

EPHESIANS

Fall 2018



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WELCOME TO EPHESIANS!

So that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

Ephesians 3:17-18 ESV

Welcome to our Fall Bible Study of Paul's Letter to the Ephesian Church! LifePoint's mission is to influence people to find and follow Jesus with the goal of becoming Christ-like influencers. A Christ-like influencer engages with God daily. But what does that look like? This study is designed to help guide you through daily study of the Book of Ephesians.

Ephesians reveals the riches of God's extravagant love for His people and shows us how we should invest our time and relationships to live in the fullness of God's love together.

In Ephesians, God reveals to us aspects of His character, challenges us to be worthy of our calling in Christ, and gives us direction in our personal interactions with each other. Ephesians is a foundational explanation of the principle of unity in the church, teaching us how use the gifts of grace we have been given to love and serve one another.

Our heavenly Father wants a relationship with US! He loves US! His Word - the Bible - is written for US. We are excited you are joining us as we all grow. And that is only the surface! There is much more, so let's get started...

Blessings,

The Men's and Women's Bible Study Teams

HOW TO STUDY THE WORD OF GOD

Our Mission and Vision:

Our mission is for participants to be active students in the study of the Bible through the following tools:

- Curriculum rooted in God's Word, designed to build first-hand knowledge of the text and spiritual growth for participants of all backgrounds
- Guided conversation through Scripture within small groups
- Sound teaching by teachers in the local church

Our vision is to see women and men grow in their knowledge and love of God, to be transformed by His Word, and to become Christ-like influencers within the context of the larger community.

Our Method:

This Bible study may look a little different than others you have done. Instead of looking at a particular topic, we will be spending seven weeks in one book of the Bible. Studying the book of Ephesians from beginning to end will allow the topics to introduce themselves. First, we will glean the background information of the book to put Ephesians in the proper context. We will need to answer some essential questions: Who wrote this? To whom was it written? When and why was it written?

Once context has been established, we will be better positioned to study and understand the content. The study guide has been written to be just that, a guide through Ephesians. As you work through these questions, you will gain first-hand knowledge, meaning you will learn for yourself. The questions in this guide are not written to be difficult, but to take you through three important stages of learning: observation, interpretation, and application.

Observation: *What does the text say?*

This stage of learning involves reading repetitively to gain familiarity with the text and looking for detail. We look for any words or phrases that are repeated. We may need to use a dictionary to look up definitions to words we may not fully understand. We look for key transition words (if/then, therefore, but) and see how they connect the text. We write out any questions that arise because it is okay to have questions as you study. And we take note of any attributes of God that are illustrated or that arise as we read. There is a copy of Ephesians in the appendix. This is for you to mark in as you read and study.

Interpretation: *What does the text mean?*

This stage of learning involves implying things from the text beyond what it says. While it is easy to read a blog or listen to a sermon and get the answer, we want to use our own minds in this process. We do our best to answer, allowing Scripture to interpret Scripture. We look up cross-references to better answer the question, "what does this mean?"

Application: *How should this change me?*

While we are now looking at how to apply the text to ourselves, this stage of learning is drawn from a God-centered perspective. We ask questions like, What does this teach me about God? Is there an example to follow? Is there a sin to avoid? Is there a promise to claim? While it more natural for us to look at others and how the text would apply to them, we must apply the text to ourselves first and foremost. It is only after our own personal application that we are equipped to share how it works in the lives of others.

HOW TO GET THE MOST OUT OF THIS STUDY

Schedule

Each week, you will meet in your small group to discuss the chapter and then receive live teaching. We will follow this format:

- 6:45 – 7:00 pm – Arrival and Childcare
Check-In
- 7:00 – 7:50 pm – Small Group Breakout
Sessions
- 8:00 – 8:25 pm – Large Group Teaching
- 8:30 pm – Dismissal

Note: In Week 1, we will meet together first in the Worship Center for Large Group Teaching and follow this with a Small Group Breakout Sessions.

