

EPHESIANS

for growing believers

5



EPHESIANS
for growing believers

Bible Study Guide

From the leadership development ministry of

FELLOWSHIP BIBLE CHURCH MISSIONS

Acknowledgments

The lesson outlines and notes in this booklet are based on New Tribes Mission's method of chronologically teaching scripture and were prepared by Tim McManigle, Director of FBC Missions and Scott McManigle. Special thanks to Lisa Grams for editing.

Table of Contents

EPHESIANS *for growing believers*

	Page
Progression Toward Maturity	2
Lesson 1	6
Lesson 2	14
Lesson 3	19
Lesson 4	24
Lesson 5	30
Lesson 6	36
Lesson 7	40
Lesson 8	44
Lesson 9	51

Progression Toward Maturity

- **Phase 1 – Relationship with God** – (Rev. 4:11; 1 Cor. 1:9) – Call of God is first to Himself - “Creation to Christ” - (Foundation for salvation)
- **Phase 2 – Position with Christ** (1 Cor. 1:30a) New Creation (2 Cor. 5:17) – “Positioned in Christ” and “New Birth Explained” – (Foundation for Sanctification)
- **Phase 3 – Dependence upon the Spirit** – (2 Cor. 3:17-18) – (Holy Spirit is the Spirit-of-Truth – John 16:13-14) – **Introduction of the Church** - (Church is the Pillar and foundation of Truth – 1 Tim. 3:15) - “Acts for Growing Believers”
- **Phase 4 – Practical sanctification** - **Identification with Christ/Co-crucified with Christ/ Conformed to image of Christ** – (Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20; Rom. 8:28-29) – Romans to Revelation for Growing Believers, “Principles of Spiritual Growth”, God’s Masterpiece the Cross,” and “Looking unto Jesus” lessons
- **Conclusion** – **Recommended order of study**

Detailed Explanation of Each Phase

Phase 1 – Foundation for Salvation - (“Creation to Christ”)

The Christian life is a relationship; therefore our desire is to lead our readers into a deep and intimate relationship with God. In order to grow into that level of relationship with God, there are foundational truths that must be clearly taught and understood. These foundational truths include the following;

- The attributes of God - His love, power, grace, omniscience, omnipotence, justice, immutability, hatred of sin, faithfulness.
- The sinfulness of man, his helplessness to save himself, and his need for a Savior.
- Only God can provide a way of salvation
- The Gospel.

Phase 2 – Foundation for Sanctification - (“Positioned in Christ” and “The New Birth Explained”)

The moment someone is born again, there is an immediate change of position that takes place in his or her life. At that very moment, one becomes a child of God, and is taken out of Adam and placed into Christ. All that Christ is, and all that Christ has, becomes ours. Therefore, before service to God is considered, one must be grounded in an understanding of who we are in Christ. Some important foundational truths that should be emphasized in phase 2 teaching, includes the following;

- Placed into Christ
- Justified (declared righteous) and accepted in Christ.
- Child of God
- Restored to oneness with God
- Eternally secure in Christ
- His Divine power has given to us all things pertaining to life and godliness through His finished work on the cross.
- Our part is to believe.

Phase 3 – Dependence upon the Spirit and introduction of the church – (“Acts for Growing Believers”)

The position change that takes place in every believer's life at salvation, is immediate and complete. The daily "living out" of that position, on the other hand, is a growth process. It is the progression of growth that the Holy Spirit is working all believers through in His process of conforming us to the image of Christ.

In order for believers to move on to maturity, we must learn to walk and depend upon the Holy Spirit. Therefore, our purpose in phase 3 teaching is to reveal the Holy Spirit's ministry, and His faithfulness to lead, guide, feed, and protect God's children, as well as to introduce the church. Some of the important foundational truths that should be emphasized include the following.

- The Holy Spirit's ministry to lead, guide, feed, protect, and establish us in truth.
- To emphasize the FAITHFULNESS of the Spirit to fulfill all that Jesus promised.
- To reveal the early church's dependence upon the Spirit.
- The Holy Spirit is as faithful in our lives today, as He was to the early church in the book of Acts.
- Introduction of the church and her role.

Phase 4 – Practical sanctification; Identification with Christ; Conformed to the image of Christ – (“Romans to Revelation for Growing Believers,” Principles of Spiritual Growth, God’s Masterpiece the Cross of Christ,” and “Looking Unto Jesus” lessons.)

The Holy Spirit is teaching us to walk less in the flesh and more in the Spirit, with Christ becoming more and more the object of our hearts.

In phase 4, we will study through the epistles with the purpose of learning to rest in our identification with Christ and His finished work. As we, by faith, begin to appropriate identification truths, our co-crucifixion with Christ, our lives will become more and more conformed to the image of Christ, manifesting the fruit of the Spirit.

Some of the important truths that will be emphasized in Phase 4 includes the following.

- The believer's identification with the death, burial, and resurrection of Christ. (Crucified with Him, and raised to newness of life)
- Sanctification is the process of walking less and less in the flesh and more and more in the Spirit.
- Our part in the process is faith in the finished work of Christ, and our identification with it.
- What it means to truly walk in the Spirit
- Putting off the old and putting on the new.
- Manifesting the life of Christ/ fruit of the Spirit.

Conclusion: Recommended Order of Study:

Being that there truly is a progression of growth that the Holy Spirit is taking all believers through, therefore our Bible lessons have been developed and arranged to line up with that work of the Spirit in our lives. Each set of lessons contain the foundational truths that must be in place in a person's heart in order to facilitate their growth unto the next stage of spiritual growth. Therefore, we believe that it is important to teach the lessons in the following order:

1. Creation to Christ
2. Positioned in Christ
3. *Acts for growing believers*

4. Romans *for growing believers*
5. Ephesians *for growing believers*
6. 1 Corinthians *for growing believers*
7. 1 Timothy *for growing believers*
8. Titus *for growing believers*
9. 1 & 2 Thessalonians *for growing believers*
10. Revelation *for growing believers*
11. Galatians *for growing believers*
12. Colossians *for growing believers*
13. 2 Corinthians *for growing believers*
14. Philippians *for growing believers*
15. Philemon *for growing believers*
16. 2 Timothy *for growing believers*
17. 1 & 2 Peter *for growing believers*
18. 1, 2 & 3 John *for growing believers*
19. Hebrews *for growing believers*
20. James *for growing believers*
21. Jude *for growing believers*
22. The Old Testament *for mature believers*
23. Acts through Revelation, *verse by verse for mature believers*

EPHESIANS FOR GROWING BELIEVERS - LESSON 1

A. Introduction

- This book was written by Paul to the church at Ephesus.
- The first time that Paul visited Ephesus was on his second missionary journey. *“And he came to Ephesus, and left them there: but he himself entered into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews. When they desired him to tarry longer time with them, he consented not; But bade them farewell, saying, I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem: but I will return again unto you, if God will. And he sailed from Ephesus.” Acts 18:19-21*
- Paul visited them again on his third journey when he stayed with them for three years.
- While in Ephesus, Paul endured much persecution, but nonetheless many believed and a church was established. *“And it came to pass, that, while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul having passed through the upper coasts came to Ephesus: and finding certain disciples...And he went into the synagogue, and spake boldly for the space of three months, disputing and persuading the things concerning the kingdom of God. But when divers were hardened, and believed not, but spake evil of that way before the multitude, he departed from them, and separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus. And this continued by the space of two years; so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks.” Acts 19:1, 8-19* Later, when Paul was returning to Jerusalem, he called all the Ephesian church elders to come and meet with him in Miletus.
- Paul reminded them of his example and challenged them to faithfully watch over the Ephesian believers and church. *“And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have showed you, and have taught you publicly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the*

things that shall befall me there: Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me...Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have showed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.” Acts 20:17-23, 31-38

B. Paul is Arrested

- After Paul returned to Jerusalem, he was arrested. He was imprisoned in Ceasarea for two years and then sent to Rome.
- It was while he was imprisoned in Rome that he sent this letter to the Ephesian church. The Holy Spirit guided him in writing this letter. It was God’s message to the Ephesian believers and to us, also!



“Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:” Ephesians 1:1

- Why did Paul call himself an Apostle? We read that Paul was an Apostle because of God’s will. God chose Paul to be His messenger, sent out to tell the good news of Jesus.
- Paul did not decide himself to become a messenger; it was God alone who chose and sent him.
- Think back to our study in the book of Acts when God sent Ananias to Paul in Damascus, ***“But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen***

vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:” Acts 9:15

- Notice that **Ephesians 1:1** also tells us who Paul was writing to: the saints at Ephesus.
- Paul refers to the saints in Ephesus as “faithful, loyal, and steadfast in Christ.” In calling them faithful, loyal, and steadfast, Paul is not saying that all saints are such, but that “in Christ” they have been made and will be kept faithful and steadfast by the faithful, loyal, and steadfast working of Christ.
- In other books written by Paul, he often referred to believers as “those in Christ.” In the beginning we were in Adam, but the moment we trusted in Christ the Holy Spirit baptized (placed) us into Christ. Now God accepts us as He accepts Christ.
- Our acceptance by God is not dependent upon who we are, or what we have done, but rather upon whom we have believed.

“Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.” Ephesians 1:2

- Notice from where grace and peace comes; it comes from God through the finished work of Jesus Christ. God has already imparted to us all grace and all peace, but we don’t always experience it.
- The more we know God and understand all that we have in Jesus, will just naturally produce and ultimately lead to a life of grace and peace.

C. Blessed With All Spiritual Blessings in Christ

“Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:” Ephesians 1:3

- Paul said, “Blessed be God,” or “Praise be to God.” Why?
- The Holy Spirit has given to us all of the spiritual blessings that we need. Because of sin, our bodies grow old and die, and our soul and spirit are separated from God for eternity in hell.
- Since Jesus died for us and we trust in Him, the Holy Spirit is able to bless us with all we need to be delivered from the penalty of sin as well as the power

of sin. These blessings are given to us by the Holy Spirit and are not physical blessings like money, cattle, cars, etc.



- Most people think about earthly, temporal things and want to receive them. But whether we are rich or poor, it matters not. We will only have earthly things for a short time.
- Our greater concern should be the spiritual riches that we have received from the Holy Spirit and will last for eternity.
- Notice that these spiritual blessings have been given to us in Christ. Had Jesus not

died and rose for us, we never would have received spiritual blessings.

- When we were in Adam, we received of Adam sin and death; but now that we are in Christ, the Holy Spirit has given to us life, and all that Christ has and is becomes ours.

D. Chosen in Christ to be Made Holy

“According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:” Ephesians 1:4

- Notice the first blessing that Paul mentions is: God has chosen us, in Christ, even before He created anything.
- Because God is omniscient (all knowing), He knew that man would sin and that He (God) would send Jesus to die for us. Therefore, in His foreknowledge, He chose those who will be saved before He created the earth.
- God chose us, in Him, to be holy and without blame before Him. Could God accept us if we aren’t holy and blameless? No. Therefore, even before He created the world God chose to place us into Christ, that through Christ, we would be made holy and blameless before Him, making it possible for Him to accept us.
- This blessing of holiness and blamelessness has been given to us positionally by the Holy Spirit.

“Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,” Ephesians 1:5

- The next blessing that Paul mentions is that we have been adopted into the family of God as adult children who no longer live in fear of being punished. Furthermore, as adult children, we are able to immediately claim our inheritance (**Galatians 4:1-7**).
- As His children, we are joint heirs with Jesus, and all that He has and all that He is becomes ours (**Romans 8:17**).

E. Made Acceptable in the Beloved

“To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.” Ephesians 1:6

- The next spiritual blessing that Paul wants to reveal is that we are acceptable to God.
- At first we were rejected by God, for we were sinners in Adam. But through Jesus we have received total and complete acceptance, “in the beloved” (in Jesus Christ).
- Left to ourselves, God cannot accept us, but Jesus has clothed us with His righteousness and made us acceptable before God.

F. Redeemed and Forgiven

“In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;” Ephesians 1:7

- The next blessing according to Paul, is that we have been bought with His blood and our sins have been forgiven. This verse makes clear that through Jesus’ blood, which has been shed for us, we have been delivered and forgiven, “according to the riches of His grace.”
- “According to the riches of His grace” means that God has delivered and forgiven us according to the limit-less grace that He possesses. There is no end to God’s grace and His willingness to give it.
- So, will there ever be more sin than there is God’s grace? Could we ever sin to the point when God says, “I have no grace left, I can no longer forgive

you”? No. There is no limit to God’s grace. We can’t sin enough to make God not forgive us.

G. Given Understanding of God’s Plan for the Future

“Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:” Ephesians 1:8-10

- The next blessing that Paul wants to bring to our attention is that we have received understanding and revelation as to what God has done, is doing, and will do.
- Before we were saved we all lived in darkness. Now we have the Holy Spirit who will reveal to us truth from God’s Word.
- We now know about eternity, what will happen to us when we die.
- We know that Jesus is the central focus of all history, and one day He will come back for His children and take us to be with Him forever.
- We know that right now Satan is lord of this world, but that one day he will be sent to hell forever. This world will be destroyed and re-created and Jesus will reign as its ruler.
- We know all of this because the Holy Spirit has revealed it to us.

H. Promised an Inheritance with the Lord Jesus

“In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:” Ephesians 1:11

- The next blessing that Paul wants to make known is that we have received an inheritance in Christ.
- Do children of very poor families receive anything when their parents die? No. There isn’t anything to leave them.
- When we were still in Adam, we were like children in a poor family. There was nothing for us to receive except death and hell.

- Now God has made us His very own children, and as children of the King of kings we have been given a king's inheritance; eternal life, love, acceptance, and oneness with the Father.

“That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.”

Ephesians 1:12

- Because God has given to us all these spiritual blessings; chosen, made holy, accepted, position of adult children, delivered, forgiveness, revelation of knowledge, an inheritance; we have received all these blessings not because we deserved them but because of God's grace and love for us.
- As we grow in our understanding of all that the Lord has done for us, God will be praised as a result.

I. Sealed With the Holy Spirit

“In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,” Ephesians 1:13

- Paul said that another blessing that we have received is the Holy Spirit. The moment that we placed our trust in Christ, God gave us the Holy Spirit.
- Oftentimes we mark our possessions so that we know they are ours and so that no one can say that they do not belong to us. God has bought us with the blood of His Son and has given us the Holy Spirit, who in turn has “marked” us with the life of Christ.
- Satan can no longer claim us as his child because we have the Holy Spirit. This proves that we belong to God. He is our owner.

J. Indwelt by the Holy Spirit – God's Promised Guarantee of our Future Deliverance

“Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.” Ephesians 1:14

- Paul said that not only is the Holy Spirit a “mark” that shows that we belong to God, but that He is also a “guarantee” that our inheritance is sure. Sometimes when someone is going to buy something which costs a lot and they don’t have all of the money, they will leave a deposit to show the seller that they are serious about buying it. Then the item will be held for them until they obtain the rest of the money.
- Even though Jesus already paid the full price for our sin, we still are living in this fallen world in cursed bodies and the fullness of our inheritance is not yet realized.
- God gave to us the Holy Spirit as proof that when we are taken up to heaven away from this earth away from and these bodies, we will receive our inheritance in full. Positionally, we already have been given our inheritance in full, but as long as we live in this fallen world in sinful bodies, we won’t yet experience all of it.
- When we are free from this life and are together with Him, we will begin to experience our inheritance in full.
- When this happens, we will give all praise and honor to Him, for then we will see clearly for the first time just how great, mighty, merciful and loving God really is.

EPHESIANS FOR GROWING BELIEVERS - LESSON 2

A. Thanks to the Lord for the Ephesian's Faith and Love

“Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints, Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;:” Ephesians 1:15, 16

Paul had heard of the Ephesians' faith in the Lord and their love for others (**Colossians 1:4; Romans 1:8**).

- The Ephesians had become God's children through faith in Jesus' death for them.
- Now they were daily believing in all of God's promises for His children.
- As they learned more and more about their position in Christ and walked in dependence upon the Spirit, the love of God began flowing through them to others.
- The Ephesians loved others with God's love, which is different from human love. (**I Corinthians 13:4-7**)
- God's love loves when people don't return that love. (**2 Corinthians 12:15**) It loves its enemies. (**Matthew 5:44**)
- The Ephesian believers had this kind of love only because the Holy Spirit was manifesting it through them. They couldn't produce it themselves.

