

A man with a beard and long hair, wearing an apron, is focused on shaping a piece of clay on a pottery wheel. He is in a workshop setting with various pottery tools and finished pieces visible in the background. The entire image has a warm, orange-red color overlay.

MADE NEW

E P H E S I A N S



WELCOME TO OUR FALL SERIES

During our time walking through Ephesians together, this devotion book is designed to help you slow down, focus on what is important, and walk with Jesus as He guides and shapes you. The book of Ephesians is about how the Gospel impacts our everyday lives; throughout this journal, we pray that you will grow in your relationship with Christ as you live your normal life, and incorporate practices that will encourage you to live on mission to see more people become more like Jesus where you live, work, and play.

The objectives of this year's journal are to help you cultivate daily and weekly spiritual practices that will require intentionality and perhaps some rearranging as you let the Holy Spirit guide you towards a life of "abundantly more than what you could ask or imagine (Eph 3:20)".

This journal is meant to be experienced within the context of community. To get the most out of this series, experience it with a group of believers who will encourage, challenge, and support each other as you learn to live in the new humanity we have through Christ Jesus.

INTRODUCTION TO EPHESIANS

The book of Ephesians is one of the richest and most practical letters in the entire Bible. The Epistle to the Ephesians is generally believed to have been written around A.D. 60-62 during Paul's imprisonment in Rome. This letter was sent to believers living in the city of Ephesus—a major cultural, political, and spiritual center of the ancient world. Ephesus was filled with wealth, influence, idol worship, spiritual confusion, and moral compromise. Sound familiar? Into that environment, Paul writes a message reminding the Church who they are, what they have in Christ, and how they are called to live in a broken world.

At its heart, Ephesians is about identity and transformation. For many believers, the struggle is not simply knowing Jesus—it's understanding who we now are because of Jesus. Paul spends the first half of the letter unpacking the spiritual realities that belong to every believer. In Christ, we are chosen, adopted, redeemed, forgiven, sealed with the Holy Spirit, and made alive by grace. Paul keeps bringing us back to this truth: our identity is not found in our past, our failures, our culture, or even our feelings. Our identity is found in Christ.

One of the major themes throughout Ephesians is unity. Paul reveals what he calls the “mystery” of the Gospel—that through Jesus, Jews and Gentiles are now one family. The cross didn't just reconcile people to God; it reconciles people to each other. In a divided world, the Church is meant to be a picture of God's peace, unity, and love. But Ephesians doesn't stop at theology. It moves into everyday life.

The second half of the letter shifts from what we believe (theology) to how we live (praxis). Paul challenges believers to walk worthy of their calling—to live differently because Jesus has changed them. He talks about relationships, marriage, parenting, purity, forgiveness, speech, work, spiritual maturity, and how to stand strong against the attacks of the enemy. Ephesians reminds us that Christianity is not simply about attending church services or knowing Bible verses. It is about becoming a new kind of people who reflect Jesus in every area of life.

And then Paul closes the letter with the powerful image of the Armor of God. Because following Jesus means we are in a real spiritual battle. We don't fight for victory—we fight from victory. God has given us everything we need to stand firm.

Over these next 8 weeks, we are going to walk through this incredible letter together. We'll discover who we are in Christ, what it means to belong to the family of God, how grace changes us, and how to live with strength, unity, wisdom, and purpose in a world that desperately needs Jesus.

Ephesians reminds us that the Gospel is not just about getting people into heaven someday. It's about bringing the life, power, and presence of Jesus into us right now.



HOW TO USE THIS BOOK

As you get familiar with this journal, you will see that we have laid out daily and weekly practices for you.

Daily Practices

Each week of our fall series will have five days of devotionals for you to read. Each day is divided into three sections: Deep, Deeper, Deepest.

In our journey of being with Jesus to become more like Him, there is always an invitation for more. When we say “deep, deeper, deepest”, it is with the intention that whenever we reach what we think is the bottom of what we can experience with Jesus, there’s suddenly a new cave to explore that will continue to draw us deeper and deeper into His grace, truth, and love.

Some days you’ll have time to engage with every section. Other days, you may only have a few minutes to read the Scripture and pray. Whatever you engage with, we know Jesus is there to meet you in it, and ready to go deeper with you when you’re ready.

If you find yourself wanting to go deeper, go for it. God loves to stretch and transform us. If you don’t have the time, energy, or desire on a particular day, don’t feel guilty, because none of this is being graded! God’s work in your life isn’t measured by how many pages you complete, but by your willingness to say yes to Him.

Wherever you’re starting from, we’re grateful you’re here. We can’t wait to see how God uses this journey through Ephesians to draw you closer to Him.

Weekly Practices

SHARE A MEAL

Have at least one intentional meal a week with at least one other person. During the meal, practice being fully present by putting your phones off and away. View these meals as a way to build the unity of the body of Christ in your family, in your friendships, and in your neighborhoods. Around the table, you can practice listening well, encouraging one another, and living on mission where you live, work, and play.

“Deeper” Conversation Ideas:

- What has been one highlight from your week?
- Where have you noticed God at work recently?
- What is something you are learning about yourself, God, or others?
- Who is someone that has encouraged you recently?
- What is one way we can pray for you this week?
- How can we help each other become more like Jesus?

COMMUNITY GROUPS

Whether it's a table group, small group, classroom, or living room, have a community around you that you gather with weekly. Use the weekly discussion guides (or, honestly, to talk about what YOU feel led to talk about; we won't be too hurt if you go off script). Share a meal, talk with each other, listen to each other, and pray for each other as you learn to become more like Jesus together.





SABBATH

Each week, set aside intentional time to rest with God. The goal of Sabbath is to step away from the demands of work and busyness so you can remember that your identity is found in Christ, not in what you accomplish. Sabbath reminds us that God is enough, and invites us to slow down, be present with Him, and trust that He is the One who sustains us.

Sabbath Practice Ideas:

- **Create space from distractions.** Put your phone away, or limit yourself to intentional communication with family and friends. Step away from social media, emails, and whatever forms of distraction keep you from being present with God.
- **Light a candle.** Use a physical reminder of God's presence and the work of the Holy Spirit in your life.
- **Spend time in creation.** Take a walk, slow down, and notice the beauty of what God has made. Go outside and touch some grass.
- **Listen and worship.** Spend time with worship music, allowing your heart and mind to turn toward God.
- **Practice stillness.** Take a few moments to slow your breathing, quiet your thoughts, and become aware of God's presence with you.
- **Spend time in Scripture.** Read slowly, reflect on God's Word, and allow Him to speak into your life.
- **Spend time with loved ones.** Practice being present with the people God has placed around you.

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

Before you begin, it is really important that we gauge where we are with our own hearts on some of the things that Ephesians deals with. Each one of us has our own way of living life and how we look at that life too. That is why we need to be able to come to this place together as a church, just like the church in Ephesus.

That being said, we want to have these questions for us to answer both before and after this 8-week study so that you can understand where you are now and so that we can all celebrate where God has brought us together as a church family. So, answer them honestly, but at the same time, don't gather any shame from the questions either. Only you will see these and God wants to grow us all in these things anyways!

1 = Never 2 = Seldom 3 = Occasionally 4 = Frequent 5 = Very Frequent

Before After

- | | | |
|-------|-------|---|
| _____ | _____ | How often do you spend time with God on your own? |
| _____ | _____ | How often do you think about how God made you? |
| _____ | _____ | How often do you spend time in prayer? |
| _____ | _____ | How often do you pray for other people? |
| _____ | _____ | How often do you think of the greater mission of the Church? |
| _____ | _____ | How often would you say that you are reminded that you are different now that you follow Jesus? |

How would you describe your identity as a person?

When you think of other believers, what does that prompt you to do?

In your mind, what does it look like to be made new?

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines, typical of notebook paper. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.



WEEK ONE

DAY ONE

DEEP

Opening prayer:

Father God, as I take a deep breath and gather my scattered thoughts, I turn my thoughts to Jesus Christ. May I experience the love and grace that comes from Your presence.

READ:

Ephesians 1:1-6

As the letter to the Ephesians opens, Paul immediately grounds us in the Gospel truths that God loves us, that God chose us, and that God adopted us through Jesus Christ. Praise God for what He has done for us through His Son, Jesus Christ!

Take a look through this scripture again and note the blessings that Paul lists out (you can underline or circle them if that is helpful to you).

Make a list of the blessings that stand out to you.

What do these mean for you, personally?

Take some time to give thanks in prayer for the spiritual blessings you have been given.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. What stands out to you about the nature of God through this opening poem?
2. Since God's nature was to love us and choose us before He made the world, where is that love experienced or applied in your life?
3. Through Jesus, the work God started in the family of Abraham is brought to all of humanity, so that anyone could be a son or daughter of God. How could/has that sense of belonging shaped your inner life (ie your sense of identity and worth, your thoughts, hopes, dreams, your devotion and passion...)?
4. How could/has that sense of belonging shape your outer life (ie habits, choices, actions, behaviors...)?

Prayer

Spend some time in prayer. Try praising or thanking God, similar to Paul did in our scripture today, or spend time praying over whatever the Holy Spirit brings to your mind.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



[illegible]



DAY TWO

DEEP

Opening prayer:

Father God, as I take a deep breath and gather my scattered thoughts, I turn my thoughts to Jesus Christ. May I experience the love and grace that comes from Your presence.

READ:

Ephesians 1:7-10

In His kindness, God has shown us that Christ's purpose is to redeem everything in heaven and on earth. Even in our sin, the grace of God looks to restore and redeem. Everything will be brought back to God, through the sacrifice of Jesus Christ.

Take a look through this scripture again and note where you see Paul reflecting on the kindness of God (you can underline or circle them if that is helpful to you).

What does redemption mean to you?

REDEMPTION: the process where sinful humanity is brought back from the bondage of sin into relationship with God through grace by the payment of Jesus' Death on the cross.

Where do you see redemption in your own life? Where do you see redemption through other stories? Through the global Church?

Take some time to give thanks in prayer for the kindness you have been shown by God through Jesus Christ.



DEEPER

Journal:

1. If God's ultimate plan is to redeem all things through Christ (vs 10), how does that affect the way you see your worst sins and failures? Do you still feel bound by shame, or are you learning to walk in the freedom of God's grace?
2. Let's zoom out more. If God's ultimate plan is to redeem all things through Christ, how does that affect the way you see the brokenness of the world around us? What role can we play in God's work of redemption and restoration in the places we live, work, and play?

Prayer:

As we reflect on the redemption of all things through Jesus, spend some time in prayer surrendering something that has been weighing on you. In the space provided, write down a word or short phrase that represents something you feel burdened or bound by. This could be something personal, something you see in another person's life, or something broken in the world around you.

Once you've written down your word or phrase, take your pen or pencil and begin drawing a circle around it. As you draw the first circle, pray something like, "God, I bind this in Your grace and power." Continue tracing circles around what you've written, and picture Jesus lifting this burden from your heart. As you pray, surrender this to Him and ask for His redemption, healing, and restoration.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.