Small Group Time

Your small group is a place to share what you have been learning and to build community. Small groups are most effective when members follow some simple guidelines:

- Confidentiality – help create a safe place to share by making sure that what is said in your group stays in your group
- Respect – allow for differing opinions and experiences
- Collaboration – give everyone an opportunity to share
- Prayer – pray for each other throughout the week

Personal Study

Each week, you will have the opportunity to gain first-hand knowledge of God’s word by using the study guide in this book. Whether you are brand-new to studying the Bible or a veteran scholar, we hope you will challenge yourself to learn and grown in this study. Here are some tips to help you get the most out of the curriculum:

- The more you put into this study the more you will get out of it.
- Challenge yourself each week to complete as much of the Personal Study section as you can.
- At a minimum, complete Day 1 at the beginning and the Chapter Summary at the end so that 1) you have read through the chapter and are familiar with it and, 2) so that you have opportunity to process and apply the central ideas of the chapter.
- Bring your questions and insights to your small group to discuss. We can’t wait to hear what God is teaching you!

A note about Bible versions

This curriculum uses the English Standard Version (ESV) of the Bible. Feel free to use other translations as you study and compare the wording in each. There isn’t any one “best” version of the Bible because different translations can have different purposes. Some versions of the Bible are translated directly or very closely from the original text (which was written in Hebrew, Greek and Aramaic), making them ideal for study purposes. In addition to the ESV, these include the NIV, the NASB or the NKJV, among others. Some translations are not as helpful for studying (since they are not translated directly from the original language), but can be useful in hearing what God’s word is saying at the heart level or in plain language. These include the NLT or the Message. If you have any questions about Bible versions, ask one of the teachers or your small group leader.

OVERVIEW OF EPHESIANS

Explore the Text

For Week 1, we will be exploring the text in our small group.

I. Have each person in your group choose one chapter of Ephesians to read to themselves (it might be good to use the copy of Ephesians in the Appendix so that everyone is using the same version). Be sure that all the chapters are covered so that, as a group, you are reading through the whole book.

1. As you read circle, underline, or highlight words/phrases/ideas that repeat in your chapter.

2. Note any things that jump out to you or questions raised by the text.

3. What would you say is the main idea of your chapter?

II. Combine all of the main ideas that your group found in order.

1. Do you see a flow or progression?

2. Use your list to identify any themes or main ideas for the whole epistle.

EPHESIANS CHAPTER 1

Personal Study

Day 1: Overview of Ephesians 1

1. Copy the Memory Verse for this week Ephesians 1:13, 14:

2. Read through the entire first chapter of Ephesians 2-5 times.

a. What repeated words or phrases do you notice?

b. What is the main idea or central theme of this chapter?

c. What questions does the chapter raise for you?

d. What are two things this chapter tells us about God?

1. _____

2. _____

Day 2: EPHESIANS 1:1-6

Write the Memory Verse Ephesians 1:13, 14:

1. What do we learn in verses 1 and 2 about Paul, his audience, and his relationship with them?

2. Why reason does Paul give for blessing God in verse 3?

3. What do we learn about our identity in Jesus in verse 4 and 5? What do you think this means?

4. According to verse 6, why did the Father do all the things recorded in verses 3-5?

1. What does Paul tell us we have in Christ in verse 7? How did we get it?

2. According to verses 7 and 8, in what manner has God given us these things?

3. What has been made known to us according to verse 9? Explain what you think this is.

4. Read verses 9 and 10. What was God's plan and purpose?

5. APPLICATION

a. How would you describe the language that Paul is using in this passage to explain what God has given us? What do you make of this?

b. What encouragement do you take from this passage? How can you apply the hope of this passage to something you are dealing with right now?