B. Prayer That They Will Have Spiritual Insight and Full Knowledge of God

“That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:” Ephesians 1:17

- The Ephesian believers had faith and love for others, but Paul prayed that God would reveal Himself to them so that they could know Him in a deeper way. As children of God, this is our greatest need. *“The big question before the church is always God Himself, and the most awesome fact about any man is not what he may say or do, but what he, in the depths of his heart, understands God to be like..... Always the most revealing thing about the church is her idea of God, just as her most significant message is what she says about Him or leaves unsaid, for often her silence is more eloquent than*

her speech..... Possibly every error in doctrine or failure to apply Christian ethics could be finally traced to imperfect thoughts about God....The man who comes to a right belief about God is relieved from thousands and thousands of temporal problems, for he sees that these problems have to do with circumstances which at best cannot concern him for very long.” (author unknown to me)

- We don't need more faith, more love, more service, but we do need to know God more and more. The more we know Him, the more we will believe, love, and serve.
- When we were saved God gave us the position of adult children, but we don't always act or look like His adult children. Often we act like little children, which is a result of a lack of knowing Him.
- Do you expect your little children to act like adults? No. First they have to spend their childhood learning and growing for many years before they will become adults.
- We, too, must first learn and grow in our understanding and knowledge of God before we will begin to act like God's adult children.
- The Holy Spirit's role is to reveal God to us. We could never learn of Him on our own; not even from reading the Bible. Keep in mind that the Bible was written by the Holy Spirit and therefore can only be spiritually understood. Only the Spirit of Truth can explain God to us.
- We must depend upon the Holy Spirit to take the Word of God and teach it to us in our hearts, revealing the truth about God more and more.
- ***“And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you. But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you.” John 14:16,17,26***
- ***“I have yet many things to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit when he, the Spirit of truth, is come, he will guide you into all truth: for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever he shall hear, that shall he speak: and he will show you things to come. He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall show it unto you.” John 16:12-14***



- The Holy Spirit was sent to live in us to lead and guide us into the truth of God's Word.
- We must depend upon Him to do what God sent Him to do.

C. Prayer That They Will Know the Hope of Their Calling

“The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,” Ephesians 1:18

- Paul prayed that their eyes would be opened to realize the hope of His calling. Keep in mind that the call of God is first to Himself. (**I Corinthians 1:9; Matthew 4:18-20; Mark 3:13-14; Mark 6:7**) Just like the disciples, God first calls us to Himself; then He does a great work in our lives, molding us into the image of His Son, and then He sends us out For His purposes and to fulfill His plan.
- We have been given His life, the life of Christ.
- The Spirit desires to reveal Christ to us, and then He reproduces His life in us, and finally manifests His life through us on a daily basis.
- God is also calling us to eternal life with Him. When we were saved, we were given an assurance in our hearts that Jesus had given us eternal life and that one day He will take us to heaven to be with Him.

D. Prayer That They Will Know the Wealth of the Glory of God's Inheritance in the Saints

- Paul also prayed that their eyes would be opened to the “riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.” This verse does not appear to be referring to our inheritance in Christ as in verse 11, but rather His inheritance in us. It is amazing that the Lord looks upon us as a part of His great wealth (**Deuteronomy 32:9-12**).

E. Prayer That They Will Be Able to Comprehend the Exceeding Greatness of God's Power Toward All Believers

“And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,” Ephesians 1:19-20

- The last thing that Paul prays is that God will reveal His mighty power, which the Holy Spirit desires to manifest in and through us. (**Colossians 1:11**)
- The things we hope for, salvation, eternal life, etc., will seem foolish to unbelievers, but to us these things aren't foolish. We know that after Jesus died for us and was buried, God raised Him back to life and took Him up to heaven.
- Because this happened to Jesus and since we are now “in Him,” we have confidence that God can and will do all that He promises in His Word.
- We must depend upon the Holy Spirit to reveal to us more and more of how great His power is and that it is at work in us and for us.
- The more we know and understand God, the more we will depend upon Him.

F. The Exalted Position of the Lord Jesus Christ

“Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come;,” Ephesians 1:21

- Paul tells us of the high and exalted position that Jesus received after He rose from the dead and returned to heaven. (**Philippians 2:9-11**)
- Jesus has been exalted far above all angels, Satan and his demons, and all people everywhere and forever.
- It's important for us to understand the position to which God has raised Jesus; for it is there that the Bible says we are seated with Him. In **I Corinthians 1:30** we read, “Of Him are you in Christ.” God took us and placed us into Christ; our position is in Christ. When Christ went to the cross, we went to the cross with Him; when He went to the grave, we went to the grave with

Him; and when He ascended to the right hand of the Father, that is our position in Him.

“And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.”
(Eph. 1:22-23)

- The Church is Jesus’ body and He is the head.
- This means that Jesus is the absolute authority over His Church, as well as the fullness of us all, as the Holy Spirit fills us with His life.

EPHESIANS FOR GROWING BELIEVERS - LESSON 3

A. A Reminder

- In lesson 2, Paul showed the Ephesians what they had been given in Christ. Now, in an effort to magnify God's grace in all that they had been given, Paul reminds them of what they were when they were still in Adam.

“And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins:” Ephesians 2:1

- Before we were saved, our standing before God was one of death and separation. We were born into this world in Adam, separated from God, on our way to hell for eternity.
- It might be good to consider **Romans 5:12** and **Romans 6:23** because of one man's (Adam) sin we were all born sinners.
- “The wages of sin is death.” We were born sinners, and we were under the power of death.
- At that time, even though our physical bodies were still living, spiritually we were dead; separated from God and heading for hell.
- Originally, God created man upright and without sin, but when Adam and Eve sinned they became sinners and all of their descendants were born sinners, and their standing before God was one of death.

B. What We Were Before

“Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:” Ephesians 2:2

- In this verse, Paul mentions three things that characterized our lives as unsaved people who are under the authority of death.
- First, he said that we walked according to the ways of the world.
- This means that we were under the control of the world and its satanic system built on power, greed, and lust, walking in and accepting its evil and wicked ways.

- We were not walking according to God’s ways.
- Secondly, Paul says that we walked according to the prince of the power of the air.
- The “prince of the power of the air” refers to Satan.
- Since we were separated from God, walking according to the ways of the world and since Satan controls the “ways” of the world, we were also under his authority, being controlled by his deception.
- Thirdly, Paul said that we walked, controlled by the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.
- As we walked according to the ways of the world and under Satan’s control, we also acted just like everyone who doesn’t know God. We walked in disobedience to Him.

C. Children of Wrath

“Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.” Ephesians 2:3

- Because we were born in Adam, separated from God, we lived under the constant control of our flesh, which is an inward desire to do wrong.
- All that our flesh desires is sin and since we were living under its influence and control; it was controlling our mind, our will, and our emotions, which resulted in the control of our body, our behavior (where we go, what we listen to, what we look at, what we say, etc.).
- Because we were born in Adam, separated from God, under Satan’s authority and walking under the control of the flesh, Paul says that we were children of God’s wrath.
- Not only were we born separated from God, but we were also the recipients of His wrath toward sin and the rejection of Him (**Romans 1:18**).
- This is the state and position every human being is born into:
 - Separated from God
 - Under Satan’s authority
 - Living under the control of the flesh
 - Children of wrath

D. Old and New Positions

“But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:” Ephesians 2:4-6

- The old standing that we had in Adam was a position of hopelessness. We were hopeless.
- We were like Jonah when he was in the belly of the fish. In and of himself he had no hope of escape. If God hadn't done something to deliver him, Jonah would have died and not been delivered.
- That is exactly how we were while still in Adam. If God had not done something to deliver us, we would have all died in our sins and gone to hell to be punished forever.
- There is no way that we could have delivered ourselves.
- But Paul said that God is rich in mercy and loves us with a great love. Mercy is “not getting what we deserve.” We deserved hell, but God gives us eternal life in heaven with Him.
- We could spend hours meditating on the picture that Paul is describing here.
- We were born sinners, separated from God. We were His enemies under Satan's authority, controlled by our flesh. We were children of God's wrath headed for an eternity in hell.
- BUT GOD, who is rich in not giving man what he deserves and because of the great love He has for us, made us alive together with Christ.
- God's grace and love were too great to allow us to remain separated from Him.
- God's justice demands that sin be punished, but His grace and love wouldn't allow us to bear that punishment ourselves and moved Him to send His own Son to bear it for us so that we could be restored to oneness with Himself.
- Therefore, Christ delivered us from our old standing of sin and separation from God and has given us a new standing of life and holiness in Himself.

“And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:” Ephesians 2:6

- This is the same thing Paul wrote back in Romans 6 where he said that because of Christ's substitutionary death for us and the fact that we've been placed into Christ by the Holy Spirit, everything that has happened to Him has also happened to us.
- He was crucified; we were crucified together with Him.
- He was buried, resurrected and ascended to His Father's right hand; we, too, have been raised to walk in newness of life (**Romans 6:4**) with a new perspective which is from our new position at the Father's right hand.
- Even though God says that this is now who we are in Christ, we often don't feel or act like this is true.
- That's because the process of our daily actions becoming worthy of our new position, is a long and slow process that the Holy Spirit is carrying out in all of our lives. Accepting His love while unworthy is a great problem for us.
- This process begins with knowledge. First, the Spirit begins to reveal to us what is ours and who we are in Christ. Then, as our hearts become convinced of the truth, we believe it, and the truth that is believed will produce Christ likeness.
- Our focus must not be on trying to be more Christ-like, but rather on the Spirit, whose ministry it is to lead us into truth and the outcome, Christ-likeness.