[illegible]



DAY THREE

DEEP

Opening prayer:

Father God, as I take a deep breath and gather my scattered thoughts, I turn my thoughts to Jesus Christ. May I experience the love and grace that comes from Your presence.

READ:

Ephesians 1:11-14

First the Jews and then the Gentiles have been brought into God's family by the work of the Holy Spirit. Now, we are all one as the family of God. Through the work of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, both Jews and Gentiles are adopted into God's family together, fulfilling God's promises from the very beginning.

What does Paul think the inheritance of God is (you can underline or circle the answers if that is helpful to you)?
How would you describe the Holy Spirit?

The Holy Spirit is the Third Person of the Trinity. The Holy Spirit is God in action, and the personal presence of God. The Holy Spirit is God speaking to us, convicting us, empowering us and regenerating us; the presence and power of God within us.

How have you seen or felt the Holy Spirit move?

Take some time to pray that you would be made more aware of the power of the Holy Spirit present in your day. have been shown by God through Jesus Christ.

DEEPER

Extra Reading: Acts 2

Journal:

1. How does the promise of the Holy Spirit bring you comfort, confidence, or conviction?
2. If God's presence within us is both a present reality and a future promise, how does that shape the way you live today?
3. How does knowing there is still more to come impact your hope, your perspective, or the way you trust God in everyday life?

Prayer:

Take a moment to sit in the presence of God. Close your eyes and take a minute to focus yourself by breathing in deeply and breathing out slowly. As you are centering yourself, take a moment to get yourself as comfortable as possible. As you keep breathing deeply, imagine that the Holy Spirit is the air around you. Sit quietly for a few moments, as long as you feel comfortable, resting and imagining that the air you breathe in is the Holy Spirit. Once you are ready to move on, end with a short prayer of gratitude.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



NOTES

[illegible]



DAY FOUR

DEEP

Opening prayer:

Father God, as I take a deep breath and gather my scattered thoughts, I turn my thoughts to Jesus Christ. May I experience the love and grace that comes from Your presence.

READ:

Ephesians 1:15-18

Paul was inspired by the faith of the people in Ephesus, to the point that he prayed for them to experience their faith even more fully, with wisdom and insight, and to give them the ability to see their life and calling through the lens of the Holy Spirit.

Who are some people in your life who you admire for their faith? Write down their names and reflect on what it is about their walk with God that inspires you.

Take a few moments to pray for them, using Paul's prayer as a guide. Ask God to deepen their faith, strengthen their hearts, and continue revealing Himself to them.

End your time praying for yourself, that you would see the world through the lens of the Holy Spirit, seeing your purpose and calling as a rich and glorious inheritance from God.



DEEPER

Journal:

1. What are some ways you can discern whether the wisdom or insight you're receiving is truly coming from the Holy Spirit?
2. What is an area of your life where you need spiritual wisdom and insight right now? Are there ways you may need to change your perspective or approach so that, instead of being led by fear or doubt, you are filled with God's light, wisdom, and hope?

Prayer:

Spend some time giving thanks to God for the spiritual mothers and fathers He has put into your life, and the example they set for you. End your prayer asking for wisdom in how you can be that spiritual mentor for other people.

Spend some time lifting your concerns to God, praying for the spiritual wisdom and insight that we've focused on today. Where does God want to change you and grow your faith? Where are you needing the eyes of your heart to be opened by the Holy Spirit?

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.

[illegible]



DAY FIVE

DEEP

Opening prayer:

Father God, as I take a deep breath and gather my scattered thoughts, I turn my thoughts to Jesus Christ. May I experience the love and grace that comes from Your presence.

READ:

Ephesians 1:19-23

We end this week with a powerful reminder; the power that rose Christ from the grave lives in us, too, through the power of the Holy Spirit. May we not just know about the power of the Father, Son, and Spirit working together, but experience that power as the Church!

Underline the words or phrases that stand out to you from this passage about the power or authority of the Godhead. What fears, pressures, or struggles in your life need to be brought under Christ's authority? Take a moment to reflect and write these out.

Spend time in prayer offering yourself to the Lord. If it's helpful, imagine laying your fears or pressures at His feet and offering a prayer like this; "Lord, Your power is more than anything I can understand. I know that You can handle anything I give You; let me experience that power in my life through Your transforming love."

DEEPER

Listen to the song “Remember” by Bryan and Katie Torwalt.

Prayer:

End this week with a time of focused prayer.

1. Adoration: spend some time praising and worshipping the God who is so big, but also sees the most small and mundane things.
2. Confession: what do you need to lay at the feet of the Lord? Is there a sin, something you are withholding, something that is keeping you from a deeper relationship with the Lord? What do you need to ask forgiveness for?
3. Thankfulness: After a time of confession, focus on the gifts and blessings of God. We’ve talked about a lot of them this week. Feel free to list them out if that’s helpful.
4. Supplication: Ask the Lord to walk with you and guide you through your struggles and fears, or lift up the fears and struggles of others.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.

NOTES

[illegible]

WEEKLY SMALL GROUP GUIDE: WEEK ONE

Opening Prayer:

Father God, you have given us every spiritual blessing through Your Son, Jesus Christ. Let this time be encouraging to us and glorifying to You.

Breathe in: You are here with us.

Breathe out: Let us focus this time with you.

Check In:

- What stood out to you from this week's sermon or readings? (ie What was new? What was exciting/hopeful?)
- Are there any things you are confused by or have questions about?
- What is the good news of this gospel message to you this week?

The Big Question:

Are you living as a new creation? What differences do you see between your old life and your new life in Christ?

Scripture Reading:

Have someone read Ephesians 1:7-10 out loud.

Ask:

1. What comes to mind when you think of redemption? How would you define redemption?
2. Let's share some stories of where you see redemption in your life. Where do you see redemption through other stories? Through the global Church?
3. What makes redemption difficult to trust when we're in the middle of pain or waiting?
4. What part of your life do you need to trust God isn't finished working on yet? What about in the world around you?

Prayer

Here are some ideas of how we can pray for each other. After someone shares, what's one truth about God's redemption we can remind them of?

1. What is an area of your life that you see needing God's redemption?
2. What is an area of your life that you are celebrating God's presence?
3. Are there any things we can lift up in prayer for each other?

Father God, thank you for this time together. As we leave this gathering, let it be in step with you. Let everything and everyone we encounter this week be transformed by the redeeming power and love of Jesus. Amen.at power in my life through Your transforming love."



[illegible]



WEEK TWO

DAY ONE

DEEP

Prayer: God, today, as I am looking toward you and desiring to see myself rightly from your point of view, help me to remember with clear eyes and to turn to you because of it.

READ:

Ephesians 2:1-3

When we look at these verses, it is meant to be a wake-up call. When Paul wrote this to the Ephesian believers, he understood that these believers were young in their faith and needed a new understanding of where they stood in relation to the sin that they carried and ultimately the cross.

Think about that for yourself. No matter if you are new in your faith or you have followed Jesus for a long time, it is important for us to remember where we have come from. The fact that the sin we have committed is what made us dead spiritually.

Think about some of the things that Paul is talking about for your life. What are the cravings of your flesh? The things that have and maybe are trying to pull you away from the Lord now? It is good for us to remember our human nature and to pay attention to what might try to pluck us away from God.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. When you reflect on your life, what are the things that made you “once dead” as Paul mentions?
2. Are there things that are still bothering you and maybe convicting you now that are still in your old ways?
3. How does your faith feel now? Are you living in a way that these things are old ways or are you still in the process? (Don't forget that this is a journey!)

Prayer:

Spend time with God in prayer over the things that He died for. Our sin was the problem that the cross fixed, so lean into that thankful gratitude today.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



[illegible]



DAY TWO

DEEP

Opening prayer:

God, today, as I remember your love, help me to live and walk in it and to deeply feel the love that you have for me.

READ:

Ephesians 2:4-5

What a relief to be alive in Christ! Do you feel the sweet difference between the verses from yesterday to today? It is so good for us to know our place with God because of our sin, but greater still, to remember everything changes because our debt has been paid on the cross.

It's like waking up one day to find that someone looked at all of your debt and struck a single check that satisfied it all. Done. Complete. Alive!

There are two things that are so important for us to remember here and we should take a second to process them today as we are here.

It was because of His love
You cannot separate grace from love. Paul makes sure of that here and reminds us that it's not for any other reason than His love that we are saved and the debt has been paid.

It is by His grace that we are saved
If love is the why, then grace is the how. They are tied for eternity together and we have got to remember that there isn't something we could do to earn these things. God loved us, so He saved us. (period)

DEEPER

Journal:

1. When you reflect on your life, do you think that you feel alive? What does that mean to you?
2. Salvation is so important and this is the full reality of what we need from God. Have you taken the chance to really trust in Jesus for your salvation? If you have, remember that moment and write down what you remember.
3. When you think about where you are today, what would you want to say to God in response to His grace? I mean, Jesus died for your sins, how would you respond to Him?

Prayer:

Now that you wrote out your response, pray it to Him!

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



NOTES

[illegible]



DAY THREE

DEEP

Opening prayer:

God, today, as I am looking toward you and desiring to see myself rightly from your point of view, help me to remember with clear eyes and to turn to you because of it.

READ:

Ephesians 2:6-7

I don't know about you, but there are many times when I think about myself and the life that I have lived and I fear that I am just not enough. I feel like I have messed up too much and I am just a bad decision away from un-earning God's love.

These verses in particular are the place where I feel God calling me the other way. It's where He reminds me that I am not down in the depths, but really and truly I have a throne to sit on. You and I both are seated with Him in heavenly places. Because of what He has done and how He has loved us so much, we are not considered low, but great enough to have a high seat.

Don't miss the question that is in between these two verses!
Why?

Why? To showcase God's grace and kindness! To glorify Him!



DEEPER

Journal:

1. Have you thought of yourself as someone who has a high seat to sit on in heaven? What does that mean to you in your daily life today?
2. Do you feel like someone who is deserving of that? Either way, how does that make you feel that God says it's true?

Prayer:

Spend time with God over the reality that He has made space for you to have a high seat with Him. Ask Him why, ask Him what that means for today, thank Him for it!

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.

[illegible]



DAY FOUR

DEEP

Opening prayer:

God, help me to remember that our relationship is not about work. I want to live in your freedom and work from that place.

READ:

Ephesians 2:8-9

Yesterday we talked about how love is the why, grace is the how, and today we know that faith is the vehicle for grace doing its work. Not only that, but it is nothing that we can do ourselves! Those are some of the most freeing words that we could hear, but that concept is one of the hardest things to fully accept in our Christian walk.

Sure, God calls us to do things, but we have to remember that those things are not us earning our salvation. We cannot do that. We have to find a way to accept that and live in a way that we have been saved. Sometimes that is really hard, but today, I think we can sit with that. Even if it's just a reminder.

