

# ADULT BIBLE STUDY IN BASIC ENGLISH

**GALATIANS:** 

By Grace Through Faith EPHESIANS:

God's Plan and Our Response

Ann Pitman Anna Beth Mitchell

BAPTISTWAY

DALLAS, TEXAS

### ADULT BIBLE STUDY IN BASIC ENGLISH

### **GALATIANS: By Grace Through Faith EPHESIANS: God's Plan and Our Response**

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First edition: April 2001.

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Administrator, Curriculum Development Office: Bernard M. Spooner Publishing consultant: Ross West, Positive Difference Communications

Language Materials Team

Writer for Adult Bible Study in Basic English, Units 1-3

Ann Pitman, Columbus Avenue Baptist Church, Waco, Texas

Writer for Adult Bible Study in Basic English, Unit 4

Anna Beth Mitchell, Columbus Avenue Baptist Church, Waco, Texas

Editor/Formatter for Adult Bible Study in Basic English

Phyllis Merritt, First Baptist Church, San Antonio, Texas

Facilitator for the Adult Basic English Team

Joe Bruce, Project Director, Texas Partnerships, Baptist General Convention of Texas

Patty Lane, Director, Office of Intercultural Initiatives, Baptist General Convention of Texas Nelda P. Williams, Facilitators Coordinator and Manager, Curriculum Development Office

# Galatians: By Grace Through Faith Ephesians: God's Plan and Our Response



Adult Bible Study in Basic English

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### Galatians and Ephesians Introduction

How does a person become right with God? Should a believer in Christ keep Jewish laws? What is meant by the *grace* of God? Is there a certain way a Christian *should* live? Does God have a plan for the world and for each one of us? These and other questions will be answered in these 13 lessons.

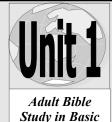
Galatians and Ephesians are two short books in the New Testament. They each have only six chapters. Paul wrote these books as letters to churches he had started in Galatia and Ephesus. The books are small, but they tell many important things we need to know. These studies from Galatians and Ephesians can bless you and help you to grow.

Unit 1 is Telling the Way of Faith. These four lessons are from Galatians chapters 1-4. Paul deals with questions about faith and the law. He tells the Galatian Christians why faith alone is God's way of making a person right with Him.

Unit 2 is Living the Way of Faith. These two lessons cover Galatians 5-6. Paul tells the people to live their freedom by helping others.

Unit 3 is *God's Plan for Us*. These three lessons are from Ephesians 1-3. Paul writes of God's purpose and plan and how we can find our place in them.

Unit 4 is *Living Out God's Plan*. These four lessons study Ephesians 4-6. They show how the Lord expects us to live and serve.



Lesson 1

Nothing Else Like It Galatians 1:6-24

Lesson 2

Walking the Talk
Galatians 2:1-6,11-21

Lesson 3

Faith – the Only Way
Galatians 3:1-18

Lesson 4

At the Right Time
Galatians 3:19-4:11

# Unit 1 Telling the Way of Faith

Unit 1 is made up of four lessons from the book of Galatians.

Lesson 1 tells us that the Good News is from God, not humans. There is only one true gospel. Nothing else is like it.

Lesson 2 teaches that God sees all people in the same way. It shows how a person can be made right with God.

Lesson 3 shows that faith in Christ is the way to happiness. It is also the way to be saved from the punishment of sin.

Lesson 4 tells why God gave the Jewish law. The law was given to lead us to Christ.



Adult Bible Study in Basic

**Bible Text** 

Galatians 1:6-24

**Memory Verse** 

Galatians 1:3

"May you have loving-favor and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

# Nothing Else Like It

#### From Saul to Paul

What do you know about Paul, the writer of the letter to the Galatians? Have you studied the book of Acts? Much of the book of Acts tells about Paul's work. When Paul visited cities in Galatia, he preached the **Good News** to people. A number of them put their trust in Jesus Christ. He started churches in those places.

Ann Pitman is the writer for Lessons 1-9. She and her husband, Dr. Gene Pitman, were medical missionaries in Nigeria in the 1960's. They now live in Waco Texas, where she helped organize the Neighbors International Program at her church. Students from 34 different countries come to the Neighbors group (102) enrolled and the International Sunday School class which her husband teaches (84 enrolled.) The Pitmans have three daughters and four grandchildren

#### **Word List**

**circumcised:** cutting off the foreskin; the religious act of becoming a Jew

**faith:** belief and trust in God and His

son, Jesus.

Good News, gospel: God's way for people to have their sins forgiven and be made right with Him grace: God's undeserved love and

kindness; it cannot be earned

Paul had not always been a follower of Christ. For a long time Paul hated Christians. He put them in jail or hurt them. Paul was called "Saul" then. But one day Saul had a special meeting with Jesus Christ. He saw a bright light from heaven shining around him on the road. Those who were with him saw the light but could not speak. Saul fell to the ground as a voice spoke. The voice said, "Saul, Saul, why are you working so hard against me?" (Acts 9:4).

When Saul knew that it was Jesus, he said, "What do you want me to do, Lord?" Later Jesus said, "This man is the one I have chosen to carry my name among the people who are not Jews" (Acts 9:15). Saul's name was changed to Paul. You can read Acts chapter 9 to see how Paul's life changed after he met Jesus.

### Don't Turn from the Truth! (**Galatians 1:6-9**)

After Paul started churches in Galatia, some false teachers went among the people there. They said that Paul's teachings were not true. They said Jesus had not called Paul. They taught that believers in Christ must follow Jewish laws and customs believers must be circumcised, not eat certain foods and keep special holy days.

Paul wrote to remind the believers of the *true* **Good News** he had preached. Paul accused the false teachers of preaching a different kind of good news or gospel. He said that even the angels in heaven did not have the right or power to change the Good News of God. How can we know today the difference between false teachings and the truth of God? Knowing what the Bible, God's Word, says is the best way to know the truth.

#### **Good News**

This is the Good News -- God sent Jesus Christ, His Only Son, into the world. The early preachers (prophets) had told that Jesus would come.

- Jesus lived a sinless life on earth and did many powerful works.
- He died on a cross to take the punishment for our sins.
- Christ arose from the grave and was seen by many.
- Christ is alive today.
- Trusting in Jesus Christ is the way to be made right with God. It is by faith and faith alone. God's Word says there is no other way for a person to be made right with God (Acts 4:12).

### Called by Jesus Christ, not Men (Galatians 1:10-24)

The false teachers accused Paul of trying to please men instead of God. The false teachers were trying to please the Jewish leaders. Paul wanted to please God and no one else. God had called him to preach through His Son, Jesus Christ. Paul's message was from God, not any man. The church leaders in Jerusalem had not taught Paul, but they agreed with him.

Paul told the Galatians of his old life. He had been a very religious Jew. He was circumcised and had kept all the Jewish laws and customs. He had wanted to kill Christians. He thought God would like for him to do this.

Paul learned that keeping the Jewish laws did not make him right with God or give him peace. So, he put his trust in Jesus. This changed his life completely. Paul knew that he did not *deserve* God's loving-favor. He could never *work* enough to *earn* it. But God's loving-favor (grace) had given him new life and peace (Ephesians 2:8-9).

### God's Free Gift

A friend's mother came from India to visit. The two of them had lunch at my house one day. They told me how the mother went at times to a special river in her country to bathe. She did this to try to feel clean and holy in her heart. It was a work she did to try to please God. Many other people feel they need to do something to find peace and be made right with God. They have not heard that God's loving-favor is a free gift to us.

### **Nothing Else Like It!**

How was Paul made right with God? Was it by doing good works? Was it by keeping Jewish laws? No! It was by putting his trust and faith in Jesus Christ. That is the way to peace and to heaven. There is nothing else like it!

What about you? Have you tried, like Paul, to find peace with God? Have you learned that God is a God of love? He knew us and loved us before we were ever born. He wants only what is best for us. He is a God who seeks us. He wants us to trust Him with all our needs. He sent Christ to die for our sins. How can we refuse to follow such a loving and kind God?!

### Things to Think About

- 1. How can we know which teachings about God are true?
- 2. Paul told God and others about the sins of his past. Did God forgive those sins?
- 3. Paul became a new person with a new message? Why did that take courage?
- 4. What can you say when you tell someone the message of Good News?

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### Galatians 1:6-24

- 6. I am surprised you are leaving Christ so soon. You were chosen through His loving-favor. But now you are turning and listening to another kind of good news.
- 7. No! There is not another kind of good news. There are some who would like to lead you in the wrong way. They want to change the Good News about Christ.
- 8. Even if we or an angel from heaven should preach another kind of good news to you that is not the one we preached, let him be cursed.
- 9. As we said before, I will say it again. If any man is preaching another good news to you which is not the one you have received, let him be cursed.
- 10. Do you think I am trying to get the favor of men, or of God? If I were still trying to please men, I would not be a servant owned by Christ.
- 11. Christian brothers, I want you to know the Good News I preached to you was not made by man.
- 12. I did not receive it from man. No one taught it to me. I received it from Jesus Christ as He showed it to me.
- 13. You have heard of my old life when I followed the Jewish religion. I made it as hard as I could for the Christians and did everything I could to destroy the Christian church.

- 14. I had learned more about the Jewish religion than many of the Jews my age. I had a much stronger desire than they to follow the ways of our early fathers.
- 15. But God chose me before I was born. By His loving-favor He called me to work for Him
- 16. His Son was to be seen in me. He did this so I could preach about Christ to the people who are not Jews. When this happened, I did not talk to men.
- 17. I did not even go to Jerusalem to talk to those who were missionaries before me. Instead, I went to the country of Arabia. Later I returned to the city of Damascus.
- 18. Three years later I went to Jerusalem to meet Peter. I stayed with him fifteen days.
- 19. I did not see any of the other missionaries except James, the Lord's brother.
- 20. I am writing the truth. God knows I am not lying.
- 21. I went from Jerusalem to the countries of Syria and Cilicia
- 22. None of the Christians in the churches in the country of Judea had ever seen me.
- 23. The only thing they heard was, "The one who tried to destroy the Christian church is now preaching the Good News!"
- 24. And they gave thanks to God because of me.

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Adult Bible Study in Basic

### **Bible Text**Galatians 2:1-6,11-21

### Memory Verse Galatians 2:16b

"A man is made right with God by putting his trust in Jesus Christ."

#### **Word List**

Gentiles: people who are not Jews guilt, guilty: a sense of shame for doing

wrong; blame; crime

mission: the work of telling others about God. sin, sinners: actions by which humans go against God; those who do evil or wrong

# Lesson 2 Walking the Talk Good Examples

Mr and Mrs. "Hop" Hopkins taught internationals for many years in the church where I am a member. They loved each person. They were never too busy to listen to problems or give a hug. Frankie taught the Sunday Bible study class. Hop helped students find an

apartment or learn to drive. The children loved Hop and called him Grandpa.

Their home was open day or night to all people.

The Hopkins lived their Christian beliefs in real life every day. We say that they "walked their talk."

In this lesson, Paul shows that our faith must be more than talk. We must live out in a real world our Christian beliefs. The actions of our everyday lives must match what we say. Peter had learned this lesson from Paul. Paul said it was wrong for Peter to eat with the **Gentiles** one day and then not speak to them the next. God taught Peter that His love was for all people.

## Walking the Talk with an Open Mind (Galatians 2:1-6)

Paul continues his letter to the Christians in Galatia who have listened to false teachers. He writes of his visit to the church leaders in Jerusalem. There, Paul tried to build some bridges of understanding between the Jews and the non-Jews. The church leaders did not ask Paul to come so they could question him. God led Paul to go there and explain his mission to the Gentiles.