Day 4: EPHESIANS 1:11-14

Write the Memory Verse Ephesians 1:13, 14 without looking:

1. What have we obtained according to verse 11? What do you think this is?

2. Do you notice any repeated ideas or concepts in verses 11 and 12?

3. According to verse 13, what happens to us when we believe in Jesus for salvation?

4. What does verse 14 tells us is the effect of the “seal” in verse 13?

5. APPLICATION

How should the information we are given in this passage influence how we understand follow Jesus?

Day 5: EPHESIANS 1:15-23

Write the Memory Verse Ephesians 1:13, 14 without looking:t looking):

1. Read verse 15-19 and list the things that Paul hopes for the Ephesians.

2. What shift takes place in what Paul is writing in verses 20-23?

3. How would you describe the relationship between verses 15-19 and verse 20-23?

4. APPLICATION

a. How can we apply what Paul wrote to the Ephesians about his hopes for them in this passage to our understanding of what God has given us in Jesus?

b. How might this passage influence what we pray for ourselves and others?

CHAPTER SUMMARY

1. What would you say is the main idea of this chapter? Write it in 10 words or less.

2. If you were to identify one of the Characteristics of a Christ-like Influencer that is most represented in/by this chapter what would it be and why? (There are multiple possible answers to this question, but just pick one).

3. What is your biggest take away from this chapter?

EPHESIANS CHAPTER 2

Personal Study

Day 1: Overview of Ephesians 2

1. Copy the Memory Verse for the Week. Ephesians 2:4, 5

2. Read through the entire second chapter of Ephesians 2-5 times.

- a. What repeated words or phrases do you notice?

- b. What is the main idea or central theme of this chapter?

- c. What questions does the chapter raise for you?

- d. What are two things this chapter tells us about God?

1.

2.

Day 2: EPHESIANS 2:1-7

Write the Memory Verse for the week. Ephesians 2:4, 5

1. How does Paul describe the condition of the Ephesian saints before they believed in Jesus in verse 1 - 3? Who is “the prince of the power of the air,” in verse 2?

2. The word “but” is a negator word. What negated the conditions and consequences of verse 1 - 3 according to verse 4?

3. According to verses 4 - 7 what has been given to us? How was it given?

4. What tense are the promises presented in verses 6 and 7? What is interesting about this?

1. What is “the gift of God” in verse 9?

2. According to verses 8-9 what role do we play in our salvation? Why?

3. Ephesians 2:1-4 tells us what we were saved from. According to verse 10, what were we saved for?

4. According to these verses which comes first, salvation or good works? What is important about this order?

5. APPLICATION

a. Why do good works if we are not saved by them? What role do they play in our lives?

b. What freedom, if any, do you find in these verses?

Day 4: EPHESIANS 2:11-18

Write this week's Memory Verse from Ephesians 2:4, 5 without looking.

1. Paul uses some very strange terminology and imagery in verses 11 and 12. What is he talking about?

2. Read Ephesians 2:13 and 14. According to these verses, what has Jesus done to the division between Jews and Gentiles?

3. According to verse 15, what did Jesus do to the "law of commandments?" What is this law and what does it mean that Jesus abolished it?

4. According to verses 15-18 how did Jesus make peace between Jew and Gentile and what is the result?

5. APPLICATION

a. If Jesus abolished the commandments, do they still have any meaning for us today? If so, what? If not, why not?

b. How should verses 13-18 affect how we understand ourselves? Others?

Day 5: EPHESIANS 2:19-22

Write this week's Memory Verse from Ephesians 2:4, 5 without looking.

1. According to verse 19, who are we because of Jesus?

2. Read verses 20 and 21. What is the foundation of the household in which we now dwell?

3. In verse 22, how are believers in Jesus described? What does this mean?

4. APPLICATION

Have you experienced the kind of peace and unity that Paul talks about in this passage? Describe a time when you really felt unified with other believers. What would you attribute to this experience?

CHAPTER SUMMARY

1. What would you say is the main idea of this chapter? Write it in 10 words or less.

2. If you were to identify one of the Characteristics of a Christ-like Influencer that is most represented in/by this chapter what would it be and why? (There are multiple possible answers to this question, but just pick one).

