

# Unfolding the Truth

– ONE BOOK AT A TIME –

Ephesians

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Leader's Guide by Mona Selden

## *Unfolding the Truth: Ephesians* Leader's Guide

*Unfolding the Truth: Ephesians* is unique from most Bible Studies, as is the Leader's Guide.

- Its **purpose** is to help you as a leader feel equipped to lead.
- It is **designed** to assist you as you plan for your time together as a group.
- You will need to **pick and choose** as you see fit from the study and the Leader's Guide.

Throughout the study guide, you will see words in **bold-faced** type, followed by a page number, to help you locate the question being referenced.

The activities suggested in this guide should be geared toward your group.

- **Charts, lists, and discussions** can be varied from week to week:
  - By gathering in large or small groups
  - By using handouts
  - By using a whiteboard
- **Scripture** can be read in a variety of ways:
  - In unison
  - By taking turns
  - By one reader

As you prepare to lead, ask the Holy Spirit to guide you so that you are able to meet the needs of your group.

Leading a Bible Study takes time and energy, as well as a personal investment in the women who are in your group. Thank you for being a willing vessel God can use to cause women's roots to go DEEPER STILL.

On behalf of the Deeper Still Team,

Mona Selden

## Introductory Lesson

- Welcome participants as they arrive.
- Begin with the “housekeeping” issues: registrations and books, location of restrooms, and announcements.
- Start with introductions and the suggested icebreaker below.
  - The suggested icebreaker is tied to the title of the study. Give the participants 90 seconds to brainstorm all the things that can be folded.
- Open in prayer.
- Ask participants to share why they chose to do this study, or what about this study appealed to them.
- Discuss what participants hope to learn from this study.
- Share with the group the structure of the study and what to expect over the next six weeks.
- Have participants share what, if anything, is familiar to them about Ephesians. Be aware that some might not have any background.
- Ask participants if they have any verses from Ephesians memorized that they would like to share?
- What do they know about Paul? This will be discussed in greater detail in Lesson 1.
- Read Ephesians 1-6 out loud together.

## Week 1

- Welcome participants as they arrive.
- Start with the suggested icebreaker below.
  - Ask participants to share a memorable birthday party.
- Open in prayer.
- Read Ephesians 1 out loud together.
- Go through Ephesians 1 discussing the markings for God and Jesus Christ, including the pronouns. There are many pronouns and it can be hard to distinguish who is being talked about. This could lead to a great discussion; keep an eye on the clock so you have time for the rest of the lesson.

### Lesson 1: Ephesians 1:1-6

- It is helpful to identify, and get information about the writer and who he is writing to.
  - How does Paul describe himself?
  - Who is Paul writing to?
    - The letter is written to the Ephesians, Gentile believers in Ephesus.
- Discuss what your group already knows about **Paul** (p. 24), including his **conversion** as seen in Acts 9 (p. 25). Use the information below as needed to supplement what students already know.
  - We first meet Paul when he is known as Saul in Acts 7:58-8:1 at the stoning of Stephen.
  - In Acts 8:3, we see that Saul begins to ravage the church.
  - In Acts 9:1-27
    - Saul is still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord.
    - He is going to Damascus looking for any belonging to the Way to bring them bound to Jerusalem.
    - Along the way, he is blinded by a great light and God speaks to him.
    - He is sent to Ananias, whom God has appointed to minister to Paul and to be used to give Saul his sight back.
    - Saul is then in the company of the disciples and they are amazed, saying, “Is this not he who in Jerusalem destroyed those who called on this name...”
    - In verse 26 we see that when he came to Jerusalem, the disciples were all afraid of him, but in verse 27, Barnabas takes him to the disciples and tells what has happened to him.
    - In Acts 11, we have the beginning of Paul’s ministry.
    - In Acts 13:9 Saul begins to be known as Paul.
- Verses 3-6 of Ephesians 1 are full of truths about what God has done for us.
  - Discuss what Paul says we have been **blessed with** (p. 25).
    - Bible Knowledge Commentary: This phrase, *heavenly places*, is used five times in Ephesians. Paul wants to make a distinction between what is earthly and what is heavenly, spiritual and material, eternal and temporal.
- As you discuss how Paul is using the phrase **According to** (p. 25) and what he is saying about our adoption, keep in mind that the word *predestined* may cause a discussion that is difficult to handle in your setting. Keep your participants focused on what is said in the text.

- Definition of predestined:
  - Proorizo (pro-or-id-zo)<sup>1</sup>
    - Complete Word Study Dictionary: from pro (beforehand) and horizo (to determine); to determine or decree beforehand.
    - Bible Knowledge Commentary: the emphasis of predestination is their being adopted as full-fledged sons of God through Jesus Christ.
    - Predestination never refers to the unsaved. God does not predestine anyone to be lost.
- Discuss the **cross-references** (p. 27), looking to see how they support the verses in Ephesians.
  - Cross-references allow us to compare Scripture with other Scripture to get a better understanding of what is being said.
  - Some questions to ask: What extra information does this give to the verse in Ephesians? Does this verse support what is being said in the verse in Ephesians? How does this verse provide a better understanding of the verse in Ephesians?
- Ask participants to share what **promises** (p. 28) stood out to them and how they personalized these verses.
- Discuss the phrase **freely bestowed** (p. 29) and the implications of God freely bestowing His grace on us.
- Discuss what is found in **Romans 8 (Deeper Still question p. 29)** that is connected to Ephesians 1:1-6.