Paul took Titus with him to Jerusalem for a purpose. Titus was Paul's friend and co-worker. He was a Gentile Christian and had not been circumcised. Titus was a good example of Paul's teaching.

Gentile believers knew they did not have to follow the Jewish laws and customs (see lesson 1). Faith in Jesus Christ alone was the way to be made right with God.

The church leaders agreed with Paul. They saw that Paul's preaching was a work of God. They encouraged him to continue preaching to the Gentiles. The truth and freedom Paul preached to the Galatians was God's way. The leaders then told Paul to remember the poor. This Paul had already been doing

# Walking the Talk-- All the Time (Galatians 2:11-14)

Peter was one of the early church leaders. He was born a Jew like Paul. God called Peter to preach to the Jewish people. At first, Peter thought he was to preach to the Jews *only*. But God showed Peter that all people are the same in God's eyes. All people need to hear about God's Son, Jesus Christ.

Acts 10:1-16 tells how God spoke to Peter in a dream. God told Peter to go to the home of a man named Cornelius. He was a Gentile. Peter argued with God. Finally he went, and Cornelius put his faith in Jesus. Peter's eyes and heart were opened!

Paul wrote about Peter's earlier visit to Antioch where Paul was staying. Peter ate with the Gentile Christians there and was friendly with them. That was against Jewish custom, but he did it. When some Jewish leaders came from Jerusalem, Peter turned away from the Gentiles and would not eat with them. He was afraid of what the Jewish leaders would say. It was hard for Peter to live in two different worlds-the Jewish and Gentile worlds.

Do you ever feel that you live in two different worlds? Christ can wipe away cultural differences. What we eat, where we call home, what we wear, — these things are not important in God's eyes. God looks into our hearts. He knows our thoughts and our actions. Being right with God is the most important thing in life.

# Walking the Talk—by Faith (Galatians 2:15-21)

Paul knew a person could not be made right with God by keeping the Jewish law. Paul had tried hard in his early life to please God by trying to keep every law. It was not possible. Many who were born Jews thought all Gentiles were sinners. Since the Jews by birth tried to keep all the law, they thought they were not sinners. But Paul said that all people are sinners. No person can ever work hard enough for or "earn" God's favor. They cannot work hard enough for God's favor. It is a gift from God. Each person must accept that gift for himself.

Paul said he was dead to the power of sin in his life. He was free to live for God. Paul had put his trust in Jesus Christ. Christ was living in him. Paul's new life was lived by faith. Paul lived in a real world. He did not try to run away from his problems. He found the right way to face them. Paul "walked his talk" in the power of Jesus Christ.

When we put our trust in Christ, God declares us "not guilty" of sin. God forgives our sin. A judge in a human court can never forgive guilt. He would have to punish the guilty person. But any person can stand before God and hear the words "not guilty." God knows about our sin and He cares. He cares so much that He sent Jesus to die to pay for our sins (John 3:16). That is Good News!

### Things to Think About

- 1. Our lives should be good examples for others to follow. What attitudes or ideas do we need to change so we can be good examples?
- 2. God's love is for *all* people, not just one group. Do all your friends and family members know that God's love is for them? How can you help them learn?
- 3. Are there problems today like those Paul and Peter faced? Can you name some?
- 4. Are all people sinners? How can a sinner hear the words, "not guilty?"

### Galatians 2:1-6,11-21

- 1. Fourteen years later I went again to Jerusalem. This time I took Barnabas. Titus went with us also.
- 2. God showed me in a special way I should go. I spoke to them about the Good News that I preach among the people who are not Jews. First of all, I talked alone to the important church leaders. I wanted them to know what I was preaching. I did not want that which I was doing or would be doing to be wasted.
- Titus was with me. Even being a Greek, he did not have to go through the religious act of becoming a Jew.
- 4. Some men who called themselves Christians asked about this. They got into our meeting without being asked. They came there to find out how free we are who belong to Christ. They tried to get us to be chained to the Jewish Law.
- But we did not listen to them or do what they wanted us to do so the truth of the Good News might be vours.
- 6. Those who seemed to be important church leaders did not help me. They did not teach me anything new. What they were, I do not care. God looks on us all as being the same.
- 11. But when Peter came to Antioch, I had to stand up against him because he was guilty.
- 12. Peter had been eating with the people who are not Jews. But after some men came who had been with James, he kept away from them. He was afraid of those who believe in the religious act of becoming a Jew.
- 13. Then the rest of the Jews followed him because they were afraid to do

- what they knew they should do. Even Barnabas was fooled by those who pretended to be someone they were not.
- 14. When I saw they were not honest about the truth of the Good News, I spoke to Peter in front of them all. I said, "If you are Jew, but live like the people who are not Jews, why do you make the people who are not Jews live like the Jews?"
- You and I were born Jews. We were not sinners from among the people who are not Jews.
- 16. Even so, we know we cannot become right with God by obeying the Law. A man is made right with God by putting his trust in Jesus Christ. For that reason, we have put our trust in Jesus Christ also. We have been made right with God because of our faith in Christ and not by obeying the Law. No man can be made right with God by obeying the Law.
- 17. As we try to become right with God by what Christ has done for us, what if we find we are sinners also? Does that mean Christ makes us sinners? No! Never!
- 18. But if I work toward being made right with God by keeping the Law, then I make myself a sinner.
- 19. The Law has no power over me. I am dead to the Law. Now I can live for God.
- 20. I have been put up on the cross to die with Christ. I no longer live.
  Christ lives in me. The life I now live in this body, I live by putting my trust in the Son of God. He was the One Who loved me and gave Himself for me
- 21. I say that we are not to put aside the loving-favor of God. It we could be made right with God by keeping the Law, then Christ died for nothing.



Adult Bible Study in Basic English

### **Bible Text**

Galatians 3:1-18

### Memory Verse Galatians 3:11b:

"The man right with God will live by faith."

#### **Word List**

**baptized:** to place a person under water and lift them up, a picture of Christ's death

curse: judgment; those under the law were

under a curse

**descendants:** a person's children and those

who are born after them

Holy Spirit: called the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, and the Comforter; He does God's work in the world. God is one, but three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit

# Lesson 3 Faith—the Only Way

## Grace and Hope in Jesus (Galatians 3:1-5)

Not long ago, an e-mail message came to us with these words, "grace and hope in Jesus." Two years earlier, the young man who wrote us did not know much about Jesus Christ. His family in Korea follows another religion. "Han" was an eager learner in the Bible Study class in our

church. It was our joy to have him in our home and share the Good News with him. Han put his faith and trust in Jesus and was baptized in our church. Han moved to another city. He promised to study the Bible and follow Jesus closely. When we see him or hear from him now, he is always happy.

Han's e-mail also said: "On the inside the Holy Spirit leads me to some good paths. I know I should not copy this crooked world. How can I do that? The way is simple. I will follow His words and leading." That is what Paul wanted the Galatians to do--follow Christ's words and leading.

The Galatians had come from a different religion, like Han. They were new Christians who had received the Holy Spirit when they believed in Jesus. But false teachers were trying to lead them away from the way of faith in Christ. Those teachers said the Christians had to obey the Jewish religious laws.

In this lesson, Paul reminds the Galatians of the way they started their life in Christ. He told them to remember what Christ had done for them when he died on the cross. Only faith, not laws,

would keep them growing in Christ. For some people today, faith alone seems too simple. When we have doubts, we should remember how Christ has changed us.

And we should keep close to Him by studying His Word.

## Abraham's Faith and God's Promise (Galatians 3:6-14)

Paul used the story of Abraham, the father of the Jewish people, as an example of faith. Abraham believed God. God was pleased with Abraham's faith. Abraham was made right with God through his faith (Genesis 15:6). Not until later was Abraham circumcised (Genesis 17:9-10). Circumcision was a sign of the agreement between God and Abraham.

After Christ came, God made a new agreement with those who put their trust in Him. Christians do not have to be circumcised or keep other parts of the Jewish laws in order to be a Christian. Abraham is the father of all who believe, both Jews and Gentiles.

Paul said the true children of Abraham are those from all nations who believe that Jesus Christ is God's son.

Paul wrote to the Romans about keeping the Jewish law: "A man is not a Jew just because he goes through the religious act of becoming a Jew. A true Jew is one whose heart is right with God" (Romans 2:28-29). Leviticus 18:5 says that a person must obey *all* the law or he will die. Because people could not keep *all* the law, it became a **curse.** A person hanged on a tree in Israel was a law-breaker and was under a curse. Christ did not sin or break the law.

Since every person has broken the law, everyone is guilty. Christ took the curse of the law on himself when he died on the cross. He took the punishment for our guilt, our sin. Christ did for us what we could not do for ourselves. He changed places with us! We are the guilty ones. We should have died on that cross. But Christ died that we might live—here on earth and in heaven. He loves us, just the way we are (John 3:16). It is hard to refuse that kind of love.

Trying to be "good" in our own power doesn't work. We think, "I'll try harder next time," or "I'll never do that

#### GALATIANS: BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH Unit 1: TELLING THE WAY OF FAITH Lesson 3: Faith - the Only Way

again." But we do not have to depend on our own strength or goodness. When we put our faith in Christ, the Holy Spirit lives in us. He works in us and through us. He helps us want to do what is right.

# The Law and the Promise (Galatians 3:15-18)

God promised to bless Abraham and his son (or seed). Paul believed this family was made up of people who had faith in God. The line was not by race, religion, or nation. It was to be a single family of faith. All believers are one in the body of Christ. The blessing God promised was based on Abraham's faith, for the law had not yet been given.

God kept His promise to Abraham (Genesis 17:7-8). God blessed the world through Abraham by sending the Messiah as one of his **descendants**.

Jesus Christ, the Messiah, broke the curse of the law. He loves us and wants us to follow Him. The way of faith in Christ makes us right with God. We can depend on God and His promises. Let us thank Him for His great love for us.

### Things to Think About:

1. The Galatian Christians received the Holy Spirit when they believed. What does the Holy Spirit do for believers?

2. Abraham had faith in God. God blessed Abraham because of his faith. Why is that blessing so important to all people?

3. Why should a Christian be happy? How did Han show his happiness?

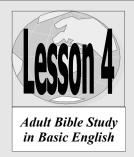
4. God has never broken a promise to me. He has given me much more than I asked for or needed. Do you also believe that we can depend on God's promises?