E. Eternal Grace

“That in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.” Ephesians 2:7

- Paul is saying that what God has accomplished for us in Christ, will show how great and awesome His grace is for all eternity.
- Keep in mind that grace is “unmerited favor;” giving man what he does not deserve.
- In all of the history of mankind, there is no other act in which someone was so undeserving of what they were receiving as we were when God sent His Son to die for us.
- Meditating upon this will do two things: it will show us the greatness of God's grace, as well as the horrific state of mankind when we were in Adam. Praise God for His grace.

F. Rich in Mercy

“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.” Ephesians 2:8-9

- There is not one single born again Christian who ever lived, who deserved the salvation they received in Christ.
- Not Abel, Seth, Enoch, Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Joseph, Moses, David, Mary, John the Baptist, none of Jesus’ disciples, nor you, nor me, no one deserves to be saved, all deserve eternal punishment in hell.
- But because God is rich in mercy and because of His great love for us, we now have been delivered from sin, its penalty, as well as its power, and have been made the holy and righteous children of God.

G. Walk in Good Works

“For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.” Ephesians 2:10

- Remember back to verses 1-3, Paul stated what our old position in Adam was, as well as the deeds that characterized that standing; fleshly indulgences.
- In verses 4-9, Paul shows what our new position in Christ is because of God’s grace.
- Now here in verse 10, Paul mentions what the fruit of our new position is; good works.
- To the degree that we know, understand, and by faith appropriate and rest in our new position in Christ, we will walk in good works.
- For just as sin is a by-product of the flesh, so good works are the by-product of our new relationship with Christ.

EPHESIANS FOR GROWING BELIEVERS - LESSON 4

A. Old Nature v. New Nature

- Paul compares our old nature in Adam with the new nature we've received in Christ.

“Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;” Ephesians 2:11

- Circumcision to the Jews was a very important thing, as it was the sign that they above all peoples of the world were God's chosen people.
- Because they were chosen by God and the Gentiles weren't, they looked down on the Gentiles, viewing them as wicked and evil.

“That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.” Ephesians 2:12-13

- Paul is reminding the Ephesian believers of their past condition, separated from Christ and excluded from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise.
- Israel has always had the hope of the promise of the Deliverer, but the Gentiles were separated from all of that.
- All through the Old Testament God protected, watched over, and blessed Israel. He always provided them with a way to be made acceptable to Himself.
- But none of this was given to the Gentiles.
- The Gentiles were ignorant of God, His covenants, and the promise of a Deliverer who would come to free them from their sin.
- We, too, are Gentiles and were separate from Christ and strangers to God's covenants of promise.

- But Paul goes on to say that even though we and the Ephesians were formerly far off in relation to God and His promises, now we have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

“For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;” Ephesians 2:14-15

- Under the law the Jewish people became self-righteous, condemning the Gentiles, for they didn’t keep the law, therefore this caused enmity between the Jews and Gentiles.
- But now in Christ, God has broken down that dividing wall of enmity caused by the law.
- For now the law is no longer in effect and in Christ, the Jew has nothing to boast of except for the grace of God; therefore, he has no opportunity to glory in his self-righteousness.
- Because of Christ, all peoples of the earth are on the same level. Those who accept Christ as Savior become the children of God and those that don’t, remain separated from God, whether Jew or Gentile.

“And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.” Ephesians 2:16-18

- Before, the Jews were the chosen people of God and all other people groups were not. But now, through the cross, we all have access by the Spirit, to the Father as His very children, and all who are the children of God are one body in Christ.
- Today, in Christ, all have access to God through the Spirit. He is our Heavenly Father and we can boldly approach the throne of grace at any time (**Hebrews 10:19**).
- Before Christ came and made this possible, God could only be worshiped in the temple and only under certain conditions.
- No uncircumcised Gentile could enter with the Jews into the inner sections of the temple.

- However, when Jesus died on the cross and cried out, “It is finished,” the veil in the temple was torn from top to bottom, which was God’s sign that now through Christ, all people would have free access to God the Father.

“Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.” Ephesians 2:19-22

- During Old Testament times, God’s dwelling place on earth was first in the tabernacle, and later in the temple that the Jews had built out of stone.
- But today, God’s dwelling place on this earth is in those who have become His children.
- The Spirit has placed us all together “in Christ.” Paul said we are growing into a holy temple “in the Lord.”

B. Strengthened By the Spirit

“For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;” Ephesians 3:14-16

- “To the extent of the value of His glory”, keep in mind that in **Exodus 33:18** Moses asked God to show him His glory, and God responded in verse 19, “I will make my goodness pass before you.” And then in **Exodus 34:6** He explains that His glory is His grace, mercy, and love to sinful man.
- Paul prayed that Christians would be strengthened with His power (goodness).
- Is there a limit to the value or riches of God’s glory? No. Neither is there a limit to the extent of strength that the Spirit can supply us. (**Colossians 1:11**)
- The reason we are as weak as Christians is because of our flesh. To the extent that we walk in the flesh, we will never experience the strengthening of the Spirit in the inner man. (**Galatians 5:16**)

- The more we walk in the Spirit, the more conformed to the image of Christ we'll become and the more of His strength we'll experience. (**2 Corinthians 3:17-18**)

“That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.” Ephesians 3:17-19

- Paul prays that as Christ is being reproduced in our hearts by faith, we will begin to understand the magnitude of His love for us and become rooted and grounded in His love.
- As we grow in our understanding of the magnitude of His love for us, we will be drawn ever closer to Him, becoming more like Him.
- The longer the process goes on in our lives, the more Christ-like we become until we are “filled up with all the fullness of God.”
- The more we walk in the Spirit, the more the Spirit fills us with the life of Christ, who is the fullness of God.

“Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.” Ephesians 3:20-21

- **Ephesians 3:20** is an often quoted verse in regard to man's physical needs, but in the context of this passage it becomes an even greater truth to consider.
- Paul is saying that regarding this work of conforming man more to the image of Christ until he is filled with all the fullness of God; not only is God capable of accomplishing this, but God has the power to conform our lives to Christ far more abundantly and beyond anything we could ever imagine.
- The same power and authority that raised Christ from the dead, that seated Him at the right hand of God, is that which is presently at work in us, establishing us in our identification with Christ, thereby conforming us more into that same image.
- Remembering always the battle between the flesh and the Spirit. (**Galatians 5:17**)

- As we by faith reckon upon our co-crucifixion with Christ, we are free from the control of the flesh and are able to walk in the Spirit.
- The more that we walk in the Spirit (influenced and controlled), the more conformed to the image of Christ we become, being filled more by the Spirit with the life of Christ, and the more He is glorified in and through our lives. (2 Peter 3:18)

“See then that ye walk circumspectly (carefully), not as fools, but as wise, Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.” Ephesians 5:15-17

- We know that we have been given a new life in Christ. We also know that Christ loves us and has given the Holy Spirit to lead us into a life that is pleasing to God.
- Therefore, stand and walk and live by faith in these truths, not walking like those who don’t have these things.
- The world is going from bad to worse, and time is running out. Therefore, we should walk in continual dependence upon the Holy Spirit, presenting ourselves to Him and expecting Him to reveal His will in His time.

“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.” Ephesians 5:18-21

- It should be the Holy Spirit who is controlling us and our actions, not alcohol, drugs, or other things.
- If we walk in the flesh, many other fleshly lusts such as drugs, alcohol, lustful desires, greed, materialism, power, etc. will control us and not the Holy Spirit.
- To be “filled with the Spirit” is a maturing process and actually means to be filled by the Spirit; The Spirit is filling us with the life of Christ.
- Verses 19-21 give us three evidences of the Holy Spirit’s filling; the Holy Spirit’s work of reproducing the life of Christ in us.
- The first evidence is toward us, “singing and making melody in our hearts to the Lord.” A joyful, light-hearted, peaceful contentment toward God.

- The second evidence is toward God; “giving thanks to God always for all things,” not just the good things, in the name of Jesus.
- And the third evidence is toward one another; “submitting yourselves one to the other in the fear (awesome respect) of God.”
- As we are being filled by the Spirit, being filled with the life of Christ, our hearts will be joyful and thankful to the Lord. As those around us see that joy and thankfulness, the Holy Spirit will use it to strengthen and encourage their hearts as well.
- Those who are influenced and controlled by the Holy Spirit are able to be submissive to one another, for they are resting in the goodness and sovereignty of God.

