

## Ephesians

### Chapter 1

#### Vocabulary:

temporal: temporary, for a short time

seek: look for

grace: undeserved love

bondage: to be tied up or restrained

unite: bring together

reign: rule as king

commend: praises, acknowledge something good

#### A. God gives Spiritual blessings

While Paul was in prison in Rome, he wrote many letters to churches in different countries. One letter Paul wrote was to the Ephesians. Paul was an apostle. An apostle was a special messenger chosen to tell others about God. Paul was an apostle because God chose him to be one.

Paul reminds us that God has blessed us. He blesses us every day and in every way. God blesses us by giving us what is best for us. These blessings are not temporal things like money or power. These blessings come from heaven. We receive these blessings because we belong to Christ.

We accept Christ because God has chosen us to belong to Him. The bible says that God loved the world so much that He gave Jesus to die for us (John 3:16). But we never seek God without the Holy Spirit working in us. Because of Christ, we are God's adopted children. Through Christ, we receive God's grace. Before Christ, we were slaves to sin. Sin took control of our lives. We have been set free from the bondage of sin because Jesus died for our sins. Because of Christ, our sins are forgiven.

Read Ephesians 1: 1-8 (page 1235)

God's plan to use Christ as a sacrifice for us was made long ago. We only know part of God's total plan. We do know that God will unite Heaven and earth. Christ will reign forever as King. God has included us in His plan. If we have received Christ, we belong to God. God works out everything in our lives to fit His plan and purpose. Our true purpose is to bring glory to God, our Father.

We accept Christ into our lives after we hear the good news of the gospel. God completes our salvation by giving us the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit lets us know that we belong to God. We know that God will complete His plan for His children. We will be completely free from sin and death.

Read Ephesians 1:9-14

#### B. Paul prays and gives thanks

Paul tells the Ephesian believers that he is praying for them. The Ephesians have been showing their faith by loving their fellow believers. Paul commends the Ephesians and is thankful to God for them. Paul also prays that the believers will develop wisdom from the Holy Spirit. He wants them to know God more. This should be our prayer as well. We should pray for Godly wisdom. We should pray to know God better.

Paul also prays that the believers would have better understanding. He prays that they will understand God's plan for their lives. He prays that the believers will recognize God's rich and glorious blessings in their lives. Because we belong to Christ, we can have the power of His resurrection. We are not powerless against sin. God has given us His Holy Spirit so that we have the power of God living in us. This power is the power that raised Jesus from the dead. Jesus now reigns in heaven with all His power. Christ is above all earthy power of kings and other authority. God has given Christ rule over everything in heaven and earth. People who believe in Christ are called the church. The church is the body of Christ. So we are His hands and feet to everyone we meet.

Read Ephesians 1:15-23

#### Questions

1. What is an apostle?

2. How has God blessed us?

3. Why do we accept Christ?

4. What is our purpose?

5. Why does Paul commend the Ephesians?

6. What should we pray for?

## Ephesians

### Chapter 2

#### Vocabulary:

sinful nature: our natural sinful habits and thoughts

actions: what we do

restored: recovered, to have something again

brag: talk about how wonderful you are

Gentiles: non-Jews

covenant: strong promise

hostility: unfriendly, unkind actions

foundation: the base of a building

cornerstone: the starting stone of a building

#### A. God has given us new life through Christ

Before we became Christians, we lived under the control of Satan. He is in the world and works in the hearts of unbelievers. We followed our sinful nature in our behavior and thoughts. God was not pleased with our actions.

But God is merciful and loves us so much. He provided a new life for us in Christ. Jesus' death on the cross gives us life. Christ died for us once and for all time. Now, Christ's glory has been restored. We also receive God's glory because we belong to Christ. We are seated with Christ in His heavenly kingdom! Why? So that God's amazing grace can be seen.

It is through God's grace that we are saved. We are not saved by what we do. God gives Christ's salvation to us as a gift. If we had to work for our salvation, then we could brag about our own greatness. The good works that we do now as Christians are a response to God's great mercy to us.