3. What is your biggest take away from this chapter?

EPHESIANS CHAPTER 3

Personal Study

Day 1: Overview of Ephesians 3

1. Copy the Memory Verse for the Week. Ephesians 3:20, 21

2. Read through the entire third chapter of Ephesians 2-5 times.

- a. What repeated words or phrases do you notice?

- b. Do you notice any themes?

- c. What questions does the text raise for you?

- d. What does this text tell you about God?

Day 2: EPHESIANS 3:1-6

Write the Memory Verse for the Week. Ephesians 3:20, 21.

1. What do we learn about Paul's current situation in verse 1?

2. In verses 2 and 3, to what is Paul referring when he mentions the mystery made known to by revelation? (See Acts Chapter 9). Describe the change that took place in Paul. What can we learn from this?

3. What does Paul tell us about the mystery he is revealing in verse 4 and 5?

4. According to verse 6, what is the mystery that has been revealed? How would the content of this mystery have been received in Paul's day by Jews and Gentiles?

1. How did Paul come to the position that he was in, according to verse 7?

2. What does verse 8 tell us about how Paul understood himself and his purpose?

3. According to verses 9 and 10 what is Paul's ministry revealing and to whom? What questions does this raise for you? What do you think it might mean?

4. According to verse 12, what do we have in Christ? What do you think this means?

5. APPLICATION

The gift of God's grace (v 7) not only saved Paul, but it gave him a specific mission and purpose in his ministry. Have you discovered within God's grace a mission and purpose in ministry? If so, what is it? If not, how might you find this?

Day 4: EPHESIANS 3:13-19

Write the Memory Verse for the Week. Ephesians 3:20, 21. Try to do this without looking.

1. According to verse 13, how did Paul understand or view his imprisonment?

How can this be?

2. Make a list of the specific things that Paul prays for in verses 14-19.

3. What do you think it means to be “filled with all the fullness of God?”

4. APPLICATION

a. How do the things that Paul prays for match the things you pray for? What can we learn from Paul’s prayer life?

b. Of the things that Paul prays for the Ephesians, which do you most need right now? Why?

Day 5: EPHESIANS 3:20-21

Write this week's Memory Verse from Ephesians 3:20, 21 without looking.

1. According to verse 20, what is God able to do?

2. What is "the power at work within us" that Paul describes in verse 20?

3. In verse 21, what is Paul's desire? What is God's glory?

4. APPLICATION

a. This passage says that God “is able to do far more abundantly than all we ask or think.” Do you ever doubt this? What causes those doubts?

b. What encouragement do you take from this prayer?

CHAPTER SUMMARY

1. What would you say is the main idea of this chapter? Write it in 10 words or less.

2. If you were to identify one of the Characteristics of a Christ-like Influencer that is most represented in/by this chapter what would it be and why? (There are multiple possible answers to this question, but just pick one).

3. What is your biggest take away from this chapter?

EPHESIANS CHAPTER 4

Personal Study

Day 1: Overview of Ephesians 4

1. Copy the Memory Verse for the Week. Ephesians 4:15

2. Read through the entire fourth chapter of Ephesians 2-5 times.

- a. What repeated words or phrases do you notice?

- b. Do you notice any themes?

- c. What questions does the text raise for you?

- d. What does this text tell you about God?

Day 2: EPHESIANS 4:1-10

Write the Memory Verse for the Week. Ephesians 4:15.

1. How does Paul urge his readers to walk in verse 1? What are the reasons behind his request (look at the first word in verse 1 and then back at chapter 3)?

2. In verses 2-3, what does this walk look like?

3. What are we called to in verses 4-6? Why is this important for believers?

4. Read verses 7-10. What is clear to you? What questions does this passage raise for you about gifts? Ascending and descending? What might these things mean?

5. APPLICATION

a. How are you walking in a worthy way this week?

b. What is one thing you can do this week to help maintain unity with fellow believers?