EPHESIANS FOR GROWING BELIEVERS - LESSON 5

A. Christians Living Together in Unity

“I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,” Ephesians 4:1

- Paul was a prisoner in Rome when he was writing to the believers in Ephesus, however more importantly he saw himself as a prisoner, captivated by Jesus Christ.
- In the first three chapters of this letter, Paul teaches the believers in Ephesus all that is spiritually theirs “in Christ”.
- We have received every spiritual blessing; we are chosen and adopted as adult children, we are accepted, redeemed and forgiven, we have been given an inheritance and the guarantee of the Holy Spirit. (**Ephesians 1:3-14**)
- Even more, all believers have been seated with Christ in the heavens (**Ephesians 2:5, 6**), and have become God’s temple in which He resides through the Holy Spirit (**Ephesians 2:22**).
- Now in Ephesians 4 Paul makes known that since we have been blessed with all these spiritual blessings in Christ, it is now possible for us to live the Christ-life (**Ephesians 4:1**).
- Because we have been blessed with all that has been mentioned, our lives will be different.
- Our positional life in Christ will affect our conditional life in this world.
- Before, living the Christ-life would not have been possible, but now because of our spiritual blessings in Christ, it is possible.
- We once lived in the world under sin’s control, and death, but God saved us with His own power, and we were born into His family. He clothed us with His righteousness and has given us an equal share with His Son, Jesus Christ.
- Now knowing that He has changed our lives in this way, we should believe it to be true and never go back to living like we did before Jesus saved us.
- By God’s grace, we are now in God’s family, and He has given us the power and desire to live our lives worthy of that wonderful grace and mercy that has been bestowed on us (**Romans 12:1-2**).

B. A Walk That is Worthy

“With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”

Ephesians 4:2-3

- A walk that is worthy of our new position or calling is a humble walk. We recognize our helplessness before God and all that we have, and all that we are comes from Him.
- It is also a meek walk; our definition for meekness is “power under control.”
- “Longsuffering” is a patient, persevering walk of trusting and resting and depending on God to give us the power and desire to be patient and persevering with others.
- The empowerment to live worthy of our calling is found in Romans 6. We must know and believe that our flesh has been crucified with Christ and that we have been raised to walk in newness of life.
- We have been given the very life of Christ as our own. Accept it to be true.
- As we depend upon the Holy Spirit to do His job of revealing to us, **progressively, the life of Christ that has been given to us (John 16:13-14)**, we will by faith accept it, and it will become a reality in our lives **(2 Corinthians 3:17-18)**.

C. The Bond of Peace

“Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.” Ephesians 4:3

- Notice that this verse does not say, “The unity of the body,” but rather the “unity of the Spirit.” We are not told to produce unity. That is something that the Holy Spirit has already accomplished.
- Notice that this unity, which is produced by the Spirit, is to be maintained “in” the bond of peace; always keeping in mind that peace is a fruit of the Spirit.
- As we live in the Spirit and the Holy Spirit produces peace in our lives, it is this peace that will maintain unity among brothers.



- As we walk in the Spirit and the fruit of peace is being manifested in our lives, we will be enabled to interact with others in any situation in a non-confrontive, non-challenging and non-attacking way.
- We will be able to disagree, exhort, and challenge one another peacefully, in love, and with a caring and concerned heart.
- The Holy Spirit's unity will ultimately be maintained by Him as we walk in the Spirit.
- It is His unity to maintain.

D. One Body, Spirit, Hope, Lord, Faith, Baptism, God, Father

“There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Lord, one faith, one baptism, One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.” Ephesians 4:4-6

- Sometimes because of our different beliefs and doctrines, it is easy to think that we need to separate from other groups; it's as if we are not seeing them as part of the same body of Christ.
- These verses make it clear that all believers have only one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, and one God and Father.
- Misconceptions and misunderstandings are caused by the flesh which builds and maintains barriers and divisions in the church (the Body of Christ).
- When we walk in the Spirit, we maintain the unity of the Spirit among all brothers, while depending upon the Spirit to bring us all into the truth. “One body and we are all in it together;” “One Holy Spirit” who is working in and through us for a common goal to glorify God and mold us into His image. “One hope” in Christ which anchors our soul (**Hebrews 6:19**); “one Lord” of our lives who has set us apart for His possession and use (**Ephesians 2:10**). “One faith” in one God; and “one baptism” into Christ and into His death (**Romans 6:13**).
- We can look to God for the faith and patience that He owns every real child of His, regardless of present beliefs and denomination.

E. Gifts

“But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;”
Ephesians 4:7; 11-14

- Christ, according to His own good pleasure, as head and Lord is the giver of certain gifts.
- Notice that these gifts are given to us as Jesus sees fit.
- These gifts are not something that we deserve or can earn, but we receive them strictly by His grace alone.
- Because we don't deserve these gifts, nor have we earned them, there is no room for pride or self-exultation.
- Let's look at the first gift that has been given to the Church: “Apostles”.
- This is a gift that was given to lay the foundation for the Church. God used the Apostles to start new churches and to write, teach, and establish His Word in the church for all eternity.
- And then Paul mentions prophets. The New Testament prophets were given by God to protect the Body from the many false teachers that existed in Paul's time, and still are active today.
- Next is the gift of Evangelism: an evangelist is one who has a tremendous power and desire to share Christ with others.
- The next gift is: Pastors or “shepherd.” It is their role to lead, guide, feed, and protect Jesus' flock.
- Jesus is the Chief Shepherd, but He also gifts some to be under shepherds of the flock.
- Teachers: are those who have a hunger and thirst for the deeper truths of God's Word.
- As the Spirit is revealing to the teacher truth, He will also use the teacher to share truth with others.

- And now Paul reveals the purpose of these gifts.

“For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:” Ephesians 4:12

- He has given the gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, and pastor-teacher for the purpose of meeting the needs of His people so that they can grow up, become strong, and be used by Him to build up the Body of Christ.
- For how long have these gifts been given?

“Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:” Ephesians 4:13

- Until we all attain the unity of the faith and knowledge of Christ.
- Until the life of Christ is being lived out through us in its fullness.

F. The Body of Christ

“That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:” Ephesians 4:14-15

- Christ has given to the Church the Holy Spirit, for the purpose of maturing.
- One of the signs or evidences of an immature Christian is a double-mindedness and continual shifting of doctrinal beliefs based on the last person talked to or the last book they read.
- Where as an evidence of a maturing Christian, who is growing into Christ likeness, is a rock solid faith in Christ and His Word as well as God-given power and desire to speak the truth in love.

“From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.” Ephesians 4:16

- If your body was missing one of its members, could it function to its full capacity? No.
- It's the same with the Body of Christ. All believers together are called the body of Christ and in order for us to function properly and do God's good pleasure, we must function according to God's ways in unity and dependence upon the Holy Spirit.
- As each individual is functioning in his God-given role, the whole body will benefit and be edified and built up in Him.

EPHESIANS FOR GROWING BELIEVERS - LESSON 6

A. Walking

“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:” Ephesians 4:17-18 “Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness.” (Ephesians. 4:17-19)

- These verses describe a downward spiral of sin that begins with “walking in the vanity of our minds.”
- The world is always caught up with something; worldly thoughts and desires; in an effort to find peace and happiness. (“Walking in the vanity of the mind,” pursuing worthless things which have no eternal value.)
- The world continually makes plans and tries to meet their needs separate from God.
- But God desires that our focus remain dependent upon Him rather than dependent upon what the world has to offer.
- When people first come to saving faith, they are often very excited about God and desire to trust only in Him.
- But many new Christians sense a need to “work” in order to please God instead of merely accepting His grace and mercy. Gone is the simplicity, freshness, joy, and first love that was theirs in the beginning (**Revelation 2:1-4**)..
- *“...in the vanity of their minds...”* So the downward spiral of sin begins with “walking in the vanity of our minds” (pursuing worthless things).
- And then Paul tells us that our “understanding will be darkened;” all of a sudden the Biblical truths that were once fresh and exciting are now cloudy, hidden, and boring.
- Next we become “alienated from the life of God;” God is no part of our thinking.
- All this drifting away from God consciousness results in becoming “past feeling” (callousness) and finally ends with giving ourselves “over to lasciviousness to work all uncleanness with greediness” (openness to indulge in any sin).

