

RCC Women's
Ministry

Knowing Christ

LESSONS FROM PAUL'S
LIFE & MINISTRY



Ephesians & Philippians

January - May 2023

Knowing Christ

LESSONS FROM PAUL'S LIFE & MINISTRY

"We proclaim Christ! We warn everyone we meet, and we teach everyone we can, all that we know about Him, so that, if possible, we may bring every man up to his full maturity in Christ Jesus. This is what I am working at all the time, with all the strength that God gives me."

-The Apostle Paul
Colossians 1:28-29

Living In Christ

EPHESIANS

Tuesday Evening:

January 10: Lesson 8

January 24: Lesson 9

February 7: Lesson 10

February 21: Lesson 11

March 7: Lesson 12

March 21: Lesson 13

Joy In Christ

PHILIPPIANS

Tuesday Evening:

April 4: Lesson 14

April 18: Lesson 15

May 2: Lesson 16

May 16: Lesson 17

Knowing Christ

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-The Apostle Paul
Colossians 1:28-29

Living In Christ

EPHESIANS

Friday Morning:

January 13: Lesson 8
January 27: Lesson 9
February 10: Lesson 10
February 24: Lesson 11
March 10: Lesson 12
March 24: Lesson 13

Joy In Christ

PHILIPPIANS

Friday Morning:

April 7: Lesson 14
April 21: Lesson 15
May 5: Lesson 16
May 19: Lesson 17

What would you do if your future was indefinitely suspended? When Paul wrote this letter, he was living under house arrest waiting for his case to be heard in Caesar's court. After 30 years of tireless traveling, the missionary preacher wasn't allowed to step outside his front door. His "house" was likely a three-room apartment in a modest, but still overcrowded, Roman neighborhood. Paul was nearly sixty, weather beaten and body worn, but he wasn't about to slow down or stop preaching! True to habit, Paul invited leaders from the synagogue (since he was unable to go to them) to come to his rented quarters. He shared the gospel. They gave him a polite hearing and left.

Paul's door stayed open and the visitors poured in. When news of Paul spread through the local churches, Paul found himself enjoying conversation and fellowship with the Roman believers he wrote to just a few years earlier. Old friends and associates began to stop in. There were visits with Timothy and a reunion with John Mark. Luke and Aristarchus remained nearby. Onesimus, a runaway slave, came to faith under Paul's roof and became a loyal servant and friend. With Paul's help, he was able to return home.

There were others who came and went on a daily basis. Since Paul was in custody, he was chained to a Roman soldier at all times. They saw him deal with circumstances, they heard his conversations, and they could not help but listen when he prayed. What do you suppose they learned from this extraordinary old man? Paul couldn't leave his house, but no visitor left untouched.

From a human standpoint, Paul's life was put on hold. Seemingly "all" he could do was pray, write letters, and wait for life to pick up again. The substance of these prison letters reveals that Paul, in spite of an unclear future, saw the big picture. You will see it too. How? By doing what Paul did. Keep your eyes on Jesus.

Background

During Paul's third missionary journey, he settled in Ephesus for the better part of three years. The obstacles and dangers Paul faced during this time were so intense that he compared his experiences in Ephesus to "fighting wild beasts" (1 Cor. 15:32). For the record, more people responded to the gospel than at any other period of Paul's ministry, "so that all who lived in Asia heard the word of the Lord" (Acts 19:10). As a result of Paul's work in Ephesus, disciples went out and planted sister churches throughout the region, including Colossae. When the time came for Paul to leave Ephesus, he left the care of the church to godly men (Acts 20:28) and eventually sent Timothy to shepherd the flock (1 Timothy 1:3). The letter of Ephesians was not intended only for the church in Ephesus; it was meant to be circulated to all the churches throughout Asia.