Again, we have a why. Why would God give this just as a gift and not have us earn it? Because no one should be able to boast that they are good enough. It is God's grace and His grace alone that saves. Today we remember that!





DEEPER

Journal:

1. Have you ever lived in a way that would suggest that you are living to please God instead of living in His grace? What did that look like?
2. Because the freedom of God is what we are talking about today, do you actually feel free from trying to work your way to salvation? If not, why do you think that is?
3. We really need to have this freedom in the forefront of our mind. Think about how your life exudes your freedom. If you lived free from sin, what would be different about your life today?

Prayer:

Spend time asking God to remind you that you don't have to work for your salvation. Bring your gratitude, and humbly ask for that reminder of your freedom.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.





[illegible]



DAY FIVE

DEEP

Opening prayer:

God, today, as I am looking toward you and desiring to see myself rightly from your point of view, help me to remember with clear eyes and to turn to you because of it.

READ:

Ephesians 2:10

So often we are easily distracted from the truth. How many of us, at some point in our lives, have struggled to see ourselves in a true light that actually reflects who we are, what our purpose is, and if we have value?

The really great thing about this verse from Ephesians is that it doubles down on something that we already know to be true. Straight from Genesis 1, we know that God made us in His image. Right from the jump that separated us from all other Creation. He made us for relationship with Him. He made us with intrinsic value. Meaning that we have value without effort or someone else's decision. Paul doubles down on the worth that we have by further showing our value. We are God's handiwork.

Have you ever made something before? Even if you went to kindergarten this is probably a resounding yes, but what I want you to think about is something that you made and took time to really pull together with care. I remember an instrument that I made in my early twenties that I took so much pride in making and I absolutely loved having and showing off when I had the chance. That is what it means for us to be God's handiwork. We have value! He is proud and wants to put us on display! That is why He has created us to do good works and He has even prepared them for us!



Don't let today pass without you remembering your value AND that He has stuff for you to do and be a part of. Now for the adventure to see what that looks like in your life!

DEEPER

Journal:

1. Do you feel like God's handiwork? No matter where you are at, process that a little bit.
2. Have you thought about the good works that God has for you? What are some of the things in the past that you feel like fit into that category?
3. What is something that you desire to do that you think God might be preparing you for?

Prayer:

Spend time with God in prayer specifically around the works and life that He has prepared for you. Remember to ask and remember that you are His handiwork.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



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WEEKLY SMALL GROUP GUIDE: WEEK TWO

Opening Prayer:

God, we know that one of the deepest things we can know about ourselves is that we are deeply loved and created to be yours. This week, we want to acknowledge you as the master creator and we want to remember what you really created us for.

Check In:

1. What stood out to you from this week's sermon or readings? (ie What was new? What was exciting/hopeful or maybe just a good reminder for you?)
2. Are there any things you are confused by or have questions about?
3. How does this change your view of yourself and God in creation?

Scripture Reading:

Have someone read Ephesians 2:1-10 out loud.

Ask:

1. Think through how you see yourself, do you feel like God's masterpiece?
2. Part of the idea of knowing our place in relationship with God is understanding how He sees us. Part of it is that we are part of His work. What does your kingdom work look like?
3. What does it look like for you to not try to boast in your works, but trust that its grace that really saves?

Prayer

Here are some ideas of how we can pray for each other. After everyone shares, what's one truth about us as God's people that we can share?

Father God, thank you for this time together. As we are walking through this week, God, help us to remember that we are your masterpiece and that we have something to do that you have planned for us. We want to live in your ways and close to you. We love you and want to see you move in us. In Jesus' name, Amen.



Fall Devotionals | Week 2



WEEK THREE

DAY ONE

DEEP

Opening Prayer:

Father God, thank You for inviting me into Your family through Jesus Christ. As I spend time with You today, open my heart to understand the depth of Your grace. Help me see that I do not belong because of my own goodness or effort, but because You have lovingly brought me near. Give me eyes to see Your faithfulness throughout history and my place in Your story. Amen.

READ:

Ephesians 2:11-13 | (Also read Romans 11:17-24.)

Paul reminds the Gentile believers to remember who they once were... People separated from Christ, excluded from God's covenant people, and without hope. But then comes one of the greatest phrases in Scripture: "But now in Christ Jesus..." **Everything has changed because of Jesus.**

In Romans 11, Paul describes believers as wild olive branches grafted into God's family tree. We weren't added because we deserved it; we were welcomed because of God's mercy. Through Jesus, God's promises are extended to all who believe.

As you read both passages:

- Underline or circle every phrase that describes life before Christ.
- Underline or circle every phrase that describes what Christ has done.
- What words best describe your new identity?



- Spend time thanking Jesus for bringing you near from the Lord now? It is good for us to remember our human nature and to pay attention to what might try to pluck us away from God.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. Why do you think Paul begins by telling believers to remember who they once were?
2. What does the image of being grafted into God's family teach you about His grace?
3. Have you ever struggled with feeling like an outsider? How does today's passage speak into that?
4. How should remembering God's grace shape the way you welcome others?

Prayer:

Spend time thanking God that His family has room for you because of Jesus. Ask Him to help you extend that same grace to others.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.







DAY TWO

PEACE IN UNITY

Opening Prayer

Jesus, thank You for being our peace. When division, conflict, or pride rise within me, remind me that You tore down every wall that separates us. Teach me to value unity the way You do and to love others as You have loved me. Amen.

READ:

Ephesians 2:14-15

Paul doesn't simply say Jesus gives peace... Jesus says he is our peace.

Through His death, Christ tore down the dividing wall between Jews and Gentiles. What centuries of hostility had built, Jesus seemed to have destroyed the wall in one act of sacrificial love. Even though there is still much work to be done... The Gospel doesn't erase our uniqueness, but it removes every barrier that prevents us from being one family in Christ.

As you read:

- Circle every action Jesus takes.
- Underline the words "our peace."
- Reflect on what walls Jesus has already torn down.





DEEPER

Journal:

1. What kinds of walls separated people in Paul's day?
2. What walls tend to divide people today?
3. Are there any walls in your own heart that still need to come down?
4. How can you become someone who actively builds peace instead of division?

Prayer:

Invite God to search your heart. If there is resentment, prejudice, pride, or unforgiveness, surrender it to Him. Ask Jesus to make you an ambassador of His peace.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



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DAY THREE

DEEP:

Opening Prayer

Father, thank you that I never have to wonder whether you want me close. Through Jesus, You have welcomed me into Your presence. Help me live each day with confidence that I belong near You. Amen.

READ:

Ephesians 2:16-17

Jesus didn't simply make peace between people... He brought us to God.

Because of our sin, we were separated from our Creator. But through the cross, Jesus removed the greatest barrier of all. Now those who were "far away" and those who were "near" hear the same invitation: Come to the Father through Christ.

As you read:

- Underline every reference to reconciliation.
- Circle every mention of peace.
- Notice who receives this invitation.



DEEPER

Journal:

1. What does reconciliation with God mean to you personally?
2. How is being “brought near” different from simply being forgiven?
3. When do you tend to feel distant from God?
4. What practices help you remain aware of His nearness?

Prayer:

Spend time simply enjoying God’s presence. Thank Him that because of Jesus, you are welcomed into His presence with confidence and joy.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges on page ____ and intentionally spend extra time with God this week, not out of obligation, but because you have been welcomed near.

Fall Devotionals | Week 3



DAY THREE

DEEP:

Opening Prayer

Father, thank you that I never have to wonder whether you want me close. Through Jesus, You have welcomed me into Your presence. Help me live each day with confidence that I belong near You. Amen.

READ:

Ephesians 2:16-17

Jesus didn't simply make peace between people... He brought us to God.

Because of our sin, we were separated from our Creator. But through the cross, Jesus removed the greatest barrier of all. Now those who were "far away" and those who were "near" hear the same invitation: Come to the Father through Christ.

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- Circle every mention of peace.
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DEEPER

Journal:

1. What does reconciliation with God mean to you personally?
2. How is being “brought near” different from simply being forgiven?
3. When do you tend to feel distant from God?
4. What practices help you remain aware of His nearness?

Prayer:

Spend time simply enjoying God’s presence. Thank Him that because of Jesus, you are welcomed into His presence with confidence and joy.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges on page ____ and intentionally spend extra time with God this week, not out of obligation, but because you have been welcomed near.



[illegible]



DAY FOUR

DEEP:

Opening Prayer

Father, thank You that through Christ I am no longer an outsider but a citizen of Your Kingdom and a member of Your family. Help me live as someone who belongs to You and reflects Your Kingdom wherever I go. Amen.

READ:

Ephesians 2:18-20

Paul uses two beautiful pictures of our identity. We are citizens of God's Kingdom and members of God's household. As citizens, we have a new allegiance. Scripture tells us that we belong to the family of God. And family members have a place to belong. Through Jesus, we receive both. We are no longer spiritual strangers trying to earn acceptance... We have been welcomed home!

As you read:

- Circle the words that describe your identity.
- Underline the foundation upon which God's household is built.
- Reflect on what it means to belong to God's family.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. What differences do you notice between being a visitor and being family?
2. How does your citizenship in God's Kingdom shape your priorities?
3. Where are you tempted to seek belonging outside of Christ?
4. How can you help others experience belonging within God's family?

Prayer:

God, Thank you for giving you a permanent place in your family. I ask you to help me live as a faithful citizen of your Kingdom and a loving member of your household.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



[illegible]



DAY FIVE

DEEP:

Opening Prayer

Holy Spirit, thank You for making Your home among Your people. Continue shaping me into someone who reflects Jesus and builds up your Church. Teach me that I was never meant to follow You alone, but together with Your people. Amen.

READ:

Ephesians 2:21-22

Paul ends this section with a remarkable picture.

The Church is like a building, with Jesus as the cornerstone. Every believer is carefully joined together into one holy temple where God lives by His Spirit.

Notice that Paul speaks both for individuals and also the people as a whole. God is transforming you (individual), and He is building us collectively (the church). Our faith life is deeply personal, but it was never intended to be private. The church isn't a building at all... It's us!

As you read:

- Circle every reference to being built together.
- Underline every reference to God's presence.
- Reflect on Jesus as the cornerstone of your life.



DEEPER

Journal:

1. Why do you think Paul describes believers as a building instead of individual stones lying separately?
2. What does it mean for Jesus to be the cornerstone?
3. How is God shaping you personally right now?
4. How is He using you to strengthen His Church?

Prayer:

Ask God to continue His work in your life and within your church family. Pray that your community would become a place where people experience God's presence, love, truth, and grace.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



[illegible]

WEEKLY SMALL GROUP GUIDE: WEEK THREE

Opening Prayer:

God, this week, we want to know what its like and choose to live in unity. We want to be one in you and we want to live in the kind of unity that is honoring to you and your sacrifice.

Check In:

1. What stood out to you from this week's sermon or readings? (ie What was new? What was exciting/hopeful or maybe just a good reminder for you?)
2. Are there any things you are confused by or have questions about?
3. When was the last time you thought about unity in the body of Christ?