#### Galatians 3:1-18

- You foolish Galatians! What strange powers are trying to lead you from the way of faith in Christ? We made it plain for you to see that Jesus Christ was put on a cross to die.
- 2. There is one thing I want to know. Did you receive the Holy Spirit by keeping the Jewish Law? Or did you receive Him by hearing about Christ?
- 3. How foolish can you be? You started the Christian life by the Holy Spirit. Do you think you are going to become better Christians by your old way of worship?
- 4. You suffered so much because of the Good News you received. Was this all of no use?
- 5. He gave you the Holy Spirit and did powerful works among you. Does He do it because you do what the Law says or because you hear and believe the truth?
- 6. It was the same with Abraham. He put his trust in God. This made Abraham right with God.
- 7. Be sure to remember that all men who put their trust in God are the sons of Abraham.
- 8. The Holy Writings said long ago that God would save the people who are not Jews from the punishment of sin also, Before this time the Holy Writings gave the Good News to Abraham in these words, "All nations will be happy because of you." (Genesis 12:3)
- 9. So then, all those who have faith will be happy, along with Abraham who had faith.
- 10. All those who expect the Jewish Law to save them from the punishment of sin will be punished. Because it is written, "Everyone who does not keep on doing all the things written in the Book of the Law will be punished. (Deuteronomy 26:27)

- 11. No one is made right with God by doing what the Law says. For, "The man right with God will live by faith." (Habbakkuk 2:4)
- The Jewish Law does not use faith. It says, "You must obey all the Law or you will die." (Leviticus 18:5)
- 13. Christ bought us with His blood and made us free from the Law. In that way, the Law could not punish us. Christ did this by carrying the load and by being punished instead of us. It is written, "Anyone who hangs on a cross is hated and punished." (Deuteronomy 21:23)
- 14. Because of the price Christ Jesus paid, the good things that came to Abraham might come to the people who are not Jews. And by putting our trust in Christ, we receive the Holy Spirit He has promised.
- 15. Christian brothers, let me show you what this means. If two men agree to something and sign their names on a paper promising to stay true to what they agree, it cannot be changed.
- 16. Now the promise was made to Abraham and to his son. He does not say, "And to sons," speaking of many. But instead, "And to your Son," which means Christ.
- 17. This is what I am saying: The Law which came 430 years later could not change the promise. The promise had already been made by God. The Law could not put that promise aside.
- 18. If it had been possible to be saved from the punishment of sin by obeying the Law, the promise God gave Abraham would be worth nothing. But since it is not possible to be saved by obeying the Jewish Law, the promise God gave Abraham is worth everything.

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### **Bible Text**

Galatians 3:19--4:11

### **Memory Verse**

Galatians 3:24

"The law was used to lead us to Christ. It was our teacher, and so we are made right with God by putting our trust in Christ."

### **Word List**

civil law—a system of government laws for citizens; these were given by God moral law—direct commands of God to show people what is right
Old Testament—the first 39 books of the Bible, God's Holy Word
Savior—one who saves; Jesus Christ Who saves us from sin and death

# Lesson 4 At the Right Time

### At the Right Time—Help Comes

Floods do not come often in Texas.

When they do come, they can bring danger. Rivers rise and houses wash away. People may wait on rooftops or in trees for help. Help does not always come. People fall into the fast water and are lost. If help does come, those who are waiting are glad. One family said it saved their lives. For them, help came at just the right time.

Christ came into the world at just the right time. Christ brought help and hope to all people. This study tells why God gave us the law. It also shows how the law in **Old Testament** times pointed people to Christ.

### The Right Time—for the Law (Galatians 3: 19--26)

Paul asked the Christians in Galatia, "What was the law for?" The law was given for a good purpose. God wanted a people "set apart" from the ungodly people around them. Abraham put his faith in God. God promised to bless him because of his faith. The law was added later to show Abraham and his people how to live. But Paul knew that keeping the law could not make a person right with God. Only faith could do that.

What was the Jewish law? The first five books of the Bible are called the Books of the Law. They may also be called the Law of Moses. God gave the Jewish people three kinds of laws:

- (1) **religious laws** that helped them in their worship of God (Leviticus 1:1-13),
- (2) **civil laws** for living in a group (Deuteronomy 24:10-13), and
- (3) **moral** laws for right living (Exodus 20:1-17).

The Christians in Galatia were

mostly non-Jews. The false teachers said a non-Jew must first become a Jew to be a Christian. They saw Christians as Jews who believed Christ was the promised Savior.

Paul said that believers in Christ are no longer under the Jewish law. Instead, believers are under grace. Paul wrote in Romans 10:4: "For Christ has put an end to the Law, so everyone who has put his trust in Christ is made right with God."

Why was the law given?

First, the law was given to show people the wrong things they were doing. All people are prisoners of sin. Before Christ came, people were held prisoners by the law. The law pointed people to the way of faith in Christ.

Second, the law was a teacher or tutor to guide the people until Christ came. In Paul's day, rich families had tutors. They cared for and guided children. When the children grew up, they no longer needed the tutors. They no longer wore children's clothes. They put on new ones. Christians take off the old clothes of the law and put on the new clothes of faith (Ephesians 4:23-24).

The Right Time—No Difference in Christ (Galatians 3:25--29)

The Galatian Christians had been baptized into Christ. They were "set apart" from their old life of sin. They were all one in Christ. Paul said there is no difference in Jew and Gentile. There is no difference in male and female. There is no difference in slaves and free people.

All people depend on the mercy and love of God. Can any person say that he or she is better than another? God looks at our hearts, not our social status, color, or place of birth (1 Samuel 16:7). Christ's death broke down the walls that separate us. We are all one in the family of God.

The "seed" of Abraham which God had promised was Jesus Christ.

Those who have faith in Christ are part of the blessing and are children of Abraham.

## At the Right Time—Children of God (Galatians 4:1-11)

Some friends of ours raised their grandson. John was only four when his parents died in an accident. The grandparents took care of him.

Everything John's parents owned was his. But John could get none of it until he grew up. When the right time came, John got everything that had been promised him.

To Paul, all people were like children held by the law. They were helpless until God gave them a way out. At the right time, God sent Jesus Christ into the world to give us help and hope. Christ bought us with his blood and set us free. Through faith, we are made right with God. We are children of God. As children, we have His Spirit living in us. We will receive all that God has promised us. God's timing is always perfect.

The Christians in Galatia were free. Paul did not want them to lose that freedom. In their old life, they were slaves to idols and pagan gods. The false teachers wanted them to be slaves to the Jewish law.

God gave the law to point the way to Christ. They were Christians now.

They had Christ living in them. God set people free from sin and death by sending Christ—at just the right time.

Christ gave us a new law of love in John 13:34: "You must love each other as I have loved you."

Jesus also said that the greatest law was this:

"'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.' This is the first and greatest of the Laws. The second is

like it, 'You must love your neighbor as you love yourself.' All the Laws and the writings of the early preachers depend on these two most important Laws."

(Matthew 22:37b-40)

### Things to Think About

1. What did the law do? Are Christians under Jewish law today? Why?

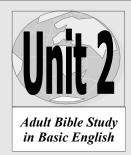
2. Do believers today still want to add works to faith? Should we do good works? For what reason?

3. How did Christ break down walls that separated different groups of people?

### Galatians 3:19--4:11

- 19. Then why do we have the Law? It was given because of sin. It was to be used until Christ came. The promise had been made looking toward Christ. The Law was given by angels through Moses who stood between God and man.
- 20. But when the promise was given to Abraham, God gave it without anyone standing between them.
- 21. Is the Law against the promise of God? No! Never! If it had been possible to be saved from the punishment of sin by obeying the Law, then being right with God would have come by obeying the Law.
- 22. But the Holy Writings say that all men are guilty of sin. Then that which was promised might be given to those who put their trust in Christ. It will be because their faith is in Him.
- 23. Before it was possible to be saved from the punishment of sin by putting our trust in Christ, we were held under the Jewish. Law. It was as if we were being kept in prison. We were kept this way until Christ came.
- 24. The Law was used to lead us to Christ. It was our teacher, and so we were made right with God by putting our trust in Christ.
- 25. Now that our faith is in Christ, we do not need the Law to lead us.
- 26. You are now children of God because you have put your trust in Christ Jesus.
- 27. All of you who have been baptized to show you belong to Christ have become like Christ.
- 28. God does not see you as a Jew or as a Greek. He does not see you as a person sold to work or as a person free to work. He does not see you as a man or as a woman. You are all one in Christ.

- 29. If you belong to Christ, then you have become the true children of Abraham. What God promised to him is now yours.
- 4:
- 1. Let me say this another way. A young child who will get all the riches of his family is not different from a workman who is owned by the family. And yet the young child owns everything.
- While he is young, he is cared for by men his father trusts. These men tell the child what he can and cannot do. The child cannot do what he wants to do until he has become a certain age.
- 3. We were as children also held by the Law. We obeyed the Law in our religious worship.
- 4. But at the right time, God sent His Son. A woman gave birth to Him under the Law.
- This all happened so He could buy with His blood and make free all those who were held by the Law. Then we might become the sons of God.
- 6. Because you are the sons of God, He has sent the Spirit of His Son into our hearts. The Spirit cries, "Father!"
- 7. So now you are no longer a servant who is owned by someone. You are a son. If you are a son, then you will receive what God has promised through Christ.
- 8. During the time when you did not know God, you worshiped false gods.
- 9. But now that you know God, or should I say that you are known by God, why do you turn back again to the weak old Law? Why do you want to do those religious acts of worship that will keep you from being free? Why do you want to be held under the power of the Law again?
- 10. You do special things on certain days and months and years and times of the year.
- 11. I am afraid my work with you was wasted.



#### Lesson 5

Freedom From and Freedom For Galatians 5:1-6,13-26

#### Lesson 6

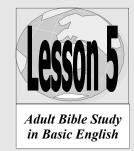
This Way to a Healthy Church
Galatians 6:1-14

# Unit 2 Living the Way of Faith

In chapters 1-4 in Galatians, Paul showed that there is only one gospel. It is the gospel of faith. In Galatians chapters 5-6, Paul wrote more about faith. He said that faith should make a difference in daily living.

The Galatian Christians had been set free from the law of works. Christ's death and coming alive again had set them free. But freedom in Christ did not mean they were free to sin. They must use their new freedom to serve and help others. As believers, they should have the fruit of the Spirit in their daily lives (Lesson 5). They should show love, joy, peace, and kindness. Also, they should not give up on people. He wanted them to be good and gentle, watch their evil desires and have faith.

As Paul closed his letter, he gave an example of a healthy church. In a healthy church, members help one another. They help others carry their heavy loads. Members take care of their church leaders. They gently bring fallen members back into the fellowship (Lesson 6). As Christians, we must do more than *say* we follow Christ. We must live the way of faith every day.



**Bible Text** Galatians 5:1-6;13-26

# Freedom From and Freedom For

**Keep that Freedom** 

Our church has a **ministry** to people who live in a halfway house near the church. Some of the **residents** have been in jail and some have been in prison. Many have been on drugs and are trying to stay away from them. A couple from our church

### Memory Verse Galatians 5:16

"Let the Holy Spirit lead you in each step. Then you will not please your sinful old selves."

### **Word List**

chaplain: preacher or minister

ministry: help or care for one person or

a group of people

residents: people who live in a certain

place

slaves: those who are captive, not free

teach a Bible lesson for the residents every Sunday. Each person who comes to class signs a paper and writes a prayer request. The paper is put in the prayer room at church each week. Church members pray for the residents.

Many of the former prisoners ask for prayers to help them stay off of drugs and live a clean life. They do not want to go back to prison. They do not want to be slaves to drugs or other sins any more. They want to keep their freedom and use it in the right way.

In this study, Paul tells the new Christians in Galatia that they are free from slavery to the Jewish law. He wants them to stay free. Faith in Christ gives freedom, not chains.

Paul is afraid their newfound freedom might be used in the wrong way. Having freedom does not mean living in sin. Christian freedom should lead to a clean life. It should be a life of loving and helping others.

### Live in the Freedom of Christ (Galatians 5:1-6)

Paul was nearing the close of his letter to

the Galatians. He repeated some things he had said before. Christ died on a cross so they could be free. Paul said that being circumcised could not make them right with God. If they put themselves under the Jewish law by being circumcised, they would have to keep *every* law. They could not choose to obey some laws and not obey others. It would also mean leaving the way of faith. They would be saying no to the freedom that God had offered them in Christ.

We are made right with God through faith, not works. God has forgiven our sins. His forgiveness is complete. Christ said those who are forgiven much love much (Luke 7:47). It is not the outward sign of the flesh, circumcision, that God's people need. What we need most is "faith working through love" (verse 6). Because of Christ, we are now able to do what we could not do before. We are free to live for others, not just for ourselves.

