

# EPHESIANS

LIFE AS THE CHURCH

**EPHESIANS SERIES GUIDE**



# WHY HAVE A SERIES GUIDE?

This guide has taken a lot of time, effort, and energy to produce. Why go to all of this effort? Our hope is that this guide will serve to deepen our study of Ephesians in Community Groups, Discipleship Groups, and individually throughout the church.

## FOR COMUNITY GROUPS

Community Groups (CGs) meet together during the week throughout Fayetteville and surrounding areas to live life together, discuss the bible, and pray for each other. CGs will have the freedom to decide when and how they study that scripture together. Some CGs may choose to study a passage before it's preached while other CGs study it after.

What can be expected within the life of CGs is:

- Fellowship, meals, and 'living life together'
- Opening Prayer followed by reading an Esphesians passage aloud
- Reading and discussing selected questions on that passage (not all questions offered in the guide need to be discussed!)
- Prayer for each other, needs of the church body/leadership, city of Fayetteville, and the world





## FOR DISCIPLESHIP GROUPS

Discipleship Groups (DGs) are groups of 2 or 3 people who meet together for more focused community and study. A DG can use this Guide as a means of structuring their time together. An example of this for an hour-long DG may be:

- Open in Prayer
- 10-15 minutes of Relational Building/Accountability Check-in
- Prayer, Reading Ephesians passage aloud
- 20 minutes of discussing questions
- Current or upcoming prayer requests
- Closing Prayer

## FOR PERSONAL USE

Along with the (daily) Veritas Bible Reading Plan, someone may choose to use this as a means of weekly Bible study. Someone can do deeper study of the passage with a Study Bible or Cross-Reference Bible. Personal answers to the questions in the Guide can be written into a journal. Some people may choose to prepare for a CG or DG in this way!





# EPHESIANS 1:1-14

Read the text aloud

## QUICK REVIEW

Ephesians was a “circular letter,” a letter that would go first to the church at Ephesus and then would be sent to many other churches in different cities. In the book of Ephesians, Paul lays out what the gospel is, what the church is, why it matters, and how we are called to live as Christians.

## KEY THEMES

God has done all that he has done for us in Christ so that we might praise his glorious grace.

## STUDY

Spend a few moments by yourself taking a closer look while re-reading the passage. Look for keywords, phrases, repetition, and transitional words. Consider how you might explain the passage using your own words.





# EPHESIANS 1:1-14

## Discussion Questions

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- Begin by reading this passage in 3-4 different translations. What are some noticeable differences in the way this passage is translated? Are there any phrases that you find helpful or confusing?
- What are some repeating words and phrases? What is the tone of this introduction?
- What are the main themes of the letter Paul introduces in this passage?

### DOCTRINE

- What does this passage tell us about our identity in and relationship with Christ?
- Verse 3 speaks of the spiritual blessings from God, and then the passage goes on to list important doctrinal truths; what are some of these Spiritual Blessings?



# EPHESIANS 1:1-14

## Discussion Questions

### APPLICATION

- Take a few moments to meditate on the truths and gifts within this passage (maybe writing in a journal). Share with others any insights the Lord may have given you.
- How would you explain the goodness and benefits within this passage to someone who is not a believer or young in their faith?

### PRAYER

Pray to close your time of discussion and study. If you are studying with another person or group, ask them for any specific ways you can pray.





# EPHESIANS 1:15-23

Read the text aloud

## QUICK REVIEW

In the first 14 verses of Ephesians, Paul lists out all the blessings of salvation we have in Jesus. Here, he turns to how we experience those blessings in our hearts and lives.

## KEY THEMES

Hope, joy, and resurrection power are available for all of God's children who will ask him for it.

## STUDY

Spend a few moments by yourself taking a closer look while re-reading the passage. Look for keywords, phrases, repetition, and transitional words. Consider how you might explain the passage using your own words.





# EPHESIANS 1:15-23

## Discussion Questions

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- Read Ephesians 1:15-19; What phrases stick out to you? Who and what is Paul praying for here?
- In verses 18-19, Paul lists three results of “having the eyes of your hearts enlightened”.
  - Number them in your text.
  - What is the hope to which we have been called? Look ahead at Ephesians 2:5-7.
- What is the power that Paul is talking about in verses 18-20? How does this compare to the world’s idea of power?