Scripture Reading:

Have someone read Ephesians 2:11-22 out loud.

Ask:

4. It's not very often that we think about our being gentiles. What does it mean to you to be grafted in like we talked about this week?
5. Do you think about the other Christians you know in your life as part of your family?
6. Is there anyone that you need to reconcile with for the sake of unity?

Prayer

Here are some ideas of how we can pray for each other. After everyone who wants to share does, what is the truth that we need to hold to about unity?

Father God, thank you for this time together. As we think through and work out what it looks like for us to be unified like you created us for, help us to seek that out with the people that you call us to live next to here. We want to be agents of unity in your kingdom. In Jesus' name we pray, amen.

[illegible]



WEEK FOUR

DAY ONE

DEEP

Opening Prayer:

Father God, as I take a deep breath and gather my scattered thoughts, I turn my thoughts to Jesus Christ. May I experience the love and grace that comes from Your presence.

READ:

Ephesians 3:1-6

Paul reveals a mystery that had been hidden for generations: through Jesus Christ, Gentiles are now included in the family of God. We are not outsiders or second-class citizens. Through Christ, we have become heirs together in the promise of God. Read through this passage again and underline or circle the phrases that describe who we are in Christ.

What does it mean to you personally that you are included in God's family? Where have you struggled to feel like you belong? Take some time to thank God in prayer for adopting you into His family through Jesus Christ.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. Why do you think people often struggle to believe they are fully accepted by God?
2. How does being called an “heir together with Christ” shape your identity and worth?
3. What barriers or labels does the Gospel remove between people?
4. How can you reflect God’s welcoming heart toward others this week?

Prayer:

Spend some time praying through areas where you feel unworthy, unseen, or excluded.

Ask God to help you live from the security of being fully loved and fully included in His family.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



[illegible]



DAY TWO

DEEP:

Opening Prayer:

Father God, as I take a deep breath and gather my scattered thoughts, I turn my thoughts to Jesus Christ. May I experience the love and grace that comes from Your presence.

READ:

Ephesians 3:7-9

Paul describes the grace given to him to preach “the boundless riches of Christ.” The Gospel is not merely information to learn; it is a relationship to know deeply and personally.

Read back through the passage and note every reference to grace, calling, or mystery. What do you think Paul means by “the boundless riches of Christ”? How have you experienced the grace of God personally? Spend some time thanking God for making Himself known through Jesus Christ.



DEEPER

Journal:

1. What keeps people from truly knowing God personally rather than just knowing about Him?
2. Where are you currently hungry for deeper understanding or intimacy with God?
3. How has God revealed His grace to you during difficult seasons of life?
4. What practices help you slow down enough to listen to God?

Prayer:

Invite God to search your heart. If there is resentment, prejudice, pride, or unforgiveness, surrender it to Him. Ask Jesus to make you an ambassador of His peace.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



NOTES

[illegible]



DAY THREE

DEEP:

Opening Prayer:

Father God, as I take a deep breath and gather my scattered thoughts, I turn my thoughts to Jesus Christ. May I experience the love and grace that comes from Your presence.

READ:

Ephesians 3:10-13

God's wisdom is now being made known through the Church. Through ordinary people empowered by the Spirit, God displays His glory and grace to the world.

Read through this scripture again and underline the words or phrases that describe God's purpose for the Church. What stands out to you about God choosing people like us to reveal His wisdom? Where do you see opportunities to reflect Jesus to others? Spend time praying that God would use your life to point people toward Him.



DEEPER

Journal:

1. Why do you think God chooses imperfect people to carry His message?
2. What fears or insecurities keep you from boldly representing Christ?
3. How can the Church better display unity, grace, and wisdom to the world?
4. What would it look like for you to intentionally make Christ known this week?

Prayer:

Pray for boldness and courage. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you represent Jesus well through your words, actions, relationships, and attitude.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



[illegible]



DAY FOUR

DEEP:

Opening Prayer:

Father God, as I take a deep breath and gather my scattered thoughts, I turn my thoughts to Jesus Christ. May I experience the love and grace that comes from Your Presence.

READ:

Ephesians 3:14-19

Paul prays one of the most powerful prayers in Scripture: that believers would be strengthened through the Spirit and rooted deeply in the love of Christ.

Read through the passage again and underline the phrases describing God's strength, love, and fullness. What images or phrases stand out most to you from Paul's prayer? Where in your life do you need the strength of Christ right now? Spend some time asking God to root you more deeply in His love.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. What does it mean to be “rooted and established in love”?
2. How can God’s love become more than just an idea and become a lived experience?
3. Where are you tempted to rely on your own strength instead of Christ’s power?
4. How would your relationships, choices, or emotions change if you truly believed how deeply God loves you?

Prayer:

Sit quietly and slowly reread verses 17-19. Imagine the love of Christ surrounding every anxious, fearful, or weary part of your life. Spend time resting in His presence.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



NOTES

[illegible]



DAY FIVE

DEEP:

Opening Prayer:

Father God, as I take a deep breath and gather my scattered thoughts, I turn my thoughts to Jesus Christ. May I experience the love and grace that comes from Your presence.

READ:

Ephesians 3:20-21

Paul closes this section with a reminder that God is able to do immeasurably more than we ask or imagine. Yet many times, we live with small expectations, hesitant prayers, and limited faith.

Read through these verses again and underline every phrase describing God's power and ability. What are some things you hesitate to ask God for? Why do you think we sometimes pray such small prayers? Spend some time bringing your biggest hopes, fears, dreams, and burdens honestly before God.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. What would change if you truly believed God could do more than you imagine?
2. Are there prayers you've stopped praying because of disappointment or discouragement?
3. How can faith grow even in seasons when answers seem delayed?
4. What bold prayer do you sense God inviting you to pray right now?

Prayer:

End this week with a focused time of prayer.

1. Adoration: Praise God for His greatness, power, and faithfulness.
2. Confession: Bring your fears, doubts, and hesitations honestly before Him.
3. Thanksgiving: Thank God for the ways He has already worked in your life.
4. Supplication: Ask boldly for God to move in your life, your family, your church, and your community.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



[illegible]

WEEKLY SMALL GROUP GUIDE: WEEK FOUR

Opening Prayer:

God, this week, this mystery is deep and is incredible for us to behold. Help us to see you and your plan for the nations fully and rightly.

Check In:

1. What stood out to you from this week's sermon or readings? (ie What was new? What was exciting/hopeful or maybe just a good reminder for you?)
2. Are there any things you are confused by or have questions about?
3. When was the last time you thought about unity in the body of Christ?

Scripture Reading:

Have someone read Ephesians 3:1-21 out loud.

Ask:

4. What does it mean to you that you have been made an heir of Christ? Do you feel that way?
5. What does it mean to you to have Christ dwell in your heart through faith? Why is that a big deal to our faith?
6. Your prayers actually affect change. How do you pray for God's kingdom here on earth?

Prayer

Here are some ideas of how we can pray for each other. After everyone who wants to share does, what is the truth that we need to hold to about our being heirs in Christ?

Father God, thank you for this time together. We want to revel in your mystery. The very fact that you chose to bring us close and make yourself known by us is a miracle. Thank you for all you have done for us. Help us to continue to seek you out this week.

[illegible]



WEEK FIVE

DAY ONE

DEEP

Opening Prayer:

Thank you for this opportunity to hear Paul's instruction to the church at Ephesus and to think about what it means to us today. I pray that you will open my heart and mind to the beauty and simplicity of God's plan and help me to understand and apply it in my life.

READ:

Ephesians 4:1-3

For centuries, the Jews had operated under the idea that they were God's chosen people. There was an institutionalized 'us versus them' mentality in how they looked at their relationship with God. Now Paul brings a new message, clarifying that it has been God's plan all along that the Jews and the Gentiles are to be united in one church and one body with Christ as the head. In these first 3 verses of chapter 4, Paul reminds us that when we gave our lives to Christ, it was not just about what we believe, but also about how we behave, especially towards one another.

Reflect:

- According to Paul in these verses, how are we supposed to live and how are we supposed to behave toward each other?
- Paul lists a set of behaviors we are supposed to demonstrate toward the world. Write them down and stop and think about what each one looks like in actual practice.
- How does this set of behaviors match up with the way of the world today?
- How would you rate how well you are doing in living out these attributes on a day-to-day basis? Are there any that are a particular challenge or struggle for you?



The good news is Jesus doesn't expect us to get it right every time and we don't need to change in our own strength. Stop now, pray, and ask the Holy Spirit to show you how you could do better and to help you to change your heart toward those around you with different beliefs and behaviors.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. When you read Paul urging us to live a life worthy of the calling we have received, what does that say to you? What is the calling we have received and what does it look like in actual practice?
2. Paul tells us to be humble, gentle, patient, and to bear with one another in love. Can you think of someone or some situation that is a real struggle for you to live out this instruction? What can you do to get back on the track that Paul describes?
3. Verse 3 explains that we are to achieve the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. How can you let the Spirit guide you and teach you to live in peace and unity?
4. How are we called to be different from the world around us that is filled with hate and self-centeredness? What does that look like in actual practice?
5. What are some specific things you can do to help to produce unity and peace?

Prayer

Take some time to pray, thanking God for the gift of the Holy Spirit, and ask the Holy Spirit to show you how to live out a life of peace and unity with those around you.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.

[illegible]



DAY TWO

DEEP:

Opening Prayer:

Heavenly Father, as we begin this devotion today, thank you for your blessings and your peace. Thank you for yesterday's lesson on how we should live in this world and for today's verses about living as one. Your plan is a perfect plan, help me to see it, understand it, and live it out.

READ:

Ephesians 4: 4-6 and John 14:6

Paul now drives home the idea of unity.... that we are all one church, and one family, with just one Father in Heaven. He emphasizes his point here by using the word 'one' over and over (a total of 7 times) in these 3 short verses:

- One body
- One Spirit
- One hope
- One Lord
- One faith
- One baptism
- One God and Father over all

Go through these verses and underline each time the word one is used. Circle the word that goes with one each time.

Reflect:

Notice that there is no mention of nationality, race, denomination, Jew, or Greek. We are all one, in one church, under God. How does that stack up with the way of the world today? How did we get to be the way we are? How did we become so divided? What can each of us do, individually, and as a church, to lessen the divide and promote the oneness that is Paul's plan?

Pray:

Pray for less division and more unity in the world, in our nation, in our community, and in our church. Our wounds will be healed by the power of the Spirit. We just need to ask.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. Paul reminds us we were called to one hope when we were called. What is your hope that you are called to?
2. When Paul points out that there is one Lord, one God and Father over all, he was speaking directly about the many gods who were worshipped in the Greek and Roman cultures. What other gods are worshipped in our culture today?
3. Thinking about your own life, are there other gods that you worship? They may be hidden to others or stuck away in a corner of your house or daily life? Write them down and ask the Holy Spirit to help you clean house.