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<sup>1</sup>“Proorizo” is the English transliteration of the Greek word for predestined. Pronunciation is added in parenthesis. Each word definition in this guide follows this format.

## Lesson 2: Ephesians 1:7-14

- Make a list of all the ***in Him and in Christ*** phrases (p. 30). As you list them, discuss all that has been accomplished in Christ.
- Ephesians 1:7 says that in Him we have redemption through Christ's blood, and the forgiveness of our trespasses. Connect that with your discussion of **1 John 5:20 and Romans 10:9**, keep in mind that some in your group may not have confessed with their mouth that Jesus is Lord.
  - Definition of redemption:
    - Apolutrosis (ap-ol-oo-tro-sis)
    - Complete Word Study Dictionary: From apo (from) and lutroo (to redeem). The recalling of captives (sinners) from captivity (sin) through the payment of a ransom for them; deliverance on account of the ransom paid.
- **According to** is a phrase that is used throughout Ephesians. Ask your participants to share what slowing down and focusing on this phrase in Ephesians 1:7-11 **revealed to them** (p. 34) about God and what He has given to us.
- Talk about how **Philippians 4:19** (p. 34) builds on our understanding of the riches of God's grace. How is it linked to Ephesians 1:7?
- We see great truths about the Holy Spirit in Ephesians 1:13-14.
  - Verse 13 says that we are **sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise** (p. 35). Discuss what this means and what difference that truth should make in our lives.
    - Definition of sealed:
      - Sphragizo (sfrag-id-zo)
      - Complete Word Study Dictionary: to seal; to set a seal or mark upon a thing as a token of its authenticity or approvedness.
      - Bible Knowledge Commentary: The word seal indicates security, authentication, and approval, certification of genuineness, and identification of ownership.
  - Verse 14 says that the Holy Spirit is given as a pledge of our inheritance. Discuss the **Deeper Still** question (p. 36).
    - Complete Word Study Dictionary: The word translated pledge speaks of the Holy Spirit whom God has given to believers in this present life to assure them of their future and eternal inheritance.
  - Discuss the **cross-references** (p. 36) and how they add to our understanding of the Holy Spirit.

### Lesson 3: Ephesians 1:15-23

- Verse 15 starts with **For this reason** (p. 38) which tells us that we need to go back and look at what is now being said based on what has already been stated.
- Make a list of all that Paul is **praying** for them (p. 39).
  - Use the word “that” as a guide for what the main ideas are in Paul’s prayers and what the details are.
    - Paul prays that God would give them two things – a spirit of wisdom and a spirit of revelation in the knowledge of Him.
    - He also prays that the eyes of their heart would be enlightened. Why? So that they would know three things – the hope of His calling, the riches of the glory of His inheritance, and the surpassing greatness of His power.
- Discuss the difference between **wisdom and knowledge** (p. 39).
- Discuss how the **cross-references** (p. 40) support Paul’s prayer.
- Talk about the things that Paul prayed that they would **know** (p. 41). Have participants share how becoming enlightened in regards to knowing these things would impact their days (**Deeper Still** question, p. 42)
  - What is the hope of His calling? How does this hope change the way we look at our todays and our tomorrows?
  - What impact should the riches of the glory of His inheritance have on the way we value things and people?
  - How does the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe cause us to better endure the trials of life?
- List what is said in Ephesians 1:19-23 about **God’s power** (p. 42) as seen in Christ’s life.
  - Why did Paul put such emphasis on God’s power? What does he want us to know and experience?
- Talk about the **cross-references** (p. 42) and have participants share when they have experienced God’s power in their lives.
- List all that is said about **Jesus Christ** (p. 43) in Ephesians 1:20-23, as well as the **cross-references** (p. 44).
  - What truth about Jesus grabbed ahold of you? What caused you to pause and think about it further, and dig deeper into its truth?
- Ask some from your group to share what verse they wrote on their index card and why.
- Ask participants to share suggestions for a title for Ephesians 1 based on the main ideas of the study.

## Week 2

- Welcome participants as they arrive.
- Start with the suggested icebreaker below.
  - Ask participants to share what elementary school they attended and something they remember about it.
- Open in prayer.
- Read Ephesians 1-2 out loud together.