### DOCTRINE

- Verse 18 speaks of an inheritance. Compare this with verses 11 and 14 (see ESV footnote for verse 14). Read Deuteronomy 32:8-9; Who is inheriting what?
- Notice the Trinity referenced by Paul in verse 17.
  - Make markings to distinguish our three-in-one God.
  - Who is the Spirit of wisdom that Paul is asking the Father of glory to grant us?
  - Read Isaiah 11: 1-2 and 1 Corinthians 2:12-16.
  - Why is it important for us to be granted this Spirit in terms of the rest of Paul’s prayer?





# EPHESIANS 1:15-23

## Discussion Questions

### APPLICATION

- Paul states that he does not cease to give thanks for the Ephesians in his prayers. What reason does he cite as his cause for thanksgiving?
  - Read John 13:34-35 and 1 John 2:7-11.
  - In light of this, how should we live in order to be a living testimony to the gospel of Christ?
- Who are some people in your life whose faith has caused you to 'not stop giving thanks for them and remembering them in your prayers'? (v16)

### PRAYER

Pray to close your time of discussion and study. If you are studying with another person or group, ask them for any specific ways you can pray.





# EPHESIANS 2:1-10

Read the text aloud

## QUICK REVIEW

In the first chapter of Ephesians, Paul has explained all the blessings we receive when God saves us in Jesus, and encourages us to walk in those blessings. Here, Paul again lays out the good news of the gospel.

## KEY THEMES

When we were dead in our sins, God made us alive and saved us completely by grace so that we would walk in the good works he has prepared for us.

## STUDY

Spend a few moments by yourself taking a closer look while re-reading the passage. Look for keywords, phrases, repetition, and transitional words. Consider how you might explain the passage using your own words.





# EPHESIANS 2:1-10

## Discussion Questions

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- Read Ephesians 2:1-10. Highlight or underline any repeated words or phrases.
  - How is God revealing His character? Consider listing some attributes of His found in this passage.
  - What connections can you make between this section of the letter and what we read in Chapter 1 (specifically 1:20-23)?
- Paul begins this section of his letter with “And you were dead...” How does this statement hit you when you first read it? What can a physically dead person do? What hope does a dead person have?

### DOCTRINE

- After reading verses 1-2, Revelation 7-11; what does this tell us about Satan as ‘the prince of the power of the air’? What do we know about who or what he rules over?
- What are all of the things listed within that passage that God will do for us through his love and mercy? What does this tell us about God and his relationship to us?





# EPHESIANS 2:1-10

## Discussion Questions

### APPLICATION

- In what ways does this passage create a posture of humility and gratitude in your heart? How would you explain this passage to a non-believer?
- Verse 10 says, 'we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works,' what are those good works? Read Ephesians 1:4, 4:24 and Col 1:10. How should this truth inform how we live?

### PRAYER

Pray to close your time of discussion and study. If you are studying with another person or group, ask them for any specific ways you can pray.





# EPHESIANS 2:11-22

Read the text aloud

## QUICK REVIEW

In the first 10 verses of chapter 2, Paul described what God has done to reconcile us to himself and give us life in Jesus. He described the “vertical” aspect of the gospel, the way it makes us right with God. Here, Paul will describe the “horizontal” aspect of the gospel, the way it reconciles us to one another.

## KEY THEMES

Jesus lived, died, and resurrected to create a new humanity in himself; and his life, death, and resurrection restores and reconciles us not just to God but to each other.

## STUDY

Spend a few moments by yourself taking a closer look while re-reading the passage. Look for keywords, phrases, repetition, and transitional words. Consider how you might explain the passage using your own words.





# EPHESIANS 2:11-22

## Discussion Questions

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- Who is Paul speaking to in this passage? What is a Gentile? How does this relate to us?
  - *Gentile Definition: a person who is not ethnically Jewish (descendant of Israel; a biological descendant of the 12 tribes)*
- Read verses 11 and 12; What is Paul having the Gentiles remember? How does this relate to verse 8?
- What are the various ways we have a 'dividing wall of hostility' in our lives? Who did Christ primarily reconcile us with? Who else did Christ reconcile us with?