Prayer:

Thank the Lord for his plan of redemption for the world and for each of us. Thank Him for Paul's reminder of those 'one's' that are most important in God's plan. Pray for the Holy Spirit to show you how to remove those things that conflict with God's plan of unity and peace.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



Fall Devotionals | Week 5

DAY THREE

DEEP:

Opening Prayer:

Heavenly Father, thank you for this new day and this new opportunity to focus on the words of your apostle Paul. Help me to put aside the distractions of the day and hear the messages in these verses – both for the people and the church at Ephesus as well as for me today.

READ:

Ephesians 4: 7-10

These next verses start out by reminding us of one of the most special gifts each one of us has received – grace. That undeserved, unconditional forgiveness is the common unifying gift that all of us have received from Jesus. He also acknowledges that we all don't need or receive the same amount of grace, but Jesus apportions it according to our individual need. That is, while we are all unified in our faith and hope, Jesus knows each of us as individuals and makes sure that we receive exactly the gift of grace we need.

Paul then takes a moment to remind us of who this Jesus is that has so generously apportioned the exact amount of grace that each of us needs. He quotes from Psalm 68:18 where the giver of gifts (grace) is described as one who ascended on high. And Paul observes that you can't ascend unless you first come down, as Jesus came to earth to teach, suffer, and die for all of us. Have you thought, lately, about the incredible gift that you have received? That each of us has received? It is one thing to say, 'I forgive you', but it is a whole other miracle to say, "I forgive all that you have done, are doing, and will do". We are forgiven!

Grace is often mentioned in scripture. Look up and read the following passages from the Bible about grace:

- Ephesians 2: 8-9
- Romans 5: 8
- Titus 2: 11-12



How would you describe grace? What does it mean to you? While you have been given the gift when you were saved, like any other gift it needs to be received, opened, unwrapped, and embraced. Have you received Jesus' gift of grace?

Stop right now and pray, thanking Jesus for his amazing grace. Tell him how grateful and thankful you are for his gift. Don't ask for anything.... just say thank you.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. Write out what grace means to you. How does it make you feel? Have you experienced the peace that comes from accepting the grace you have been given?
2. Does knowing that the gift of grace covers not just your past, but also your future, make life easier as you navigate the challenges of this world? How will you see the gift of grace show up as you go out into the world today?
3. How can you also give the gift of grace to those around you? What does it look like in actual practice?

Prayer:

Go to Jesus in prayer and thank him, specifically, for both his sacrifice for you and for the incredible gift of grace. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you how to pass along that gift of grace to those around you: family, friends, the person sitting next to you in the pew on Sunday morning, even the driver of that car that cut you off today. Ask also for the opportunity to show the grace of Jesus in this fallen world in which we live.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



[illegible]



DAY FOUR

DEEP:

Opening Prayer:

Hello, Lord. Thank you for being so faithful to meet me here and to walk alongside me in this study of Ephesians. It is a blessing to spend this time with you and your Word. Help me to put aside the distractions of the world and to calm my mind as I focus on this next portion of Ephesians 4.

READ:

Ephesians 4: 11-13

In this portion of Ephesians 4, Paul reassures us that Christ doesn't expect us to carry out his mission on our own and in our own strength. Instead, He has provided a group of especially equipped team members who He has prepared and equipped. Paul specifically calls out apostles and prophets whose role was to lay the foundation on which the church would be built (see Eph 2:20). He also provides evangelists such as Philip (Acts 21:8) and Timothy (2 Tim 4:5) to spread the Gospel. And finally, He provided for pastors and teachers whose chief function is described in Acts 20:28. These people were given special gifts of ministry with a specific purpose in God's plan which is described in verse 12. There Paul explains that these apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers were equipped and sent for the purpose of equipping the people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up until we all reach unity in the faith. It was never God's plan for all of us to sit back and watch the 'professionals' do the work of the church. It is God's plan that WE do the work, after we have been equipped and built up.

Reflect:

Have you thought about the role of church staff compared to the role of the members of the church? What do you see as the difference between the two? What is their role and purpose? What is your role and purpose? How can we as members of the church support those who have been given special ministry gifts and help them to fulfill their role in God's plan for the church? What do we need to do to pick up the work they have prepared us for and carry it forward out into the community?

Take a moment right now to pray for the staff, elders, and ministry leaders of the church. Pray for strength, wisdom, discernment, and a special anointing by the Holy Spirit to carry out the roles they have been prepared for. Also pray for understanding and discernment on your part about how you can come alongside those leaders and help to grow and mature the church.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. Do you know what your specific gifts and calling are in service to Jesus in the church? If yes, write them down and identify how you can start to actively put them to work. If not, ask the Holy Spirit to speak clearly to you and show you what He would have you do. Is there someone you could talk to who could guide you in service? Write down that person's name and describe how you will approach them for guidance and support.
2. What does "unity in the faith" look like to you? Write out your definition, as well as how close are we to achieving the unity described by Paul here? Are we there already or do we still have work to do? What about you? Are you contributing to unity in the faith or are you simply watching others do the work? Write down those areas where you feel called or think you could make a difference. Find out today how you can put your gifts and calling to work.

Prayer:

Spend some time giving thanks for Jesus' provision of these special people who are called to lead in the local church. Pray for protection for them and their families, both physically and spiritually.

Ask God to show you how you can put what He has given you in the way of gifts and abilities to work for His glory and for His purposes. Ask Him for guidance, wisdom, and discernment about how you can put what He has given you to work for Him.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.

Fall Devotionals | Week 5



DAY FIVE

DEEP:

Opening prayer:

Thank you, Lord, for your presence with me this week as I have studied and thought about how the church is supposed to function and how I am to carry out my part in your plan for the church. Now, quiet my heart and mind and speak clearly to me as I focus on this final portion of Ephesians 4.

READ:

Ephesians 4: 14-16

In these final verses of this section, Paul describes the goal we are to be seeking....to mature in Christ. In his ministry, Paul traveled from town to town preaching the Good News and establishing churches. Those new churches were filled with brand new believers. Those new believers were very vulnerable to attacks by Satan, confusion spread by the Judaizers who preached a message of 'Gospel + Jewish rules and traditions', and the pressures of the world around them, especially the Greek and Roman cultures of the time. Those new believers could have their faith tossed and turned as if they were in a storm. We face those same storms and pressures today. The solution is to grow deeper in our relationship with Jesus and more mature in our faith. That maturity in the faith is what allows us to weather the storms of doubt and confusion and to remain strong in our faith in Jesus.

Think about your own faith journey. Do you remember when your faith was new and young? Do you remember the thoughts, questions, and doubts that you faced? While it was all new and exciting then, it was also a time of fragility and danger. Contrast that with where you are in your faith journey today? Have you grown? Do you feel as if you are more mature in your faith? Why or why not? How has it come about? What has helped you to become more mature in your relationship with Jesus?



Spend time in prayer, asking God to show you where you are in your faith journey and your progression to the maturity that Paul describes in these verses. Thank Him for what he has taught you so far and ask him to continue to give you wisdom, discernment, and maturity in your faith.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. God puts others in our lives to be examples or help us in our faith journey. Think about those believers you know who you would consider to be mature in their faith. Write their names down. For each one, write down what it is about them that makes you think they are mature in their faith. What are the lessons you can learn from each of them to help you in your faith journey?
2. Write down a specific plan for how you will continue to mature in your faith. What are you going to do? How and when are you going to do it? Who will you ask to help, mentor, or coach you in your journey? Who can be your Paul?
3. Is there someone in your circle who needs a coach, mentor, or friend that you can come alongside and help them to mature in their faith? Write down their name and how you will approach them and offer to help them.

Prayer:

Go to the Lord in prayer and thank Him for his faithfulness to take you under his wings, to bless you with the gift of faith, and to put other believers in your life who can help you to grow and mature in your faith. Thank Him for not leaving you on your own and for bringing you to this church and this family of believers.

Pray for wisdom, discernment, an energy to grow in your faith and ask the Holy Spirit to show you what you need to do and how you need to do it to become an active and engaged part of this church family.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.

[illegible]

WEEKLY SMALL GROUP GUIDE: WEEK FIVE

Opening Prayer:

God, because of your great love, we realize that there is a deep calling and connection that calls us home to what it looks like to be like you. Help us to live out your ways and to live as Holy because you are Holy.

Check In:

1. What stood out to you from this week's sermon or readings? (ie What was new? What was exciting/hopeful or maybe just a good reminder for you?)
2. Are there any things you are confused by or have questions about?
3. When was the last time you thought about unity in the body of Christ?

Scripture Reading:

Have someone read Ephesians 4:1-16 out loud.

Ask:

4. What does it look like to you, in 2026, to live a life that is worthy of the calling?
5. Why do you think it is important that Paul brings unity back up again here in this chapter?
6. In what ways are you allowing yourself to be equipped in the following of Jesus?

Prayer

Here are some ideas of how we can pray for each other. After everyone who wants to share does, what is the truth that we need to hold to in unity and maturity?

Father God, thank you for this time together. We realize that we need to strive together in unity. This is a high calling, and we don't want to neglect that aspect of it. Help us to treat it seriously, but to also make sure that we bring it to you together as a people. We want to be more and more like you.

[illegible]



WEEK SIX



DAY ONE

DEEP

Opening prayer:

Father God, today I honor you with my time and attention to what you might want to teach me. I turn my thoughts to Jesus Christ. May we feel unified in Your presence through Your Word.

READ:

Ephesians 4:17-19

Chapter four begins by focusing on the unity of the body of Christ. As we strive to live out this unified mission of spreading the Gospel, we must ensure that we are becoming Christ-like. In these specific verses, Paul commands that we put off behavior that displeases God. He is speaking of things that are working against unification with Christ.

Paul is not just offering his advice; he says, “I speak on the Lord’s authority,” and in some translations, it is stated that Paul “insists” that people stop behaving in ways that cause them to wander from God’s plan.

Paul communicates that the darkness of sin clouds the minds and hearts of the people. As you read over these verses slowly, think about whether you have any things that you think cause you to be close-minded or if your heart is hardened toward someone or something.





DEEPER

Journal:

1. Paul says, “With the Lord’s authority, I say this....” If Paul were writing this letter to you, what would he be speaking about?
2. What are the areas in your heart or mind that you think could use some attention and redirection? Journal through these and think about who a safe person or mentor could be to help you through this.
3. In verse 17, it says the Gentiles are “hopelessly confused.” We have hope in Jesus, and that is what unifies us. Write out a few praises or thoughts of gratitude.

Extra Reading: 2 Corinthians 4. Let this chapter be an encouragement to you.

Prayer

I praise and thank You, God, for the specific direction You have given me in challenging circumstances. God, help me not to wander off Your path and to trust that Your will is at work in my life.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



[illegible]



DAY TWO

DEEP:

Opening prayer:

Father God, thank you for renewing me as a child of God, created in your image. Help me to meet you in Your Presence today with an open mind and heart.