Freedom from the Law and from Sinful Ways (Galatians 5:13-18,26)

Paul wrote the Galatian Christians

about the right use of freedom. Christ died to free them from the punishment of sin. They should not go back to their old sinful ways. They were to be slaves to the law of love. He wrote words from the Jewish law: "You obey the whole law when you do this one thing, 'Love your neighbor as yourself'" (Leviticus 19:18). Those who love others are truly free.

A chaplain from a prison in Texas spoke to a group in our church. He said the prisoners have a hard time when they leave prison. Some do not know where to go or what to do. Some want to go back to their old lives of doing wrong. Others want to start over and live a clean life. The chaplain asked people in the church to help prisoners who were freed. They would need jobs and places to live. Church members could help them learn how to live in their new life of freedom.

Paul said the Holy Spirit's power would help the Galatians live their free lives. The good things the Holy Spirit led them to do would be different from the things they had done before. Christ gave them freedom *from* sin, not freedom *to* sin. Paul encouraged them to follow the walk or life-style of the Spirit. Living in the Spirit freed the Galatians from their old way of life (verses 18-21). Paul did not want his brothers in Christ to live that way any more. He said those who live that way cannot belong to God. They are servants of evil, not God.

### Freedom to do Good (Galatians 5:22-26)

Life in the Holy Spirit means life under God's rule. Paul spoke of the fruit of the Spirit. This includes love, joy, peace, kindness, goodness, gentleness and other qualities. This fruit comes from letting God completely control our lives. A person who is rich in the fruit of the Spirit is one who lives close to God and obeys Him. This person shows love for God by loving and serving others. Christians love and respects others' rights and needs. Paul said there is no law against the fruit of the Spirit. Freedom in Christ means freedom to love and serve.

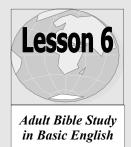
### Things to Think About

- 1. Christ came to set us free from the punishment of sin. That freedom does not give us a right to follow a sinful life-style. Do you agree or disagree?
- 2. Freedom in Christ means following the law of love. Why is it hard to love others as we love ourselves?
- 3. The Galatian Christians were tempted to try another way other than Christ. How are we tempted to follow other ways today?
- 4. God gives the Holy Spirit to all who put their trust and faith in Jesus Christ. How does the Holy Spirit help us love and serve others and live clean lives?

### Galatians 5:1-6,13-26

- Christ made us free. Stay that way. Do not get chained all over again in the Jewish Law and its kind of religious worship.
- 2. Listen to me! I, Paul, tell you that if you have the religious act of becoming a Jew done on you, Christ will be of no use to you at all.
- 3. I say it again. Every man who has the religious act of becoming a Jew done on him must obey every Jewish Law.
- 4. If you expect to be made right with God by obeying the Jewish Law, then you have turned away from Christ and His loving-favor.
- 5. We are waiting for the hope of being made right with God. This will come through the Holy Spirit and by faith.
- 6. If we belong to Jesus Christ, it means nothing to have or not to have gone through the religious act of becoming a Jew. But faith working through love is important.
- 13. Christian brothers, you were chosen to be free. Be careful that you do not please your old selves by sinning because you are free.
- 14. Live this free life by loving and helping others. "You obey the whole Jewish Law when you do this one thing, "Love your neighbor as you love yourself." (Leviticus 19:18)
- 15. But if you hurt and make it very hard for each other, watch out or you may be destroyed by each other.
- 16. I say this to you: Let the Holy Spirit lead you in each step. Then you will not please your sinful old selves.

- 17. The things our old selves want to do are against what the Holy Spirit wants. The Holy Spirit does not agree with what our sinful old selves want. These two are against each other. So you cannot do what you want to do.
- 18. If you let the Holy Spirit lead you, the Jewish Law no longer has power over you.
- 19. The things your sinful old self wants to do are: sex sins, sinful desires, wild living,
- 20. worshiping false gods, witchcraft, hating, fighting, being jealous, being angry, arguing, dividing into little groups and thinking the other groups are wrong, false teaching,
- 21. wanting something someone else has, killing other people, using strong drink, wild parties, and all things like these. I told you before and I am telling you again that those who do these things will have no place in the holy nation of God.
- 22. But the fruit that comes from having the Holy Spirit in our lives is: love, joy, peace, not giving up, being kind, being good, having faith,
- 23. being gentle, and being the boss over our own desires. The Jewish Law is not against these things.
- 24. Those of us who belong to Christ have nailed our sinful old selves on His cross. Our sinful desires are now dead.
- 25. If the Holy Spirit is living in us, let us be led by Him in all things.
- 26. Let us not become proud in ways in which we should not. We must not make hard feelings among ourselves as Christians or make anyone jealous.



#### **Bible Text**

Galatians 6:1-14

### Memory Verse Galatians 6:2

"Help each other in troubles and problems.

This is the kind of law Christ asks us
to obey."

#### **Word List**

**deacons**—a special group of workers who are chosen to help lead a church

# Lesson 6 This Way to a Healthy Church

### The Church is Important in Our Lives

How important is church in a person's life? When I was young, my church was important to me. It was a small church in a small Texas town. But the people had big hearts. They were loving and kind. The members lived together in a spirit of Christian love. They showed concern for one another. They cared about me. The leaders helped to guide my life and teach me more about God. It was in that church that I put my faith and trust in Jesus Christ.

I have not lived near that church for many years, but I still like to visit. I often think about how much that church helped me to grow as a Christian. That church is a good example of a healthy church.

In this lesson, Paul is closing his letter to the Christians in Galatia. He wanted the young churches there to be healthy. The members were new Christians. They did not know how to work out problems. Paul told them to help each other and obey Christ's law of love.

### **Healthy Churches Share Burdens** (Galatians 6:1-5)

Earlier, Paul had written about the fruit of the Spirit (Galatians 5:22-23). He wanted the church members to live with that kind of love for one another. Paul then named some problems in the church (Galatians 5:26). Some church members were being proud, causing hard feelings and making others jealous.

Paul wanted the stronger church members to help the weaker ones. What if a person trying to live in the Spirit made a mistake? Paul said the stronger ones should show Christ's love and forgiveness. They should lead him back gently and with care. It was like a doctor putting a broken bone back together. The doctor wants to make the leg well, not break the other one. If the weaker brother had to carry the problem alone, he might

fall under the load.

Stronger members should not be proud. They might be tempted later to do the same wrong things. When we help one another, we are living Christ's law of love. We need to look at our own lives. Do we honor Christ in all things? Church members are part of the church body. We are also members of the family of God.

The church where I am now a member is a loving, caring church. It is very large. But it does not seem large because the people are so friendly.

People who visit our church say they feel love there. We care about each other and help each other. Recently, I had a death in my family. Many church friends sent cards and helped me in other ways.

Paul wanted that kind of love shown in the Galatian churches.

### A Healthy Church Takes Care of Its Leaders (Galatians 6:5-6)

Because our church is large, we have a number of church leaders. Our pastor (preacher) is a leader. Church leaders are workers who are paid by the church. They work in the church because God has called them, and not for the money. We thank God for their good leadership.

Most Baptist churches follow the Bible way of giving. We give one-tenth of our income to the church (tithing). The money we give pays the church leaders. It also helps carry out more than 50 ministries in the church to people of all ages. We give money to help tell people everywhere about God's love.

Paul wanted the new churches to pay their teachers. Paul was probably thinking of his own trials. He was a tent maker. He often worked at that job so he would not have to take money from the churches.

Many other workers in churches today are not paid. They are volunteers who give their time to help in the church. They show thanks to God by helping others.

My husband and I are volunteer workers. He teaches a large Bible Study class for internationals on Sundays. On Thursdays, he teaches a computer class for internationals. He takes pictures of new church members once a month and is a deacon. He does not take money for his service to the church.

Paul may have meant something like that when he wrote, "Everyone must do his own work."

### A Healthy Church Does Not Give Up (Galatians 6:7-10)

Christians should not get tired of doing good and helping others. A church should not give up on any person. Paul told a farm story. A farmer plants corn in the spring and gathers corn in the fall. He cannot plant weeds and then gather apples from those weeds. Paul said we cannot fool God. We gather the same fruit as the seed we plant. If we plant sinful acts, we gather the results of those acts, even if God forgives us. There is a natural law for farmers. There is also a moral law which we should obey.

# A Healthy Church Is Proud Only in the Cross of Christ (Galatians 6:11-14)

Paul said he would be proud only in the cross of Christ. The Galatians were made right with God by putting their faith in Christ. That is still the way a person becomes a Christian.

Becoming a church member has two more steps. The next step is telling the church that you trust in Christ. In many churches there is a time at the end of the worship service when people are invited to come tell about becoming a Christian.

Being baptized is the last step.

The Christian is placed under the water and then is brought back up. This is a picture of the old life being buried and of the new life with Christ. It is also a way of showing others a picture of how Jesus died, was buried and is now alive.

Being a church member brings many blessings. If you are not a church member, would you like to be a church member? Why not talk with someone about it today. You will be glad you did.

### **Things to Think About**

1. How can a church help its members with their problems?

2. What does the story about planting and growing mean? What can we learn from it?

3. Why should a Christian be a church member? Is it hard to become a member?

### Galatians 6:1-14

- Christian brothers, if a person is found doing some sin, you who are stronger Christians should lead that one back into the right way. Do not be proud as you do it. Watch yourself, because you may be tempted also.
- 2. Help each other in troubles and problems. This is the kind of law Christ asks us to obey.
- 3. If anyone thinks he is important when he is nothing, he is fooling himself.
- 4. Everyone should look at himself and see how he does his own work. Then he can be happy in what he has done. He should not compare himself with his neighbor.
- 5. Everyone must do his own work.
- 6. He who is taught God's Word should share the good things he has with his teacher.
- 7. Do not be fooled. You cannot fool God. A man will get back whatever he plants!
- 8. If a man does things to please his sinful old self, his soul will be lost. If a man does things to please the Holy Spirit, he will have life that lasts forever.

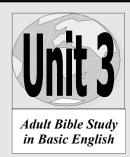
- 9. Do not let yourselves get tired of doing good. If we do not give up, we will get what is coming to us at the right time.
- Because of this, we should do good to everyone. For sure, we should do good to those who belong to Christ.
- See what big letters I make when I write to you with my own hand.
- 12. Those men who say you must go through the religious act of becoming a Jew are doing it because they want to make a good show in front of the world. They do this so they will not have to suffer because of following the way of the cross of Christ.
- 13. Those who have gone through the religious act of becoming a Jew do not even keep the Law themselves. But they want you to go through that religious act so they can be proud that you are their followers.
- 14. I do not want to be proud of anything except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ. Because of the cross, the ways of this world are dead to me, and I am dead to them.

Have you ever thought, "What is

life all about?" Have you wondered why you are in the world? Perhaps you have

God's Plan for Us

Unit 3



#### **GOD'S PLAN FOR US**

Lesson 7

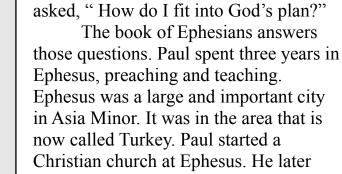
What God is Up To Ephesians 1:1-14

Lesson 8

Saved to New Life! Ephesians 2:1-16

Lesson 9

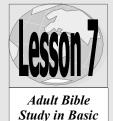
What God Wants for You Ephesians 3:14-2



wrote this letter to the church there. He probably wanted other churches to read the letter also.

Paul wrote Ephesians from prison.

