

new



EPHESIANS 4-6 . EV CHURCH . TERM THREE 2009



Term 3 Daily Reading Notes

Ephesians 4-6 (New)

Week	Passage	Title
1	Ephesians 1:1-14	New Purpose
2	Ephesians 2:1-10	New Life
3	Ephesians 4:1-6	One New People
4	Ephesians 4:4-16	New Growth
5	Ephesians 4:17-24	New Self
6	Ephesians 4:25-5:2	New Way
7	Ephesians 5:3-21	New Identity
8	Ephesians 5:21-33	New Marriages
9	Ephesians 6:1-9	New Relationships
10	Ephesians 6:10-24	New Battle

We want to encourage each other to be on mission to our non-Christian friends, family and contacts.

Who are you on mission to?

Make a list and start praying for them (and yourself).

Pray for 3 friends, once a week, for 1 minute (3-1-1).

List the name of your family/friends here.

Ephesians 4-6 guide

How to use this book:

1. Personal Reading

- Use this guide to help you read your Bible every day.
- Start by reading Ephesians in one go if you can, then slowly work your way through.
- Scribble down your thoughts and questions each day and remember to pray and ask God to speak to you by His Spirit, through His Word.

2. Growth Groups

- Take this guide with you to your growth group each week so you can write down prayer points that come from the study that week and prayer requests from the members of your group.
- Let your group know who you are on mission to.

3. Church

- Keep this guide with your Bible and bring it with you to church.
- Scribble down sermon notes in the space provided.

Appendices

At the back of the book there is also a bit more information on some of the issues that come up in Ephesians. You may find these helpful to look through during the series.

Introduction to the book of Ephesians

The book of Ephesians was written by the Apostle Paul from prison. Paul had some history with the Ephesian church, and yet this is the most impersonal and general of Paul's letters. The only explanation that makes sense of the impersonal character of the letter is that it was a circular letter. It seems that this letter would have been intended for the region in which the thriving harbour city of Ephesus functioned as the chief city, with copies being delivered to all the main cities of the region including Ephesus.

The city of Ephesus, and region beyond, was filled with magic and idol worship. The religion of Ephesus centred on Artemis, with whom the people of Ephesus believed themselves in covenant relationship. The followers of Artemis practised magic, and the temple of Artemis in Ephesus was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Many other gods were worshipped in the city and surrounding regions, including Aphrodite, Poseidon and Zeus. There were also some Jews there.

Paul brought the gospel to this city on his third missionary journey and large numbers of people came to Christ over the three years he was there. Great opposition rose to Paul and his gospel preaching as the gospel started to affect both the religion and economy of Ephesus, as people turned from idols and magic to worship the Lord Jesus.

Looking at the content of letter to the Ephesians, we see that it breaks clearly into two halves. The first three chapters contain the theology of what Christ has done for us for His glory, and the final three chapters show us how to respond in a manner worthy of what has been done for us. The turning point in the book is Ephesians 4:1, where Paul urges the Ephesians to live a life worthy of the calling they have received. The first three chapters outline the calling they have received (the existence they have been called to as Christians) and the last three chapters show how to live worthily of this calling.

The first half of Ephesians should leave us both humbled and exalted. It paints a picture that leaves us thinking that we are very small in a physical and spiritual world that is vast, and is the stage for God's great drama of bringing the whole of existence – heaven and earth – under the head of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The most shocking thing though, is the role that we play as the church. As we struggle along in this sinful world, our progress is watched by the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms. We who are united in Christ make known to the powers and authorities in the heavenly places the manifold wisdom of God. There is a great conflict between God and evil going on in our world. This conflict is resolved in Jesus, and we (the church in a fallen world) are God's chosen focus in its resolution.

Ephesians deals with the work of Christ on the cross from a much larger perspective than we often do. We not only see what Christ has done for us by His death on the cross, we see God's sovereign work in salvation – choosing individuals before the creation of the world, choosing to save on the basis of mercy and grace rather than good works, choosing to unify the entire created universe under His risen Son.