### Lesson 1: Ephesians 2:1-10

- Review what Paul is saying as he uses the phrase **according to** (p. 50).
- Discuss the use of the word **flesh** (p. 50) in Ephesians 2:1-10 and in the **cross-reference** (p. 50).
  - What is being taught about the flesh? What do we need to know about the flesh?
- As you go over the questions regarding **the flesh** (p. 51), don't miss the connection between the *according to* in verses 1-2 and *the flesh* in verse 3.
- Ephesians 2:4 starts with the word **but** (p. 52). Discuss what is being contrasted here.
- Talk through Ephesians 2:4-6, looking for the main thoughts and the **parenthetical thoughts** (p. 52).
- List the verses that use **so that** (p. 52) and discuss how the *so that* shows us why something has been done.
  - What is the blessing that follows?
- List what is said of **God's character** (p. 53).
  - What about **God's character** is revealed in the cross-references (p. 54)?
  - Which of these character traits calls out to you? Which one is especially meaningful in this time of your life?
- Discuss what we learn about what has happened in **Christ Jesus** (p. 54).
- Reflect on God's **free gift** (p. 54) of salvation as talked about in Ephesians 2:8-10.
  - Again, keep in mind that some may not have accepted this gift. Or, some may still be trying to earn their salvation through the things that they do.
- Have participants share how each part of **Ephesians 2:10** (p. 55) speaks to them.
  - These are not good works that we need to do in order to be saved as we are saved by grace, not as a result of works. These are good works that are fruit and evidence of that salvation.



## Lesson 2: Ephesians 2:11-18

- Discuss the two groups Paul is referring to when he calls them the “**Circumcision**” and the “**Uncircumcision.**” Discuss what he wants them to **remember** (p. 57).
  - Paul is writing to the Ephesians who are Gentile believers. Here, in Ephesians 2:11, he identifies them as Gentiles, and he recognizes that they are called “Uncircumcision” by the Jews who are the “Circumcised.”
    - For the Jews, circumcision was the sign of the covenant made between God and Abraham and Abraham’s descendants. It was what they were to do in order to keep the covenant. If they were not circumcised, they had broken God’s covenant.
    - The Gentiles were not a part of that covenant, thus they were not circumcised.
  - In these verses, Paul spells out the differences between the Jews and the Gentiles by noting what the Gentiles were not a part of.
    - They were separate from Christ.
    - They were excluded from the commonwealth of Israel.
    - They were strangers to the covenants of promise which caused them to have no hope and to be without God.
- Discuss **hope** (p. 58) and the role it plays in our lives. Share what **Romans 5:1-5** (p. 59) teaches about hope.
- Look at the word *but* in Ephesians 2:13 and reason through what is being **contrasted** (p. 59).
  - In Ephesians 2:11-12, Paul is reminding them that they were once separate from Christ, *but* now they have been brought near by the blood of Christ.
- List truths about **Jesus** (p. 61) from Ephesians 2:14-18.
- Discuss the **enmity** (p. 62) that Paul mentions in Ephesians 2:15.
  - Bible Knowledge Commentary: Jews and Gentiles were enemies because the former sought to keep the Law with its commandments and regulations, whereas the Gentiles were unconcerned about them.
- As you work your way through the questions regarding **peace** and **reconciliation** (p. 62-65), keep in mind that Paul is speaking of bringing peace in regards to the Jewish and Gentile believers, making them into one new man, and also in regards to sinners and God.
  - **Peace** (p. 62) is mentioned four times in Ephesians 2:14-18.
  - Discuss the **cross-references** (p. 63) and the role of Jesus in bringing about this peace.
  - Read through the **cross-references** for **reconcile** (p. 65) and reason through what is being said.
    - Who is being reconciled? Who is doing the reconciliation? How is the reconciliation accomplished? What benefits come from being reconciled?
  - Definition of reconcile:
    - Apokatalasso – (ap-ok-at-al-las-so)

(See Next Page...)

- Complete Word Study Dictionary: From two words: Apo (from, indicating the state to be left behind) and Katallasso (to reconcile). The restoration of a relationship of peace which has been disturbed.

### Lesson 3: Ephesians 2:19-22

- Have participants share what they chose as the **important words** (p. 67) in Ephesians 2.
- Discuss the use of **So then** (p. 67) in Ephesians 2:19.
  - Paul is basing what he is about to say on what he has already said.
- Discuss the use of **but** (p. 67) in Ephesians 2:19 and make note of what is being contrasted.
- Draw a picture of **God's household** (p. 68) based on the details in Ephesians 2:20-22. Reason through what the text says about God's household.
  - Who makes up the household?
  - Who makes up the foundation?
  - Who is the cornerstone?
- Talk about the importance of Christ Jesus being the **cornerstone** (p. 68).
  - What is the purpose of a cornerstone?
    - Bible Knowledge Commentary: In ancient building practices, the chief cornerstone was carefully placed – the entire building was lined up with it. The church's foundation – the apostles and the prophets – needed to be correctly aligned with Christ.
- Discuss what Ephesians 2:21-22 says is happening **in the Lord** (p. 69) and what is happening **in the Spirit** (p. 69).
- Discuss **1 Corinthians 3** and **1 Peter 2** (p. 70-71), looking at what extra information these passages give us.
- Ask some from your group to share what verse they wrote on their index card and why.
- Review what Ephesians 2 was all about by having some from your group share their **titles** (p. 67) for the three lessons.
- Ask participants to share suggestions for a title for Ephesians 2 based on the main ideas of the study.

## Week 3

- Welcome participants as they arrive.
- Start with the suggested icebreaker below.
  - Ask participants to share the last time they rented a vehicle and the occasion.
- Open in prayer.
- Read Ephesians 1-3 out loud together.

