reminded me that spiritual growth is a community project pursued not just individually but also corporately.” List at least ten theological truths and ten life lessons on this page that you learned from your study of Ephesians, and record the verses where each one is addressed.

THEOLOGICAL TRUTHS I’VE LEARNED

LIFE LESSONS I’VE LEARNED

The final step of the synthesis is to prayerfully choose two applications to practice. These can be applications that you developed and began to practice during previous lessons, or you can create entirely new applications. Whatever your choice, two things must be true about them:

1. Both applications should relate to areas of your life where you are currently in need of growth. Do not choose “be kind to others” if this is already something you do very well.
2. Both applications should be specific with a clear plan for growth and the name of someone who will hold you accountable. “Study the Word more” is not specific enough. Instead, develop a specific plan, such as, “I will read through Romans this month and write down my observations, interpretive questions, and applications in a journal. Steve will hold me accountable on a weekly basis.”

APPLICATION #1

- Principle from Ephesians:

- Verses where it’s discussed:

- Plan of Action: I will...

- Who will hold me accountable:

APPLICATION #2

- Principle from Ephesians:

- Verses where it’s discussed:

- Plan of Action: I will...

- Who will hold me accountable:

End your study by returning to the Lord in prayer. Thank Him for what you have learned this week, ask Him to help you apply the principles you have chosen, and lay before Him the needs of your fellow group members.

My Notes...

APPENDIX

A. BIBLE STUDY TOOLS OVERVIEW

OBSERVE:

Every time we study the Bible, the first thing to ask is, “What do I see?” This is the crucial skill of observation, which lays the groundwork for the rest of our study. Here are four tasks involved in observation which should be performed in the order below:

Observation Task 1: Mark up the passage by visually identifying the following specific elements:

- **Underline** all verbs. A verb is a word or group of words used to indicate either that an action is taking place (“we will reign with Him”) or that a state or condition exists (“we are faithless”). Verbs are often the most significant indicators of the author’s flow of thought.
- Circle key words or phrases. These are words or short phrases that are important theologically or thematically (they set the theme or main idea for the passage).
- Highlight repeated words or phrases. Also, include words and phrases that are closely related even if not exact duplicates (such as “suffer hardship” and “endure suffering”). You’ll also want to highlight things that are repeated from previous passages.
- Box connecting words. These important words indicate the logical connection between words, phrases, and clauses. Here are eight types of common connecting words to look for:
 1. **Comparison** either points out similarities between two or more related ideas or simply joins like ideas. Comparison words include: and, like, as, just as, also, so also, even so.
 2. **Contrast** points out dissimilarities between ideas. Contrast words include: but, rather, yet, however.
 3. **Purpose** indicates the intended goal of an idea or action, whether or not it was realized. Purpose words include: that, so that, in order that.
 4. **Result** is similar to “purpose,” but indicates the actual consequence, whether or not it was intended. Result words include: that, so that, as a result, with the result that.
 5. **Cause** expresses the basis or cause of an action. Cause words include: because, since, and sometimes for.
 6. **Explanation** is what follows and further explains the previous idea, giving reasons why it is true, why it occurred, or simply adding additional information. Look for the key word “for.”
 7. **Inference** provides a logical consequence, conclusion, or summary to the previous discussion. Inference words include: therefore, for this reason.
 8. **Condition** presents a condition that must occur before a certain action or conclusion can take place. The statement may or may not reflect reality (i.e., it could be hypothetical). Key word is “if.”

Observation Task 2: List 2-3 primary themes you see in the passage each week

A primary theme is the big idea, the central truth, or command that the passage focuses on. After reading the passage, write your themes as single words or short phrases. Identifying these themes at the beginning of your study will help you develop a good overall grasp of the passage.

Observation Task 3: Write two or more observations per verse

Our observations might identify people, places, or events, point out repeated words or key terms, record important connections between words and sentences, or even point out something missing that we expected to see.

Observation Task 4: Record your own interpretive questions

Here are a few examples:

| WHO IS | WHAT IS THE | WHY DID THE AUTHOR | HOW |
|---|--|---|---|
|Paul talking about?accomplishing the action?benefiting from the action? |meaning of this word?significance of this phrase?implication of this statement?relationship between these phrases? |choose this word?include this phrase, statement or command?not say _____? |was this action accomplished?will this situation occur? |

INTERPRET:

Our observation of a passage should stir interesting yet challenging questions, leading us to the second stage of our Bible study: interpretation. Fortunately, we do not have to run to a commentary or study Bible for answers (though these are helpful tools to check our conclusions). Use the following six methods, as needed, to tackle a variety of questions.

Interpretation Method 1: Use the context.

Look for important clues in the sentences and paragraphs that come before and after the verse in question. Try to follow the author's flow of thought through the whole chapter. This may take you to the previous lesson, so have it handy as a review. You may need to read ahead for clues.

Interpretation Method 2: Study cross-references.