The second half of Ephesians shows us that an appropriate response to what Christ has done for us, and who this has made us to be, will encompass the entirety of our lives and will be lived out in Christian community. Again and again Paul calls Christians to be who they are; to live out the reality of whom we have been remade to be 'in Christ'. We have been united in Christ and so are to live out that unity in practice. We put off our old self and put on a new renewed self at conversion, and so we are to continually put off anything that is part of that old life. We are God's dearly loved and holy children and so are to live lives that imitate God and are holy.

As we read the book of Ephesians, it gives us deeply practical ways to live out the Christian life, but they are always rooted in the profound theological realities of who we are now in Christ.

Ephesians paints a picture of newness in Christ. We have a new life and a new purpose, as one unified new people who experience new growth together. We have put on a new self and are living a new way based on our new identity in Christ. It results in new marriages, new relationships and a new spiritual battle for which God has given us all the resources we need.

As we read the book of Ephesians, may God cause us more and more, in heart and action, to love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.

CHANDLER ON THE COAST

Matt Chandler will speak about how we are called to live gutsy
Christian lives centered on Jesus on the coast

Tickets \$10 - Online Rego - www.chandleronthecoast.com

7.30 pm @ Central Coast Grammar School

Richard Lounie Centre

Wednesday 26th August (one night only)

Week 1: Ephesians 1:1-14 – New Purpose

Day 1

Read Acts 19.

One of the stops on Paul's 'third missionary journey' was Ephesus, where Paul stayed for three years (Acts 19:8-10, 20:31).

1. From this chapter, what do we learn about the city of Ephesus?
2. How does Paul go about his ministry in Ephesus, and how do we see the power of the gospel at work in this chapter?
3. What is the response to the gospel in Ephesus, and what responses should we expect to the gospel today?

Thank God for the power of the gospel; it transforms people from all sorts of evil backgrounds to be followers of Christ, His church. Pray that we would continue to spread the gospel message even when there is opposition.

Day 2

Read Acts 20.

1. Paul reminds the Ephesians elders of his ministry amongst them so he can be a model for them to follow as they continue to lead the church of Ephesus. What does Paul's model teach us about what is central to good ministry and leadership?
2. What instructions does Paul give the Ephesian elders? What does this teach us about gospel ministry?

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3. How does Paul describe the church? How should this shape the way we treat God's people?

Pray that we would treat God's people, His church, as those who are so precious to God He has bought them with His own blood. Pray for those who preach and teach among us, that they would proclaim the whole will of God and guard the flock from false teachers and teachings.

Day 3

Read Ephesians 1:1-14.

1. Who is writing this letter, to whom is it written, and how are they both described? What do we learn from this?
2. Paul greets the church at Ephesus in verse 2 with a prayer showing what he wants for them. What is he praying for them even as he greets them?
3. Verse 3 says that we have been blessed in the "heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ". Looking over the whole passage, what blessings do we have if we are "in Christ"?

Thank God for all the incredible spiritual blessings you have received, bought at the cost of Jesus' blood.

Day 4

Read Ephesians 1:1-14.

1. Often we think about becoming a Christian from our perspective, but this passage is full of the work of God in our salvation as He brings about His will and purpose. What does it mean to be chosen, predestined, and sealed by God? (See verses 4-5, 11, 13)

2. What does it mean that the Holy Spirit is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance? (See appendix 1 for information on the 'us' and 'you' language in Ephesians.) What do deposits do, and in what way is the Spirit a deposit?
3. What do we learn about God's sovereignty from this passage? In what ways does this unsettle you, and in what ways does this give you confidence?

Praise God that in His glorious sovereign grace He has chosen us to be His, predestined us to be adopted as His children, has drawn us to Himself, sealed us with His Spirit and will keep us for glory.

Day 5

Read Ephesians 1:1-14.