### Lesson 1: Ephesians 3:1-7

- This first part of Ephesians 3 talks about two things: Paul's ministry and the mystery. Looking at each one individually will cause the discussion to skip around in the homework, but it will be beneficial in gathering all that is being said about both subjects.
- Ephesians 3:1 tells us that Paul was *the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of the Gentiles*.
- Ephesians 3:2 talks about *the stewardship of God's grace that was given to him*. Discuss **stewardship** and what **Colossians 1:24-29** (p. 80) tells us about the stewardship that was given to Paul and the calling to preach.
  - The cross-reference of **Galatians 2:7-9** (p. 80) tells of Paul being entrusted with the preaching of the gospel to the Gentiles.
    - We first read of Paul's calling to preach to the Gentiles in Acts 9:15. The Lord tells Ananias to go to Paul, "...for he is a chosen instrument of Mine, to bear My name before the Gentiles and kings and the sons of Israel..."
- Discuss what **Ephesians 3:7** (p. 82) tells us about Paul's ministry.
- Discuss the calling on Paul's life that we see in **Acts 26:15-16** (p. 83).
- Discuss the role of God's grace in Paul's ministry as shown in **1 Corinthians 15:9-10** (p. 83).
- Ephesians 3:8-9 continues to talk about God's grace and Paul's ministry.
  - Discuss the purpose of the **grace that was given to Paul** (p. 86).
- Ephesians 3:3-6 tells of the mystery that was made known to Paul. Discuss how this **mystery** (p. 78-79) was made known to Paul, and what the mystery entails.
  - Bible Knowledge Commentary: In Scripture a mystery is not a truth difficult to understand but a truth previously unrevealed (and therefore unknown) which is now revealed and publicly proclaimed.
- Review **Ephesians 2:11-22** (p. 82) and connect it to what is being said about the Gentiles in Ephesians 3:1-7.

## Lesson 2: Ephesians 3:8-13

- In discussing Paul's ministry, you looked at the purpose for the grace that was given as it is talked about in verses 8-9. Now look at the **so that** (p. 86) in verse 10 and discuss what this tells us about the actions that Paul was to take.
- Talk about what **unfathomable** (p. 87) means and what is being said about the unfathomable riches of Christ, both in Ephesians 3:8 and 2 Peter 1:2-4.
  - Definition of unfathomable:
    - Anexichniastos – (an-ex-ikh-nee-as-tos)
    - Complete Word Study Dictionary: Impossible to trace out, unsearchable, untraceable.
- Looking at Ephesians 3:10, discuss the definition of **manifold** (p. 88) and what it is describing.
  - Definition of manifold:
    - Polupoikilos – (pol-oo-poy-kil-os)
    - Complete Word Study Dictionary: Manifold, multifarious, greatly diversified, abounding in variety. From two words: polus – much, and poiklos – diverse, various.
    - Vincent's Word Studies: Through the church, God's wisdom in its infinite variety is to be displayed.
- Ephesians 3:10 talks about the manifold wisdom of God and 1 Peter 4:10 talks about the manifold grace of God. Have participants share what impact these truths about **God's wisdom and grace** (p. 89) have on our lives.
- Ephesians 3:12 reminds us that through Jesus we have boldness and confident access. Adding **Hebrews 4:15-16** (p. 90) to that, discuss what it means to have boldness and confident access, and what the implications are of that.
  - Remember, before Jesus' death on the cross, only the high priest was allowed to enter in the holy of holies and come before the altar, where God's presence was. When Jesus died, the veil that separated the holy of holies from the rest of the tabernacle was torn in two from top to bottom. His death gave us free access to the throne of God.
  - Hebrews 10:19-22 speaks to the confidence we have, by the blood of Jesus, to enter the holy place.
- Talk about **Paul's suffering** (p. 91) and what we can learn from him about our own suffering.

### Lesson 3: Ephesians 3:14-19

- Looking at the **For this reason** (p. 93), reason through what Paul is telling us to look back on before we look ahead.
- Looking at the **so that** (p. 94) in Ephesians 3:17, discuss why Paul is praying that they would be strengthened with power.
  - Complete Word Study Dictionary: In desiring that Christ may dwell in their hearts, Paul is speaking of Christ being permitted to take up full residence by His Spirit in their hearts.
    - Bible Knowledge Commentary: This is not referring to the beginning of Christ's indwelling at the moment of salvation, but denoting the desire that Christ may be at the very center of or deeply rooted in believers' lives.
- Reason through the text of Paul's prayer. What are the **main thoughts** (p. 94-95) of what he is praying for them? What are the extra tidbits of information that he is giving?
  - Discuss how these supporting details add **power and emphasis** (p. 96) to what Paul is praying for them.
  - Have participants share which part of the prayer they most **desire (Deeper Still question p. 96)** for their own lives.
  - Discuss the **cross-references** (p. 98), looking at what Paul's unified message is.

