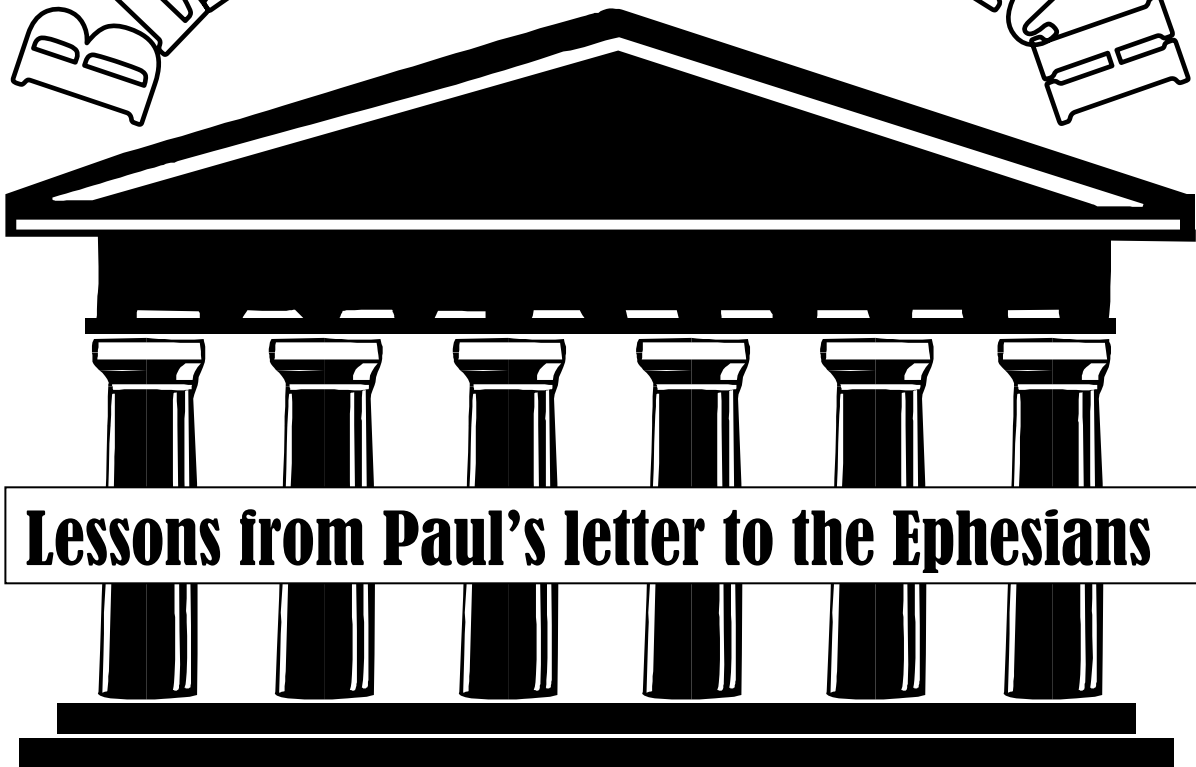


BECOMING THE CHURCH



Lessons from Paul's letter to the Ephesians

Keith S. Andrews

Lesson 1 – 1:1-10

Introduction and Praise

Eph 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus:

2 Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

4 For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love

5 he predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will-

6 to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God's grace

8 that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.

9 And he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ,

NOTES:

What does Paul mean when he refers to himself as *an apostle of Christ Jesus* in vs. 1? _____

Read vv. 5, 9; Rom. 12:2; 1 Thess. 4:3-7, 5:16-18; Heb. 10:35-36. How would you describe *God's will* for yourself? _____

Who were *the saints in Ephesus*? _____

Paul often uses the blessing *grace and peace*. (See vs. 2). How do these terms apply to one's relationship to God the Father through God the Son? _____

The same Gk. Word is used in vs. 3 for *praise* and *bless*. It says that we should bless God the Father who has already blessed us. Our praises are, therefore, a *response* to what He has done.