Some of his other letters to churches were written in a hurry. But in prison, Paul had plenty of time to think and to write. Some people say that Ephesians is Paul's best letter. It is a beautiful letter. Enjoy this study.



### **Bible Text**

Ephesians 1:1-14

Memory Verse Ephesians 1:9b-10

"God . . . planned long ago to send Christ into the world. . . at the right time."

# Lesson 7 What God is Up To

Paul Writes to the Faithful Followers in Ephesus (Ephesians 1:1-2)

We studied Paul's letter to the Galatian Christians in the last six lessons. This lesson begins the study of Paul's letter to the Ephesians. Paul opens the letter in the usual way. The Ephesians were his friends and fellow Christians. Paul says he is a missionary for Jesus Christ. He was writing from prison in

### **Word List**

Victory: winning, having success

Rome. How could Paul live as a missionary when he was chained to a prison guard?

Acts 27:30-31 gives the answer. Paul lived and spoke for Christ, even in prison: "He was happy for all who came to see him. He kept on preaching. He taught about the Lord Jesus Christ without fear."

Do you think a Christian's witness may be greater in times of trouble? We can live in a prison of our own at times. It may be money or family problems, a sick body, loneliness or other needs in our lives. Can we, like Paul, still share Christ's love with others, even during hard times? Only with Christ's help can we do it. We have to stay close to Him.

Paul called the Ephesian Christians "faithful followers." Paul honored the Ephesians by giving them that name. That meant they stood strong for Christ in their everyday lives. That was not easy in Ephesus. The great temple to the pagan goddess Diana in Ephesus was one of the Seven Wonders of the world.

At that time, Ephesus was the fourth largest city in the world. It had many religions and false gods. Read Acts 19:23-41 to learn about Paul's trouble with the idol makers there.

Purpose: aim or goal

Is it sometimes hard for us to stand strong in our beliefs? Even family members may be against our Christian faith. Faith in Christ helped the Ephesian Christians to stand strong. It would be good to be called a "faithful follower" of Christ today.

Paul wanted the Ephesian Christians to have God's peace and loving-favor.

True peace is not just the absence of trouble. It means a quiet trust in God. It does not depend on what happens around us or what happens to us.

A dear friend and former teacher said that Paul promised peace to the believer. He did not mention victory over the thing that troubles us. But victory always comes when we are filled with God's peace.

Loving-favor is the special gift of God to believers in Christ Jesus.

## Blessings to the Chosen People of God (Galatians 1:3-8)

In these words to the Ephesians, Paul is thinking of Christians as the chosen people of God. God had already given them a taste of heaven on earth by showing them love and forgiveness. Paul was sure that God had a plan for his life. God had chosen Paul before the world began (Galatians 1:15). God called Paul to serve Him. Paul then chose to serve God and be His witness. The purpose and plan God had for Paul was part of the bigger plan God had for the whole world.

Why did God choose us? A person could never be *good* enough to be chosen. God chose sinners to be made holy through the blood of Christ. Christ, who never sinned, shed His blood on the cross. He did it to free us from the punishment of sin. God, in His wisdom and love, did all of this for us! God's purpose and plan was to bring us into His family through Jesus Christ.

How can we understand that kind of love? We must praise God and show our thanks by sharing His love with others. Christians are still part of the world. We should make a difference *in* our world, working wherever God puts us.

## God's Secret Plan Is Now Known (Ephesians 1:8-14)

God's loving plan was to send Christ into the world. It was in God's mind long ago. He did not tell all people His plan. God waited until the right time came. God spoke through the early preachers (prophets). They said that God would send His Son. He would send a Savior for His people. God planned everything in the past. He has also planned all that is to come in the future.

God's plan for the future is a good one. He will gather all believers together in Christ. They will be from every nation, race and color. There will be no walls to separate Jews and Gentiles, or any other group. All will be one in Christ, and He will be the head of all. Believers will all be together as one in God's family. Now we know God's plan, what He is up to.

Loved ones in heaven and those on earth will come together. During the last year, my sister and my brother died. I was sad to lose them, but I had hope. I know I will see them again in heaven one day. My mother died 24 years ago, but just before he died last month, my brother saw her. He said, "Mama is coming to get me." Yes, we will have a great family get-together one day!

God's Holy Word tells us that Christ is coming again. No one knows the time, but we do know it will happen just the way God planned it.

How did the Ephesians know that God would keep His promise? Paul said that God marked the believers as His own. He sealed the agreement by giving each one His Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit will be with every believer until God finishes His work in them. Praise God for His loving plan!

### Things to Think About

- 1. Who are the chosen people of God?
- 2. What was God's loving plan?

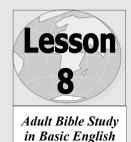
## 3. How does your plan for your life fit into God's plan?

4. How can we know that God's promises will be kept?

### Ephesians 1:1-14

- This letter is from Paul. I am a missionary for Jesus Christ. God wanted me to work for Him. This letter is to those who belong to Christ in the city of Ephesus and to you who are faithful followers of Christ Jesus.
- 2. May you have loving-favor and peace from God our Father and from our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 3. Let us honor and thank the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. He has already given us a taste of what heaven is like.
- 4. Even before the world was made, God chose us for Himself because of His love. He planned that we should be holy and without blame as He sees us.
- God already planned to have us as His own children. This was done by Jesus Christ. In His plan God wanted this done.
- 6. We thank God for His loving-favor to us. He gave this loving-favor to us through His much-loved Son.
- 7. Because of the blood of Christ, we are bought and made free from the punishment of sin. And because of His blood, our sins are forgiven. His loving-favor to us is so rich.

- 8. He was so willing to give all of this to us. He did this with wisdom and understanding.
- 9. God told us the secret of what He wanted to do. It is this: In loving thought He planned long ago to send Christ into the world.
- 10. The plan was for Christ to gather us all together at the right time. If we are in heaven or still on earth, He will bring us together and will be head over all.
- 11. We were already chosen to be God's own children by Christ. This was done just like the plan He had.
- 12. We who were the first to put our trust in Christ should thank Him for His greatness.
- 13. The truth is the Good News. When you heard the truth, you put your trust in Christ. Then God marked you by giving you His Holy Spirit as a promise.
- 14. The Holy Spirit was given to us as a promise that we will receive everything God has for us. God's Spirit will be with us until God finishes His work of making us complete. God does this to show His shining greatness.



### **Bible Text**

Ephesians 2:1-16

### Memory Verse Ephesians 2:8:

For by His loving-favor
you have been saved from the punishment
of sin through faith.
It is not by anything you have done.
It is a gift of God."

#### **Word List**

jungle-forest with many trees and plants

# Lesson 8 Saved to New Life Introduction

Our friends sent us their newsletter. We liked the pictures of their trip. They had been to a Billy Graham meeting for preachers. The picture I liked best was the one of their son, Joe, with two Warani Indians. They were from Ecuador. Their people used to be called "Aucas." The men were smiling and happy.

But in 1956 one of the men in the picture had killed a missionary. The missionary had gone into their **jungle** 

village to tell them about Jesus. The wife of the missionary later moved into that village. She and her little girl lived among the Aucas to tell them about God's love.

Under the picture, Joe's mother wrote: "These men now love the Lord and love to tell people about Him. Their tribe also likes to watch the JESUS film over and over. They tell people 'how you must follow God's path to get to God's house." These men and others were changed from people of hate to people of love. Only God's loving-favor can change the hearts of men like that.

God changed the hearts of the Ephesians, too. In this lesson, Paul writes to the Ephesians about the difference trusting Christ had made in their lives.

# What the Ephesians Had Been in the Past

(Ephesians 2:1-3)

Paul tells the Ephesians that they had been "dead" in their sins. They had not obeyed God. They had followed the sinful ways of the world. They gave in to whatever their minds and bodies wanted. It was life that deserved only the anger of God. Paul wrote in Romans 6:23: "You get what is coming to you when you sin. It is death!" The Ephesians had been under the devil's power until they chose to follow Christ.

What is sin? The Bible says, "Every kind of wrong-doing is sin" (1 John 5:17). Sin is also choosing to follow

GOD'S PLAN FOR US

our own way instead of God's way. Sin controls and is deadly. John wrote, "...everyone who sins is the servant of sin because sin has a hold on him" (John 8:34). But there is good news: "Christ never sinned, but God put our sin on Him. We are made right with God because of what Christ did for us" (2 Corinthians 5:21).

### What the Ephesians Became Through the Work of Christ (Ephesians 2:4-10)

God made the Ephesians right with Him. He made them new people in Christ. God did it because of His great love and mercy. God did not change their past, but He did change their future. They had been sinners, ungodly people. Now they were children of God. They were no longer under the power of sin and death.

God raised Jesus Christ from the dead. Believers are raised from spiritual death. They are given the power of the Holy Spirit in their lives. God also gives believers a place in heaven with Christ. The believers' new place in Christ should bring a new way of living.

The Ephesians were saved from the punishment of sin by God's mercy and loving-favor. It was by faith and not by any kind of works. Paul knew that a

person could never be *good* enough to earn God's forgiveness. Paul said that would make the person proud. As a Jewish leader, Paul had tried to keep all the Jewish laws. He learned that it could not be done. Breaking one law was the same as breaking all.

The Law, to Paul, was the way of self-help, of earning one's forgiveness. God's mercy and loving-favor (grace) is God's way; it is totally unearned. It is a priceless gift from God to the person who has faith in His Son, Jesus Christ.

Works cannot save us from the punishment of sin. But God created us to do good works. We are made new persons in Jesus Christ. We are then called to do good works in His name.

Christians show their thanks and praise to God by helping others. That is part of God's wonderful plan for our lives. We do not have to look far to see people who need help. God wants us to live pure lives, be thankful and help others. That kind of life will bring joy to the heart of God.

### **Gentiles and Jews Brought Together in Christ** (Ephesians 2:11-16)

Many walls divided the Gentiles and the Jews before Christ came. Jews thought Gentiles were "unclean."

Because Jews tried to keep the law, they thought they were pure and holy. Paul said that all people are sinners. All people need God's forgiveness. Before Christ came, Gentiles had no hope and had no knowledge of the true God. They were far away from Him. But in Christ, the Gentiles were brought close to God.

In Christ, the walls that divided the Jews and Gentiles were broken down. Christ's blood brought the two groups together to God. All believers are now part of the family of God. "For sure I tell you, anyone who hears My Word and puts his trust in Him Who sent Me has life that lasts forever. He will not be guilty. He has already passed from death into life.( John 5:24.)

- What kind of walls did the missionaries break down with the Auca people?
- Which walls separate people today?
- Are they walls of color, race, money or religion?
- How can Christians help break down the walls?

In God's loving kindness, He saves us to new life. He wants us to share His love with others.

### Things to Think About:

1. How were the Ephesians different after they put their trust in Christ?

2. How did the Auca men change?

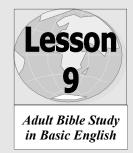
3. How can a person be saved to new life? Do you want that for your life?

4. How did Christ bring the Jews and Gentiles together? How can we help break down walls that separate people today?

### Ephesians 2:1-16

- At one time you were dead because of your sins.
- 2. You followed the sinful ways of the world and obeyed the leader of the power of darkness. He is the devil who is now working in the people who do not obey God.
- 3. At one time all of us lived to please our old selves. We gave in to what our bodies and minds wanted. We were sinful from birth like all other people and would suffer from the anger of God.
- 4. But God had so much lovingkindness. He loved us with such great love.
- 5. Even when we were dead because of our sins, He made us alive by what Christ did for us. You have been saved from the punishment of sin by His lovingfavor.
- 6. God raised us up from death when He raised up Christ Jesus. He has given us a place with Christ in the heavens.
- 7. He did this to show us through all the time to come the great riches of His loving-favor. He has shown us His kindness through Christ Jesus.
- 8. For by His loving-favor you have been saved from the punishment of sin through faith. It is not by anything you have done. It is a gift of God.
- 9. It is not given to you because you worked for it. If you could work for it, you would be proud.