1. In this passage God makes clear what His great eternal plan and purpose is. Verses 9-10 take us to the heart of it. (See appendix 2 for more information on the concept 'mystery'.) What is God's eternal purpose?
2. If this is God's eternal purpose, what should our purpose in life be?
3. The word 'praise' pops up a number of times in this passage (verse 3, 6, 12, 14). God is carrying out His eternal purpose for the praise of His glory. How does this give us insight into what the goal of our life should be?

Pray that we would be so captured and moved by the eternal purpose of God to bring all things under the rule of His Son and give Him all glory that our purpose in life would be to bring the greatest glory to God possible.

Prayer Points and Notes

Week 2: Ephesians 2:1-10 – New Life

Day 1

Read Ephesians 2:1-10.

1. From verse 1, what does it mean to be “dead in your transgressions and sins”? How does the word “dead” help us to understand our hopelessness and helplessness before Christ works to save us?
2. From verse 2, who is the ruler of the kingdom of the air, and how did we follow his ways? What does this teach us about Satan’s work in the world?
3. From verse 3, without Christ what is the position of humankind before God?

Thank God that when we were absolutely powerless to save ourselves, and lived under His just wrath, He worked through His Son to save us.

Day 2

Read Ephesians 2:1-10.

1. We were spiritually dead, but what has Christ done for us and why? (verses 4-7)
2. What is God’s great purpose in our salvation? What is God showing about Himself throughout ages to come? (verse 7)
3. What do you think would be an appropriate response to what God has done for us through Jesus?

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Thank God that He has made you alive in Christ, saved you, seated you with Christ now, and shown you great kindness. Pray that your life would be a worthy response of love and thankfulness for what Christ has done for you.

Day 3

Read Ephesians 2:1-10.

1. What is grace?
2. What part do we play in our salvation? Why can we not boast?
3. We are created anew in Christ. What have we been re-created for?

Give thanks that Christ has done it all from beginning to end, that our salvation is totally the result of God's overwhelming generosity and not our works.

Day 4

Read Ephesians 2:11-18.

1. "Formerly" what relationship did Jews and Gentiles have, and how did the Gentiles stand before God?
2. From verses 13-18, what has Christ achieved and how has He achieved it?

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3. There was no more hostile and distant relationship in the ancient world than the relationship of Jews and Gentiles. What miraculous thing has God created by the death of His Son?

Praise God that, in His divine power and wisdom, He has made a new humanity, the church, out of a hostile and divided humanity.

Day 5

Read Ephesians 2:19-21.

1. In speaking about who we are now in Christ, what contrast is drawn in verse 19?
2. How does the building picture help us understand who we are now in Christ?
3. What significance is there in the fact that the building is 'a holy temple'? How should this shape the way we think of and treat other Christians?

Pray that you would treat God's church, and all its members, as those who are joined together with you as a living, breathing temple in which God dwells by His Spirit.

Prayer Points and Notes

Week 3: Ephesians 4:1-6 – One New People

Day 1

Read Ephesians 3:10-11.

1. The gathering of God's people, the church, is more than just God's people coming together to encourage each other, listen to God's word, pray, sing etc. While these things are really important there is a far greater reality to our gathering. What does Ephesians 3:10-11 say is the purpose of the church?
2. If this is the case, how important is it that we gather together (church) every week as God's people? Why?

Pray that everyone at our church would grasp that in the gathering of God's people (church), God is displaying His glory and wisdom to the universe as the one who has united sinful, hostile human beings together in relationship to Him by Christ. Pray that you would consider church an absolute priority every week.

Day 2

Read Ephesians 4:1-6.

1. How does Paul describe himself and what does this teach us about his current situation?
2. What does Paul urge Christians to do?
3. Often when people talk about being 'called' they mean being called to a certain ministry or career or task, but when the Bible uses the word 'called' it means something very different (See Romans 1:6-7; 8:28

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and Ephesians 1:18, 4:4). What does it mean to be called, and what are Christians called to?

Give thanks that God has called us to belong to Christ Jesus and to have a glorious hope.