It may be that Paul lists (or *particularizes*) the *spiritual blessings* that we have received in vv. 4-10. If so, what are the blessings? _____

10 to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment--to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.

How do you understand *in the heavenly realms* in vs. 3? _____
_____ (Compare 1:20, 2:6, 3:10, & 6:12).

Note the repetition of the phrase *in Christ* (along with related phrases) in vv. 1, 3, 4, 7, & 9. What do you think Paul means by this phrase? (Compare also Rom. 6:23, 8:1, 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 15:22-23; 2 Cor. 3:14, 5:17; Gal. 3:28).

When, according to vs. 4, were we chosen by God? _____
_____ We were chosen for what purpose? _____

Paul uses the word *predestined* in vs. 5. What does the word mean and for what were we *predestined*? _____
_____ (Also see Jer. 1:5; Eph. 1:11; Rom. 8:29).

Both *redemption* and *forgiveness* seem to be tied to Christ's blood in vs. 7. In what way does the shedding of *Jesus'* blood relate to *our* redemption and forgiveness? (Read and consider 1 Pet. 1:18-19; Heb. 9:22; Rev. 5:9-10). _____

We often think of a mystery as something that is unknown – something that is kept secret. Notice that God, according to the riches of His grace, has lavished wisdom and understanding upon us so that we might comprehend the mystery of redemption. Do you think that this great mystery can be understood apart from this spiritual revelation? Why or why not? (See also Matt. 13:10-11; Rom. 16:25-27; Col. 1:26-27). _____

A literal reading of vs. 10 speaks of God's *stewardship (or administration) of the fullness of the times according to his good pleasure*. This is presenting a large picture of how God has overseen the events of history in order to fulfil His own purpose. To what extent do you think that God should be given credit or blame for the events of human history? Explain your answer. _____

What is God's ultimate purpose according to vs. 10? _____

(Compare Ps. 110:1; Matt. 28:18; Col. 1:16-18; Rev. 11:15-18).

Lesson 2 – 1:11-14

God's Possession

Eph. 1:11 In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,
12 in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.
13 And you also were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,
14 who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession--to the praise of his glory.

NOTES:

Paul begins vs. 1 with these reassuring words: "*In him we were also chosen. . .*" List at least 4 reasons why it is significant to you to know that God *chose* you. _____

Verse 13 says that you were included in Christ when you *heard the word of truth*. Read Rom. 10:13-15. When, where, and how did you hear the gospel? _____

Do you think it is possible for a person to be where the gospel is being proclaimed and not "hear" it? Explain your answer. _____

Scholars have taken the Gk. word *kerygma* to mean the "essentials of the gospel." It was this message about Jesus that the apostles told over and over. Read Acts 10:34-43; Rom 1:2-3; 1 Cor. 15:2-8. C.H. Dodd has reduced the *kerygma* to these six points:

- Jesus has fulfilled Messianic prophecy
- Jesus went about doing good and performing miracles
- Jesus was crucified according to God's plan
- Jesus was raised from the dead and exalted to heaven
- Jesus will return in judgment
- We must repent, believe, & be baptized

Read Rom. 1:16-17. What does Paul say about the gospel? _____
_____ Eph. 1:13 talks first about *hearing* the gospel,
but then about *believing*. Is believing the same as having faith? Why or why not?
(Consider also John 6:28-29; James 2:19) _____

What, according to vs. 13, is the seal with which the people of God have been marked?
_____ Read Isa. 44:3; Joel 2:28-29; John 8:38-39;
Eph. 4:30; 2 Cor. 1:21-22. How and why is this "sealing" significant? _____

How do you understand the phrase *a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance* in vs. 14?

What is *redemption* and why is that word used in vs. 14? _____

Do you think of yourself as *God's possession*? Why or why not? (Read Rev. 5:9; Matt.
20:28; Acts 20:28; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; 1 Pet. 1:18-19). _____

Notice the repetition of the phrase *the praise of his glory* in vv. 12 and 14. What do
you think this means? (Compare Phil. 1:9-11; 1 Pet. 1:6-7). _____

Lesson 3 – 1:15-23

Paul's First Prayer

Eph. 1:15 For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, 16 I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.