- 10. We are His work. He has made us to belong to Christ Jesus so we can work for Him. He planned that we should do this.
- 11. Do not forget that at one time you did not know God. The Jews, who had gone through the religious act of becoming a Jew by man's hands, said you were people who do not know God.
- 12. You were living without Christ then. The Jewish people who belonged to God had nothing to do with you. The promises He gave to them were not for you. You had nothing in this world to hope for. You were without God.
- 13. But now you belong to Christ Jesus. At one time you were far away from God. Now you have been brought close to Him. Christ did this for you when He gave His blood on the cross.
- 14. We have peace because of Christ. He has made the Jews and those who are not Jews one people. He broke down the wall that divided them.
- 15. He stopped the fighting between them by His death on the cross. He put an end to the Law. Then He made of the two peoples one new kind of people like Himself. In this way, He made peace.
- 16. He brought both groups together to God. Christ finished the fighting between them by His death on the cross.



#### **Bible Text**

Ephesians 3:14-21

### Memory Verse Ephesians 3:20

"God is able to do much more than we ask or think through His power working in us."

#### **Word List**

**cruel**: unkind, brutal, bloody, causing suffering

**destroy**: to get rid of something or someone, kill, to tear down or break up **interpreted**: person said words in a different language (the Yor'uba language)

**Nigeria**: a country in West Africa where Baptists have missionaries

## Lesson 9 What God Wants for You

### **Paul's Prayer for the Church**

Paul believed in the power of prayer. In his letters to the churches, Paul often said he was praying for them. Paul was in prison and could not be there with the Christians at Ephesus. But he could pray for them. In Ephesians 1:16, Paul

wrote, "I always give thanks for you and pray for you." Earlier Paul had gone to Jerusalem by ship. He had stopped in Miletus (Acts 20:17-36). There Paul sent for the leaders of the church at Ephesus. He greeted them and they all prayed together. The Ephesians were sad because they knew they would not see Paul again.

This second prayer in the letter was meant to encourage the Christians and help them grow in Christ. Paul prayed that the church would truly be the body of Christ. This study shows Paul's heart of love for God and for all people. It should help us see that God wants all believers to have love and power for daily living.

## Paul on his Knees (Ephesians 3:14,15)

Paul began by saying, "For this reason." Paul wrote earlier that all people could now come to God through faith in Christ. These people make up the family of God, the church. Some family members are already in heaven and some are here on earth.

God's plan long ago was to bring all people into God's love through Christ. God made all people, but not all choose to become a part of His family.

Usually Jewish men stood to pray

with their arms held out in front. Paul's heart was so heavy that he got down on his knees to pray.

I usually pray seated, but at times I kneel as Paul did. I remember a day in Nigeria when I prayed on my knees. It was my morning to speak on the women's ward at the hospital. I prayed that God would open the hearts of the women. I wanted them to know of God's love for them.

A nurse interpreted for me, since my Yoruba language was poor. I was afraid the women did not understand. I almost did not ask them to say if they would put their trust in Christ. I was surprised when every non-Christian woman there said they believed.

Four weeks later, I received a letter from my friend Sybil. She lived 7,000 miles away. She wrote that God had told her to pray for me that day. It was the same day seven women in the Shaki Baptist hospital trusted in Christ. God is not limited by time or space. God answers when we pray for others. Sybil prayed for me, and I prayed for the women. God's Spirit was at work in all of our hearts.

# Paul Prayed for Power for Living (Ephesians 3:16-17a)

Paul prayed that God would give

the believers gifts from His great riches. One gift would make them strong with power from the Holy Spirit. They would be strong on the inside. They would be able to face problems and trials. The Holy Spirit's presence in our lives brings peace.

The Spirit helps us know what to say to God when we pray. How can we be strong and filled with the Spirit? We must keep our minds and thoughts on Christ. That means having regular prayer time, taking part in worship and reading God's Word.

Another gift was that of Christ living in their hearts by faith. Paul's life completely changed after Christ began living in his heart by faith. Paul had hated Christians and wanted to **destroy** them. Then Paul met the risen Christ (Acts 9:1-31). After that Paul was a servant of Jesus Christ. "He preached without fear in the name of the Lord" (Acts 9:29). Paul prayed that his Christian friends would have that same faith alive in their hearts.

Paul wanted Christ to be at home in their hearts.

A person once asked me, "Does Christ feel at home in every room of your heart? Is there some closet, some place you have not yet opened to Him?" We should want Christ to be Lord of every part of our lives. Psalm 139:23,24 says, "Look through me, O God, and know my heart. Try me and know my thoughts...and lead me in the way that lasts forever."

### How Can We Measure Christ's Love? (Ephesians 3:17b-19)

Paul also prayed for the Ephesian Christians to be filled with love. He wanted them to understand the greatness of Christ's love. His love is too high and long and wide and deep to ever be measured. There is no way to get away from His love.

Paul wrote that nothing could keep believers from the love of Christ (Romans 8:35-39). Christ loved us so much that He was willing to take our sins on Himself and die on a **cruel** cross (John 3:16). Christ tells us to love one another as He has loved us.

What kind of love do we have for one another? Does our love reach far enough to include people who are different from us? Do we love others enough to pray for them? Christ's love working in us will help us love others as we should.

### God is Able to do More (Ephesians 3:20-21)

Paul's last words here are a prayer of praise. With God's power in us, we can all work together in love. We can help the body of Christ to be what it should be.

Our church has "Upward Basketball" teams for any children who want to play. A lot of these children do not attend any church. This year there were 26 ball teams and two cheerleading teams. A total of 220 children took part. Adults in our church prayed for each child and his or her family. A closing program was held for the families. The pastor told them about God's love in Christ. Sixty-eight people signed cards saying they were trusting Christ. Fifteen were parents.

God is able to do more than we can ever think or ask. He wants us to trust Him and be filled with His love and power. That is what God wants for us.

#### Things to Think About

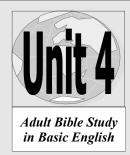
Do you have the Holy Spirit's power working in your life?

- 1. How can we be filled with Christ's love?
- 2. How important is your prayer life? Do you need to give it more time?
- 3. Are you regular in Bible study and worship?

#### **Ephesians 3:14-21**

- 14. For this reason, I get down on my knees and pray to the Father.
- 15. It is from Him that every family in heaven and on earth has its name.
- 16. I pray that because of the riches of His shining greatness, He will make you strong with power in your hearts through the Holy Spirit.
- 17. I pray that Christ may live in your hearts by faith. I pray that you will be filled with love.
- 18. I pray that you will be able to understand how wide and how long and how high and how deep His love is.

- 19. I pray that you will know the love of Christ. His love goes beyond anything we can understand. I pray that you will be filled with God Himself.
- 20. God is able to do much more than we ask or think through His power working in us.
- 21. May we see His shining greatness in the church. May all people in all time honor Christ Jesus. Let it be so.



#### Lesson 10

How to Find Your Place in the Church Ephesians 4:1-16

#### Lesson 11

How to Walk the Walk and Talk the Talk Ephesians 4:17-5:11

#### Lesson 12

How to Be Christian in Family Life
Ephesians 5:21-6:4

#### Lesson 13

How to Be Christian When It's Not Easy Ephesians 6:10-24

# Unit 4 Living Out God's Plan

In Unit 3 we studied how to become a Christian and what a Christian believes.

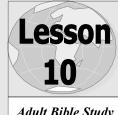
In this unit Paul talks about the Christian's daily life.

He tells how God wants us to be in church in *Lesson 10*.

Lesson 11 tells us how to treat other people.

The subject of *Lesson 12* is our families.

Some of these rules may be hard to keep. We must depend upon the Lord for strength as we live the Christian life. That is what we will study in *Lesson 13*.



Adult Bible Study in Basic English

#### **Bible Text**

Ephesians 4:1-16

#### Memory Verse Ephesians 4:15b

We are to grow up and be more like Christ. He is the leader of the church.

#### **Word List**

unity: becoming one; perfect agreement

# Lesson 10 How to Find Your Place in the Church

#### Introduction

At the end of *Lesson 9*, Paul told the people in the Ephesian church that he was praying for them with all his heart. He asked God to make them strong and to fill their hearts with faith and love. He wanted them to understand God loved

Anna Beth Mitchell of Hewitt, Texas, wrote the final four lessons of this series. She has taught English as a Second Language at Columbus Avenue Baptist Church for the past eight years. Her husband, Paul, is a retired Army chaplain. They have lived many places and have enjoyed knowing people from many countries. They are now members of the International Bible Study Class at their church

them. It is a beautiful prayer. Read Ephesians 3:14-21 again. Then he began to teach them how to live and work in the church.

#### God wants Christians in the Church To Live in Unity (Ephesians 4:1-6)

Remember, Paul was a prisoner.
But he had not done anything wrong. He was a prisoner for the Lord. How sad that there are still people in prison today who have done nothing wrong. They are in prison because they believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. Many have been killed because they became Christians or told others about Jesus. We should do all we can to help them and remember them in our prayers. They are our brothers and sisters in Christ.

Paul used his time in prison wisely. He wrote this letter to help his friends at Ephesus. He wanted them to become strong Christians. He told them not to be proud. They were to be kind and gentle. They were to be patient and love one another.

The word *one* is used many times in Verses 3-6. Christians are to live together as **one** by the help of the Holy Spirit. There is **one** body. The church is the body of Christ. A church is not a building. A church is people who

believe and follow Jesus' teachings.

When I say, "I'm going to the church," my husband often reminds me that I'm going to the building where the church meets. The church is the people. Using the word "church" to mean a building is the way we talk. But, in the Bible, "church" always means believers in the Lord Jesus Christ.

The church is **one** body. The body has **one** Spirit, **one** hope, **one** Lord, **one** faith, **one** baptism, and **one** God who works through us and lives in us. What **unity!!** But this unity can be broken by sin. With God's help, we must confess our sin. Then unity can be returned to the church.

#### God Wants Christians in the Church to Find and Use Their Gifts (Ephesians 4:7-11)

When Jesus had won the victory here on earth, He went back to heaven. He had come down from heaven and had died on the cross. He had been buried, and had risen from the dead. As He left the earth, He gave gifts to men. The gifts were gifts needed in the church so Christians could tell others about Jesus. Christ decides the spiritual gift received by each person. Gifts are given, not to make people proud, but to help the church. We need to be prepared to do the

good works that God wants us to do.

My husband and I attend an International Bible Study class at our church. We are a small part of the body of Christ that meets there.

Our teacher is a retired surgeon. Each Sunday he faithfully teaches the class. He is using one of the gifts God has given him. Our director is a Lebanese preacher. A Korean woman and a Japanese woman greet visitors and keep our records. A young Chinese man leads our singing, and the piano is played by a Korean woman.

Each of these people, along with many others in our class, is finding and using God-given gifts. There is beautiful unity as we share our gifts in our class.

#### God Expects Christians in the Church to Grow Toward Maturity (Ephesians 4:12-16)

How would parents feel if their baby did not grow? How disappointed they would be. They listen carefully for the first words. They are so happy when their baby takes a few steps.