Day 3

Read Ephesians 4:1-6.

1. If chapters 1-3 describe what Christians have been called to, what is the calling that Christians have received?
2. What does it mean to live worthy of that calling?
3. The words “live a life worthy of the calling you have received” more literally could be translated “walk worthily of the calling to which you have been called”. How does the picture word “walk” help us when thinking about living worthily of our calling?

Pray that you would grasp how amazing what you have been called to in Christ is, and so seek to live the whole of your life as a worthy response.

Day 4

Read Ephesians 4:1-6.

1. Verses 1-3 fill out what it means to live a life worthy of our calling. What sort of life do these verses describe?

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2. In chapter 3, Paul is describing what God has done for His people. Read Ephesians 3:14-22. What has God done for us, and what is the logical practical outcome for Christians? (3:1-6)
3. What is humility, what is gentleness and what does it mean to 'bear with someone in love'?
4. With whom in particular do you need to practice humility, gentleness, patience, love etc?

Ask for forgiveness for times when you have been proud, harsh, impatient and unloving.

Day 5

Read Ephesians 4:1-6.

1. Read verses 3-4. Where does Christian unity come from? What does this mean Christians should do?
2. In what ways do Christians have oneness? What should this mean for the Christian life?
3. How do you plan to grow in unity with your brothers and sisters at EV?

Pray that you would live out the unity that you have in Christ with your Christian brothers and sisters at EV.

Prayer Points and Notes

Week 4: Ephesians 4:4-16 – New Growth

Day 1

Read Ephesians 4:4-16.

1. In verse 7, what is the grace that has been given, and what is it given to the members of a church for?
2. In what ways is there unity and diversity in the church?
3. What opportunities are there for you to serve at EV using your gifts?

Pray that you would use the grace Christ has given you to perform your distinctive function in serving the church.

Day 2

Read Ephesians 4:4-16.

1. What is the scene pictured in verse 8? Who are Jesus' captives, and what gifts has He given?
2. In what way has Jesus descended and ascended?
3. What does it mean that Jesus fills the whole universe?

Praise Jesus for His glorious victory over our spiritual enemies on the cross, and for the gifts He has poured out upon us for the good of the church.

Day 3

Read Ephesians 4:4-16.

1. Verse 11 speaks of the gifts that the ascendant Christ has poured out on His people. What is similar about all the gifts in verse 11?
2. What is the purpose of these gifts?
3. In the church, who does the work?
4. What is the goal of the works of service that are done?

Pray that you would be equipped by God's word for works of service, and that you would faithfully do this work for the building up and maturing of the church.

Day 4

Read Ephesians 4:4-16.

1. From verse 13, what place does knowledge have in maturity?
2. What does it mean to have the whole measure of the fullness of Christ?
3. From verse 14, how does maturity help us in the Christian life?
4. What sort of teachings are around in the wider Church at the moment that could blow people off course?

Pray that God would so mature you that you will not be blown off course by false teaching, but will be strong and stable in your faith.

Day 5

Read Ephesians 4:4-16.

1. What does it mean that Christ is the head if we are the body? How should this affect our behaviour?
2. Verse 15 says that speaking the truth in love causes us to grow up into Christ. What does it mean to speak the truth in love? Do you find it harder to speak truthfully or to speak lovingly?
3. In verse 16 the church is pictured as the body of Christ. What causes it to grow and be built up? What part are you playing in this?
4. What place does love have in Christian maturity?

Pray that you would speak the truth in love as you faithfully do the work of building the church in love.

Prayer Points and Notes

Week 5: Ephesians 4:17-24 – New Self

Day 1

Read Ephesians 4:17-19.

1. What words does Paul use to describe the mind of the unconverted Gentile in these verses?
2. What is the cause of this ignorance, darkened understanding and futile thinking? What does it mean for their relationship with God?
3. What relationship is there between our thinking and our living?

Thank God that He has opened our minds to the truth of Christ and so driven away ignorance and given us true spiritual understanding. Pray that our minds would be continually renewed by the truth of the Scriptures, and so our lives would be remolded to be like Christ.