Tracing Paul's Steps: *Second and Third Missionary Journeys*

- Paul is eager to re-visit churches established on the first journey. Barnabas wants to take John Mark; Paul does not. After a sharp disagreement, they separate. Paul asks Silas to partner with him. Paul delivers the Jerusalem decree (Acts 15) in every city he visits. In Lystra, Paul asks a promising young convert named Timothy to join them. Luke joins the team shortly after. (Acts 16)
- In Troas, a man in a vision asks Paul to come to Macedonia. Paul and his team sail to Macedonia and make their way to Philippi. While there, Paul and Silas are beaten and thrown in jail. During an earthquake, they refuse the chance to escape; the Philippian jailer is converted. (Acts 16)
- Paul establishes a church in Thessalonica but is forced to leave after a riot. He has a brief and fruitful ministry in Berea, but agitators keep him on the move. Eventually Paul arrives in Corinth and is befriended by a Christian couple named Aquila and Priscilla. Paul settles in Corinth for 18 months; during this time, he writes two letters to the believers in Thessalonica. (Acts 17-18)
- From Corinth, Paul's team sails to Ephesus joined by Aquila and Priscilla. The Ephesians ask Paul to stay longer. He promises to return, God willing, but continues on to Jerusalem. In Jerusalem, he visits the church to report on his activity; then he returns to Antioch. The second missionary journey lasts about 3 years. (Acts 18)
- After a time (about one year) Paul begins his third journey. This trip is to encourage the growing churches and gather a collection for the Jerusalem church. (Rom. 15:26; 1 Cor. 16:1) From Antioch, Paul follows his previous route through Galatia before making good on his promise to revisit Ephesus. For nearly 3 years, Paul has a thriving ministry in and around Ephesus. A sister-church is planted (probably by Paul's disciple, Epaphras) in nearby Colossae. (Acts 19) While in Ephesus, Paul becomes aware of problems within the church at Corinth. He responds by writing 1 Corinthians.
- From Ephesus Paul goes to Macedonia, likely visiting believers in Philippi, Thessalonica and Berea. Along the way, he writes another letter to the Corinthians. Soon after, Paul arrives in Corinth. During his 3-month stay, Paul writes to believers in Rome and expresses his intention to visit them. Paul intends to sail directly from Corinth to Jerusalem, but changes his plans to avoid a plot against his life. Instead, he backtracks through Macedonia. At long last, Paul arrives in Jerusalem. (Acts 20-21)
- Within a week of his arrival, Paul is arrested and falsely charged with bringing Gentiles into the temple. Rescued from the angry mob, Paul finds himself in Roman custody. So begins an extended period of trial and defense: two years in prison at Caesarea, followed by two years of house arrest in Rome. (Acts 22-28) During this time, he wrote Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians and Philemon.



Working Text for Ephesians 1:1-23

New International Version (NIV)

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, 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. 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.

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.

Key Words and Phrases

Key words and phrases help us understand the main point the writer wants to make. How do we recognize key words and phrases? Here are some simple things to look for.

- When you see a word or phrase repeated, you can be sure Paul is using it to make his point.
- If you are unfamiliar with a word or its meaning, it becomes a key word *for you*. Take time to learn the definition so you will understand how it is being used in the sentence.

List any key words and phrases you found in Ephesians 1:1-23

Write the definition of the following words or phrases. Use a regular dictionary or a concordance with a Greek Dictionary if you have one.

“spiritual blessing” (vs.3) _____

“good pleasure” (vs.5,9) _____

“in Him” (vs.4,7,9-11,13) _____



INTERPRETATION — *What does it mean?*

Look for a spiritual lesson. Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: “Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid?” **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

APPLICATION — *How does it apply to me?*

We don’t study the Bible just to gather information—we want to spiritually grow. Our heart needs to be open to change. The only way to move truth off the pages of your Bible and into your life is to **put it into action.**

To apply a spiritual lesson, we must examine ourselves and take deliberate steps to do something with what we have learned. Ask yourself: Is this a new insight for me, or does it reinforce what I already know? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? What changes does it require? Think of how the lesson relates to you and what specific course of action you will take. **Write your application in the form of a question to make it personal.**

Ephesians 1:1-6

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Ephesians 1:7-14

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Ephesians 1:15-23

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Summary

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the passage is about. _____

Give a title to the chapter that will help you personally to remember it.



Take a Closer Look

In Him, we have redemption through His blood,
the forgiveness of sins,
according to the riches of His grace
which He lavished on us...
Ephesians 1:7-8a NAS

Memorize God's Word

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize from and re-write the verse here.

Meditate on God's Word

Look up. What does this verse teach you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, His promises.)

Look around. What does this verse teach you about the world and people in general?

Look within. What does this verse teach you about yourself?

Look ahead. Does this verse give you reason to hope? Briefly share your thoughts.

Look alive! Given the opportunity, how would you express the truth found in this verse to someone who needs to hear it?

Make God's Word Your Prayer

As you memorize and meditate on this verse, pray it back to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit examine your heart, increase your understanding, and help you to pray. Ask Him for faith and strength to *act* on the truth of God's Word.



Something to Think About . . .

Pause to meditate on the grace Paul is describing here...the love God has demonstrated on the cross...is not a reluctant but a lavish love!