God wants His children to grow also. Paul told the Ephesians to become grown-up Christians, not babies. If they did not grow, they would never be strong Christians. Paul also said false teachers would try to get them to believe things that were not true. If they were not strong Christians, they might listen to the false teachers.

Paul said they would be like a ship in a storm. False teachings would blow them back and forth. They needed to grow up and be strong in Christ. The same is true today. After we become Christians, there are some things we need to do. We must study the Bible, God's word. We need to learn to talk to God in prayer. We should meet together with other Christian believers. We should listen to messages by our preachers and Bible study teachers. We need to always be looking for God's way.

How are we to grow? We are to grow up and be more like Christ (verse 15). Christ is the head of the church. We who are believers are part of the body of Christ. Each part is to help the other parts.

Paul tells us in verse 15 that we are to hold to the truth with love in our hearts. The whole body of believers is joined together through Christ. It is held together by Him. He helps us grow and builds us up in love. Then each part of the body does its work.

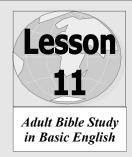
#### Things to Think About

- 1. Have you believed in Jesus Christ and become a part of His spiritual body?
- 2. Have you grown the way God wants? Do you know He is with you wherever you are and whatever happens to you?
- 3. Have you thought about your gifts? What are they?
- 4. Are you using your spiritual gifts to help others in Christ's body?

#### **Ephesians 4:1-16**

- I am being held in prison because of working for the Lord. I ask you from my heart to live and work the way the Lord expected you to live and work.
- 2. Live and work without pride. Be gentle and kind. Do not be hard on others. Let love keep you from doing that.
- 3. Work hard to live together as one by the help of the Holy Spirit. Then there will be peace.
- 4. There is one body and one Spirit. There is one hope in which you were called.
- 5. There is one Lord and one faith and one baptism.
- 6. There is one God. He is the Father of us all. He is over us all. He is the One working through us all. He is the One living in us all.
- 7. Loving-favor has been given to each one of us. We can see how great it is by the gift of Christ.
- 8. The Holy Writings say, "When Christ went up to heaven, He took those who were held with Him. He gave gifts to men." (Psalm 68:18)
- 9. When they say, "He went up," what does it mean but that He had first gone down to the deep parts of the earth.
- 10. Christ Who went down into the deep also went up far above the

- heavens. He did this to fill all the world with Himself.
- 11. Christ gave gifts to men. He gave to some the gift to be missionaries, some to be preachers, others to be preachers who go from town to town. He gave others the gift to be church leaders and teachers.
- These gifts help His people work well for Him. And then the church which is the body of Christ will be made strong.
- 13. All of us are to be as one in the faith and in knowing the Son of God. We are to be full-grown Christians standing as high and complete as Christ is Himself.
- 14. Then we will not be as children any longer. Children are like boats thrown up and down on big waves. They are blown with the wind. False teaching is like the wind. False teachers try everything possible to make people believe a lie.
- 15. but we are to hold to the truth with love in our hearts. We are to grow up and be more like Christ. He is the leader of the church.
- 16. Christ has put each part of the church in its right place. Each part helps other parts. This is what is needed to keep the whole body together. In this way, the whole body grows strong in love.



#### **Bible Text**

Ephesians 4:17-5:11

### Memory Verse Ephesians 5:8b

"Live as children who have the light of the Lord in them."

#### **Word List**

misusing: not using something in the right

way

**seminary:** a school for training Christian

leaders

# Lesson 11 How to Walk the Walk and Talk the Talk

#### Introduction

In lesson 10 we saw how Christians are to live their new life in the church. In this lesson we will see how we should live in relation to all people. The rules Paul gives are good for helping us live with our friends and also with those who are not our friends. Paul tells us some things we should *not* do. He also tells us many things we *should* do.

# What a Difference Christ Makes (Ephesians 4:17-24)

Paul told the people at Ephesus that their lives must be different from the lives of the people of the world who did not know God. What mixed-up lives those people lived! They thought foolish thoughts. They didn't care whether something was right or wrong. They were always wanting to do sinful acts. Their minds were dark because they had closed them to God. They had turned their hearts away from Him.

There are many people in the world today who are like that. To them the things of the world are more important than God. They love their jobs, money, cars, houses, pleasure, and other things. They do not even think about God. They are called worldly people.

They, too, have foolish thoughts and don't care whether anything is right or wrong. They have not chosen to listen to God and are still in darkness.

We were once like this. Then we learned differently from Christ. He made our hearts and minds new. He made us new persons. Now we want to put God first and trust Him for our needs. We are not to do things that we did in the past. We want to live now to please God and follow His rules.

We need to show God's love and

His way to all people. God can change other's lives if they will listen to Him. We need to live in such a way that we will be examples of Christian love to the church and to worldly people.

## What Not To Do (Ephesians 4:25-5:11)

In this letter Paul reminds us how to live our Christian life. There are things we should *not* do in our Christian walk:

- Lying must be stopped; we are to tell the truth. Lying will create problems and hurt people.
- We should be slow to become angry. There will be times when we do get angry. Even Jesus got angry when he saw people misusing God's house.

But we are not to let anger become sinful. Anger becomes sinful when we let it stay in our hearts and upset our lives. Doing this leads to many troubles. It may give the devil a chance to start working in our lives. We are told to get over our anger before the sun goes down. That doesn't give us long to be angry, does it?

 Stop stealing. Do not take what is not yours.

#### What To Do

Remember that we are new

persons. Our minds and hearts have been made new by Jesus Christ. These rules help us to walk in a way that will be pleasing to God.

- We are to work with our own hands so that we can provide for our needs. We should also work so that we can have enough to share with others in need
- We must also be Christlike in our talk. Our words show what is in our heart. The words we say should be helpful to other Christians and to those who are not Christians. We make God's Holy Spirit sad when we use bad words and say things that hurt other people.
- We should be thoughtful and kind at all times. Children of God want to be like their heavenly Father.
- We must also be forgiving. God forgave us. If we are becoming like Him, we will also be forgiving of others.

#### A Story of Forgiveness

The only son of a former teacher in our Neighbors International Program was murdered many years ago. He was a seminary student who was selling Bibles during the summer. Some young men told him they would buy a Bible if he would take them to their grandmother's house to get some money. Instead they killed

him for the money he had. I did not know this teacher when this happened. I met her years later. God had given her the ability to forgive the killers of her son.

She went with our church college department on a mission trip to prisons. The prisoners in four different prisons heard her tell what had happened. She told them how she had with God's help forgiven the murderers. Then she was able to tell them how God could and would forgive them if they were willing to believe in Jesus.

A forgiving spirit can cleanse our hearts and open many doors.

Sexual sins should not be a part of our lives. Paul says we should never even talk about such things. Bad language hurts the speaker as well as the hearer. Our mind and our body are to be controlled by the Holy Spirit.

We are to be satisfied with what God has given us and not want what belongs to someone else. In another letter Paul wrote, "I have learned to be happy with whatever I have" (Philippians 4:ll).

Jesus said, "I am the light of the world" (John 8:12). He also said to his followers, "You are the light of the world." It is only as we receive the light of Jesus that we become "lights." As

God's children, His light should always be seen in our lives.

#### **Things to Think About**

1. Are you holding anger in your heart toward any person? Will you ask God to help you overcome that anger?

2. Which one of the rules Paul gives do you find hardest to keep?

3. God's Holy Spirit gives us power to live like God wants us to. Have you asked God to help you live as you should?

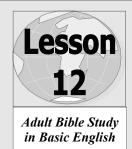
#### Ephesians 4:17-5:11

- 17. I tell you this in the name of the Lord: You must not live any longer like the people of the world who do not know God. Their thoughts are foolish.
- 18. Their minds are in darkness. They are strangers to the life of God. This is because they have closed their minds to Him and have turned their hearts away from Him.
- 19. They do not care anymore about what is right or wrong. They have turned themselves over to the sinful ways of the world and are always wanting to do every kind of sinful act they can think of.
- 20. But you did not learn anything like this from Christ.
- 21. If you have heard of Him and have learned from Him,
- 22. put away the old person you used to be. Have nothing to do with your old sinful life. It was sinful because of being fooled into following bad desires.
- 23. Let your minds and hearts be made new.
- 24. You must become a new person and be God-like. Then you will be made right with God and have a true holy life
- 25. So stop lying to each other. Tell the truth to your neighbor. We all belong to the same body.
- 26. If you are angry, do not let it become sin. Get over your anger before the day is finished.
- 27. Do not let the devil start working in your life.
- 28. Anyone who steals must stop it! He must work with his hands so he will have what he needs and can give to those who need help.
- 29. Watch your talk! No bad words should be coming from your mouth. Say what is good. Your words should help others grow as Christians.
- 30. Do not make God's Holy Spirit have

- sorrow for the way you live. The Holy Spirit has put a mark on you for the day you will be set free.
- 31. Put out of your life all these things: bad feelings about other people, anger, temper, loud talk, bad talk which hurts other people, and bad feelings which hurt other people.
- 32. You must be kind to each other. Think of the other person. Forgive other people just as God forgave you because of Christ's death on the cross.

5:

- 1. Do as God would do. Much-loved children want to do as their fathers do.
- Live with love as Christ loved you. He gave Himself for us, a gift on the altar to God which was as a sweet smell to God.
- Do not let sex sins or anything sinful be even talked about among those who belong to Christ. Do not always want everything.
- 4. Do not be guilty of telling bad stories and of foolish talk. These things are not for you to do. Instead, you are to give thanks for what God has done for you.
- 5. Be sure of this! No person who does sex sins or who is not pure will have any part in the holy nation of Christ and of God. The same is true for the person who always wants what other people have. This becomes a god to him.
- 6. Do not let anyone lead you in the wrong way with foolish talk. The anger of God comes on such people because they choose not to obey Him.
- 7. Have nothing to do with them.
- 8. At one time you lived in darkness. Now you are living in the light that comes from the Lord. Live as children who have the light of the Lord in them.
- 9. This light gives us truth. It makes us right with God and makes us good.
- 10. Learn how to please the Lord.
- 11. Have nothing to do with the bad things done in darkness. Instead, show that these things are wrong.



#### **Bible Text**

Ephesians 5:21-6:4

### Memory Verse Ephesians 5:30

"We are all a part of His body, the church."

#### **Word List**

**compare:** to look at, to show how things are alike or how they are different.

**discipline:** training in proper behavior, or

punishment for not following rules

# Lesson 12 How to Be Christian in Family Life

#### Introduction

When I was a child, most women worked at home. A change began in the American way of life during World War II. Many men were in the army. Women were needed to work making army supplies.

Today, Americans have many more things to help with their work than in the past. We have dishwashers, washing machines, and air conditioning. In order to have many of these things, both the husband and wife work. Babies are taken to a nursery. Many children go home to an empty house after school.

God was the maker of the very first family and He has a plan for all families. Let's look at God's word and see what is most important in marriage and the home.

# **Husbands and Wives** (Ephesians 5:21-33)

This section of Scripture starts with a word to husbands and wives. They are to be willing to help each other and care for each other as equals. Then in the next verse the wives are told to obey their husbands. Paul begins at once to explain to husbands and wives how this can be done.

God gave a good plan for families. The husband is to be the head. This does not mean he is to make all of the rules alone. It means that his first earthly duty is to his family. He should lead the family in the right way. Paul **compares** the husband as the head of the family to Christ as the head of the church. A husband has a special work to do. The wife also has a special work.

The most important part of a husband's duty comes in verse 25. The word is "love." A husband is to love his wife as Christ loved the church. How much did Christ love the church? He loved the church so much that He died for it. This is the same way that a husband should love his wife. In verse 28

Paul also says that men should love their wives as they love their own bodies.