### Lesson 4: Ephesians 3:20-21

- Talk about what is said about **God** (p. 100) in Ephesians 3:20-21.
- Discuss what the **cross-references** (p. 101) add to these verses.
  - Definition of glory:
    - Doxa – (dox-ah)
    - Complete Word Study Dictionary: from dokeo, to think, recognize. Giving glory to God is ascribing to Him His full recognition.
- Ask some from your group to share what verse they wrote on their index card and why.
- Ask participants to share suggestions for a title for Ephesians 3 based on the main ideas of the study.
- As you close out this first section of Ephesians, looking at the **themes of the chapters** (p. 103), discuss what the flow of thought has been from Chapter 1 through Chapter 3.
  - What Christ has done for us → How the Ephesians were formerly and how they are now → the mystery of how they are able to be this way.
- Discuss how studying these chapters has impacted their faith.

## Week 4

- Welcome participants as they arrive.
- Start with the suggested icebreaker below.
  - Ask participants to share the last card or letter they received via snail mail.
- Open in prayer.
- Read Ephesians 1-4 out loud together.

### Lesson 1: Ephesians 4:1-6

- Discuss what the **therefore** (p. 108) is there for in Ephesians 4:1.
  - Usually, when you look back, you need to be careful that you don't go back too far. But because of the way Ephesians is structured, we need to look back at all that Paul has talked about in chapters 1-3; his words about our conduct are based on his words about the doctrine.
- In Ephesians 4:1 Paul says that he **implores** (p. 109) them.
  - What is Paul imploring them to do?
    - Paul is imploring them to walk in a manner worthy of their calling. This was not a calling that came about because of their self-effort, but as a result of God's grace.
  - Talk about what Paul's tone would sound like if he were speaking to them in person.
  - Discuss how **1 Thessalonians 2:12** (p. 109) gives us a bigger picture of this.
- List the characteristics of the **walk** as mentioned in **Ephesians 4:2** (p. 110).
  - Discuss these in practical terms, reflecting on how this would be **lived out** (**Deeper Still** question p. 110).
- Discuss the word **diligent** (p. 111) in Ephesians 4:3 and 2 Peter 1:10.
  - Definition of diligent:
    - spoudazo – (spoo-dad-zo)
    - Complete Word Study Dictionary: to be diligent, earnest, or eager. To make every effort to do one's best.
    - NIV Bible Commentary: Suggests difficulty and the resolute determination to overcome it.
  - What does Paul want them to be diligent to do?
    - Talk about what it means to **preserve** (p. 111) the unity of the Spirit.
      - Reflect back on what Paul has talked about regarding unity and how the two groups have been made into one (Ephesians 2:15-16).
- List the **seven elements of unity** (p.112) found in Ephesians 4:4-6, using the word, "one", as your guide.
- Review the use of **all** (p. 113) and discuss the importance of that small word.
- Discuss what **1 Corinthians 12:13** (p. 113) adds to our understanding of *one* and *all*.

## Lesson 2: Ephesians 4:7-13

- Discuss the **contrast** (p. 114) as it is stated in Ephesians 4:7.
  - Verses 1-6 talking about unity and all the “one” items.
  - We are all one BUT we each have been given individual gifts.
- As you discuss the gifts given, or **the roles** (p. 115), as laid out in Ephesians 4:11, keep in mind what is said about those gifts in the surrounding verses.
  - When were the gifts given (verse 8)?
  - What gifts were given (verse 11)?
  - Why were they given (verse 12-13)?
- Discuss how each gift **functions** (p. 115) and why Paul listed them in this **order** (p. 115)
  - Definition of *apostle*:
    - apostolos – (ap-os-tol-os)
    - Complete Word Study Dictionary: one sent, ambassador; instituted by Christ to witness of Him before the world.
  - Definition of *prophet*:
    - prophetes – (prof-ay-tace)
    - Complete Word Study Dictionary: a foreteller of future events, an interpreter; from pro – before or forth, and phemi – to tell. Prophets were a class of instructors or preachers who were next in rank to the apostles and before the teachers; speaking from an immediate revelation – as relating to future events or to the mind of the Spirit in general.
    - Vines Dictionary: Sometimes spoke practical, direct revelation for the church from God, or expounded revelation already given.
    - 1 Corinthians 14:3 says, “...one who prophecies speaks to men for edification and exhortation and consolation.”
    - 1 Corinthians 14:4 reiterates that, saying the one who prophesies edifies the church. This chapter also talks about if a prophet speaks then other prophets are to pass judgment as to whether what was spoken is in accordance with God’s word.
  - Definition of *evangelist*:
    - euaggelistes – (yoo-ang-ghel-is-tace)
    - Complete Word Study Dictionary: one who declares the good news; an evangelist, a preacher of the gospel; often not located in a particular place, but traveled as a missionary to preach the gospel and establish churches.
  - Definition of *pastor*:
    - poimen – (poy-mane)
    - Complete Word Study Dictionary: shepherd, one who generally cares for the flocks; the spiritual guide of a particular church.
  - Definition of *teacher*:
    - didaskalos – (did-as-kal-os)
    - Complete Word Study Dictionary: instructor, teacher, master – giving progressive instruction of God’s redeeming purpose.