Day 2

Read Romans 1:18-25.

1. What similarities can you see between this passage and Ephesians 4:17-19?
2. Why are people without excuse for their suppression of the truth?
3. How should humans have responded to God, and what have they done instead?

4. How do we see God's wrath at work today? (verse 18 and 24)

Ask for forgiveness for all the times you have worshipped and served created things rather than the creator. Pray that God would enable you to worship, serve and thank God as you should.

Day 3

Read Ephesians 4:17-19.

1. What have those who are without Christ lost sensitivity to, and what is the result?
2. What do we learn about sin if indulging in "every kind of impurity" only leads to "a continual lust for more"?
3. What is there in your life that you know to indulge in would 'feel good' (at least at the time) but that you must struggle against?

Give thanks that Jesus saves us from a calloused conscience and greed for impurity. Pray that Jesus would enable you to struggle against and have victory over sin in your life.

Day 4

Read Ephesians 4:20-24.

1. What is the truth that they were taught when they came to know Christ? What does this teach us about sharing the gospel and discipling new Christians? (see also Colossians 2:6-7)

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2. What three things does a Christian do at conversion? (one in verse 23, one in verse 24, and one in verse 25)
3. What is the underlying reason for the Christian's new way of life?

Pray that when we share the gospel we make clear to people that coming to Christ is making Him Lord, which means taking off the old corrupted self (like filthy clothes) and putting on the new recreated self.

Day 5

Read Ephesians 4:20-24.

1. The "old self" is literally the 'old man' and the "new self" the 'new man'. The new man has links to the one new man that Christ has joined Jew and Gentile to be (Ephesians 3:15). How are the old man and the new man described here?
2. What does this teach us about what occurs when someone becomes a Christian?
3. In verse 25 Paul is going to begin a list of things to throw off. What is his reasoning as to why we are to throw off these things?

Pray that you would now daily throw off all behaviour which belonged to your old life because you threw off your old self once and for all at your conversion.

Prayer Points and Notes

Week 6: Ephesians 4:25-5:2 – New Way

Day 1

Read Ephesians 4:25-28.

1. Verse 25 begins with the word “therefore”. What is the reason for putting off sinful practices?
2. What are we to put off in the area of our speech? (Ephesians 4:25, 29; 5:4)
3. Is it possible to be angry and not sin? What are we to do when we are angry and why?

Pray that as new people we would be putting off sinful practices, that our speech would be becoming truthful and pure, and our anger would be righteous and not lead to sin.

Day 2

Read Ephesians 4:25-30.

1. Verse 28 commands Christians not to steal. However, being a “new man” means greater transformation. What are thieves to do when they come to Christ?
2. What is unwholesome talk? What are some examples of types of unwholesome talk?
3. What two principles in verse 29 help us work out whether we should say the thing that is in our head?

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4. What is talk that “builds others up according to their needs”? What are some examples?

Pray that your mouth would bear witness to the transformation that is occurring within you. Pray that you would only speak what is helpful for building people up according to their needs, and what benefits those who hear you.

Day 3

Read Ephesians 4:29-32.

1. In verse 32, what sort of behaviour are we to get rid of, and how are we to live instead?
2. Define both kindness and compassion. How has God shown both of these to you?
3. When do you find it hard to forgive others? How does verse 32 help you?

Pray that your life would be marked by kindness, compassion and forgiveness.

Day 4

Read Ephesians 4:29-32.

1. What does the fact that the Holy Spirit can be grieved remind us about Him?
2. How can we grieve the Holy Spirit? (Look at the verses around this

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command.)

3. If we are sealed by the Holy Spirit for the day of redemption, what confidence should we have even as we seek not to grieve the Holy Spirit?

Give thanks that our final salvation is sure because God has sealed us with His Spirit. Pray that you would not grieve the Holy Spirit by ungodly living.