Read Ephesians 2: 1-10 (page 1236)

#### B. God's new family

We are Gentile believers and are called the "uncircumcised". Circumcision was part of the covenant that God made with Abraham for all Jews. Before we became believers, we were not part of this special covenant. We were separated from God. But Jesus died for us and brought us to God.

Because of Jesus, Jews and Gentiles are no longer separated. Christ has broken down the wall of hostility between Jews and Gentiles. The hostility was put to death on the cross. Before Christ, Jews had to follow many rules and commands. When Jesus died on the cross, he fulfilled the requirements of the law. Jesus has created peace between Jews and Gentiles to make us one people.

Read Ephesians 2: 1-16

Jesus came and preached peace to both Jews and Gentiles. Both groups come to the Father through the power of the same Holy Spirit. Therefore, we are all one family with God as our Father. We are like a building whose foundation is the prophets and apostles. Jesus is the cornerstone around which everything else is built. Jesus holds the building together. We who are believers are also being built together. We are a house where God dwells through the Holy Spirit.

### Questions

1. What were we like before we became Christians?
2. How does God show mercy to us?
3. Why is it important that we are saved by God's grace?
4. Why are Jews and Gentiles no longer separated?
5. What does it mean that Jesus is the cornerstone?

## Ephesians

### Chapter 3

Vocabulary:

imprisoned: put into prison

apply: is for/is given to

dwells: lives

rooted and grounded: to be firmly established

#### A. Paul is the messenger to non-Jews

Paul was imprisoned in Rome for 2 years. He was imprisoned because the Jewish leaders said that he spoke against the Jewish faith. One thing that angered them was that Paul said that God was sending him to non-Jewish people. Paul wrote to the Ephesian church telling them about this. Paul calls this a mystery. The mystery which God revealed to Paul is that all the promises made to Israel also apply to non-Jews. That means that all the promises in the entire bible are meant for everyone, Jews and Gentiles alike. Jews and Gentiles are now one body in Christ.

Because of God's grace and power, Paul can tell this good news. It is not Paul who is important but rather it is God's wonderful message to the Gentiles that's important. This has always been God's plan but He has chosen to reveal it in His time. God's plan is to tell everyone in the world about His wonderful gospel. God plans to use the church to show God's wisdom to all ruler and authorities.

Because of Christ and by faith in Him, we can boldly go before God. We can go to God freely and without fear.

Read Acts 22:21-23 (page 1180), Ephesians 3: 1-13 (page 1236)

#### B. Paul prays for God's people

Paul bows in prayer before God the Father. He is the Creator God who has named every family in heaven and earth. Through God's glorious riches, we can be strong. God's Holy Spirit gives us His power that lives in us. Because the Holy Spirit dwells in us, so does Christ because we believe in Him. If Christ lives in us, we can be rooted and grounded in love. Then we can begin to understand Christ's love - how wide, long, deep, and high this love really is.

God gives us more than we can even imagine. He always gives us far more than we even ask for. God deserves all our praise and glory.

Read Ephesians 3: 14-21 (page 1237)

### Questions

1. Why was Paul imprisoned in Rome?
2. What is the mystery that Paul writes about?
3. What is God's plan?
4. From whom do we get God's power?

## Ephesians

### Chapter 4

#### Vocabulary:

apostle: one who is sent out (like a missionary)

build up: to encourage, to help someone grow in faith

wisdom: knowledge of what is right and good judgment in action

knowledge: the truth or facts

distinguish: to tell the difference between two things

moral: being truthful, having good behavior

focus: concentrate on

grieve: to have sorrow

#### A. The body of Christ is one

Paul continues in his letter to remind us of the life that God has chosen for us. We cannot earn our salvation but we are responsible for our actions. We should not be proud : our salvation is a gift from God. We should be patient and respond to one another in love. When we remember how much God has forgiven us, we can respond to others in love. We are one body in Christ. We have the same Holy Spirit living in us. We all have the same hope in Christ, the same Lord, the same faith. Father God is over everything.