Cross references are simply other passages in any book of the Bible that are somehow related to the verses you are studying. They often prove incredibly helpful as you seek to understand your passage. A few such cross references can be found in the margins of most English Bibles, but more can be found by visiting the online reference www.biblestudytools.com. Simply type in the book and chapter in the box to the left of the "Search" button and then click "Search." All of the chapter will appear on the screen. Be sure that "New American Standard" is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then click the box next to "Cross References" so that numbers appear throughout the passage. Clicking any of these will move your screen to the bottom of the page where you will find a series of cross references for specific verses within the passage. This is a great tool for answering tough questions!

Interpretation Method 3: Look up key words.

While looking up a key word in English is helpful, doing so in Greek is far better and is surprisingly easy, thanks to the internet. Simply log onto www.biblestudytools.com, and as an example, type in the book and chapter in the box to the left of the "Search" button and then click "Search." All of the chapter will appear on the screen. Be sure that "New American Standard" is your selected Bible in the drop down box, and then click the box next to "Strong Numbers" so that most of the words will be highlighted in blue. Clicking on any of these will bring up a new screen that will tell you the Greek word used here, its possible definitions, and the total number of times it is used in each book of the New Testament

(NT). Click on any of the other NT books (under the title “NAS Verse Count”), and get a list of every verse in that book that uses this Greek word. What used to take hours now takes seconds!

Interpretation Method 4: Look up background information

You can find helpful insights by looking up confusing names or words in a Bible dictionary or by looking up the particular verses you are studying in a background commentary. One of the best dictionaries is The New Bible Dictionary by Wood & Marshall. The IVP Bible Background Commentary by Craig Keener is another excellent example of a verse-by-verse background commentary.

Interpretation Method 5: Tackle tough questions step-by-step

When trying to answer the most challenging questions, follow this four-step process:

1. List all the options. Always start by brainstorming every possible answer to your question.
2. List pros and cons for each option. See all the evidence you can find that either argues for or against a particular option. This evidence comes from your study of key words, the grammar of the sentence, the context of surrounding verses and the book as a whole, cross references to other books, and comparison with your overall understanding of Christian theology.
3. Choose the most likely option. Look at your evidence for each option. Typically, evidence from the immediate context is most important, followed closely by evidence from the book as a whole. Evidence from other books of the Bible, or from Christian theology as a whole, does not carry quite as much weight unless the solution contradicts a clear passage elsewhere or a major tenant of Christian doctrine. In that case, since Scripture never lies and God cannot contradict Himself, you must eliminate that option.
4. Decide on your certainty level. Once you have chosen the best solution, step back for a second and humbly gauge how certain you are of its accuracy (90% = I am very sure this is correct ... 60% = This solution is just a bit more likely than the others!). Finally, talk with others and check commentaries or reference books to see what solutions they have chosen and why.

Interpretation Method 6: Compare multiple translations

This packet uses the New American Standard (NASB) translation. You can often find helpful interpretive clues by comparing this translation with other translations. The New King James Version (NKJV), like the NASB, is a fairly word-for-word translation of the Greek text. The New International Version (NIV) and the New Revised Standard Version (NRSV) are excellent phrase-to-phrase translations of the Greek and thus often easier to read. Another excellent phrase-to-phrase Bible, which includes extensive translation notes, is the New English Translation (NET) available online for free at net.bible.org. You can find and compare numerous translations of any Bible passage at www.biblestudytools.com.

APPLY:

Our Bible Study is not over until we practically apply what we have learned to our everyday lives. And, we know that because we are relational by nature, our learning and growth can and should impact other people in our lives.

The Relational Application section in this study provides an opportunity to **connect the personal application** of God's word **with the relational spheres** we live in.

Application Task 1:

1. Prayerfully determine the **main biblical truth or principle** that God revealed to you during your study. A principle is a fact stated or implied in a passage that is relevant to our lives and not specific to a particular person or time. A few questions to ask are:

- Is there a promise for me to claim?
- Is there a truth for me to believe?
- Is there a command for me to obey?

Application Task 2:

2. Determine how this truth impacts the **four main relational areas** in your life.

God

- How does this truth stretch me in my relationship with God?
- Is there something from which I need to confess and repent?
- Are there some characteristics of God of which I am reminded to praise or worship Him?

Family/Friends

- How does this truth impact my relationship with my family or friends?
- How could I share this truth with these loved ones?
- Is there something or someone specific I can pray for?

Ministry/Work

- Is there an opportunity to integrate this truth in my work environment?
- Is there a next step of ministry I can take based on this truth?
- How does this truth impact my attitude, decision-making and conversations in work or ministry?

World

- How does this truth change my view of the people in the world around me?
- Is there a way to care for, serve or reach out to the world around me based on this truth?

(Example on next page)

Here is an example from Psalm 1:

- Pray that Bible translation ministries will make significant progress in unreached areas of the world.

WORLD
GOD

- Praise God each morning this week for the gift of His Word.
- Meditate on each lesson's memory verse during each week of this study.