- This is what happened to the Israelites in the wilderness when they began to look and focus on their circumstances rather than on God. (**Deuteronomy 6:10, 11**)
- Their hearts were darkened, they didn't see the truths that God spoke and the result was no faith and a sin response. (**Deuteronomy 6:12**)

B. Renewed Minds

“But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: “ Ephesians 4:21

- All of a sudden Paul's focus shifts from the problem (downward spiral of sin) to God's remedy, Jesus Christ. Notice Paul does not say you have not so learned about Christ, but rather “learned Christ.” “Learning Christ” is to know Him, not merely knowing about Him.

That you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Him. And this is the truth, that ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; and be renewed in the spirit of your mind; and that ye put on the new man which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” Ephesians 4:21-24

- The first truth that we heard and were taught by abiding in Christ and observing His life, begins in verse 22, “put off the old man.” As we by faith rest in the truth of our co-crucifixion with Christ, the “old man” is put off or held in the place of death and we are able to walk free of its influence and control.
- The next truth we have heard and been taught by looking unto Jesus, is that once the “old man” is put off, the Holy Spirit is free to “renew the mind.” As the Spirit gains influence and control over our minds we begin to see life from God's point of view and our thinking changes.
- And finally, we begin to experience the Christ-life; the Holy Spirit reproducing the life of Christ within (“putting on the new man”).

“Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.” Ephesians 4:25

- Therefore, because the old man is put off, the mind is renewed and the new man is put on, we should live differently (verses 25-32).
- Why did Paul say that we should speak the truth with one another? Because “we are members one of another.” It would be foolish for one Christian brother to tell a lie to another, as it would be the same as a man who lies and deceives himself.

“Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:” Ephesians 4:26

- Some teach that all anger is sin, but this verse makes clear that not all anger is sinful. When is anger sin and when is it not sin?
- Anytime that anger is a result of something that someone has done against me, it is sin because my focus is centered on me.
- Jesus never got angry at people for the things they did to Him, but only for what they did that was contrary to God.



“Neither give place to the devil.” Ephesians 4:27

- Verse 26 told us not to let the “sun go down on our wrath...” i.e. don’t let your anger continue on and on, for the longer we stay angry, the deeper down into the spiral of sin we go, and the more influence and control Satan has over our lives through the flesh. When we walk in the flesh, we carry out the deeds of the flesh (Galatians 5:19-21 – envy, strife, jealousy, anger, divisions).

“Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.” Ephesians 4:28

- Before salvation, we can only walk in the flesh and in the flesh we only care about ourselves.
- Our selfishness in the flesh is manifested in many different ways. For some it’s through stealing...
- Paul says that now since the old man is put off and the Holy Spirit is putting on the new man, our stealing and dishonest dealings should be replaced by hard and honest work, not only for our own benefit, but with a view to help meet the needs of others.

- It's one thing to get a thief to stop stealing, but it's a work of the Holy Spirit reproducing the life of Christ within, that would bring a thief to a point where he would stop stealing, get a job, and give to others.

“Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.”

Ephesians 4:29

- Now that the old man has been put off, the mind renewed, and the new man (Christ) has been put on, our speech will be different. We now have the power and desire to speak words that will turn hearts toward Christ and encourage others.

“And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” Ephesians 4:30

- The old man has been crucified with Christ. We have been given His nature, as well as the Holy Spirit to reveal truth. Now we can believe and walk in truth.
- When we don't walk in faith and dependence upon Him, we grieve the Holy Spirit.
- Notice Paul's comment: “Ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.” The Holy Spirit is not only our “seal” of ownership (similar to branding a horse), but the use of the word “seal” also has the idea of locking us in or making secure (John 10:28-29).

“Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.”

Ephesians 4:31, 32

- Have you ever been bitter toward someone and tried real hard to stop being bitter, but it won't go away?
- However, now that the old man has been put off, the mind renewed and the new man put on, there is a new power and desire to not only stop the bitter, angry, evil speaking, but there is a total change (from self to Christ) and a new tender, forgiving heart of love.

EPHESIANS FOR GROWING BELIEVERS - LESSON 7

- Before we begin to study Ephesians 5, we should re-read Ephesians 4:17-24, as chapter 5 is a continuation from Chapter 4.

“This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But ye have not so learned Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.” Ephesians 4:17-24

- Because our flesh has been crucified with Christ and we’ve been given a new nature, Paul shared some things in chapter 4 that should now be a part of our lives.
- First, he said that we should speak the truth at all times.
- We should get angry about all that opposes God, but self-focused anger won’t be in our lives as we walk in the Spirit.
- We will no longer give Satan an opportunity to work in our lives.
- Instead of stealing, we will work to meet our own needs, as well as the needs of others.
- Our words will be encouraging and helpful to the growth of others.
- We no longer will grieve the Holy Spirit by continuing in unbelief.
- And we will speak and act toward one another in love, forgiving each other as God in Christ forgave us.

A. God’s Children Should Walk in Love

“Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;” Ephesians 5:1

- The Word “therefore” looks back to chapter 4. Because of all that the Holy Spirit has done for us in chapter 4, we now are enabled, by Him, to “follow hard after God” (**Psalm 63:8**).
- The phrase, “as dear children” has the idea of following after God with child-like faith.

B. We Have Been Given God’s Nature

“Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling savour.” Ephesians 5:1-2

- Paul is saying that as God’s children, we have been given His nature and all that it contains.
- All that God does is motivated by selfless love, so all that we do will be motivated by His love if the Holy Spirit is reproducing the life of Christ in us.
- It was because of His love that He died for us. That same love is also characteristic of our new nature.
- Walk according to your new nature which is rooted in His love and you will die to yourself. (**Ephesians 3:17-19**)

“But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Be not ye therefore partakers with them. For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:(For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;) Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.” Ephesians 5:3-10

C. A New Nature

- Things that are unfitting in our new nature are things that unbelievers do habitually.

- It is in their nature to do these things and it once was in our nature, also. But no longer.
- After we finish working all day we usually are dirty. Do we like to stay that way?
- No. We go home and wash up because it isn't our nature to remain dirty.
- What about pigs? They love being dirty! Even if we wash them, they will go out looking for more mud. It's their nature to be dirty.



- Just like we don't enjoy being dirty, as God's children we will never enjoy continuing in sin.

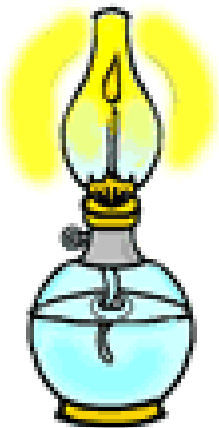
- Sometimes we may slip and fall, or possibly even rebel, but we will never be happy to remain in the

flesh because it is no longer our nature.

- Unbelievers love to sin, for it is in their nature.
- Why should we be found doing the very things that the world will one day be judged for?

D. Set Apart

- Paul is saying that our natures are so different that it should not be fun for us to enjoy the sinful ways of unbelievers.



- We, too, used to be children of darkness, not knowing the truth. But we are now children of light.
- The Holy Spirit has revealed the truths of God's Word to us and we now know what is right.
- Therefore, it would be wrong for us to go back and walk like people in darkness who don't know the truth.
- If we walk in dependence upon the Holy Spirit, He will enable us to do what is right, good, and pleasing to God.
- Verse 10 tells us to learn what is pleasing to God. What does please God? (**Hebrews 11:6**)

- So we see that "without faith" we are unable to please God.
- Without acknowledging and depending on God, there will be no pleasing Him.

“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.” Ephesians 5:11-14

- Here Paul tells us that not only should we not participate in the evil deeds of the unbelievers, but we should be exposing their sin.
- How are we to expose their sin?
- By our lives. If we walk in dependence upon the Holy Spirit, our life will produce the fruit of the Spirit (**Galatians 5:22, 23**).
- As others see the fruit that the Holy Spirit is producing in and through us, they may become convicted. After becoming convicted, some will respond and turn to the Lord for salvation.
- Why did Cain kill Abel? Did Abel go and tell Cain that he was disobeying God? No. Just the fact that Abel did what was right convicted Cain that he was wrong.
- As we walk in dependence upon the Holy Spirit, He will use our lives in the same way.
- When missionaries go into a new area, do they go out and tell everyone they are sinners and their spirit worship is sin?
- No. They just teach God’s Word and as people hear the truth, the Holy Spirit convicts their hearts of those things.
- We don’t have to point out everyone’s sin, but as we walk in dependence upon the Holy Spirit, He will use our actions and words to accomplish in the lives of others His good pleasure.