Read Ephesians 4: 1-6 (page 1237)

We are one body in Christ. But, just as our human bodies have different parts, God has given us different gifts. Psalms 68 says that when Christ returned to heaven, He gave gifts to His people. Christ gave people gifts to be apostles, prophets, preachers, pastors, and teachers. These gifts are to build up the body of Christ. Because of these gifts, we will continue to grow in faith. We will receive all that God has for us.

As we grow in Christ, we will become firm in our faith. We will no longer act like children. We will not be tricked into believing something that is not of God. We will speak God's truth through Christ's love. Christ is the head of our body. He is the one who directs and guides us.

This chapter in Ephesians is very similar to chapter 12 in I Corinthians. In Corinthians, Paul shows us other gifts that God gives us through the Holy Spirit. God has given some people the ability to speak with wisdom ; to others, the ability to speak with knowledge. Other people have been given the gifts of faith, healing, and to perform miracles. God has also given the ability to distinguish between spirits. Some people have the ability to speak in unknown languages, while others can interpret these languages.

Read Ephesians 4: 7-16(page 1237 ), I Corinthians 12: 7-11(page 1213)

## B. Living as children of Light

Paul tells the Ephesians not to live like Gentiles. For us, we must not continue to live like unbelievers. Our thoughts must be different. Unbelievers don't know God. They don't understand God's purpose. Without God, people don't know what is right. They do not have an understanding of what is moral. Without God, people only think of themselves. They look for ways to please themselves.

We must turn away from our former life. Instead, we should change our thinking. We should focus on the life that God has chosen for us. We need to stop lying to one another. We must speak the truth in Christ's love. It is natural to get angry. But we must forgive and not hold on to our anger.

Read Ephesians 4: 17-27(page 1238)

We must be honorable in what we do. We should work hard so that we can help others. We need to think before we speak. When we speak, we should choose words that are helpful and encouraging. We should not grieve the Holy Spirit. How do we grieve the Holy Spirit? We grieve Him by holding on to anger, by being bitter, and by saying bad things about other people. Instead, we should be kind and forgiving to other people. Always remember how much God has forgiven you.

Read Ephesians 4: 28-32

## Questions

1. What does Paul remind us of in the beginning of Chapter 4?

2. How should believers behave towards one another? Why?

3. What are some gifts that the Holy Spirit gives?

4. What should we focus on?

5. How do we grieve the Holy Spirit?

## Ephesians

### Chapter 5

Vocabulary:

imitate: to follow someone as a model

immoral: against God's law

circumstances: all situations, anything that happens

visible: able to see

#### A. Living as children of Light.

When we were children, we imitated the behaviors of our parents. God is our Father, so we should imitate Him. We should follow the example of Christ. Jesus loved us so much that He died for us. He was obedient to God in everything.

We should honor God in all that we do. We should not be involved in anything immoral. We should be careful about what we say. In fact, we should give thanks in all circumstances. If someone continues to be immoral and greedy, they are not part of God's family. Don't be involved with people who continue to live against God.

Read Ephesians 5: 1-7 (page 1238)

At one time, we lived in darkness because we disobeyed God. But now we are in the light because of Christ. Jesus is the Light of the world. In the light, everything is clear and visible. We should walk in the light in obedience to God. Through prayer and the bible, we can learn what pleases God. Don't be involved in any behavior that does not honor God. Let God's light shine in your life.

Read Ephesians 5: 8-14

Be wise in your behavior and thinking. Each day has been given to us as a gift. Use every opportunity to show God's love. Don't let wine or strong drink control you. Instead, let the Holy Spirit control your life. Encourage everyone with scripture and hymns. Give thanks to God for everything.