MAIN TRUTH: A healthy, righteous life is rooted in God's word

- Look for ways to winsomely speak truth into the conversations I have at work.

MINISTRY/WORK
FAMILY/FRIENDS

- Ask my spouse what God is showing him/her through the Word this week.

B. ADDITIONAL STUDY RESOURCES

ONLINE RESOURCES

biblestudytools.com - online word studies

blueletterbible.org - online word studies

soniclight.com - online commentary

bestcommentaries.com - online commentary database

DISCIPLESHIP/BIBLE STUDY RESOURCES

Living By the Book by Howard Hendricks and Charles Swindoll

A more in-depth book on how to study the Bible using the tools discussed in this packet.

The Master Plan of Evangelism by Robert Coleman

A highly motivational analysis of Jesus' own principles of evangelism and discipleship.

The Lost Art of Disciple Making by Leroy Eims

This practical resource will give you a detailed structure to follow and great content to cover as you begin to disciple a new believer.

A Survey of Bible Doctrine by Charles Ryrie

An easy-to-read, relatively short systematic theology primer that you can walk a new believer through to ground them in the faith.

Essentials of the Faith by Grace Bible Church, College Station, TX

This small group Bible study packet walks a new believer through the fundamental trusts and practices of the Christian faith in ten self-paced lessons.

** Note: Grace Bible Church does not always agree with the views of these commentaries. These are good tools to help understand hard passages, but the particular theological views reflect the author, of the commentary and not those of Grace Bible Church.*

C. NEW TESTAMENT CHRONOLOGY

| EVENT | DATE |
|---|-----------------------------------|
| Crucifixion of Jesus | April 3, 33 |
| Pentecost (Acts 2) | May 24, 33 |
| Paul's conversion (Acts 9) | Summer 35 |
| Paul in Jerusalem, 1st visit (Acts 9:26-29; Gal. 1:18-20) | 35-43 |
| Paul to Antioch (Acts 11:25-26) | Spring 43 |
| Epistle of James written | 45 |
| Paul in Jerusalem, relief visit (Acts 11:30; Gal. 2:1-10) | Autumn 47 |
| Paul to Antioch (Acts 12:25-13:1) | Autumn 47 – Spring 48 |
| Paul's first missionary journey (Acts 13-14) | April 48 – September 49 |
| Peter at Antioch (Gal. 2:11-16) | Autumn 49 |
| Galatians written from Antioch | Autumn 49 |
| Paul in Jerusalem, Jerusalem council (Acts 15) | Autumn 49 |
| Paul in Antioch (Acts 15:30-35) | Winter 49/50 |
| Paul's second missionary journey (Acts 15:36-18:22) | April 50 – September 52 |
| 1 & 2 Thessalonians written | Spring – Summer 51 |
| Paul in Jerusalem and Antioch | End of September 52; Winter 52/53 |
| Paul's third missionary journey (Acts 18:23-21:16) | Spring 53 – May 57 |
| 1 & 2 Corinthians written | Spring – Fall 56 |
| Romans written | Winter 56/57 |
| Ephesian elders visit Paul at Miletus (Acts 20) | May 57 |
| Paul in Jerusalem | Eve of Pentecost, May 27, 57 |
| Paul's arrest and trial before Felix (Acts 21:26-24:22) | June 57 |
| Paul's appearance before Felix and Drusilla (Acts 24:24-26) | June 57 |
| Paul's imprisonment in Caesarea (Acts 24:27) | June 57 – Aug 59 |
| Paul's trial before Festus (Acts 25:7-12) and Agrippa (Acts 26) | July 59; Aug 59 |
| Paul's voyage to Rome (Acts 27:1-28:29) | Aug 59 – Feb 60 |
| Paul's first Roman imprisonment (Acts 28:30) | Feb 60 – Mar 62 |
| Luke written | 60 |
| Acts Written | 60 |
| Ephesians written | Autumn 60 |
| Colossians and Philemon written | Autumn 61 |
| Philippians written | Spring 62 |
| Paul's release | Spring 62 |
| Mark Written | 62 |
| Paul in Ephesus and Colossae | Spring – Autumn 62 |
| Peter in Rome | 62 |
| Paul in Macedonia | Summer 62 – Winter 62/63 |
| 1 Timothy written | Autumn 62 |
| Paul in Asia Minor | Spring 63 – Spring 64 |
| Peter martyred | Summer 64 (67?) |
| Paul in Spain and Crete | Spring 64 – Spring 66; Summer 66 |
| Titus written | Summer 66 |
| Paul arrested and taken to Rome | Autumn 67 |
| 2 Timothy written | Autumn 67 |
| Paul's death | Spring 68 |
| Matthew written | 60's |
| Hebrews written | 60's |
| Destruction of Jerusalem | September 2, 70 |
| Jude written | 60's or 70's |
| John written | 80's or 90's |
| 1,2,3 John written | 80's or 90's |
| Revelation written | Early 90's |



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