How suspicious of God many Christians seem to be. We do not trust Him; we doubt His goodness; we taste little of the sweetness of His grace. Here is what will dissolve paralyzing fears, cringing doubt, suspicious unbelief: *the riches of His grace...lavished upon us*. Yes, grace makes us rich.¹

- Sinclair B. Ferguson



God's Word Bearing Fruit

For you, personally, what has been the most important lesson from this study?
How will you put what God has shown you into practice?

¹ Sinclair B. Ferguson, *Let's Study Ephesians*, p.15

Message Notes:

The image shows a large, irregularly shaped area with a grey background and horizontal lines, resembling a torn piece of lined paper. The area is bounded by a dark, jagged border. The text "Message Notes:" is located at the top left of this area. The rest of the area is empty, with horizontal lines extending across the width of the shape.

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Lessons from Paul's Life and Ministry

LIVING IN CHRIST

Ephesians 2:1-22

Inductive Discovery Lesson 9

Someone has said that men who move the world do not let the world move them. Certainly Paul was such a man. When he found himself restricted to quarters in Rome, it changed his plans but not his purpose. Though confined by walls, his spirit soared. His aim intensified. As he meditated on God's plan of redemption, Paul was more conscious than ever of the blessings that belong to those who live in Christ Jesus.

After thirty years, the gospel of God's amazing grace was still on Paul's lips. It spilled into all his conversations and letters. While some experiences fade with time, the Damascus Road light that flooded truth into Paul's soul continued to blaze. He loved to think how every facet of grace reflects the glory of God's plan. Late at night, when cares or concerns made sleep difficult, Paul could rest knowing that God—*with His perfect plan in motion from the beginning of time*—was in control. So what if he was sequestered away while Rome postponed his case? Paul still found opportunities every day to praise God's love, mercy and grace.

Background

What would life for Paul in first-century Rome have been like? The city of Rome was built on seven hills. The average person lived in a tightly congested block of apartments three to five stories high. Shops and workrooms occupied the ground floor and families lived above. A typical flat was a long, narrow space divided into three sections. One large window opened onto the street below; nicer buildings had wood lattice shutters, iron bars or even a small balcony. The cobbled streets were so narrow that carts were banned from sunrise until 4:00 p.m. By day, the streets filled with pedestrians forced to jostle through the crowd and stay alert for falling debris and sewage routinely dumped from windows. Public latrines and baths were provided for all.

Paul's day probably began at sunrise. A typical breakfast would have been bread and olives. From his window, Paul could take in the sights, smells and sounds of daily life. Bakers, butchers, produce vendors and small taverns. Blacksmiths, potters, cobblers and cutlers. He could watch Roman *clients* (men of the lower class) set out early to wait in line to pay their respects to wealthy patrons who gave a small sum of money to get them through the day. He would have seen women on their way to small shrines with handfuls of food or flowers for a daily offering to some god or another. Wedding and funeral processions would have passed by his window. Perhaps he heard the excited roar of crowds cheering gladiators or chariot races at Circus Maximus.

By noon, work was finished; a light lunch was followed with rest and a bath. The public baths were a daily ritual for all Roman citizens; it was a chance to mingle, gossip, and relax. Romans prided themselves on being cleaner (therefore better) than people in other parts of the world.

The streets of Rome were not a safe place to be after dark. By dusk, most people returned home for dinner, barred their doors and stayed in for the night.

Working Text for Ephesians 2:1-22

English Standard Version (ESV)

1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins **2** in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience— **3** among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. **4** But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which He loved us, **5** even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved— **6** and raised us up with Him and seated us with Him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, **7** so that in the coming ages He might show the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. **8** For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, **9** not a result of works, so that no one may boast. **10** For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

11 Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— **12** remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. **13** But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. **14** For He Himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in His flesh the dividing wall of hostility **15** by abolishing the law of commandments and ordinances, that He might create in Himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, **16** and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. **17** And He came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. **18** For through Him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, **20** built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone, **21** in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. **22** In Him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

Key Words and Phrases

Key words and phrases help us understand the main point the writer wants to make. How do we recognize key words and phrases? Here are some simple things to look for.

- When you see a word or phrase repeated, you can be sure Paul is using it to make his point.
- If you are unfamiliar with a word or its meaning, it becomes a key word *for you*. Take time to learn the definition so you will understand how it is being used in the sentence.

List any key words and phrases you found in Ephesians 2:1-22

Write the definition of the following words or phrases. Use a regular dictionary or a concordance with a Greek Dictionary if you have one.