17 I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.

18 I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is like the working of his mighty strength, 20 which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, 21 far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

22 And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

NOTES:

What two things does Paul mention in vs. 15 that he had heard about the Ephesian believers? _____

Consider this in light of Matt. 22:26-40 & 1 Jn. 4:20.

Paul's first petition in his prayer for the Ephesians is for *the Spirit of wisdom and revelation*. Why does he ask for this? _____

Do you think he is talking about the Holy Spirit in vs. 17? Explain your answer. (Consider Col. 1:9; 1 Cor. 2:9-10, 12:7-8; Isa. 11:2; Jn. 14:16-17; Acts 6:9-10).

The phrase *the eyes of your heart* in vs. 18 has to be figurative. What do you think it means? (Consider also Matt. 13:15-17).

Paul prays that they might be enlightened in order to know:

- The hope to which they are called (vs. 18)
- The riches of his glorious inheritance (vs. 18)
- His incomparable great power (vs. 19)

Read Rom. 5:1-5, 15:4, 13; 1 Cor. 15:19; Eph. 4:4-6; 1 Thess. 4:13-14; Titus 1:1-2, 2:11-14. What is the hope to which we have been called? _____

Read Col. 1:10-12, 3:23-24; Heb. 9:15-17; Rev. 21:1-7. Describe the riches of his glorious inheritance. _____

To what does Paul compare the power that is working for us who believe in vv. 19-20? _____

We sometimes use the word "transcendent" to describe Christ's relationship to His creation. In what ways is Christ presented as supreme in vv. 21-22? _____

In what specific ways is Christ *head* over the church? (See Eph. 4:15-16; Col. 1:16-18, 2:9-10). _____

Lesson 4 – 2:1-10

From Death to Life

Eph. 2:1 As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins,
2 in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.
3 All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath.
4 But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy,
5 made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions--it is by grace you have been saved.
6 And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus,
7 in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus.
8 For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith--and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God--
9 not by works, so that no one can boast.
10 For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

NOTES:

According to vs. 1, what is the past condition of the believers to whom Paul was writing? _____

_____ Do you think this is the general condition of humanity, or does it only apply to Ephesians? Give at least 3 Scripture references that support your answer.

In vs. 2, Paul writes of *the ways of this world*. The Gk. word for world is *cosmos*. Is Paul talking about planet earth, the natural universe, or what? (Consider also Jn. 3:16-17, 15:18-19, 17:14-15; Rom. 12:2a; James 4:4; 1 Jn. 2:15-17). _____

In vs. 2 Paul also mentions *the ruler of the kingdom of the air*. Who is he talking about? How can there be such a "ruler" if God has sovereign control over all things? Read and consider Jn. 8:44, 14:30-31; Eph. 6:12; 1 Jn. 3:8; Rev. 12:9. _____

If, as vs. 3 states, we were like them – seeking only to gratify the desires of the flesh – then what has changed? Are we not still flesh? Are we not still subject to its lusts? (Read and compare Rom. 7:5-6, 8:5-6, 13:14; Gal. 5:16, 24-25). _____

Verse 4 says a lot about the God we serve. In spite of our disobedience – remember vs. 2 – God’s love for us was great. His mercy was so abundant that it caused Him to reach down and do something wonderful for us. What did He do? (See vs. 5 & compare Col. 2:11-15) _____ Here Paul reminds us of something that should be clear, it is by GRACE that we have been saved. As for us, we were dead in our transgressions and sins; but God, even when we were dead, made us alive with Christ. Read and compare the following passages: Jn. 5:21; Rom. 5:8,10; 1 Jn. 3:16, 4:10; Col. 1:21-22.