Day 5

Read Ephesians 5:1-2

1. As children, who are we to imitate?
2. What will this imitation look like? Whose example are we following?
3. What example did Christ set, and how was it received by His Father?
4. To whom, and in what way, can you better show Christ-like love?

Pray that you would be an imitator of Your heavenly Father, especially in imitating the love of Christ.

Prayer Points and Notes

Week 7: Ephesians 5:3-21 – New Identity

Day 1

Read Ephesians 5:1-8.

1. In what ways are Christians described in verses 1-8?
2. Therefore, from these verses, what things should we do and what things should we not do?
3. Verses 3 and 4 focus on the areas of sexual sin and sins of speech. What is said about each area, and what do you need to repent of?

Ask for forgiveness for any sins for which you need to repent. Pray that you would live as God's dearly loved child, God's holy person, and as a child of the light.

Day 2

Read Ephesians 5:3-7.

1. Why might we be tempted to think sin and disobedience is unimportant?
2. Verses 5-6 are not a description of a Christian who falls into sin, but rather of those who have given themselves over to this sort of behaviour. The phrase "those who are disobedient" is more literally "sons of disobedience". With this in mind, how do these verses warn the Christian against taking sin lightly?

Pray that you might take holiness seriously.

Day 3

Read Ephesians 5:8-14.

1. What does it mean that we were darkness and are now light? How are we different?
2. We are light, and so to live as children of the light (be in practice what we are in reality). How are we to do this?
3. How are Christians to relate to the non-Christian world around them?
4. From verses 13-14, what is the hoped for outcome of a life that shines with the light of Christ?

Pray that we might live as children of the light. Pray that “sons of disobedience” that you know would turn to the light.

Day 4

Read Ephesians 5:15-21.

1. What sort of days do we live in? How can we make the most of this time?
2. How can we live the wise rather than the foolish life?
3. Verses 19-21 show how the Spirit-filled life will be lived out in practice. What marks out someone who is filled with the Spirit?
4. How does the image of being filled with the Spirit instead of alcohol help us to understand what it means to be filled with the Spirit?

Pray that you would be increasingly under the influence of the Spirit, and so be speaking God's word to one another, adoring God in song, living with a heart of thankfulness to God and submitting to one another.

Day 5

Read Ephesians 5:15-21.

1. What is the content of psalms, hymns and spiritual songs, and who are we speaking them to? How does this help us to understand one dimension of singing in church? What are we also doing as we sing? (verse 19)
2. Colossians 3:16 is a parallel passage. What does this teach us about how the word of Christ dwells in us and among us, and what we are doing when we sing in church?
3. Why do you think thankfulness is a mark of the Spirit-filled life? (See Romans 1:21)
4. The next chapter will fill out what it means to live a life of submission to one another. Does it surprise you that submission is the mark of a Spirit-filled life? Why/why not?

Pray that God would fill you with His Spirit so that you would live wisely and rightly for Him.

Prayer Points and Notes

Week 8: Ephesians 5:21-33 – New Marriages

Day 1

Read Genesis 2:18-25.

1. What do we learn here about the relationship between men and women?
2. What is God's design for marriage and families?
3. How has our society departed from God's design? What has gone wrong?

Pray that the marriages of our church would be in line with what God intended, and would bring Him great glory by their oneness.

Day 2

Read Ephesians 5:21-24.

Paul has been speaking of what it means to be filled with the Spirit, and part of that Spirit-filled life is submission.

1. What is submission? What does it mean that we are all to "...submit to one another out of reverence for Christ..."? (v21)
2. What does it mean for wives to submit to their husbands? Why are wives to submit to their husbands, and what example are they given? (v22-24)

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3. Think of a practical example of where a wife might need to submit to her husband, and how they would graciously go about doing that.

Pray that the wives of our church would be women who graciously and willingly submit to their husbands as the church submits to Christ.

Day 3

Read Ephesians 5:21-27.