### DOCTRINE

- "Circumcision" and "covenant promises" were very important to the Jews. What significance did circumcision hold for them? Read Genesis 17:9-14 and Acts 15:1.
- Read some of the covenant promises: 2 Samuel 7:8-17 and Jeremiah 31:31-35. In light of Ephesians 2:13, read Romans 2:25-29, and Colossians 2:6-14.
  - Consider the significance of this for the saints in Ephesus. What can we learn here?





# EPHESIANS 2:11-22

## Discussion Questions

### APPLICATION

- Paul writes that Christ “preached peace to those who were far off and to those who are near”. What does Paul mean by this?
  - What role do we play in the preaching of this message of peace?
- Looking back at the entirety of chapter 2, what are the common themes and messages? How should we respond to this? How does this cause us to worship God?

### PRAYER

Pray to close your time of discussion and study. If you are studying with another person or group, ask them for any specific ways you can pray.





# EPHESIANS 3:1-13

Read the text aloud

## QUICK REVIEW

In the first 2 chapters, Paul has been laying out the gospel, the good news of what God has done to reconcile us to himself and one another through Jesus. Here in chapter 3, he begins to show us why he has done this, and what role the church has in his plan to sum up everything in Jesus.

## KEY THEMES

God makes his wisdom, glory, and power known through the church, which means we should give our lives to building up the church and bringing others into the church.

## STUDY

Spend a few moments by yourself taking a closer look while re-reading the passage. Look for keywords, phrases, repetition, and transitional words. Consider how you might explain the passage using your own words.





# EPHESIANS 3:1-13

## Discussion Questions

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- Why does Paul describe himself as “a prisoner of Christ Jesus”?
  - What other ways does Paul describe himself in this section of text?
  - What is common about these titles?
- Paul begins this passage talking about the revelation and mystery made known to him. Read verse 6, what is that mystery? Why do you think this would have been such a revelation and mystery to the people of this time?

### DOCTRINE

- Read Ephesians 3:4-5. What was known of the promise of the coming Messiah before Jesus was incarnate?
  - Take a look at these verses:
    - Genesis 3:15 & 22:15-18
    - 2 Samuel 7:12-16
    - Isaiah 11:1-10
    - Ezekiel 34:20-24
- Read verses 8-10, what does this tell us about one of God’s intended purposes for his church?
  - This verse refers to ‘rulers and authorities in the heavenly places’; [watch this Bible Project video about the Divine Council](#); what are your thoughts from these Spiritual Beings?





# EPHESIANS 3:1-13

## Discussion Questions

### APPLICATION

- Paul describes himself as “the least of all the saints”, seeming to have been humbled by his understanding of the gift of God’s grace.
  - Read 1 Timothy 1:12-16 and 1 Corinthians 15:9-11.
    - How does this contrast with our cultural ideal of a self-made person and rugged individualism?
- Paul says we have “boldness and access” in Jesus Christ and through our faith in Him. How do we utilize this access? How do we approach boldly without being arrogant?

### PRAYER

Pray to close your time of discussion and study. If you are studying with another person or group, ask them for any specific ways you can pray.





# EPHESIANS 3:14-21

Read the text aloud

## QUICK REVIEW

Paul has explained the love of God in the gospel through the first 3 chapters of Ephesians, now he turns and prays that the Ephesians would experience God's love for them.

## KEY THEMES

The more we understand and experience God's great love for us in the gospel, the more we will pray.

## STUDY

Spend a few moments by yourself taking a closer look while re-reading the passage. Look for keywords, phrases, repetition, and transitional words. Consider how you might explain the passage using your own words.





# EPHESIANS 3:14-21

## Discussion Questions

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- How does this passage relate to the beginning of Chapter 3?
- Read this passage in multiple translations; what difference do you notice? Does this add to your understanding of the passage? If so, why?
- Read over verse 16.
  - Why does Paul start his prayer asking that they be strengthened by the Spirit?
  - What is our inner being? Who is able to strengthen our inner being?
  - Look at 2 Corinthians 4:16-18. Consider the importance of strengthening our inner man.