Day 3: EPHESIANS 4:11-16

Write the Memory Verse for the Week. Ephesians 4:10

1. What is the purposes of each of the various gifts listed in verses 11-12?

2. What are the end goals Paul outlines in verse 13?

3. How does Paul describe spiritual children in verse 14?
What might this look like in our own life?

4. What is Paul calling us to do in verse 15? How does verse 16 fit into the ideas that Paul has already discussed in this chapter?

5. APPLICATION

a. What does it look like to speak the truth in love? Which one is more natural for you, to speak truth or love? Why?

b. What is one thing you can do this week to grow in speaking in the way that is less natural?

Day 4: EPHESIANS 4: 17-28

Write the Memory Verse for the Week. Ephesians 4:

1. How does Paul describe the way the Gentiles walk in verses 17-19?

2. What does Paul encourage the Ephesians to put off and to put on in verses 22-28? (there may not be both in each verse)

Verse	Put Off	Put On
22		
24		
25		
28		

3. What does it mean to be renewed in the spirit of our mind? (verse 23)
How is this connected to putting off the old self and putting on the new self?

4. How can someone be angry and not sin (verse 26)? How does being angry give the devil an opportunity (verse 27)?

5. APPLICATION

a. Describe a time when you have sinned when you were angry. How did this impact your relationships?

b. What is one thing you can do this week to handle your anger better?

Day 5: EPHESIANS 4:29-32

Write this week's Memory Verse from Ephesians 3:20, 21 without looking.

1. In verse 29, what does Paul say should not come from our mouths?
What three characteristics does he give for what should come from our mouth?

2. What does Paul mean in verse 30 when he warns the Ephesians to not grieve the Holy Spirit? Use the surrounding context (in particular, verses 20-32) to justify your answer.

3. How are we to forgive others (verse 32)?

4. APPLICATION

a. Do you struggle with forgiveness? Why or why not?

b. How does the truth of verse 32 help you?

c. Is there someone that you need to forgive? If so, write out one practical step you will take this week to move closer to forgiving them.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

1. What would you say is the main idea of this chapter? Write it in 10 words or less..

2. If you were to identify one of the Characteristics of a Christ-like Influencer that is most represented in/by this chapter what would it be and why? (There are multiple possible answers to this question, but just pick one).

3. What is your biggest take away from this chapter?

EPHESIANS CHAPTER 5

Personal Study

Day 1: Overview of Ephesians 5

1. Copy the Memory Verse for the Week. Ephesians 5:15

2. Read through the entire fifth chapter of Ephesians 2-5 times.

- a. What repeated words or phrases do you notice?

- b. Do you notice any themes?

- c. What questions does the text raise for you?

d. What does this text tell you about God?

Day 2: EPHESIANS 5:15

Write the Memory Verse for the Week. Ephesians 5:15.

1. What is commanded in verse 1? What is the basis for this command in the verse and in the previous chapter?

2. What are the Ephesians specifically commanded to avoid in verses 3 and 4? What reasons are given for Paul's command?

3. What does verse 5 say will be forfeited if we do not avoid these behaviors? What does this mean? What can't this mean based on what we read in Ephesians 1 and 2?

4. Who are “the sons of disobedience” mentioned in verse 6?

5. APPLICATION

If we cannot lose our salvation – see Ephesians 1:11, 12 – what power do Paul's commands in this chapter have? What reason is there to follow these commands? What insight might our memory verse this week provide?

Day 3: EPHESIANS 5:7-16

Write the Memory Verse for the Week. Ephesians 5:15. Try to do this without looking.

1. According to verses 7-9 what should be our motivation for doing good?

2. According to verse 12-14 what are we supposed to do in addition to avoiding darkness? What do you think this means?

3. Of what specific things is Paul talking about in verses 7-14? (Hint: Go back to Day 2)

4. What do you think it means to “Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise?”

5. APPLICATION

a. Paul has given very strong warning so far in this chapter about sexual immorality, coarse talking, and covetousness. Why do you think he is giving such strong warnings? What evidence can you give from life experience (in general, not specific) to support or refute Paul’s emphasis?

b. Who is someone you know that walks carefully and wisely? What is it about how they live?