1. What are husbands commanded to do in verse 25?
2. How does Christ show His love for the church? What amazing thing has He achieved for us? (v25-27)
3. Following Christ's example, what do you think it means for a husband to be "...the head of the wife...", and in practical terms, how could a husband go about doing this?

Pray that the husbands of our church would be men who lovingly and sacrificially lead their wives into all holiness.

Day 4

Read Ephesians 5:28-33.

1. How do verses 28-30 go about spurring husbands on to love their wives? What does it show us about the relationship between Christ and the church? (v28-30)
2. How does the quote from Genesis help us to understand the "...profound mystery..." of Christ and the church? (v31-32)

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3. If marriage is a picture of the relationship between Christ and His church, what strikes you about the relationship we have with Christ, and why?

Give thanks for the oneness and intimacy that we have with Christ, and for His ultimate act of sacrificial love that makes it possible for us to be pure and blameless before the Holy God.

Day 5

Read Revelation 19:1-10.

1. When is the wedding of the Lamb going to take place? (See also Revelation 21:1-4)
2. Who is the Lamb, who is His Bride, and what is she wearing? Why is this amazing?
3. While in one sense we are the bride of Christ now, what awaits us in the future? How does the imagery of the wedding and wedding party capture some of what our future holds?

Give thanks that one day there will be the final consummation of our relationship with Jesus: where Jesus brings in the new creation, deals with sin, and the eternal celebration begins as we enter an experience of perfect relationship with Christ.

Prayer Points and Notes

Week 9: Ephesians 6:1-9 – New Relationships

Day 1

Read Ephesians 6:1-3.

1. From verse 1, how are children to respond to their parents?
2. Paul picks up one of the ten commandments (Exodus 20:12; Deuteronomy 5:16) and makes it a command for Christians, with an adjusted promise. In what way is this promise true?
3. While we might cease to be children, and so cease to obey our parents, we are still to honour them. What does it mean to honour your parents when you are a child? What does it mean when you are older?

Pray that you might honour your parents, and if you are a parent, that your children might honour you.

Day 2

Read Ephesians 6:4.

1. Though this verse applies to both mothers and fathers, why do you think fathers are particularly singled out in this verse?
2. What does it mean to exasperate your children, and why is it wrong? What might make a child angry?

3. The word 'training' could also be translated 'discipline' and has the sense of both punishment and teaching. What is to be the focus of Christian parenting?

Pray for the parents of our church, that they would bring our children up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

Day 3

Read Ephesians 6:5-8.

It is important that we don't immediately equate the slave-master relationship with our modern day employer-employee relationship. There are some major differences. Slaves were bonded servants, and often became slaves because they were bankrupt. The authority and obedience of a master-slave relationship generally goes a long way beyond the present day work contract.

It is also important not to think of 1st century slavery as being the same as the forced slavery of the 19th century African-American slave trade. Slavery in the ancient world was not always the wicked oppression and injustice that we associate with slavery. Often slavery was how the ancient world dealt with bankruptcy.

1. If you were a slave, when might you be tempted not to work hard or to be disobedient? What commands does Paul give to Christian slaves?
2. What reasons for obedience does Paul give to motivate Christian slaves to obey their masters?
3. We have obligations and responsibilities to people, including at our daily work. How might these verses shape your attitude to those you have an obligation to?

Pray that we might be those who carry out our obligations and

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responsibilities to people faithfully, and work hard for them as serving the Lord.

Day 4

Read Ephesians 6:9.

1. Why might a master think he can get away with mistreating his servant?
2. How should verse 9 shape the attitude of both slave and master?
3. We have authority over people in some areas of daily life, including at our work. How might these verses shape your attitude to those you have authority over?

Pray that you might exercise any authority that you may have over people mindful that God is your master, and so might treat people under your authority well.

Day 5

Read Colossians 3:18-25.

The books of Colossians and Ephesians mirror each other's teaching in many places.

1. What do we learn from this passage about how each member of a Christian household is to behave?
2. What should be our overarching concern in all our relationships?