Has God raised us up and seated us with Christ in the heavenly realms? That is what Paul says in vs. 6. Do you think that this is a description of our *position* with Christ or of our *experience* with Christ? Explain your answer. _____

The phrase “in order that” which begins vs. leads to a statement of purpose. It tells us *why* God has done what He has done. What does God want to make evident? (vs. 7a) _____ How has it been expressed? (vs. 7b) _____

With what is *faith* contrasted in vv. 8-9? _____ Why is it important for Christians to understand that salvation is not the result of their good works? _____ Is the doing of good works supposed to be part of the Christian life? Consider vs. 10; Matt. 5:15-16; 1 Tim. 6:18-19; Heb. 10:24; 1 Pet. 2:12. _____

Do you think that God has a special plan and a specific work for YOU to do? _____

Lesson 5 – 2:11-3:6

Unity in Christ

Eph. 2:11 Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called "uncircumcised" by those who call themselves "the circumcision" (that done in the body by the hands of men)--

12 remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world.

13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.

14 For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility,

15 by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace,

16 and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.

17 He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.

18 For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

NOTES:

What, according to vv. 11 & 12, was the relationship between Gentile and Jew apart from Christ? _____

Paul has just emphasized the fact that salvation is by *grace* through *faith*. Why does he now make reference to circumcision? _____

By what means have Jew and Gentile been brought together (vs. 13) _____

Read Rom. 2:28-29; Gal. 5:6, 6:15; Php. 3:2-3; Col. 2:11-12. Circumcision was given as a sign of the covenant relationship between God and His people. How might it serve as a figure (symbol) for what Christ has done for us? _____

In vs. 14 Paul says that Christ is our *peace*. Jesus Himself said: "*Peace I leave with you; my peace I give you.*" (Jn. 14:27). He then goes on to say that His peace is not like that of the world. What hostile forces have been reconciled in Christ? (Compare vv. 12, 19, & 3:6). _____

19 Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household,

20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone.

21 In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.

22 And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

3:1 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles--

2 Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you,

3 that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly.

4 In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ,

5 which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets.

6 This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

Is it your experience that the cross joins or separates Jew and Christian? Explain your answer. _____

Do you think *far away* and *near* in vs. 17 refer to geographic distance? Why or why not? _____

How is *God's household* described in vv. 19-22? _____

Read 1 Cor. 3:16-17, 6:19-20; 2 Cor. 6:16; 1 Pet. 2:5-6. What application can you draw from the Scriptural relationship between God's *temple* and His *people*? _____

What is the *mystery* that Paul writes about in vv. 3:3-6? _____

How does he claim to have insight into this mystery? (vs. 3) _____

Is the *promise* that is mentioned in vs. 6 something new? Explain your answer. (Consider Gal. 3:6-9,14, 29).

Lesson 6 – 3:7-13

Servant of the Gospel

Eph 3:7 I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power.

8 Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,

9 and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.

10 His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms,

11 according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

12 In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

13 I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory.

NOTES:

Compare vv. 3:7 and 1:1. In vs. 1 Paul calls himself an *apostle*. Here he calls himself a *servant*. What is the significance of the word servant and how does it relate to our culture? (See Matt. 23:11; Mk. 9:35; Jn. 12:26; Php. 2:5-7; Rom. 10:9; 1 Cor. 12:3). _____

Notice that Paul attributes his gospel ministry to the working of God's power. Read Acts 9:1-6, 15, 22:4-10, 21, 26:13-18. In these accounts do we find Paul seeking Christ or Christ calling Paul? _____

How did Paul know to go and share the gospel of Christ with the Gentiles? _____

Why does Paul call himself *less and the least of all God's people*? Why would Christ call such an evil man to be an apostle? (Compare 1 Tim. 1:15-16)

In vv. 8 & 9 Paul describes his ministry as *preaching* to the Gentiles / *making plain* (bringing to light) to everyone mystery... Preaching = making God's Word clear. The context of vs. 9 would make *everyone* mean, not all living persons, but Gentile as well as Jew.

Remember that the *mystery* about which Paul writes in vs. 9 is that God's grace is poured out upon all nations – both Jew and Gentile – through Christ. (See Eph. 3:6; Rom. 11:25; Col. 1:25-27).