- Ephesians 4:12-13 tells us why the gifts have been given. Reason through what is said in these verses in regards to what is to be accomplished and until when.
  - Discuss what **until** (p. 117) in Ephesians 4:13 tells us about the use of these gifts.
    - Talk about how the **cross-references** (p. 117) give us a greater insight into those goals.

### Lesson 3: Ephesians 4:14-16

- Ephesians 4:14-15 contrasts being as children and growing up. List Paul's **differences** (p. 120) between the two as stated in these verses.
- Discuss what **growing up** in all aspects and **leaving childish ways behind** (p. 121) looks like.
- Looking at the **cross-references** (p. 122), list the actions that are to be taken by one who is growing up in all aspects.
- Reason through what **Ephesians 4:16** (p. 123) is saying about the growth of the body and Christ's role in that.
  - Discuss **Colossians 2:19** (p. 123) and **Hebrews 13:20-21** (p. 124). How do these support what is said in Ephesians 4:16?

### Lesson 4: Ephesians 4:17-24

- Paul is writing to the Ephesians, who are Gentiles. But here in Ephesians 4:17-24, as Paul is referring to the Gentiles, he is referring to the unsaved around them.
- Paul tells the Ephesians not to walk as the Gentiles walk. Discuss how the **Gentiles walk** (p. 125).
  - Discuss Paul's use of the word **callous** (p. 125) and how that has affected how the Gentiles walk.
- Ephesians 4:20 gives us a contrast, as indicated by the word *but*. Discuss what is said about how the Ephesians **learned Christ** (page 126).
- In Ephesians 4:22-24, Paul tells what they have learned in Christ. Use the cross-references on pages 97-98 to discuss these truths.
  - Discuss laying aside the **old self** (p. 128-129).
  - Discuss being **renewed in the spirit of your mind** (p. 128).
  - Discuss putting on the **new self** (p. 128-129).



## Lesson 5: Ephesians 4:25-32

- Point out the *therefore* in verse 25 which tells us to look back at what has already been said.
- Notice the pattern here: Paul gives them a negative command, a “don’t do this,” then a positive command, a “do this,” and then he gives a reason. Make a chart of the instructions of what they **should** and **should not be doing** (p. 133).
  - After you chart these instructions, go back and discuss each one using the questions and the cross-references in the homework.
- Talk about why we should **speak truth** (p. 132).
  - Remind participants of all that Paul has said to the Ephesians about being members of one another and members of one body.
- Discuss what is said about **anger** (p. 132).
  - Don’t miss the connection between our anger and giving the devil an opportunity.
  - Paul also talks about anger when he lists the bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, slander, and malice that must be put away from them.
- Talk about what is said about **labor** (p. 133-135) and why we need to perform with our own hands what is good (look at the *so that*).
- Using Ephesians 4:29 as your guide, discuss what kinds of words should be coming out of our mouths and why.
- As you discuss the **Holy Spirit** (p. 134), keep in mind that Paul warns us not to grieve the Holy Spirit directly after he has warned us about our words.
  - Talk about what it means to grieve the Holy Spirit.
    - Definition of grieve:
      - Lupeo – (loo-peh-o)
        - Complete Word Study Dictionary: from lupe, sorrow. To grieve, afflict with sorrow.
    - Discuss what **2 Corinthians 1:21-22** (p. 134) teaches us about the Holy Spirit.
    - List what is learned about the **Holy Spirit** from the cross-references (p. 135).
- Ask some from your group to share what verse they wrote on their index card and why.
- Ask participants to share suggestions for a title for Ephesians 4 based on the main ideas of the study.

## Week 5

- Welcome participants as they arrive.
- Start with the suggested icebreaker below.
  - Ask participants to share the story behind their Bible.
- Open in prayer.
- Read Ephesians 1-5 out loud together.

### Lesson 1: Ephesians 5:1-6

- Read Ephesians 4:1-2 and discuss how it **compares** (p. 142) with the message of Ephesians 5:1-2.
  - Point out the *therefore* and what it is pointing back to.
- Discuss honoring God as His beloved child and the **challenges** (**Deeper Still** question p. 142) in that.
- Discuss Ephesians 5:2 and what our **motivation** (p. 143) for walking in love should be.
  - Have participants share what **walking in love looks like** (**Deeper Still** question p. 143) in their day.
- List the **negative behaviors** (p.144) that we are to turn from, according to Ephesians 5:1-5.
- Discuss what is said about **the tongue** (p. 144) in Ephesians 5:4.
  - Reason through what is being said for us in today's culture.
    - What would we call filthy and silly talk or coarse jesting?
    - Where do we find those things?
    - How can we guard against those things?
  - Talk about why these are not fitting for those walking in love.
- Discuss what Paul says about who will not inherit the kingdom of God in **Ephesians 5:5-6** (p. 144).
  - Reason through the **cross-references** (p. 145), adding to the truth that Paul has spoken.