### DOCTRINE

- In verse 19, Paul writes about “surpassing knowledge” and “fullness”.
  - How do we know something that surpasses knowledge?
  - How are we filled with fullness?
  - Who does this work?
  - How does this relate to Ephesians 1:22-23 and Colossians 2:9-10?





# EPHESIANS 3:14-21

## Discussion Questions

### APPLICATION

- Going back to verse 16; Do we see any connection with what Jesus teaches his disciples in John 15:4-9?
- What are ways that God is glorified in the Church?

### PRAYER

Pray to close your time of discussion and study. If you are studying with another person or group, ask them for any specific ways you can pray.





# EPHESIANS 4:1-16

Read the text aloud

## QUICK REVIEW

Paul turns from the “indicatives” of the gospel, what God has done, to the “imperative,” what we are called to do in response. Here he describes how we live our lives in response to what God has done for us in the gospel.

## KEY THEMES

We live together as God’s reconciled people by walking in unity and using our gifts to build each other up into spiritual maturity.

## STUDY

Spend a few moments by yourself taking a closer look while re-reading the passage. Look for keywords, phrases, repetition, and transitional words. Consider how you might explain the passage using your own words.





# EPHESIANS 4:1-16

## Discussion Questions

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- Paul begins the passage with 'therefore.' Go back and reread 3:14-21, what reasons does it give for 'living worthy of the calling we have received'?
- Count how many times 'one' and 'all' are written in this passage. What are some of the ways we are 'one,' and what point is Paul trying to get across here?
- Reread verses 11-16, what is the purpose of having various apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers?

### DOCTRINE

- Read Psalm 68 in light of verses 7-10. What is Paul telling us about Christ's nature and one of his purposes in coming to earth, dying for our sins and rising again?
- What kind of picture does this passage paint of Spiritual Maturity and how we grow in it?



# EPHESIANS 4:1-16

## Discussion Questions

### APPLICATION

- This passage talks about our various gifts and abilities being used for the building up of the church. What does that look like on a practical day to day level? How can you identify and encourage someone else you've seen build up the church body recently?
- What is the difference between unity and uniformity? How are we as followers of Christ called to have unity while also having differing opinions and interpretations?

### PRAYER

Pray to close your time of discussion and study. If you are studying with another person or group, ask them for any specific ways you can pray.





# EPHESIANS 4:17-32

Read the text aloud

## QUICK REVIEW

Paul began chapter 4 by telling us how we are to live as Christians in light of what God has done for us in the gospel. We are to help each other grow into maturity as a church.

## KEY THEMES

We are called to walk in the new life that Jesus purchased for us by putting off the old and putting on the new.

## STUDY

Spend a few moments by yourself taking a closer look while re-reading the passage. Look for keywords, phrases, repetition, and transitional words. Consider how you might explain the passage using your own words.





# EPHESIANS 4:17-32

## Discussion Questions

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- Read this passage in multiple translations. What are some differences that you notice? What are the definitions of futility, ignorance, and callous? What does this tell us about a 'gentile' belief system and thought process?
  - Reread the beginning of chapter 2. What should be our heart posture toward someone who is a 'gentile'?
- Reread verses 20-32, what are some of the markers of our new life in Christ? What things should be put away?

### DOCTRINE

- Read Ephesians 1:11-14, 2:1-10; What does it mean to have new life in Christ? In this passage, how does Paul say we should live now that Christ's life is applied to us?





# EPHESIANS 4:17-32

## Discussion Questions

### APPLICATION

- Are there any of these commands listed that you don't always keep? Is there anything you need to repent of? Take a moment to pray and reflect.
- How can keeping these commands be a witness to people who don't follow Christ?

### PRAYER

Pray to close your time of discussion and study. If you are studying with another person or group, ask them for any specific ways you can pray.