EPHESIANS FOR GROWING BELIEVERS - LESSON 8

*“And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;”
Ephesians 5:18*

- In **Ephesians 5:18**, Paul said that all believers should be influenced and controlled by the Spirit. And then beginning in verse 22, Paul speaks about various relationships; husband/wife; servant/master; parent/child.
- In studying relationships and how we should treat one another, we must keep in mind verse 18:
- The only way we will be able to function in relationships as Paul writes here in Ephesians will be by walking under the influence and control of the Spirit.
- Before we read on in Ephesians, it might be important for us to look back at the first husband/wife as an example. Where did the first marriage come from? Whose idea was it?

A. Adam's Need

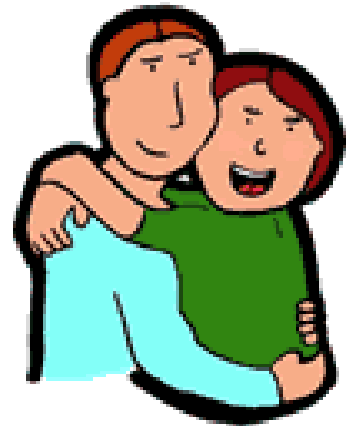
- *“And out of the ground the LORD God formed every beast of the field, and every fowl of the air; and brought them unto Adam to see what he would call them: and whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof. And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field; but for Adam there was not found an help meet for him.” Genesis 2:19-20*
- Why did God have Adam name the animals? Possibly to show him his need. Adam probably never gave a thought to the fact that he had no mate, until he began naming the animals and saw that they had mates. Let's look at how God provided for Adam's need of a wife.
- *“And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man.” Genesis 2:21-22*
- There are five things that God did here: caused Adam to sleep; took a rib; closed the flesh; made a woman; brought her to Adam.

B. God Causes Adam to Sleep

- God did not require Adam's help. It was God who decided what Adam's wife should be like. Adam was not awake to give his suggestions.

C. God Takes Adam's Rib

- Why a rib? Why not an ear or a leg or a piece of hair?
- The rib is a part of Adam's side; Eve was not to be Adam's "head" and be over him, nor was she to be beneath him; she was to be his equal.
- The rib was near his heart; Eve would be kept near Adam's heart in love and care.
- The rib was under his arm; she would always need Adam's protection, just as a hen protects her chicks under her wings.



D. God Closes His Flesh

- Unlike an operation today, it required no healing process.

E. God Makes the Woman

- She was completely a work of God.

F. God Brought Her to Adam

- God wanted Adam to know that she was a gift from God Himself.
- It was God who instituted marriage; marriage is a creation of God, not an invention of man.

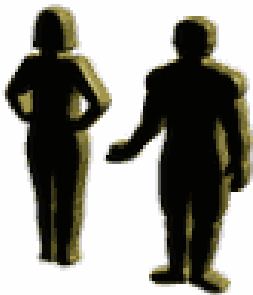
G. Wives Subject To Husbands

“Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.” Ephesians 5:22-24

- Paul begins by saying that wives are to be subject to their husbands in the same way they would be subject unto the Lord.
- God established man as the head of woman (**I Corinthians 11:3**), as well as her provider and protector, therefore she is to submit to the authority that God has placed over her.
- Verse 24 clearly states that she is to submit to her husband in everything. What if it contradicts the Word of God?
- Remember in Acts, when the Pharisees commanded that the disciples not proclaim Christ? What did the disciples say?
- Let’s read **Acts 5:28, 29**. Just like this, wives should submit to their husbands in everything, except when it contradicts the Word of God.

H. Husbands, Love Your Wives

“Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.” Ephesians 5:25-30



acceptance? No.

- Paul commands husbands to love their wives, as Christ loves the Church.
- Let’s go back to the Garden, back to Adam and Eve again.
- She came from Adam’s rib, and must always be kept near his heart in love and care.
- After God brought Eve to Adam, notice Adam’s immediate response of acceptance (**Genesis 2:23**).
- At this point, had Eve done anything to earn Adam’s

- Who did Adam know better, God or Eve? God. He had never seen Eve before.
- Therefore, it is very important to realize that Adam's acceptance of Eve was based on His relationship with God.
- Adam was convinced of God's love for him and he knew that God would only give him what was good for Him. Therefore, he accepted Eve immediately.
- We should also accept and love our wives because God loves us and He gave them to us, not because of their actions.
- But how can wives always submit and respect their husband, and how can husbands love and accept their wives as Paul is commanding?
- By being filled by the Spirit as we read in verse 18.
- When we believe that our flesh has been crucified with Christ and we have been given a new nature, and our dependence is on the Holy Spirit, we will be enabled to live according to our new nature, which will be in obedience to God's Word.
- A woman walking in the flesh won't want to submit to her husband.
- She will only focus on his faults and will rebel against his authority.
- But a woman walking in the Spirit has her focus and dependence upon God, not upon her husband. (**Isaiah 26:3**)
- She is confident of God's love for her, so that even if her husband makes a mistake, God will use this for good in her life.
- Therefore, she is free to obey her husband.
- Paul commanded husbands to love their wives as Christ loves the Church.
- This will be impossible for a man in the flesh.
- For a man in the flesh only cares about himself and his own needs. He won't care about the needs of others, even his wife.
- But a man in the Spirit will focus on others and see others to be more important than himself. (**Philippians 2:3, 4**)
- His concern will be to see that his wife receives all that she needs.
- Remember that God created Eve from Adam's body; she was a part of his body.
- Therefore, in **Ephesians 5:28-31**, Paul commands husbands to love their wives and take care of them, just as they would care for their own bodies.
- If you cut your hand, would you ever say to your hand, "You're not as skillful as I want you to be, I don't care if you get better, so I'm not going to take care of you."

- Of course not. If something bad happens to your hand, it will affect your whole body.
- What do we do sometimes when our wives don't do what we want them to do?
- We get angry and don't accept them. We look for opportunities to get revenge. Paul says that we are of the same body and should love and care for our wives, not because they do everything right, but because they are part of our bodies, given to us by God.

I. Children

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise; That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.” Ephesians 6:1-3

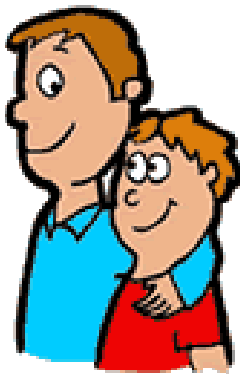
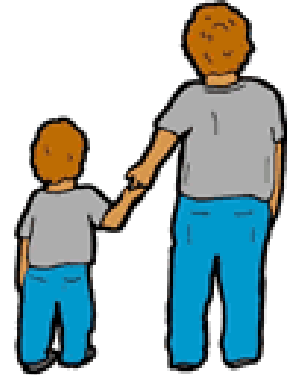


- Children who are believers should also be living under the influence and control of the Spirit.
- Children who walk in the Spirit will obey their parents, but those who walk in the flesh will disobey.
- Because God commands children to obey their parents; therefore when they disobey, they are really disobeying God.
- Keep in mind that obeying parents is only half of what God commands; children must do it with the right attitude, “honor thy mother and father.”
- Notice Paul tells us that this commandment has a promise attached to it; “That it may go well with thee and thou may live long on the earth.”
- How so? If children disobey parents and fail to honor/respect them, the parent-child relationship will be hindered and life will be hard for the child (**Proverbs 13:15**).
- Furthermore, Paul says “that thou may live long on the earth.” If a child disobeys and fails to respect his or her parent, going against the wise counsel of the parent, there will be natural consequences for refusing the correction and instruction of parents. In some cases it could mean the death of the child. Example: parent instructs the child not to climb a certain tree. The child disobeys, a branch breaks and the child falls to his death. An interesting verse to consider is **Proverbs 30:17**.

J. Parents

“And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.” Ephesians 6:4

- Paul now addresses fathers who must be filled by the Spirit in order to raise their children “in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.”
- Otherwise, we respond to them in the flesh, which will often activate their flesh, causing anger and bitterness.
- Parents who are overprotective and do not allow their child the freedom to fail; who are impatient and demanding and speak carelessly and roughly, instead of lovingly and carefully; who threaten and harass and are too severe in their punishment will “provoke their children to anger, rather than provoke them to love and good deeds” (**Hebrews 10:24**).