## Lesson 2: Ephesians 5:7-14

- Using the *therefore* to guide you, connect Ephesians 5:7 with Ephesians 5:6, and discuss who Paul is referring to when he says not to be **partakers with them** (p. 147).
- What does Ephesians 5:8 say about why we should not be partakers with them?
  - Here again Paul is talking to them about what they formerly were and what they are now. They are not to be partakers with the sons of disobedience because they are now *Light in the Lord*.
    - Talk about how **2 Corinthians 6:14** (p. 147) adds to that.
- Paul then gives the command to walk as children of Light. Discuss what he says in Ephesians 5:10 about **how to walk** (p. 147) as children of Light.
  - NIV Bible Commentary: Those who live as “children of light” will be continually trying to ascertain what the will of God is in every situation so that all they do may satisfy Him.
    - Notice what Paul says about light and darkness in Ephesians 5:7-14.
      - Light: goodness and righteousness and truth; pleasing to the Lord.
      - Darkness: unfruitful deeds; need to be exposed; disgraceful to speak of them.
- Discuss **Romans 12:2** (p. 148) and how it sheds light on pleasing the Lord.
  - Share **examples** (**Deeper Still** question p.148) of thinking differently from the world.
- Discuss what we are to do when we see deeds of darkness, according to **Ephesians 5:11** (p. 148).
  - Talk about how the idea of exposing the deeds of darkness is expounded on in **Ephesians 5:13** (p. 149).
  - Link these truths with **John 3:19-21** (p. 149).
    - Talk about the contrast that is made here between the light exposing evil deeds and manifesting deeds of the truth.
- Reason through **Ephesians 5:14** (p. 150) and what each part of the verse is referring to.
  - Discuss the connection between Ephesians 5:14 and **James 4:6-10** (p. 150).

### Lesson 3: Ephesians 5:15-21

- Review what Paul has said thus far as to how we are to walk.
  - Ephesians 2:10 – we are to walk in the good works that God has prepared beforehand.
  - Ephesians 4:1 – we are to walk in a manner worthy of our calling.
  - Ephesians 5:2 – we are to walk in love.
  - Ephesians 5:8 – we are to walk as children of Light.
  
- Discuss how we are to walk, according to **Ephesians 5:15** (p. 152).
  - Talk about what this looks like in practical terms.
  - Read through the cross-references from **Proverbs** (p. 153-154) and talk about what is being said about wisdom.
  
- List the **behaviors** that are talked about in **Ephesians 5:18-21** (p. 155).
  - Keep in mind that what is being said here regarding the Holy Spirit must be understood accurately.
    - MacArthur Bible Commentary: Every Christian is indwelt and baptized by the Spirit at the time of salvation. He is giving a command for believers to live continually under the influence of the Spirit.
    - Wuest Word Studies: The verb (be filled) is in the present imperative: “Be constantly being filled with the Spirit.”
  - The behaviors that are listed in Ephesians 5:19-21 can be seen as the results of being filled with the Holy Spirit.
  - Discuss the similarity of the message in **Colossians 3:15-18** (p. 155).

## Lesson 4: Ephesians 5:22-33

- Discuss the placement of **Ephesians 5:21** (p.157), reviewing what the flow of thought has been in chapter 5.
  - Being *subject to one another* is a difficult concept in the culture we live in.
    - Bible Knowledge Commentary: willingly serving others and being under them rather than dominating them and exalting themselves.
- Using the **analogies** (p. 157), discuss the relationships that are talked about and the way they are connected.
  - Be mindful of those in your group who are not married. Encourage them to think about how they can benefit from the instructions and truths in this passage.
- Looking at **Ephesians 5:25-28** (p. 158), talk about what Christ did for His church and why.
- Tie all of **Ephesians 5** (p. 159) together; talk about each section and how they are all connected.
  - Discuss the **guidelines** (p. 160) that are given and the difference they can make in our relationships.
    - Although we cannot follow all of the instructions on our own, we can do so by the power of the Holy Spirit. Have participants share what a difference being filled with the Holy Spirit can make in living out these guidelines or instructions.
- Ask some from your group to share what verse they wrote on their index card and why.
- Ask participants to share suggestions for a title for Ephesians 5 based on the main ideas of the study.

## Week 6

- Welcome participants as they arrive.
- Start with the suggested icebreaker below.
  - Ask participants to share how they came to know about Jesus Christ, the Son of God.
- Open in prayer.
- Read Ephesians 1-6 out loud together.

### Lesson 1: Ephesians 6:1-4

- Describe the role of **each family member** (p. 165), according to Ephesians 6:1-4.
- Talk about the **children** (p. 166), answering why they are to obey and honor, as well as what the result would be.
  - Discuss what **Colossians 3:20** (p. 166) adds to this.
  - Have participants share their own experiences with **obeying and honoring parents** (**Deeper Still** question p. 166).
- Discuss the caution that is given in **Ephesians 6:4** (p. 167) to fathers.
  - Talk about **Colossians 3:21** (p. 167) and what it says regarding why fathers should not exasperate their children.
    - The NASB uses the phrase provoke your children to anger.
    - Definition of provoke to anger:
      - Parorgizo – (par-org-id-zo)
        - Complete Word Study Dictionary: To provoke to anger, irritation or resentment. From para (at the point of, unto, implying movement toward a certain point), and orgizo (to anger, irritate).
    - Talk about what fathers are to be doing **rather than provoking** (p. 168) their children to anger.
      - Definition of *discipline*:
        - paideia – (pahee-di-ah)
        - Complete Word Study Dictionary: To instruct; chastening...all effectual instruction for the sinful children of men includes and implies chastening; correction.
      - Definition for *instruction*:
        - Nouthesia – (noo-thes-ee-ah)
        - Complete Word Study Dictionary: admonition, warning, exhortation; any word of encouragement or reproof which leads to correct behavior.
      - Complete Word Study Dictionary: Paideia (discipline) would not be complete without nouthesia (instruction).
  - Keep in mind those who may not have children, single moms, or those who did not have a good relationship with their father. Have participants share what benefit these truths are to them in these situations as you discuss the questions on p. 169.