Day 4: EPHESIANS 5:17-24

Write the Memory Verse for the Week. Ephesians 5:15. Try to do this without looking.

1. What are were the Ephesians told not to do in verses 17 and 18? What reasons and alternatives does Paul give?

2. What were the Ephesians told to do in verses 19 and 20? How do you think these instructions could be lived out in practical ways?

3. What is the final command given by Paul in verse 21? Who is it for?

4. What instruction does Paul give and to whom in verse 22? What reason and analogy does he give in verses 23 and 24?

5. APPLICATION

a. Do verses 19 and 20 seem clear or practical to you? What might it look like to live these instructions out in a real, practical, not weird way?

b. Verses 22-24 strike a nerve to say the least, what negative or anxious thoughts do these verses stir up in you?

c. What can be found in verses 22-24 that might speak against these negative or anxious thoughts? Is there anything from earlier passages of Ephesians that might also speak to these thoughts? What do you know about God that might speak to these thoughts?

Day 5: EPHESIANS 5:25-33

Write this week's Memory Verse from Ephesians 5:15 without looking.

1. What instructions does Paul give and to whom in verses 24-28? What reason and analogy does he give in these verses?

2. What comparison does Paul make between the marriage relationship and the church in verses 29-31?

3. What is the mystery that Paul is talking about in verses 32 and 33?

4. APPLICATION

a. Once again, the passage we are studying today strikes a nerve. What negative or anxious thoughts does this passage stir up in you?

b. What can be found in verses 25-33 that might speak against these negative or anxious thoughts?

CHAPTER SUMMARY

1. What would you say is the main idea of this chapter? Write it in 10 words or less.

2. If you were to identify one of the Characteristics of a Christ-like Influencer that is most represented in/by this chapter what would it be and why? (There are multiple possible answers to this question, but just pick one).

3. What is your biggest take away from this chapter?

EPHESIANS CHAPTER 6

Personal Study

Day 1: Overview of Ephesians 6

1. Copy the Memory Verse for the Week. Ephesians 6:10

2. Read through the entire sixth chapter of Ephesians 2-5 times.

- a. What repeated words or phrases do you notice?

- b. Do you notice any themes?

- c. What questions does the text raise for you?

- d. What does this text tell you about God?

Day 2: EPHESIANS 6:1-4

Write the Memory Verse for the Week. Ephesians 6:10.

1. What instruction does Paul give and to whom in verses 1-3?

2. What reason does he give for this? (If you have time, look up Exodus 20:12).

3. What are fathers told not to do in verse 4? Why do you think Paul says this to fathers?

4. What instruction is given for raising children in verse 4?

5. APPLICATION

a. What does it mean to obey your parents? When does this obligation end? When is a child released from the obligation to obey parents? What role or attitude should replace obedience in this relationship?

b. What does it mean to bring a child “in the discipline and instruction of the Lord?” How could/has this been abused? What does this look like when done well?

Day 3: EPHESIANS 6:5-9:

Write the Memory Verse for the Week. Ephesians 6:10

1. What instruction does Paul give and to whom in verses 5-8?

2. What is a bondservant?

3. In verses 5-8, who does Paul say that bondservants should be trying to serve?

4. What instruction does Paul give and to whom in verse 9?

5. APPLICATION

a. Is Paul condoning slavery in this passage? Is there anything about this passage that might indicate otherwise?

b. What might Paul be doing in addressing both slaves and masters in this letter which would have been read out loud to the whole church together?

Day 4: EPHESIANS 6:10-18a

Write the Memory Verse for the Week. Ephesians 5:16. Try to do this without looking.

1. In verses 10-13, what command does Paul give and what reasons does he give for this?

2. What are “the authorities,” “the cosmic powers over this present darkness,” and “the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places?”