- As parents grow in the grace and knowledge of Christ and are filled by the Spirit with the life of Christ, the Holy Spirit will enable them to set a good example for children to follow.
- Also, it is the Holy Spirit that will enable us to daily teach and encourage our children with the truth from God’s Word.
- Furthermore, as fathers and mothers walk in the Spirit, the Holy Spirit will enable us to teach our children, by example, to walk in the Spirit and not in the flesh.
- When we walk in the flesh, we will only be teaching our children to do the same. (**John 3:6**)

K. Masters and Slaves

“Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:

Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.” Ephesians 6:5-8

- When Paul wrote the book of Ephesians, it was common place for there to be masters and slaves. Today, most of our societies function with employers and employees.
- Paul’s thought here is that an employee, who is walking in the control of the Spirit, will work for his employer as if he is working for the Lord.
- He will not just work hard when the employer is watching and then be lazy when he isn’t around; but because we are God’s servants, we should always work wholeheartedly, “as unto Christ.”
- An employee walking in the flesh will only care about himself and his needs. He won’t think about doing a good job for his employer.
- Paul goes on to say that our real reward doesn’t come from an employer, but it will ultimately come from the Lord.

“And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.” Ephesians 6:9

- Paul now addresses employers reminding them that they should treat their employees fairly and with loving care.
- Employers should remember that they are not more important to God than their employees, but that God sees us all alike.
- Therefore, because the employee is one who God loves, he should be treated accordingly.

EPHESIANS FOR GROWING BELIEVERS - LESSON 9

- When Paul wrote this letter to the believers in Ephesus, he was a prisoner in Rome, with one of his hands bound to a Roman soldier by a chain. In Paul's time, there were Roman soldiers. These soldiers had their armor for warfare. Usually, the first thing a soldier would put on was a belt around his waist. His belt was important, as all the other pieces were held in place by it. Next, he would put on his breastplate. It covered his chest and back, and connected to the belt. Then, he would put on his shoes. Roman soldier shoes were made from animal skins and the soles were studded with nails. Next, the soldier would pick up his shield, his helmet, and last, his sword.
- In our study of Ephesians today, Paul refers to us as soldiers of Christ with an enemy to resist. Just as the Roman soldiers had armor and weapons for their battle, so Paul said that God has given Christians weapons and armor to be used in battle.



A. Our Battle

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.”
(Ephesians 6:10-13)

- Today, as children of God, we are in the same situation as the Israelites found themselves when they were released from Egypt.
- They were free from Egypt's power and authority, but at the Red Sea, Pharaoh was coming to reclaim them.
- In the same way, we have been set free from Satan's power, but he continues to try and deceive us in an effort to control us again.

- He can never reclaim us and make us his own, but through deception he can influence our mind, will, and emotions, and ultimately control us.
- One of Satan's greatest desires is to deceive us from believing the truth of Romans 6, which when not believed, will keep us walking in the flesh.
- For when we are in the flesh, Satan is able to draw our attention away from God through the temptations of this world.
- Just as the Israelites couldn't protect themselves from the Egyptians, neither can we protect ourselves from Satan's deceptions, temptations, and accusations.
- Therefore, Paul writes, "Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God."
- Why is it so important that we be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might and put on the whole armor of God? He tells us why in the latter part of verse 11: "So that we can stand against the deceptive schemes of the Devil." And then Paul goes on to tell us that this battle is like no other that we have ever experienced.
- "We wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities and powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places." We are no match for this enemy; we can't even see what we are fighting, therefore we must be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might and put on the whole armor of God.
- It's interesting to note Paul's use of the word "stand" in this passage. In verse 11, he says, "put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to **stand** against the schemes of the devil." Again in verse 13 he says, "Therefore take unto you the whole armor of God that you may be able to **stand** in the evil day and having done all, to **stand**."
- In the Greek, the word "stand" has the idea that the ground has already been taken and we are merely to hold our ground. But how?
- In **I Peter 5:8, 9** Peter writes, "*Be sober, be vigilant, because your adversary, the devil, as a roaring lion walks about seeking whom he may devour: whom resist steadfast, or stand fast in the faith.*"
- So how do we stand our ground against the schemes of the devil? By resisting him steadfast in our faith that he is a defeated foe (**Colossians 2:15**).
- Look back at **Ephesians 6:13**. Paul does not command us to take up the armor and then go and conquer Satan.
- We don't have to conquer him because Jesus already did.

- All that is left for us to do is to rest in and believe the victory that has been won for us.
- We must by faith, hide in Jesus' victory for us.
- So, what is the armor That God has given us? It is the Lord Jesus Christ.
- As mentioned before, Jesus has already defeated Satan and his demons and they are under His authority, therefore we must hide ourselves in Christ. He is our armor that God has given to us.

B. Truth

“Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;” Ephesians 6:14

- It's interesting to read in **John 14:6** that Jesus said, “I am the way, the truth, and the life.” He does not say, “I will show you the truth, or teach you the truth,” but rather, “I am the truth.”
- Therefore, if we are to “gird our loins with truth,” we must put on the Lord Jesus Christ.
- The truth about Jesus, who He is, what He's done on our behalf, what He's given us, must be known and understood. We must have a deep, abiding relationship with Christ; we must know Him.
- Knowing Christ will be the belt that will hold all of the other pieces of the armor in place.
- Next comes “the breastplate of righteousness.” In **I Corinthians 1:30**, Paul tells us that Christ is our righteousness. Therefore, if we are to put on the breastplate of righteousness, we must “put on the new man” (**Ephesians 4:24**), the Lord Jesus Christ.

C. Peace

“And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;” Ephesians 6:15

- **I Corinthians 15:1-5** explains the “gospel.” It is the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Therefore, if our feet are to be shod with the gospel, we must put on the Lord Jesus Christ.
- We have peace with God, regardless of what people or Satan may say because the Lord Jesus died for our sins, and rose from the dead.

- We can stand firmly in God’s peace.
- Satan will work to get us to lose sight of the peace that we have with God and cause us to worry and panic about God’s love and acceptance of us.
- If Satan can get us to believe his lies and doubt God’s love and acceptance of us, then we will lose that calming and stabilizing peace in our hearts.

D. Faith

“Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.” Ephesians 6:16

- All throughout the Bible, we see God’s part, God’s part, then our little part of believing, and then again, God’s part. A good example is **Romans 15:13**: *“Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost.”* Notice that it is all God except the one phrase, “in believing” which is our little part.
- Back again to **Ephesians 6:16**; basically, Paul is saying to take the truth (Christ and the finished work of the cross), our standing before God (totally righteous and at peace), and become fully convinced of it (faith), and you will see it extinguish all of Satan’s fiery darts of doubt.

E. Salvation

“And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:” Ephesians 6:17

- Salvation is all about Jesus; therefore to put on the helmet of salvation is to put on the Lord Jesus Christ.
- Satan wants us to lose sight of Romans 6, that our flesh has been crucified and get us to begin trying to fight sin in our own strength, for he knows that we can’t win.
- However, by being totally convinced of what Jesus’ substitutionary death accomplished, and what our co-crucifixion with him accomplished, we are set to see daily victory over sin in our lives.
- For His death and our death with Him has taken care of the source of our sin, the flesh.

- It's amazing to see how verses 14-17 are so fully intertwined. First, the Holy Spirit girds us about with the TRUTH, which is Christ, the living Word of God (He places us in Christ). He reveals to us our position before God, totally righteous and at perfect peace; He convinces us of our complete salvation from sin, death, Satan, and punishment and then uses the written Word of God (Jesus Christ) in our lives to cause us to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord Jesus Christ.
- An interesting scripture to ponder here would be **Ephesians 4:20, 21**.

F. Praying Always

“Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;” Ephesians 6:18

- The Greek words for “always” (praying always), and “the Spirit” are the same word, denoting a fixed position or state. A possible paraphrase of this verse could be, “praying always, because of being in the state of dependence upon God, and in the state of being in the Spirit.”



- If the Spirit is controlling our lives, He will lead us into continual dependence upon God, a continual life of prayer (**I Thess. 5:17**).
- It might be good to ponder the following definition of prayer by John Darby: “Prayer is the great means by which we are kept in awareness of God’s presence. It is an expression of our weakness and confession of our need for Him.”

- Once again, we see that a part of the “armor of God,” prayer, is centered on Jesus Christ.

G. Praying for the Brothers and Sisters

“And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,” Ephesians 6:19

- Paul asked the Ephesians believers to pray for him, that God would impart to him the words and the boldness to continue proclaiming the gospel.

- It's interesting to note that at the time of writing this prayer request, Paul was in prison because of the gospel.

H. Tychicus

“But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:” Ephesians 6:21

- Tychicus may have taken this letter to the Ephesians. He was a man who had traveled with Paul and had helped in teaching God's Word to the churches that had been established.

“Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.” Ephesians 6:23

- Peace, love, and faith come only from God; as we walk in the Spirit we will experience it.

Fellowship
BIBLE CHURCH

3217 Middle Road
Winchester, Virginia 22602
540-662-7743
fbc@fbcva.org
www.fbcva.org