God kept this mystery hidden. That does not mean, however, that it was a new plan. Note, in vs. 11, that these were done *according to His eternal purpose*. Read vs. 10. How is this great plan of God to be revealed? _____

Do you think that the angels, holy and fallen, were unaware of the "Covenant of Redemption*"? Consider Matt. 24:36; 1 Pet. 1:10-13. _____

Notice in vs. 11 that God' eternal purpose is *accomplished* in Christ Jesus our Lord. That is why Jesus, before He died on the cross, said: "*It is finished.*" (Jn. 19:30). What does that great truth mean to you and to me? _____

Read Jn. 14:6; Eph. 2:18; Heb. 4:16, 10:19-24. Paul says in vs. 12 that, because of Christ, we may approach God with freedom and confidence. Do you feel comfortable coming to God boldly? Why or why not? _____

See vs. 13. Why should Paul's being sent to the Gentiles, even through difficulties and tribulation, be encouraging to the Ephesians? _____

_____ God has made sure that you had the opportunity to hear the gospel. Should you be encouraged by that fact? Why or why not? _____

*The "Covenant of Redemption" is the agreement that existed from before the creation of the worlds as to what role each person of the Trinity, God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit, would play in the redemption of the elect.

Lesson 8 – 4:1-16

Living Worthy

Eph 4:1 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

2 Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.

3 Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

4 There is one body and one Spirit-- just as you were called to one hope when you were called--

5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism;

6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

7 But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it.

8 This is why it says: "When he ascended on high, he led captives in his train and gave gifts to men."

9 (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions ?

10 He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)

NOTES:

Paul has called himself an *apostle* (1:1), a *servant* (3:7), and a *prisoner* (3:1 & 4:1). Are these terms figurative or literal? Explain your answers. _____

In Greek the church is *ekklesia*, meaning "called out." We can think of ourselves as people who have been called out from the world and into fellowship with Christ and with each other. What related word does Paul use in vs. 1? _____

In this case "calling" is used in the sense of vocation or business. The Christian is not just called *from* certain things, he or she is also called *to* certain things. How does Paul describe the *business* of the church in vv. 2-3? _____

What word is repeated seven times in vv. 4-6? _____ Do you think this statement relates to the instruction in vv. 2-3? If so, how? _____

Read Rom. 12:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:7-12. What point is being made about the body of Christ (i.e., the church)? _____

11 It was he who gave some to be apostles, some to be prophets, some to be evangelists, and some to be pastors and teachers,
 12 to prepare God's people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up
 13 until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.
 14 Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming.
 15 Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will in all things grow up into him who is the Head, that is, Christ.
 16 From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

In vs. 7 we see that *grace* has been appointed to us by Christ. Verse 8, however, speaks of *gifts* given by Christ to men. How do you think that God's gifts are related to His grace? _____

What are the gifts Christ has given? (See vs. 11). _____
 _____. What is the overall purpose of these *gifts*? (vs. 12). _____

What does an apostle do? _____

What does a prophet do? _____

What does an evangelist do? _____

What does a pastor do? _____

What does a teacher do? _____

The phrase *built up* in vs. 12 is a term used in construction. In what way(s) might the church be built up? _____

Read Jer. 32:39; Zeph. 3:9; Jn. 17:20-21. Is

There *unity* in the body of Christ? Explain your answer? _____

The word *mature* is used in vs. 13. Describe a mature Christian? _____
 _____ How does Paul describe the *immature* Christian in vs. 14? _____

There are two important elements in vs. 16 regarding the growth of the church. First, growth comes "from Him." He is the vine. We are the branches. Separated from Him there is no growth and certainly no fruit. The second element is that growth comes as each part (i.e., each member or each person) does its work. Do you think that the church can grow if either element is missing? Why or why not? _____

Lesson 9 – 4:17-32

Putting Off and Putting On

Eph 4:17 So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking.

18 They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts.

19 Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, with a continual lust for more.

20 You, however, did not come to know Christ that way.

21 Surely you heard of him and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus.

22 You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires;

23 to be made new in the attitude of your minds;

24 and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

25 Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to his neighbor, for we are all members of one body.