# EPHESIANS 5:1-21

Read the text aloud

## QUICK REVIEW

Chapter 4 showed us that we are to walk in the new life Jesus has given us by being unified with one another, serving each other with our gifts, and helping each other to grow. Paul continues to describe what it looks like to live in the new life that Jesus has given us as we put off the old and put on the new.

## KEY THEMES

▶ We are called to imitate God as beloved children by walking in love, walking in the light, and walking in wisdom.

## STUDY

Spend a few moments by yourself taking a closer look while re-reading the passage. Look for keywords, phrases, repetition, and transitional words. Consider how you might explain the passage using your own words.





# EPHESIANS 5:1-21

## Discussion Questions

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- What are some repeated words and phrases within this passage? Why does that seem significant? How do these repetitions add to the meaning of the passage?
- What are some of the things Paul lists we should do? What are some of the things Paul lists we should not do?
- After rereading Ephesians 5:8-14, read Isaiah 51:17; Isaiah 52:1; Isaiah 60:1; Malachi 4:2; Romans 13:11. How do these verses add to your understanding and meaning of the passage?

### DOCTRINE

- What does this passage tell us about our identity as children of God?
- How can this passage give us a clearer understanding of biblical discernment?



# EPHESIANS 5:1-21

## Discussion Questions

### APPLICATION

- What happens to us when we forget our first identity as children of God/light? How can we bring our minds and hearts back to God in those moments?
- How can we approach this text as more than a simple list of dos and don'ts for our lives? What deeper message does this tell us about how we live in the world?

### PRAYER

Pray to close your time of discussion and study. If you are studying with another person or group, ask them for any specific ways you can pray.





# EPHESIANS 5:22-33

Read the text aloud

## QUICK REVIEW

Paul has been describing what it looks like to live the Christian life, the new life we have in Jesus. Here he turns specifically to marriage and shows us how the gospel should transform a marriage.

## KEY THEMES

Husbands and wives are called to reflect the gospel in their marriage.

## STUDY

Spend a few moments by yourself taking a closer look while re-reading the passage. Look for keywords, phrases, repetition, and transitional words. Consider how you might explain the passage using your own words.





# EPHESIANS 5:22-33

## Discussion Questions

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- To what is Paul comparing the relationship between husbands and wives? How should this frame how we think of married relationships?
- Verse 22 tells wives to submit to their husbands and verse 33 recaps the entire message and tells wives to respect their husbands. What does this tell us about the relationship between submission and respect?
- How are husbands called to love their wives? What characterizes this love?

### DOCTRINE

- This passage can be very controversial and harmful when taken out of context or weaponized. How can we have healthy perspectives of marriage, gender roles, and biblical community when looking at this passage in the whole of the biblical narrative?
- Rereading verse 25. What is our position in the relationship between Christ and his Church? What benefits and responsibilities do we have as the bride of Christ?





# EPHESIANS 5:22-33

## Discussion Questions

### APPLICATION

- Does this passage directly relate to non-marital mixed-gender relationships?
  - 1 Timothy 5:1-2 says “Do not rebuke an older man harshly, but exhort him as if he were your father. Treat younger men as brothers, older women as mothers, and younger women as sisters, with absolute purity.” What does this tell us about relationships with men/women who are not our spouses?
- How can this passage be an encouragement to some who may not marry or may not yet be married?

### PRAYER

Pray to close your time of discussion and study. If you are studying with another person or group, ask them for any specific ways you can pray.





# EPHESIANS 6:1-9

Read the text aloud

## QUICK REVIEW

Paul showed us how the gospel is meant to change our marriages. Here, he turns to parents and children, bosses and employees, to describe the change the gospel is meant to make in them.

## KEY THEMES

Paul shows us how the gospel changes our relationships at home and in the workplace.

## STUDY

Spend a few moments by yourself taking a closer look while re-reading the passage. Look for keywords, phrases, repetition, and transitional words. Consider how you might explain the passage using your own words.





# EPHESIANS 6:1-9

## Discussion Questions

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- What does this passage tell us about the relationship between children and parents?
- Slavery during this time was not based upon race, it was mainly a form of serving out financial debt. What does this passage tell us about the relationship between a slave for this time and a master?