Pray that the family relationships of our church might be pleasing to the Lord, fitting before Him, and that all we do would be for His glory.

Prayer Points and Notes

Week 10: Ephesians 6:10-24 – New Battle

Day 1

Read Ephesians 6:10-12.

1. Who is our enemy, how are they described, and what do you learn from this?
2. Often we think only about the material realities about us. How does this passage help us to see beyond the material?
3. What sort of tactics does our enemy use? (See also John 8:42-47 and Ephesians 2:1-2.) How does knowing this about our enemy help us to fight him?

Thank Jesus that He has defeated Satan on the cross and so freed us from his rule. Pray that you might now live in resistance to his schemes and lies.

Day 2

Read Ephesians 6:10-18.

1. While Satan has been defeated on the cross, Jesus still allows Satan's activity in the world and in the lives of Christians. The Christian life is described here as a struggle. How does the word 'struggle' help us to understand the Christian life?
2. What are Christians to do in the face of such an enemy? (verse 13-14)

3. What is the aim of the Christian in this struggle? (verse 13)

Pray Christ would enable you to struggle against Satan and his schemes, to put on the full armour of God and stand firm, so that at the end you will be standing.

Day 3

Read Ephesians 6:10-18.

1. How can Christians be sure they will not be overcome by the Devil and his minions?
2. What armour has God provided for us? How do the various pieces help us in our struggle?
3. Prayer is the final weapon in our struggle. If God's Word is the sword of the Spirit, what does it mean to pray "in the Spirit"? What should shape our prayers?

Thank God for the armour that He has provided to keep us safe. Pray that we would stand firm in this armour, and take out the gospel in great prayerfulness.

Day 4

Read Ephesians 6:19-20.

1. What does Paul ask the Ephesians to pray for him? (See appendix 2 for more information on the concept 'mystery'.) What does this show about his desires and concerns?

2. Our prayers show what we desire the most. What do your prayers show about what you most deeply desire?
3. If Paul asks for prayer to fearlessly declare the gospel, what does it show was a temptation for him? How does this encourage us?

Pray that your desires might more and more be brought in line with God's desire, and so your passion for the gospel to be proclaimed would be seen in your life and in your prayers.

Day 5

Read Ephesians 6:21-24.

1. What do we know about Tychicus from the New Testament? (See also Acts 20:4; Colossians 4:7; Titus 3:12.) How is he a model for us? Why is Paul sending Tychicus to Ephesus?
2. What does Paul want and pray for the Ephesians? (verses 23-24) Is this your desire for yourself and others?
3. Read 1 Timothy 1:1-4 and Revelation 2:1-7. What becomes of the church of Ephesus in the years after receiving this letter? How is this a warning to us?

Pray that you would love the Lord Jesus with an undying love.

Prayer Points and Notes

Appendices

Appendix 1: The 'Us' and 'You' language in Ephesians

In the early chapters of Ephesians, you might have noticed that Paul uses the language of 'us' and 'you' a few times. Often, when he does this he is referring to the Jews as "us" and the Gentiles as "you" (e.g. Ephesians 1:13; 2:1). This language highlights the inclusion of the Gentiles in all the blessings of salvation, and the union of Jew and Gentile as one new man in Christ.

Appendix 2: The 'Mystery' of Ephesians

In Ephesians, Paul uses the word 'mystery' a number of times (Ephesians 1:9; 3:3-9 and 6:19). Often today, we use the word mystery to talk about something mysterious and hard to understand, or something that has no answer, but this isn't how Paul uses the word.

In writings of the time the word 'mystery' meant something hidden or secret. This is the same in Paul's writing. It is a secret that cannot be known unless it is revealed, but that can be known if it is revealed. And Paul makes clear that the mystery he is talking about has now been revealed.

In Ephesians the mystery is the hidden plan of God, which until the coming of Christ was secret and hidden, but has now been revealed to us. The mystery is the gospel plan: the work of Christ in saving and unifying Jew and Gentile through His death and resurrection, and bringing about His sovereign rule.

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