READ:

Ephesians 4:20-24

Paul challenges the people to remember what they know to be true about Jesus. What have you learned about Jesus and know to be true? Consider how you were taught or how you heard about Jesus.

Christ's sacrifice for us allows us to "throw off sin." Paul encourages us to let the Spirit renew our thoughts and attitudes. He also tells us to put on a new nature created to be like God. What a blessing!

DEEPER

Journal:

1. Read and reflect on a similar passage of Scripture in Colossians 3:5-11. I love the phrase in verse 8 that says “now, it is the time.” What are we waiting for? God is ready to renew us now.
2. What do you need to throw off today in order to make room for the Spirit to move and put on a new nature? Listen to the song, “Make Room,” before you write what God is calling you to surrender.

Extra Reading: Try out the website Bible Hub. Type in Ephesians 4:21 and select the “study” tab, and then read some deeper thoughts about Paul’s words. <https://biblehub.com/ephesians/4-21.htm#study>

Prayer:

God, my Creator, renew in me a childlike faith that passionately seeks You daily and desires to spread the Gospel of Your Good News everywhere I go. May the people I encounter see Your Light shining brightly through the darkness of this world.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



Fall Devotionals | Week 6

DAY THREE

DEEP:

Opening prayer:

God, today I surrender my heart and mind to You. Free me of any angry thoughts that consume me and separate me from You. Thank you for Your grace and for guiding me through Your Word.

READ:

Ephesians 4:25-29

Today's verses call us to action. The focus is on lies, anger, and truth, and adjusting our behavior to prevent the devil from gaining control of our decisions. Paul tells us to talk to our neighbors.

Jesus said, "Love your neighbor as yourself." (Matthew 22:39) As we are in a relationship with Jesus and becoming more like Him, we must evaluate the areas in our lives that need forgiveness and restoration.

Paul tells us what to do and how to act toward others, and through those actions, we will be engaging in relationship and unity as a body of Christ followers.





DEEPER

Journal:

1. Write down some areas where you are challenged with truth and anger. What footholds do you think need your attention? Spend time in prayer with those thoughts and ask God to give you some next steps of growth.
2. In verse 28, it says, “Use your hands for good,” and in verse 29, it says, “Let your words be an encouragement.” Write down the name of someone (a neighbor) in your life that needs one of these two things from you, and then pray for them this week or serve them somehow.

Prayer:

God, how grateful I am for Your love and mercy. Today, I pray to become more like You by evaluating the part of my heart that feels anger or is untruthful. Teach me to engage with a neighbor and grow as a disciple of Christ.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



[illegible]



DAY FOUR

DEEP:

Opening prayer:

Father God, Your presence is a safe space for me. Today, as I reflect on the sacrifice You made for me, I give You my thoughts and invite Your Holy Spirit to fill me with kindness.

READ:

Ephesians 4:30-32

Today's three verses are each uniquely challenging. Go slow as you read. Take one verse at a time, and underline phrases that raise questions in your mind or stir your heart posture.

Paul is reminding us that we are forgiven and saved by grace. He is also calling us to a place of obedience, so that our character reflects that of Christ.

The idea of bringing sorrow to the Holy Spirit as a result of my sin is thought-provoking. I do not always think of God as having emotion, but after digging into Scripture, emotion is evident throughout it.

Before you begin journaling today, listen to the song, "Holy Spirit, You Are Welcome Here."

DEEPER

Journal:

1. What sorrow, harsh words, or evil behavior do I need to turn over to God?
2. Who is God calling me to be kind to, forgiving of, and tenderhearted toward? Pray for them today.
3. Look for Scriptures to help renew your mind and speak truth into your life. You can begin here in 1 Peter 2:9: “But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s special possession, that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.”

Prayer:

Holy Spirit, you are welcome here in this most quiet place of my heart. Allow me to feel a fresh wind of kindness toward the people in my life who have challenged me and renew my life to reflect the goodness of God.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



NOTES

[illegible]



DAY FIVE

DEEP:

Opening prayer:

Father God, what a beautiful week we have had together. Thank you for guiding me in a direction that pleases You and brings glory to You.

READ:

Colossians 3:12-17

We end this week with a Scripture that is warm and encouraging. Underline the words or phrases that stand out to you and direct you to honor God with your character.

As we circle back to the theme of unity as a body of believers, I hope you feel a sense of peace and can express your gratitude to God in prayer and worship today.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. Write out your praise to God or a psalm of thanksgiving.
2. The Scripture says, “teach and counsel each other with all the wisdom He gives.” Write down the name of someone you are teaching about Jesus and pray for them. If you do not have someone, consider who that could be (a friend, co-worker, neighbor, family member). Are you in a group for this series? If not, you can still join! Growing in God’s Word with others is valuable for your relationship with Jesus.

Extra Reading: Galatians 5:22-25. Circle one of the fruit of the Spirit you would like to grow in.

Prayer:

End this week with a time of focused prayer.

1. Adoration: spend some time praising and worshipping the God who loved us so much that He sent His Son to pay the price for our sins.
2. Confession: What do you need to lay at the feet of the Lord? Is there a sin, something you are withholding, something that is keeping you from a deeper relationship with the Lord? What do you need to ask forgiveness for?
3. Thankfulness: Focus on what a gift it is to have the Holy Spirit leading us in every part of our lives, so that we experience a fullness of life in Christ.
4. Supplication: Ask the Lord to continue to walk with you and guide you through the surrender of your sinful nature, so that you can be unified in the mission to spread the Good News of Jesus.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



[illegible]

WEEKLY SMALL GROUP GUIDE: WEEK SIX

Opening Prayer:

God, because of what you have called us to in this chapter this week, help us to see what is old and dead in us. Show us what it looks like to throw off our old selves and to walk with in step with you.

Check In:

1. What stood out to you from this week's sermon or readings? (ie What was new? What was exciting/hopeful or maybe just a good reminder for you?)
2. Are there any things you are confused by or have questions about?
3. What was the most important thing you read this week, for you?

Scripture Reading:

Have someone read Ephesians 4:17-32 out loud.

Ask:

4. Do you remember what you were like before Jesus? Anything you would be willing to share?
5. What does it mean to you to be a new creation?
6. Many times, in following Jesus, our growth can stagnate and stall, what is something new that God wants to do in you in light of something old that has or should be put off?

Prayer

Here are some ideas of how we can pray for each other. After everyone who wants to share does, what is the truth that we need to hold to about being new in Christ?

Father God, thank you for this time together. Thank you for your sacrifice. Truly it is your work on the cross that transforms. Your grace is the only thing that can do this and we love you today in light of that. Help us to live out our new way of life as we leave this place.

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WEEK SEVEN



DAY ONE

DEEP

Opening prayer:

God, I want to walk in your ways. I want to understand you and know what you have for me. Mold my heart to be like yours.

READ:

Ephesians 5:1-5

These verses are full, aren't they?! Paul certainly doesn't waste any time jumping to the point here, but before we think about the bulk of these Scriptures, it is really important that we spend a few moments in verses 1 & 2.

"Follow God's example" is not just a soft opening for a harder topic, it's a topic in and of itself. Paul is taking this moment in chapter 5 to call us to holiness.

There is a really big difference between holiness and pure obedience. Obedience is doing what is expected of you because it is expected of you. There is nothing wrong with obedience! Sometimes our faith really does require obedience, but in this context, God is using Paul to call us to the deeper thing.

Holiness is most easily described as us walking with God in order to grow to be more and more like Him. This is a process. It's something that God wants to do IN us and not expected from us.



Think about verses 3-5. Most of the things on this list that Paul gives are ones that many of us struggle with. When you pair that with verses from similar passages, like Romans 8, we can see that this charge is not just “don’t do those things”. It really is a call for us to walk in the way that God has for us. To, with the help of the Holy Spirit, become more like Jesus.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. When you think about walking in the way of Jesus, why would it be important for us to know that these things are outside of that way?
2. What does it mean for you to walk in the way of love?
3. Is there anything in your life that doesn't quite fit the call for us to follow in God's example?

Prayer

Spend time with God in prayer specifically over where you are at with holiness and your journey to become more like Jesus. What does that look like for you? Ask God if there is anything missing. Ask Him if there is anything that needs to be cut off from your life.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.

[illegible]



DAY TWO

DEEP:

Opening prayer:

God, today, as I remember my place as your child, remind me what it means to BE your child. Not earn my place, because I can't, but the fact that I am.

READ:

Ephesians 5:6-10

Read that one more time: You were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord.

How beautiful is that?! This thought and idea that we have crossed over, not of our own strength, but because God says so is what changes this and gives it its deep meaning.

And it's because of that place that God gives us that Paul warns us to not be deceived. Don't let the darkness hold you! Don't let the disobedient pull you away from what God has said is true about you.

It can be so easy for us as believers to feel as though we are in darkness and eventually live as though we are in darkness even though we have a God that doesn't see us that way and is really calling us to live how He sees us!

DEEPER

Journal:

1. What do you think it looks like to really live out being a child of the light?
2. Remember a time when you were deceived into something that took you away from God and His ways.
3. When you think about what Paul says about “the fruit of the light”, what is the one that stands out to you the most and what do you think it would look like for that fruit to grow in your life?

Prayer:

Spend time asking God what it looks like in your life to be a child of the light. Ask Him what fruit He wants to grow in you!

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



Fall Devotionals | Week 7



DAY THREE

DEEP:

Opening prayer:

God, today, while I am rightly looking at my life and how I invest in our relationship, help me to see clearly what I need to do with the other relationships that I have and how I carry myself.

READ:

Ephesians 5:11-14

One of the things that we must be really careful about with our life as Jesus followers is learning to live as though you are in the light. We need to be able to rightly divide what relationships we have, what things we allow into our lives, and who we allow to speak into our lives just the same.

That is why Paul says to have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness and, if anything, expose them.

What we need to remember is that this idea of trying to be more like Jesus becomes a lot harder when we allow ourselves to be dragged down by decisions that pull us away from God or when we have a friendship or relationship that is separate from Him.

The funny thing is that sometimes what we really need is to do what verse 14 says. To wake up and open our eyes to what really is there.

If we are “caught sleeping” we might just wake up to a hard time. God wants more for us than that though. He calls us to live in the light and choose Him.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. There is a good chance you already know about something in your life that fits the mold of “have nothing to do with”. What would that be for you?
2. Do you remember a time where something came back to bite you? What was that decision and what do you remember about it?
3. Think about your life and ask yourself what might be something you need to wake up on.

Prayer:

Spend time with God over that last question and see what might need some work.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



[illegible]



DAY FOUR

DEEP:

Opening prayer:

God, help me to understand what it means for me to live a wise life. I want your wisdom and I want to live your way, help me to work in that direction.

READ:

Ephesians 5:15-17

Think about what we have been talking about for the last couple of days. It is a very real conversation for us to have with ourselves and with God, to seek wisdom in the way that we live.

In the very first portion of verse 15 Paul gives this really great thought that I think is important for us to just keep in mind and in prayer:

Be careful, then, how you live.