“**surpassing riches** of His grace” (vs.7) _____

“we are His **workmanship**” (vs.10) _____

“good works” (vs.10) _____



INTERPRETATION — *What does it mean?*

Look for a spiritual lesson. Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: “Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid?” **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

APPLICATION — *How does it apply to me?*

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Ephesians 2:1-10

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Ephesians 2:11-18

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Ephesians 2:19-22

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Summary

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the passage is about. _____

Give a title to the chapter that will help you personally to remember it.



Take a Closer Look

**By grace you have been saved through faith,
and that not of yourselves;
it is the gift of God, not of works,
lest anyone should boast.
Ephesians 2:8-9 NKJ**

Memorize God's Word

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize from and re-write the verse here.

Meditate on God's Word

Look up. What does this verse teach you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, His promises.)

Look around. What does this verse teach you about the world and people in general?

Look within. What does this verse teach you about yourself?

Look ahead. Does this verse give you reason to hope? Briefly share your thoughts.

Look alive! Given the opportunity, how would you express the truth found in this verse to someone who needs to hear it?

Make God's Word Your Prayer

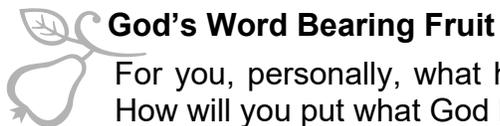
As you memorize and meditate on this verse, pray it back to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit examine your heart, increase your understanding, and help you to pray. Ask Him for faith and strength to *act* on the truth of God's Word.



Something to Think About . . .

G is for Gift: The *principle* of grace.
R is for Redemption: The *purpose* of grace.
A is for Access: The *privilege* of grace.
C is for Character: The *product* of grace.
E is for Eternal Life: The *prospect* of grace.

- Vance Havner



God's Word Bearing Fruit

For you, personally, what has been the most important lesson from this study?
How will you put what God has shown you into practice?

Message Notes:

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Lessons from Paul's Life and Ministry

LIVING IN CHRIST

Ephesians 3:1-21

Inductive Discovery Lesson 10

I'm praying for you . . .

Those words, spoken sincerely, assure us that someone cares. We need the prayers of others, don't we? There is power in prayer—not in the words themselves, but in the faith that lays hold of God's Word. *The effectual, fervent prayer of a righteous man avails much.*

Paul was a praying man. His prayers were filled with faith and armed with courage. He knew that God answers prayer; and if you asked him to tell you *how* he knew, you'd better pull up a chair and plan to stay awhile.

Paul had always been a praying man, but the limitations of house arrest freed him to pour yet more of himself into prayer for the church. He often thought of the believers far away in Asia. He vividly recalled the times of his life there, how hard the enemy had pressed and how greatly God had blessed. When visitors came, Paul eagerly sought news: *what do you hear from Colossae? How does it go for our brothers in Philippi? What of Ephesus?* Though years and miles separated them, Paul had left part of his heart with them. *I'm praying for you*, Paul wrote. His prayer welled up from the depths of his soul, where God's Spirit lived and moved and breathed. He prayed for the saints at Ephesus *and all who are faithful in Christ Jesus* (including you!) to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge.

He prayed what he knew. When Paul contemplated God's calling on his life, it humbled him. When Paul thought about the wisdom of God's plan, it exhilarated him. When Paul pondered the magnitude of God's love, it dropped him to his knees. When Paul thought of all that God's Spirit supplies to help us live, and love, and grow in Christ—well, he couldn't contain his praise! The neighbors probably heard him singing!

Working Text for Ephesians 3:1-21

New Living Translation (NLT)

1 I, Paul, am a prisoner of Christ Jesus because of my preaching to you Gentiles. **2** As you already know, God has given me this special ministry of announcing His favor to you Gentiles. **3** As I briefly mentioned earlier in this letter, God Himself revealed His secret plan to me. **4** As you read what I have written, you will understand what I know about this plan regarding Christ. **5** God did not reveal it to previous generations, but now He has revealed it by the Holy Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets. **6** And this is the secret plan: The Gentiles have an equal share with the Jews in all the riches inherited by God's children. Both groups have believed the Good News, and both are part of the same body and enjoy together the promise of blessings through Christ Jesus. **7** By God's special favor and mighty power, I have been given the wonderful privilege of serving him by spreading this Good News.

8 Just think! Though I did nothing to deserve it, and though I am the least deserving Christian there is, I was chosen for this special joy of telling the Gentiles about the endless treasures available to them in Christ. **9** I was chosen to explain to everyone this plan that God, the Creator of all things, had kept secret from the beginning. **10** God's purpose was to show His wisdom in all its rich variety to all the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms. They will see this when Jews and Gentiles are joined together in His church. **11** This was His plan from all eternity, and it has now been carried out through Christ Jesus our Lord. **12** Because of Christ and our faith in Him, we can now come fearlessly into God's presence, assured of His glad welcome. **13** So please don't despair because of what they are doing to me here. It is for you that I am suffering, so you should feel honored and encouraged.