26 "In your anger do not sin" : Do not

NOTES:

Paul is quite emphatic about the instruction of vs. 17. What is the important instruction? _____

If we are saved do we have to be concerned about how we act? (Consider Matt. 12:36-37; Eccl. 12:14; 2 Cor. 5:10).

Compare vs. 17 and Rom. 12:2. What makes one's thinking *futile*? _____

How does a person avoid futility of thought? (Consider Ps. 1:1-2). _____

How is the Gentile's (unbeliever's) thinking described in vs. 18? _____

What is the cause of their condition? _____

Compare and contrast vv. 18-19 and Rom. 1:18-32. _____

How does a person come to know Christ?

let the sun go down while you are still angry,

27 and do not give the devil a foothold.

28 He who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with his own hands, that he may have something to share with those in need.

29 Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen.

30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

31 Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.

32 Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Verses 20-21 connect knowing Christ (Messiah) with *the truth that is in Jesus*. Do you think a person can know about Jesus and not *know Christ*? Explain your answer. _____

What, according to vv. 22-24, must the believer put off and what must he put on in its place? _____

Compare Rom. 13:13-14.

Verses 25-32 give several evidences that this change of character has taken place. List them:

PUT OFF

PUT ON

_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____
_____	_____

Consider vv. 26-27. How might unresolved anger *give the devil a foothold*? _____

The thief steals to satisfy his own desires. What is the objective of a believer's hard work according to vs. 28? _____

Similarly, according to vs. 29, what should be the objective of our conversation? _____

Would you say that the old self is more focused on self or on others? _____ What about the new self? _____ How would you describe your own focus? _____

Where do we look to find a pattern for forgiving? _____

Lesson 10 – 5:1-18

Living in the Light

Eph 5:1 Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children
2 and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.
3 But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people.
4 Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving.
5 For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person-- such a man is an idolater--has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.
6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient.
7 Therefore do not be partners with them.
8 For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light
9 (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth)
10 and find out what pleases the Lord.

NOTES:

The previous chapter ended by saying: "...forgiving each other just as in Christ God forgave you." Now we read: "be imitators of God." In what ways has God not only told us in His Word, but provided us with an example of right behavior? (Also consider Mic. 6:8). _____

What example does Paul give of "a life of love?" _____

Read vv. 3-4. What behaviors does Paul call "improper for God's holy people?"

How does this list compare with the "acts of the sinful nature" in Gal. 5:19-21? _____

What should replace irreverent speech? (vs. 4) _____

Paul equates a greedy person to an idolater in vs. 5. Why might that be so? (Consider also Matt. 6:24; 1 Tim. 6:10).

11 Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them.
12 For it is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret.
13 But everything exposed by the light becomes visible,
14 for it is light that makes everything visible. This is why it is said: "Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."
15 Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise,
16 making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil.
17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.
18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit.

Read vs. 6. What are we not to be deceived by? _____

_____ What do you think this means? (Consider also Col. 2:8; 1 Cor. 1:20, 3:19-20). _____

Read vv. 8-14. In what ways does the "light" expose fruitless deeds? _____

Can you give examples from your own experience? _____

Jesus said: "I am the light of the world" (Jn. 8:12). He also said that his *disciples* would be light in this world. (See Matt. 5:14, Jn. 12:36). How, as individuals and as the church, should we go about "being light?" _____

In vv. 15-16 we find a stern warning to *be careful* how we live. Put this in your own words as you understand it. _____

How does not being "drunk with wine" in vs. 18 relate to being "filled with the Spirit?" _____

Lesson 11 – 5:19-6:9

Right Relationships

Eph. 5:19 Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord,
20 always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
21 Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.
22 Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord.
23 For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior.
24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.
25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her
26 to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word,
27 and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless.
28 In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.

NOTES:

Verse 19 uses the formula "psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs." What do you think these are? How do they differ? (Also see Col. 3:16). _____

_____ How does this apply to our conversations with one another? _____

The word *always* is used in vs. 20 with reference to giving thanks to God. This idea is echoed in Ps. 34:1; Php. 4:6; Col. 3:17; 1 Thess. 5:18. Are there things for which you find it difficult to be thankful?