3. List the “pieces” of the armor of God in verses 14-18. How does each piece go with the aspect of faith to which it is connected (i.e., how is truth like a belt)?

4. APPLICATION

a. According to verse 14 our battle is “not against flesh and blood,” but against spiritual forces. Can you site any examples from your own experience that proves Paul right in this statement?

b. How do you think our approach to the problems of our home, our church, our community, and our world would be different if we took this advice? How do we do that?

c. How are you doing right now at being strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might? If well, what is this rooted in? If not well, how can we pray for you?

Day 5: EPHESIANS 5:18b-20

Write this week's Memory Verse from Ephesians 5:16 without looking.

1. What does Paul ask for in verses 18b - 20?

2. Who has Paul sent and for what reason according to verses 21 and 22?

3. What can you learn from how Paul closes the Epistle in verses 23 and 24?

4. APPLICATION

a. What do we learn from the prayers Paul asks for in this passage? How does this reflect our prayer life? The things for which we seek prayer? What might change about our lives if these kinds of things became a priority in prayer?

b. Spend some time as a group together praying about and for the things that Paul asks for in this passage.

CHAPTER SUMMARY

1. What would you say is the main idea of this chapter? Write it in 10 words or less.

2. If you were to identify one of the Characteristics of a Christ-like Influencer that is most represented in/by this chapter what would it be and why? (There are multiple possible answers to this question, but just pick one).

3. What is your biggest take away from this chapter?

FULL TEXT OF EPHESIANS

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus:

² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love ⁵ he predestined us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, ⁶ to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. ⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, ⁸ which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight ⁹ making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ ¹⁰ as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

¹¹ In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, ¹² so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. ¹³ In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

¹⁵ For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, ¹⁶ I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, ¹⁸ having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰ that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²² And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

2 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience — ³ among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. ⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, ⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—

⁶ and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, ⁷ so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, ⁹ not a result of works, so that no one may boast. ¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

¹¹ Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands — ¹² remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility ¹⁵ by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, ¹⁶ and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. ¹⁷ And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹ in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. ²² In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

3 For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—

² assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace that was given to me for you, ³ how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. ⁴ When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

⁶ This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

⁷ Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God’s grace, which was given me by the working of his power.

⁸ To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, ¹⁰ so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹ This was

according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord,¹² in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him.¹³ So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is your glory.

¹⁴ For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,¹⁶ that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being,¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love,¹⁸ may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,¹⁹ and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us,²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

4 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,² with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,³ eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.⁴ There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism,⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.⁷ But grace was given to each one of us

according to the measure of Christ's gift.

⁸ Therefore it says,

“When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men.”

⁹ (In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth?¹⁰ He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)¹¹ And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers,¹² to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ,¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,

¹⁴ so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes.¹⁵ Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ,¹⁶ from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

¹⁷ Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds.¹⁸ They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart.

¹⁹ They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity.

²⁰ But that is not the way you learned Christ!— ²¹ assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, ²² to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, ²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

²⁵ Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. ²⁶ Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷ and give no opportunity to the devil. ²⁸ Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need.

²⁹ Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³² Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you

5 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. ² And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

³ But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.

⁴ Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving.

⁵ For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. ⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷ Therefore do not become partners with them;

⁸ for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light ⁹ (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), ¹⁰ and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. ¹² For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. ¹³ But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, ¹⁴ for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Awake, O sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”

¹⁵ Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶ making the

best use of the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, ²⁰ giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

²¹ submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ. ²² Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. ²⁸ In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, ³⁰ because we are members of his body. ³¹ “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” ³² This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. ³³ However, let each one of

you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

6 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), ³ “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.”

⁴ Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

⁵ Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, ⁶ not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷ rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, ⁸ knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free.

⁹ Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore take up the whole

armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶ In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; ¹⁷ and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, ¹⁸ praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints,

¹⁹ and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

²¹ So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord will tell you everything. ²² I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage your hearts.

²³ Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible.



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