Paul says that when husbands love their wives, they love themselves. When we give love, we usually receive love. A loving husband will probably receive the same kind of love from his wife.

Paul also says that the husband should take care of his wife as he takes care of his own body. The love of a husband will cause him to protect his wife. Verse 30 says, "We are all part of His body, the church." This means husbands, wives, and children.

When a new home is started, it is important for the family to learn how to live together. This is why the husband and wife leave their parents and start a new family. These two newly-weds are to become one before the Lord and before others.

Paul says it is hard to understand how two can become one. But this should be the goal of all marriages. We are to become one in our love for the Lord and one in our love for each other. We are also to become one in the plan and care of our family.

Through the years we grow in this oneness. An elderly woman said, "If my husband should die before I do, I will live the rest of my life feeling like half of a person."

Again. the important word is "love." This love is *agape love* which is far different from sexual love. It is the unselfish love that Christ has for the church. It is the highest love.

Paul closes this section with another word to the wives. He says, "Every wife must honor her husband." It is easy to honor a husband who loves his wife in the way described in these verses.

## Children and Parents (Ephesians 6:1-4)

Children are included in Paul's family rules. They are to obey their parents in the Lord. Loving parents teach children to obey. Children need to learn to obey early in life.

If children receive no **discipline**, they may grow up and not know how to live as they should. They may not be kind to other people. The may not be willing to obey the laws of the land. It may be hard for them to see the need for making Jesus Christ the Lord of their lives.

Not only are children to obey their parents, they are also to honor them. Paul reminds us that this has been true since long ago. The Ten Commandments were given to Moses. The fifth commandment says, "Honor your father and your mother, so your life may be long in the

land the Lord your God gives you" (Exodus 20:12).

Finally Paul warns fathers to be careful in disciplining their children. Parents never want to make their children angry because of unkind treatment. All discipline should be done in love.

#### God's Plan is Love

The most important word in all of this lesson is "love." This love includes Christ's love for the church and the love of husband and wife for each other. It also includes the children's love for parents and the parent's love for children.

This is the way to have a loving family. Even though families have changed over the years, one thing is the same. Love of God and love of others make a good family. Decide today to make Christ's love shown in your family.

#### Things to Think About

1. Do you see anything in your family today that is not kind and loving? Will you ask God to help you change this if you do?

2. Remember that children are a gift from God. Will you seek His help as you take care of your children?

3. How can love help a family become what God wants?

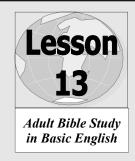
#### Ephesians 5: 21-6:4

- 21. Be willing to help and care for each other because of Christ. By doing this, you honor Christ.
- 22. Wives, obey your own husbands. In doing this, you obey the Lord.
- 23. For a husband is the head of his wife as Christ is the head of the church. It is His body (the church) that He saves.
- 24. As the church is to obey Christ, wives are to obey their own husbands in everything.
- 25. Husbands, love your wives. You must love them as Christ loved the church. He gave His life for it
- 26. Christ did this so He could set the church apart for Himself. He made it clean by the washing of water with the Word.
- 27. Christ did this so the church might stand before Him in shining greatness. There is to be no sin of any kind in it. It is to be holy and without blame.
- 28. So men should love their wives as they love their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

- 29. No man hates himself. He takes care of his own body. That is the way Christ does. He cares for His body which is the church.
- 30. We are all a part of His body, the church.
- 31. For this reason, a man must leave his father and mother when he gets married and be joined to his wife. The two become one.
- 32. This is very hard to understand, but it shows that the church is the body of Christ.
- 33. So every man must love his wife as he loves himself. Every wife must respect her husband.

6

- 1. Children, as Christians, obey your parents. This is the right thing to do.
- Respect your father and mother.
   This is the first Jewish Law given that had a promise.
- The promise is this: If you respect your father and mother, you will live a long time and your life will be full of many good things.
- 4. Fathers, do not be too hard on your children so they will become angry. Teach them in their growing years with Christian teaching.



#### **Bible Text**

Ephesians 6:10-20

#### Memory Verse Ephesians 6:10b

"Be strong with the Lord's strength."

#### **Word List**

demons: evil spirits

**salvation:** having our sins forgiven and receiving eternal life by believing in Jesus **weapon:** anything used to fight a battle

# Lesson 13 How to Be Christian When It's Not Easy

#### Introduction

A battle has been going on in the world since Adam and Eve chose to sin. Guns and tanks are not used in this battle. It is a spiritual battle between good and evil. In a spiritual battle the leaders are not seen. We can't see the devil with our eyes, but we can see the evil he causes. We can't see God with our eyes, but we can see Him in everything that is good. God has let us

know Himself in His word and in Jesus Christ. The spiritual battle for good and evil takes place in our world and in our hearts.

We are born with a sinful nature. All of us have sinned. We must choose to be on God's side in order to be right with God and have our sins forgiven. The devil does not want us to choose God as our leader. Even after we become Christians, he continues to try to get us to sin. We must always remember that God is on our side. With God's help we can win the battle.

## Who is our Enemy? (Ephesians 6:10-12)

Paul gives his Ephesian friends a warning. Be careful. Without God's help you will fall into the traps of the devil. He is a tricky spiritual being who wants to keep people from becoming believers. He also wants to harm believers. You can be strong in the Lord's strength.

Paul says that our enemy is not flesh and blood. He is not a human being. He is the spiritual leader of dark powers and spirits in this world. He has helpers such as demons. Our enemy, the devil, is also called Satan.

People are not our enemies. Some people who have been caught in the devil's trap may do very bad things. The

demons and spirits of darkness lead them into all kinds of evil. They may murder, steal, misuse sex and do other wrong acts. The devil makes them think that anything is all right.

The devil has another trick. He tries to make people think that they are good. He wants them to think they do not need God. Since every one of us has sinned, people who think they are good are being fooled by the devil.

We fight the devil by being strong in the Lord and by telling the good news of Jesus. People who are under the power of the devil can be saved and become new persons in the Lord.

After we become Christians, God will help us stand against the devil. The devil is always trying to get Christians to sin. We must have the Lord's strength.

# God Gives Us What We Need for the Battle (Ephesians 6:13-17)

Paul was in prison when he wrote this letter. For a long time he was chained to Roman guards. He may have looked at the guards' clothing and thought, "What should Christians wear?" Then he began to tell us what we need to "put on" in order to fight this battle with evil.

The guard had a belt. The Christian should wear a belt of truth.

The piece of iron over the guard's chest protected the upper part of his body. A Christian's protection comes from being right with God and doing what He says.

Paul may have noticed the guard's shoes. The shoes on Christians' feet should help them tell the Good News of peace.

The guard had a covering for his body's front, a shield. Christians have a wonderful front covering— Faith. We must believe God and trust in Him. Paul says that faith is the most important gift God gives to stop the devil's attacks.

The wonderful covering of salvation is to be placed on the head. The Christian has been freed from the punishment for

sin. The price for our sins has been paid by Jesus Christ. We have received from Him eternal life.

Men in battle carry
weapons. The Christian's
weapon is the Word of God.
We have the Bible and God
speaks to our hearts. We must
listen to God and know His
word so that it will help us
when we need it.

# **Importance of Prayer** (Ephesians 6:18-20)

Our leader is God. He is always present. We can talk to Him at any time. We must pray about all things so that we will know the right thing to do. When we feel the devil's presence, prayer is the best way to defeat him. Paul tells us to pray at all times for all Christians. We are to pray that we would be people of truth and that we would be right with God.

We are to pray that our faith will be strong and that we will tell the Good News of Jesus. We thank God for the faith He has given us and for His Word. We thank Him for forgiving our sins.

Paul asked his friends to pray for him. He did not ask them to pray that he would get out of prison. He asked them to pray that he would speak without fear.

He also wanted them to pray that he would use the right words when he spoke. He wanted people to understand about Jesus. He did not want the prisoner's chains to keep him from speaking the Good News. The devil was trying to stop his speaking. Paul was going to win the victory with God's help. We, too, can win the battle. We do not win in our own strength. We must be strong in the Lord's strength.

#### Things to Think About

1. Remember that people who do wrong are following the wrong leader. Will you do all you can to show them the right way?

2. Will you let the Lord make you strong to fight the many evils of our time?

3. Can you list what God has given us to help make us strong?

4. Many persecuted Christians are in jail. Do you remember them in your prayers?

#### Ephesians 6:10-20

- 10. This is the last thing I want to say: Be strong with the Lord's strength.
- 11. Put on the things God gives you to fight with. Then you will not fall into the traps of the devil.
- 12. Our fight is not with people. It is against the leaders and the powers and the spirits of darkness in this world. It is against the demon world that works in the heavens.
- 13. Because of this, put on all the things God gives you to fight with. Then you will be able to stand in that sinful day. When it is all over, you will still be standing.
- 14. So stand up and do not be moved. Wear a belt of truth around your body. Wear a piece of iron over your chest which is being right with God.
- 15. Wear shoes on your feet which are the Good News of peace.
- 16. Most important of all, you need a covering of faith in front of you. This is to put out the firearrows of the devil.
- 17. The covering for your head is that you have been saved from

- the punishment of sin. Take the sword of the Spirit which is the Word of God.
- 18. You must pray at all times as the Holy Spirit leads you to pray. Pray for the things that are needed. You must watch and keep on praying. Remember to pray for all Christians.
- 19. Pray for me also. Pray that I might open my mouth without fear. Pray that I will use the right words to preach that which is hard to understand in the Good News.
- 20. This is the reason I was sent out.

  But now I am in chains for preaching the Good News. I want to keep on speaking for Christ without fear the way I should.

#### **Word List Review**

baptized: to place a person under water and lift them up a picture of Christ's

death

chaplain: preacher or minister

**civil law:** a system of government laws for citizens; these were given by God **circumcised**: cutting off the foreskin; the religious act of becoming a Jew

**cruel**: unkind, brutal, bloody, causing suffering

**compare:** to look at, to show things are alike or how they are different.

curse: judgment; those under the law were under a curse

deacons: a special group of workers who are chosen to help lead a church

demons: evil spirits

descendants: a person's children and those who are born after them

**destroy**: to get rid of something or someone, kill, to tear down or break up **discipline**: training in proper behavior, or punishment for not following rules

faith: belief and trust in God and His son, Jesus

**Gentiles:** people who are not Jews

**Good News, gospel:** God's way for people to have their sins forgiven and be made right with Him

**Grace**: God's undeserved love and kindness; it cannot be earned

guilt, guilty: a sense of shame for doing wrong; blame; crime

**Holy Spirit**: called the Spirit of God, the Spirit of Christ, and the Comforter; He does God's work in the world. God is one, but three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit

**interpreted**: person said words in a different language (the Yor'uba language)

**jungle**—forest with many trees and plants

ministry: help or care for one person or a group of people

**misusing:** not using something in the right way

moral law: direct commands of God to show people what is right

mission: the work of telling others about God.

**Nigeria**: a country in West Africa where Baptists have missionaries **Old Testament**: the first 39 books of the Bible, God's Holy Word

purpose: aim or goal

residents: people who live in a certain place seminary: a school for training Christian leaders

**Savior**: one who saves; Jesus Christ Who saves us from sin and death

**salvation:** having our sins forgiven and receiving eternal life by believing in Jesus **sin, sinners**: actions by which humans go against God; those who do evil or

wrong

slaves: those who are captive or not freeunity: becoming one; perfect agreement

victory: winning, having success

weapon: anything used to fight a battle