### DOCTRINE

- Reread 5:22-33, who is being addressed in those passages? Who is being addressed in this passage? What does this tell us about the ordering of relationships within our lives?
- Verse 9 compares God to our master and us with a slave. Verses 5:1-2 compares us to beloved children of God. How do both of these realities give us a holistic picture of our relationship to God?



# EPHESIANS 6:1-9

## Discussion Questions

### APPLICATION

- Much of Ephesians relates to our relationship with God and other people. How does this inform how we treat, care for, and interact with people on a daily basis?

### PRAYER

Pray to close your time of discussion and study. If you are studying with another person or group, ask them for any specific ways you can pray.





# EPHESIANS 6:10-24

Read the text aloud

## QUICK REVIEW

Paul has been describing the change the gospel makes to every aspect of our lives. Here, as he closes out the letter, he closes by showing us the spiritual war we are in and how we are to do battle.

## KEY THEMES

We are called to stand firm in the middle of spiritual battle by resting in God's power, putting on God's armor, and trusting God through prayer.

## STUDY

Spend a few moments by yourself taking a closer look while re-reading the passage. Look for keywords, phrases, repetition, and transitional words. Consider how you might explain the passage using your own words.





# EPHESIANS 6:10-24

## Discussion Questions

### GENERAL OBSERVATIONS

- What is the stated purpose of putting on the full armor of God? What are the pieces of the armor of God?
- Who or what does it say that we are fighting against? Who does that mean we are not fighting against?

### DOCTRINE

- Watch this Bible Project video about [The Satan and Demons](#). What does this tell us about our enemy in this Spiritual Battle?





# EPHESIANS 6:10-24

## Discussion Questions

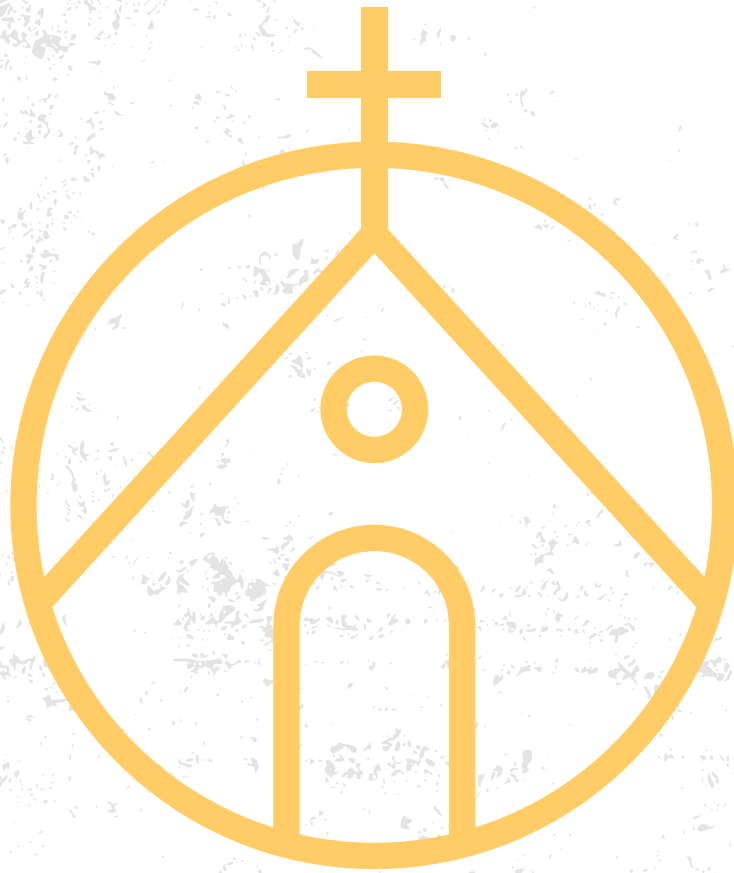
### APPLICATION

- This language is all battle related; do we often feel we are in a spiritual battle in daily life? Why or why not?
- What are some of your biggest takeaways from the Book of Ephesians?

### PRAYER

Pray to close your time of discussion and study. If you are studying with another person or group, ask them for any specific ways you can pray.





**V** **VERITAS CHURCH**

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