So much of this idea of living as wise and not unwise comes down to our intentionality and care for what we do or don't do. We have all had times in our lives where we have left things to their own devices and they have been hard for us because of that.

If we instead care for the way that we live and see ourselves, we might just see wisdom pour from that.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. Remember a time where you were not careful with your living. What did that result in?
2. Because of what we have been talking about for the last couple of days, do you see yourself as someone who is living wisely?
3. What is something in your life that could use some more intentionality? Maybe even one of the things Paul listed?

Prayer:

Spend time asking God about how you are living and if there are any things that need a touch of wisdom and decision to live His way instead.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



[illegible]



DAY FIVE

DEEP:

Opening prayer:

God, today, I need your Holy Spirit to be at work in me and growing me to be more like you. Help me to lean on you today as I go about my day.

READ:

Ephesians 5:18-21

These verses are so important to our walks with God. It is so easy for us to focus on the drunkenness and get stuck there. Most of us know what is at the end of that road.

What we might not understand is the call for us to be filled with the Spirit!

Every single believer has the Holy Spirit inside of them. God in us, calling out to us and calling us to live closely with Him.

Being filled with the Holy Spirit isn't some scary thing, but really it is a surrendered living that includes God in everything we do. Living out of the overflow of what He brings instead of just giving God an hour on Sundays.

There is a big difference between drunkenness and being filled with the Spirit, so sometimes it feels like there is some middle ground that we can decide, but let me tell you now, God wants to work in and through you and that happens through the Holy Spirit!

DEEPER

Journal:

1. Have you experienced God like this before? What does the Holy Spirit mean to you?
2. When you think about being filled with the Holy Spirit, do you think that is how you would describe yourself? Why or why not?

Prayer:

Spend time with God in prayer specifically around being filled with the Holy Spirit. Ask God to give you a fill-up if you need it or maybe just the ways to pay attention to Him.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



[illegible]

WEEKLY SMALL GROUP GUIDE: WEEK SEVEN

Opening Prayer:

God, because of what you have called us to in this chapter this week, help us to see what is old and dead in us. Show us what it looks like to throw off our old selves and to walk with in step with you.

Check In:

1. What stood out to you from this week's sermon or readings? (ie What was new? What was exciting/hopeful or maybe just a good reminder for you?)
2. Are there any things you are confused by or have questions about?
3. What was the most important thing you read this week, for you?

Scripture Reading:

Have someone read Ephesians 5:1-21 out loud.

Ask:

4. Do you think you have been living in the dark or in the light lately?
5. If you needed to give someone advice on wise living, what would it be?
6. When you look at your life, do you believe you walk with the wisdom that Paul writes about here or is that something that God is calling you to this week?

Prayer

Here are some ideas of how we can pray for each other. After everyone who wants to share does, what is the truth that we need to hold to about being a child of the light?

Father God, thank you for this time together. Thank you for making me a part of your family. If it weren't for your way, I would still be in the dark. Help us to walk in your light this week!

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WEEK EIGHT



DAY ONE

DEEP

Opening prayer:

Father God, as I take a deep breath and gather my scattered thoughts, I turn my thoughts to Jesus Christ. May I experience the love and grace that comes from Your presence.

READ:

Ephesians 5:21-24

Before you interpret this passage, what do you notice? What words, themes, or repeated ideas stand out?

Throughout Ephesians, Paul continues to emphasize the beauty of the Gospel story and how our lives are transformed because of it. In today's reading, Paul begins a breakdown of how Christian households should look in regard to the new humanity we have put on in Christ. He begins with this foundational command for our whole week; Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. Paul then begins applying this principle to marriage, first addressing wives and calling them to submit to their husbands as they both live under Christ's lordship.

This scripture should never be used to divide men and women, husbands and wives, in a power struggle of who has dominance and who has submission. This is not the way of Jesus, and this is not the point Paul is making in this passage. In our marriages and in our relationships, we strive to give some small glimpse of the Kingdom of Heaven in action. Through mutual submission, intimacy, respect, and honor, we show our unity with Christ as we love our people deeply and serve one another willingly. Whether you're married, single, male, or female, we are called to imitate Christ's humility in our relationships.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. Throughout Ephesians, Paul has been describing our new identity in Christ. How does this passage continue that theme?
2. Why do you think Paul uses the relationship between Christ and the church as a picture for marriage?
3. What does the word “submit” seem to mean in the context of Ephesians as a whole, especially after reading 4:1–3, 4:32, and 5:1–2?
4. What feelings do you have toward the act of “submission”? Is this something that comes naturally to you, or does it make you uncomfortable?

What does Jesus want to transform?

Spend some time in prayer and ask God: Is there a relationship where I’ve been focusing on my own preferences more than serving the other person?

Bonus scripture (especially if you’re struggling with the submission idea): Mark 10:35-45

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



[illegible]



DAY TWO

DEEP:

Opening prayer:

Father God, as I take a deep breath and gather my scattered thoughts, I turn my thoughts to Jesus Christ. May I experience the love and grace that comes from Your presence.

READ:

Ephesians 5:25-30

What do you notice about today's passage? How does this continue the thoughts from yesterday's reading?

As Paul continues his breakdown of Christian households under the new humanity of Christ, today we read his address to husbands, to love and cherish their wives as Christ does the Church. Christ's relationship with the Church is marked by His extravagant, sacrificial love. He gave Himself up for the Church, sanctified her, and loved her. Jesus willingly laid down His life for her, seeking her flourishing rather than His own comfort or status. Paul's vision for marriage is rooted in the kind of love that puts others first.

This is the beauty of Jesus' call to our new humanity; when wives submit to their husbands, and husbands love their wives, and everyone submits to one another as we are commanded, we enter into a never-ending, live-giving circle of mutual submission and love. We can offer our "you first", as an overflow of the completeness we enjoy in our unity with Christ.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. What does this passage teach you about the character of Jesus?
2. Why do you think Paul chooses Christ's sacrificial love as the model for marriage? How is this different from the ways our world often defines love and relationships?
3. What fears or desires make it hard to put another person's good before your own?
4. How would your closest relationships change if your first question became, "How can I help this person flourish?"

What does Jesus want to transform?

Where am I being invited to love like Jesus, not just with my words, but through sacrifice and action?

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



Fall Devotionals | Week 8



DAY THREE

DEEP:

Opening prayer:

Father God, as I take a deep breath and gather my scattered thoughts, I turn my thoughts to Jesus Christ. May I experience the love and grace that comes from Your presence.

READ:

Ephesians 5:31-33

Marriage within the Kingdom of God is a beautiful picture of unity, covenant, and self-giving love. As Paul quotes Genesis, he reminds us that from the beginning God designed humanity for relationship, connection, and oneness.

In the new humanity we receive through Christ, our relationships have the chance to be part of Christ's restoring work. Christ makes us whole and holy, and through our relationships with one another, we participate in the redeeming and holy work that God started at the beginning of time.

Even if you don't feel represented in this passage, there is a deeper truth that the Lord has put His image-bearers into the world to help foster the trust, peace and unity that comes from the Holy Spirit. We are all invited to be Kingdom workers who reflect His love in the world. Through the power of the Holy Spirit, our relationships can be a small glimpse of what the Kingdom of Heaven will look like.



DEEPER

Journal:

1. Who experiences more of Jesus because of the way I show up in my relationships?
2. Who is God inviting me to pursue greater reconciliation, trust, or peace with?
3. How can my relationships become a place where others experience the love of Jesus?
4. How can I become someone who brings the peace, trust, and unity of God's Kingdom into the places I live, work and play?

Christ is creating a new humanity, and we are learning to live as that new humanity together. End today in a time of worship, thanking God for His thoughtfulness in how He created us to be together. Ask Him to help you live with the mindset: We > Me.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.

[illegible]



DAY FOUR

DEEP:

Opening prayer:

Father God, as I take a deep breath and gather my scattered thoughts, I turn my thoughts to Jesus Christ. May I experience the love and grace that comes from Your presence.

READ:

Ephesians 6:1-4

The passages we've studied this week are deeply connected to the Roman-Greco household roles of Paul's day, but they introduce a countercultural vision for Christian households. Paul spent the last few days working through our marriage relationships, but today he continues to direct his audience to scripture, and clarifying this important message: when we belong to Christ, we interact with the people closest to us differently. Children are called to obey and honor their parents, and parents are called to nurture their children in the ways of the Lord.

In Paul's callback to the Ten Commandments, he points to the foundational truths of God's people and shows how those truths are still relevant to continue to shape life in Christ. With humility, honor, and a willingness to put others first, we get to do this holy work of growing together as we attempt to reflect Christ's love in our lives to the people around us.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. How does following Jesus change the way we use authority, responsibility, or influence?
2. What does it look like to honor others in a culture that often encourages us to compete, control, or look out only for ourselves?
3. Who are the people God has placed in my life that I have the opportunity to encourage, nurture, or help grow?
4. How can the relationships God has given me become places where we help one another grow toward Christ?

What does Jesus want to transform?

Where do I see evidence that Jesus is making me into a different kind of person in the way I relate to others? How is Christ inviting me to move from independence and self-protection toward humility and connection with others?

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



Fall Devotionals | Week 8



DAY FIVE

DEEP:

Opening prayer:

Father God, as I take a deep breath and gather my scattered thoughts, I turn my thoughts to Jesus Christ. May I experience the love and grace that comes from Your presence.

READ:

Ephesians 6:5-9

In our final day of this week's section, we are faced with the last household relationship, and the one that is seemingly the most distant from our modern lives. However, the slaves and masters of Paul's day are absolutely relevant when you see the reality of human exploitation and the misuse of power that still continues to devastate people around the world.

We can never forget who we belong to. It is not enough to "just use power better"; we must remember we serve our Master in heaven. Those with authority are reminded that they are also under authority. Every person ultimately answers to Christ.

It is not enough to just accept any injustice done against us; we must remember that our worth and identity comes from the Lord. This does not mean we ignore injustice, but that we trust God as we pursue what is right and reflect His character in how we respond. Paul does not erase the reality of the broken systems people live within, but he introduces a new way of seeing one another. Even the most unequal relationships in society must be confronted with the reality of new life in Christ.



DEEPER

Journal:

1. What does this passage reveal about how Jesus transforms the way we view power and authority?
2. Why do you think Paul reminds both slaves and masters that they ultimately serve the Lord?
3. How does the gospel challenge the ways our world defines status, worth, and importance?
4. Where has God given me influence, and how can I use it in ways that honor Jesus and serve others?

What does Jesus want to transform?

- Where might I be seeking power, control, or status instead of serving others?
- Who are the people God is inviting me to see with greater dignity and compassion?
- Where do I need to repent of seeing myself as more important than someone else?

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.

[illegible]

WEEKLY SMALL GROUP GUIDE: WEEK EIGHT

Opening Prayer:

Father God, thank You for creating us to live in relationship with You and with one another. Teach us to love like Jesus, to serve with humility, and to reflect Your Kingdom in the way we treat every person. Let this time together encourage us and draw us closer to You.