_____ What should our attitude be regarding the difficulties and tribulations of this life? Consider Jn. 16:33; Rom. 5:3-5, 8:28, 38-39; 1 Pet. 1:6-7. _____

The section that begins in 5:21 and continues through 6:9 opens with this instruction: "Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ." What is *submission*? _____

To whom should we submit? _____
_____ How does this demonstrate our reverence for Christ? _____

29 After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church--

30 for we are members of his body.

31 "For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh."

32 This is a profound mystery--but I am talking about Christ and the church.

33 However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

2 "Honor your father and mother"--which is the first commandment with a promise--

3 "that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."

4 Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

5 Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ.

6 Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart.

7 Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men,

8 because you know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.

Verses 22-24 are addressed to:

Verses 25-33 are addressed to:

Verses 6:1-3 are addressed to:

Verse 4 is addressed to:

Verses 5-8 are addressed to:

Verse 9 is addressed to:

Two very important things should be noted about this passage. First, these instructions are about *relationships*. They are about *interaction*. Obedient behavior from children, for example, *depends* upon parents who are training and instructing them according to God's Word. Similarly, a wife is able to submit to her husband *only* if he is providing godly leadership in the family and loves her sacrificially, as Christ loved the church. Second, these instructions are about relationships between *believers*. Read 1 Cor. 15:33; 2 Cor. 6:14-16. What do these passages have to say about relationships between believer and *unbeliever*? _____

How do you understand the term *head* in vs. 23? _____

When most husbands tell their wives "I love you" do you think they mean the same thing as Paul means in vs. 25? Why or why not? _____

9 And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

What is the significance of the quote from Genesis in vs. 31 and why do you think Paul included it here?

Throughout this passage Paul uses the relationship between Christ and the church to explain the relationship between a husband and wife. In what other ways and in what other passages is this analogy used? _____

Read vs. 4. Why do you think Paul addresses this instruction to *fathers* only and not to *parents*? _____

_____ Define the word *exasperate* as it is used in this verse. _____

How can we apply instructions addressed to *slaves* and to *masters* in a culture where no one owns slaves? _____

Lesson 12 – 6:10-24

The Whole Armor and Closing

Eph 6:10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power.

11 Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms.

13 Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand.

14 Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place,

15 and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace.

16 In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one.

17 Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

18 And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be

NOTES:

We are to be strong. What is the source of that strength? (vs. 10) _____

Read vv. 11-13. This is about being prepared for a struggle. It is *not* a struggle against _____

It *is* a struggle against _____

Do you think that any man could prevail in a struggle against spiritual powers if he had only his own human strength? Why or why not? _____

What are we supposed to be able to do? (vv. 11, 13, 14) _____

What is the purpose of armor? _____

Verse 11 uses the phrase *put on*. Do you think this relates in any way to those passages we studied in lesson 9 about "putting off" and "putting on"? _____
What might we have to put off in order to put on God's armor? _____

What do you think is meant by "day of evil" in vs. 13? (Consider Eccl. 12:1; Eph. 5:16; Acts 2:20-21). _____

alert and always keep on praying for all the saints.

19 Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel,
20 for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

21 Tychicus, the dear brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will tell you everything, so that you also may know how I am and what I am doing.

22 I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage you.

23 Peace to the brothers, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

24 Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.

Read and compare vv. 14-17 with Isa. 11:1-5, 59:15-18.

What do the various parts of the armor represent in the Ephesian passage?

Belt _____

Breastplate _____

Shoes _____

Shield _____

Helmet _____

Sword _____

Paul moves directly from the struggle against evil to prayer. Some suggest that the taking up of the sword of the Spirit and praying in the Spirit are really one thought. How might these two things fit together? _____

Who does Paul say to pray for in vs. 18?

For what does he ask for prayer in vv. 19-20? _____

Why was Tychicus being sent to Ephesus? _____

Paul began his letter to the church in Ephesus with a blessing. Notice that he ends his letter the same way, with a blessing of peace and grace.