## Lesson 2: Ephesians 6:5-9

- As you begin your discussion on slaves and masters, remind participants of the relevance of these verses, even though we do not have slaves and masters in today's society.
- Talk about what is said to slaves in Ephesians 6:5-9.
  - Discuss what they are to do, how they are to **show obedience** (p. 171), and how they are to render service.
  - Discuss how **Colossians 3:22-24** (p. 172) ties into Ephesians 6:5-9.
  - Discuss what reason **1 Timothy 6:1** (p. 172) gives for slaves showing full respect for their masters.
    - Read **Philippians 2:8** and **Luke 22:42** (p. 172) out loud and talk about Jesus' example for us.
  - Talk about what **eyeservice** and being **men-pleasers** looks like as mention in **Ephesians 6:5-6** (p. 173).
    - Definition of eyeservice:
      - ophthalmouleia – of-thal-mod-oo-li-ah)
      - Complete Word Study Dictionary: implying either service rendered only when one is being scrutinized or service rendered only for appearance sake.
    - Definition of men-pleasers:
      - Anthropareskos – (anth-ro-par-es-kos)
      - Complete Word Study Dictionary: from antropos (man), and aresko (to please). To try to please men and not God; denotes one who tries to please all.
  - Relate what is said in Ephesians 6: 6 to **Galatians 1:10** (p. 173) and what Paul said about himself.
  - Have some group share times **when they have struggled** (**Deeper Still** question p. 173) with seeking the approval of people over God.
  - Talk about not being able to serve two masters as stated in **Matthew 6:24** (p. 174).
- Discuss what **masters** (p. 174) are to do and why.
  - Tie this in with **Colossians 4:1** (p. 174).
- One of the reasons masters are to treat slaves in this way is because there is no partiality with God, as stated in **Ephesians 6:9**. Read out loud the **cross-references** (p. 175) and discuss what **prevents us** (**Deeper Still** question p. 175) from seeing those around us without partiality.
  - Remember that unity is a theme of Paul's throughout Ephesians.
- Ask some in your group to share what they chose as **Lessons to be Learned** (p. 176) from the instructions in Ephesians 5:15-6:9.

### Lesson 3: Ephesians 6:10-17

- Notice the structure of this section: Paul tells them to put on the full armor of God, then he makes a statement about their struggle, then he tells them again to put on the armor.
- Notice also that verse 10 starts with *finally*. We are at the close of the book; Paul is giving final instructions to them.
- Discuss Paul's instructions for them to **be strong** (p. 177). Talk about the difference between being strong *in the Lord and in the strength of His might* and being strong in your own might.
- Looking at the **so that** (p. 178), discuss what Ephesians 6:11 says about why we need to put on the full armor of God.
  - Also, look at the *so that* in Ephesians 6:13 and talk about what that verse says about why we need the full armor of God.
- Discuss what Ephesians 6:12 tells us about what we **struggle against** (p. 178).
  - Using the cross-references and questions on p. 180, talk about how we **underestimate the influence** (p. 179) of the enemy in our lives.
- Talk about how the armor of God **enables us** (p. 181) to stand firm.
- Using the **Deeper Still** question (p. 182), discuss each piece of the armor of God and how it fits into your day.



## Lesson 4: Ephesians 6:18-24

- Talk about the instructions that Paul gives for our **prayers** (p. 183).
  - Discuss what he tells us about how we should pray.
    - Prayer: speaking to God.
    - Petitions: speaking to God with a specific request in mind.
  - Discuss what he asks on his own behalf.
  - Have your participants share about their **prayer life** (**Deeper Still** question p. 183).
- Read out loud the **cross-references** (p. 184-185) and discuss what each one is saying regarding prayer.
- Using Paul's request that they pray that he would have boldness to speak, discuss praying for those in **full-time ministry** and having others **pray on your behalf** (p. 186).
  - Have participants share their reaction to the questions on pages 187-189.
- Discuss **incorruptible love** (p.188).
  - Bible Knowledge Commentary: Incorruptible here is used in a spiritual sense and means freedom from corrupt doctrines or designs.
  - Vines Dictionary: It also refers to a love that is sincere and undiminishing.
- Ask some from your group to share what verse they wrote on their index card and why.
- Ask participants to share suggestions for a title for Ephesians 6 based on the main ideas of the study.
- Have participants share what this study of Ephesians meant for them.
  - What new insights did they gain?
  - What did they learn that they need to put into practice?

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