Breathe in: Jesus, make me more like You.

Breathe out: Teach me to love others well.

Check In:

1. What stood out to you from this week's sermon or readings? (ie What was new? What was exciting/hopeful?)
2. Are there any things you are confused by or have questions about?
3. What is the good news of this gospel message to you this week?

The Big Question:

How does belonging to Jesus change the way I love and serve the people around me?

Scripture Reading:

Have someone read Ephesians 5:21-33 out loud.

Ask:

1. Throughout Ephesians, Paul has been describing our new identity in Christ. How does this week's passage continue that theme?
2. Paul begins this whole section with, "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." What do you think mutual submission actually looks like in everyday life? Where have you seen someone live this out well?
3. How does the circle of mutual love and submission that Paul offers in this passage challenge the way our culture defines love and relationships?

4. How would our homes, workplaces, friendships, and church communities change if everyone consistently asked, “How can I serve this person?” instead of “How can this person serve me?”

Prayer

Take some time to close by sharing prayer requests together.

As people share, listen for opportunities to encourage one another toward Christlike love.

After sharing, pray for one another — asking God to help each person reflect the humility, love, and grace of Jesus in their relationships.

Closing Prayer:

Father God, thank You for loving us first. Thank You for showing us what true humility and sacrificial love look like through Jesus. Help us become people who reflect Your Kingdom in every relationship You’ve entrusted to us. May our homes, friendships, workplaces, and church communities become places where others experience Your love through us. Fill us with Your Spirit this week so we can live as the new humanity You have created us to be. In Jesus’ name, Amen.

Fall Devotionals | Week 8



WEEK NINE

DAY ONE

DEEP

Opening prayer:

God, I realize that there are times where I have fought through life as if I were fighting flesh and blood. Help me to see the true battle that I am fighting.

READ:

Ephesians 6:10-12

Note that today we are looking at verses that are very “skippable”. These two verses are often just read in process to get to put a helmet on a kid on stage. Often, they are just the precursor to talking about your preparation for battle, but not today.

Today we are going to sit in the deep things that live in these three verses.

There are three major things that we can read and remind ourselves about today from these three verses. They will prepare us for the rest of the week, yes, but I know that God has something for us here today.

1. We can be strong in the Lord and His power

Can we just take a second to remember that our God is powerful?! He has every power on heaven and earth and we know Him personally! Not only that, but He is calling us to be strong IN His power. So He is going to lend His strength to us. That is incredible!

2. The devil really is scheming

This is not something we can forget. It is something very easy to forget, but we have got to know that the devil really is trying to do things

that will pull US away from what God created us for. That is REAL. It doesn't mean that he is too powerful or that he is going to take you out, but it does mean that we need to be prepared.

3. Our battle is not against flesh and blood (most important)

Your neighbor that is just going crazy on you over your garbage cans, that mean person at work, the lady who cut you off in traffic, and everything in between. We have got to remember that our battle isn't really with that person. Sure, this can be overdone and overstated, BUT what can't be overdone or overstated is the reminder that we shouldn't burn in anger over other people too much. It's not about them. We can take that to the spiritual battlefield with God instead.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. When have you experienced something recently that probably was a spiritual battle that you realize now that it's over?
2. What would it mean for you to rely on God's strength instead of your own?

Prayer:

Spend time with God in prayer asking Him for that strength and to help you to see the world and what you are going through rightly.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.

NOTES

[illegible]



DAY TWO

DEEP:

Opening prayer:

God, I realize that I need you. If I am going to stand firm I am going to need your help. Help me to lean on you and to prepare my heart for what is out there in the world today.

READ:

Ephesians 6:13-17

Great! Now that you have read that scripture I want to encourage you to do something that maybe you have not done in a while. If you are new to faith, this might not be something you need, but that's okay. This is an exercise that I like to do around these types of verses because its very Sunday School-able. It goes great on a coloring page. There's for sure a skit out there somewhere. And while that is all good and helpful for us, we tend to think that we know what is there and that God doesn't have anything new for us here. What I want to challenge you to do is close your eyes and try to just forget all the memory you have of this and then go back and read 13-17 again. Do your best to see these verses with fresh eyes.

Your faith really is a shield. The truth of God's word will really hold you together. The Gospel of peace really will keep you ready. Don't forget the very deep things that Paul gave us here. Its so much more than that coloring sheet we all used to do. Or maybe it was on a felt board?



DEEPER

Journal:

1. What is the piece of the armor of God that you feel like you need the most right now?
2. Is there a piece of the armor that you forgot about until re-reading it today?
3. How do you need to prepare today and learn to stand firm?

Prayer:

Spend time asking God for that piece of armor you need today.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



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DAY THREE

DEEP:

Opening prayer:

God, I want to learn to care and hear the needs of others. Can you help me to see beyond myself and show me what it means to be in the family of God.

READ:

Ephesians 6:18

This one verse is very loaded! There are two halves of this one topic that I think are really crucial for us to understand and take with us today. First is that idea that is brought up right on the front end; praying in the Spirit.

There are a few ways that people take this, but that can sound really intimidating if we don't realize the truth about prayer for us as believers. This is a great little note from a commentary that I think will really help us here.

...to be joined with "praying." It is he in us, as the Spirit of adoption, who prays, and enables us to pray
Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset, and David Brown,
Commentary Critical and Explanatory on the Whole Bible,
vol. 2 (Oak Harbor, WA: Logos Research Systems, Inc.,
1997), 358.

The truth is that the Holy Spirit is our connection to God. He is inside us and we are in God because of Him. Praying in the Spirit, as Paul puts it, is intentional, real prayer where we are meeting with God and bringing our whole selves to it. Its distinct.

The other half is what I think we don't do a great job of in 2026. "Keep on praying for ALL the Lord's people".

This challenge from Paul to be thinking about and praying for all of God's people is a great reminder for us. Praying for the church down the street, the believers in China, for the people in your neighborhood that you don't even know yet, all the way to those in secret in Pakistan. The global church needs our prayer and the hope is that all of us will be praying for all of us.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. Have you ever looked up what the church is up to around the world? Take a second to remember what you have heard or to look something up!
2. When we take time to pray over others it helps us to remember that its not just "me". Take a second to reflect on the fact that you are being prayed for by other believers. How does that make you feel?

Prayer: Spend time praying for the global church and what God is doing in and through all of the believers.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



NOTES

[illegible]

[illegible]



DAY FOUR

DEEP:

Opening prayer:

God, be with our leaders of every level. Lead their hearts, call them close and keep them close to you. I trust you to care for them and I know that you know all things that we need in them and from them.

READ:

Ephesians 6:19-20

As we spend time here and are nearing the end of our journey through Ephesians, Paul asks for prayer for himself as a leader. Even as I am writing this, I realize just how serious and gutsy that was. It takes some vulnerability, some personal reflection, and openness to ask for those things.

I will follow suit.

Leadership and ministry are hard work. It doesn't matter if you are a volunteer or on staff, it is taxing because it is worthy work. We pour our heart and soul into it. So, for our team leads, our main volunteers, our family ministry staff, all the way to the executive team and our boards... please pray.

Pray that at every level we will keep the mission in front of us and that the main thing stays the main thing. Pray that we will never lose a heart for the lost and hurting. Pray that we won't stumble or be pulled away by temptation. Pray that we will be unified and single focused together and we will pray with you.

DEEPER

Journal:

1. Have you ever asked anyone for prayer before? When was the last time?
2. Pick someone specific to pray for and jot down a note to remember to pray for them.

Prayer: Spend time praying for your person you picked (extra points if you let them know)

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



[illegible]



DAY FIVE

DEEP:

Opening prayer:

God, today I ask that you lift me up with your word and remind me of all the truth that we have walked through as a church family. Encourage me with your love today.

READ:

Ephesians 6:21-24

Personally, I love verses like these. We know basically nothing about Tychicus except for the fact that he came along with this letter to Ephesus. What this does is remind us that this was a real letter that God inspired Paul to write and gave Him the wisdom to send so that in 2026 our church family could continue in the beautiful tradition in learning through the truth of God's word. It is a beautiful thing!

On top of that, there is a fantastic little sign off benediction that Paul gives that I think we can revel in and continue to ask and speak over each other in prayer as well.

Peace to the brothers and sisters and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.

Incredible. Simple. Real.

That is our prayer for us as a church family. That we would see more people become more like Jesus and that we would all get to enjoy the peace, love with faith, and grace that comes with being followers of Jesus together.



DEEPER

Journal:

1. Peace, love, faith, and grace. How have you seen these things growing in you in these 9 weeks as we have been going through Ephesians?
2. Who is on your heart to pray these things over?
3. What has been the best part of Ephesians for you?

Prayer: Spend time with God in prayer for our church community being on this mission and walk together.

DEEPEST

Look at our weekly challenges in the front of this book and make time to practice them.



[illegible]

WEEKLY SMALL GROUP GUIDE: WEEK NINE

Opening Prayer:

God, we want to keep up our fight to stay with you and for you. Help us to stand in your ways, with your world on our mind. While we are here, help us to keep your world firm in our sights for prayer.

Check In:

1. What stood out to you from this week's sermon or readings? (ie What was new? What was exciting/hopeful or maybe just a good reminder for you?)
2. Are there any things you are confused by or have questions about?
3. What was the most important thing you read this week, for you?

Scripture Reading:

Have someone read Ephesians 6:10-24 out loud.

Ask:

4. What fight in your world have you realized that is really something that is "not against flesh and blood"?
5. Have you ever considered praying for ALL the Lord's people when you pray?
6. How have you seen the strength of the Lord in your life and what do you think God wants to grow in your strength next?

Prayer

Here are some ideas of how we can pray for each other. After everyone who wants to share does, what is the truth that we need to hold to about being strong in the Lord in your situation?

Father God, thank you for this time together. We want to keep the world right in our hearts and we want to walk with the understanding that we are yours, and because of that, we are at war. Not with other people, but with the enemy. Help us to stand firm and to pray for those around us while we persevere.

WHAT'S NEXT?

It has been a privilege to journey through Ephesians together as a CCM family. We pray that you have been challenged, encouraged, and grounded in your identity and calling as a child of God, united with Christ and living in your new humanity. Even though this series is coming to an end, God's work in you is not. Whatever He has begun through this study can continue to shape the way you live on mission to see more people becoming more like Jesus where you live, work, and play.

We love hearing how God is moving in the lives of our church family. If you have any stories to share of how God has moved in you or your community group this fall, we'd love to hear from you! You can share with any of your pastors or email drew@baysidechurch.net.

We hope that the daily and weekly rhythms we've been coaching you through this study have been helpful to you. As this study ends, don't leave these practices behind. Choose one or two rhythms to carry into your everyday life, and invite someone in your community group to encourage and pray for you as you continue growing.

The invitation to be with Jesus to become more like Him never changes. As you continue following Him, may your life point others to Jesus so that more people become more like Him.