## B. Wives and Husbands

All believers are part of God's family. But we are also called the Church which is Christ's body. Jesus Christ is the head of the Church. He leads and directs us. In a marriage, God has given the husband a specific job. This job is to lead his wife and family. Paul admonishes wives to submit and be under the control of their husbands. But husbands must lead their wives with love. In fact, this love should be like Christ's love. Jesus died for us. We become holy and perfect by Christ's blood. The husband should have the same love for his wife as he has for himself. He should care for his wife and family in the same way that Christ cares for the church. God has designed marriage between a husband and wife. Marriage is a picture of the relationship between Christ and the church. So, husbands must love their wives. But wives must also respect their husbands.

Read Ephesians 5: 22-33 (page 1239)

### Questions

1. How should we respond to God, our Father?
2. How can we honor God?
3. Jesus is the Light of the world. What does that mean for us?

4. Each day has been given to us as a gift. How should we respond?

5. What is a husband's responsibility in a marriage? What is marriage a picture of?

## Ephesians

### Chapter 6

Vocabulary:

ultimate: final

authority: person in command

placed: put

apply: to use

treat: how you behavior

analogy: to compare something to something else

armor: special clothing that help protect against injury

breastplate: a metal piece of armor that covered the chest

righteousness: right with God

#### A. Relationships

There are many relationships that occur throughout our lives. These relationships include marriage, parent/child, and boss/employee. Our behavior in each of these relationships should show God's love. In Exodus, God commands children to obey their parents. In his letter to the church in Ephesus, Paul reminds us to obey our parents because it's the right thing to do. God is the ultimate authority. But He has placed all of us under the authority of those He has chosen. However, those in authority must be loving in their leadership. It is important to train our children but we must do it in love.

Read Ephesians 6: 1-4 (page 1239), Colossians 3: 18-21(page 1247)

Paul also talks about the relationship between slaves and masters. This is not a relationship that exists now but we can apply it to the employee/boss relationship. No matter who we work for, we are really serving the Lord. We should work with all our heart since we are working for God. If you are in authority, you must treat your employees with love and respect.

Read Ephesians 6: 5-9 (page 1239), Colossians 3: 22-24 (page 1247)

#### B. God's Armor

How can we remain strong in the Lord? God has given us many things to strengthen us. Paul uses the analogy of someone going into battle. We battle against the world and Satan. When soldiers went into battle, they wore armor.

Paul advises us to put on the armor of God. First, there is the belt of truth and breastplate of righteousness. In the gospel of John, Jesus says that He is the truth. In I Corinthians, Paul writes that Jesus is our righteousness. So our focus should be on Jesus. On our feet, we should wear the "gospel of peace". In Isaiah, we can read:

"How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who publishes peace, who brings good news of happiness, who publishes salvation, who says to Zion, "Your God reigns." (Isaiah 52: 7)

This tells us that when we share the gospel, we become stronger in the Lord.

We must use the shield of faith to protect us from Satan's attacks. What is faith? Faith is believing in God's promises. Faith is trusting in what we cannot see. We become stronger in the Lord when we believe His promises for our lives. The helmet of salvation protects us. By accepting God's free gift of salvation, we can trust that God will never leave us or forsake us.

Finally, we need a weapon for our battle. Our weapon is the sword of the Holy Spirit which is God's word. Jesus used the scripture when Satan tried to tempt Him. We should follow His example.

Read Ephesians 6: 10-15, Hebrews 11:1 (page 1275)

### C. Prayer

At all times, we must pray through the power of the Holy Spirit. Pray in all situations. Pray for other believers. Paul asked the members of the Ephesian church to pray for him. We should remember to pray for our pastors and missionaries that they would be bold in their teaching.

Read Ephesians 6: 16-24 (page 1239)

### Questions

1. How should children respond to their parents? How should parents correct their children?

2. Who do we really work for? How does that effect how we should act?

3. Who are we in battle against?

4. Paul tells us to put on armor. How do each of these items relate to God or Jesus?

Belt of truth -

Breastplate of righteousness-

Gospel of peace-

Shield of faith-

Helmet of salvation-

Sword of the Holy Spirit-

5. When should we pray?