14 When I think of the wisdom and scope of God's plan, I fall to my knees and pray to the Father, **15** the Creator of everything in heaven and on earth. **16** I pray that from His glorious, unlimited resources He will give you mighty inner strength through His Holy Spirit. **17** And I pray that Christ will be more and more at home in your hearts as you trust in Him. May your roots go down deep into the soil of God's marvelous love. **18** And may you have the power to understand, as all God's people should, how wide, how long, how high, and how deep His love really is. **19** May you experience the love of Christ, though it is so great you will never fully understand it. Then you will be filled with the fullness of life and power that comes from God. **20** Now glory be to God! By His mighty power at work within us, He is able to accomplish infinitely more than we would ever dare to ask or hope. **21** May He be given glory in the church and in Christ Jesus forever and ever through endless ages. Amen.

Key Words and Phrases

Key words and phrases help us understand the main point the writer wants to make. How do we recognize key words and phrases? Here are some simple things to look for.

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List any key words and phrases you found in Ephesians 3:1-21

Write the definition of the following words or phrases. Use a regular dictionary or a concordance with a Greek Dictionary if you have one.

“the **unsearchable riches of Christ**” (vs.8) _____

“the **manifold wisdom of God**” (vs.10) _____



INTERPRETATION — *What does it mean?*

Look for a spiritual lesson. Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: “Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid?” **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

APPLICATION — *How does it apply to me?*

We don’t study the Bible just to gather information—we want to spiritually grow. Our heart needs to be open to change. The only way to move truth off the pages of your Bible and into your life is to **put it into action.**

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Ephesians 3:1-7

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Ephesians 3:8-13

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Ephesians 3:14-21

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Summary

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the passage is about. _____

Give a title to the chapter that will help you personally to remember it.



Take a Closer Look

Now to Him who by His power within us
is able to do infinitely more than we ever dare to ask or imagine—
to Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus forever and ever. Amen!
Ephesians 3:20-21 (Phillips Translation)

Memorize God's Word

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize from and re-write the verse here.

Meditate on God's Word

Look up. What does this verse teach you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, His promises.)

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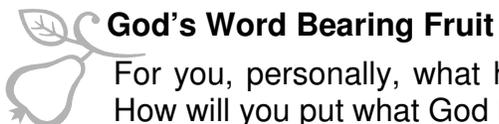


Something to Think About . . .

This is the secret, isn't it? You and I can do nothing—but God, living in us, filling us, working through us, is able to do more than we can even think to ask Him...

God can exceed your wildest dreams—if you stop trying to manipulate, scheme, and bring it to pass in your own strength. Allow Him to live in you and through you, and the wildly unthinkable will become commonplace in your life...

- Ray Stedman¹



God's Word Bearing Fruit

For you, personally, what has been the most important lesson from this study?
How will you put what God has shown you into practice?

¹ Ray Stedman, *Our Riches in Christ*, pg. 164

Message Notes:

A large rectangular area with a light gray background and horizontal lines, resembling a notepad or a message box. The area is framed by a thick, irregular, dark gray border that looks like torn paper. The text "Message Notes:" is positioned at the top left corner of this area.



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Lessons from Paul's Life and Ministry

LIVING IN CHRIST

Ephesians 4:1-32

Inductive Discovery Lesson 11

Paul began this letter by taking his readers on a guided tour of blessings. To borrow a phrase, we've been "in the heavenlies" to get a soaring view of our spiritual riches. Like a pilot on a cross-country flight, Paul points out the landmarks—and you've been given a window seat. Take a flyover of your life in Christ. Look in every direction and see God's grace and wisdom stretch beyond the horizon. See how His mercy blankets the rough terrain. His knowledge, like a vast canyon beckons you to explore and discover His plan. In your heartland are fields of good works, planted and watered by God's own hand. From this altitude, Paul declares the peace we have in Christ is an unremitting river that can't be diverted by circumstances or sandbagged by strife. The landscape of life only makes sense when you see it from God's perspective. *We are filled with the living, breathing life of Christ!*

Read that last sentence again. Let it penetrate your heart as you study the rest of this letter. Up to this point, Paul's focus has been on what Christ has done for us. Now it's time to talk about how to live that out in our daily life and behavior toward others. "I beg you," Paul writes, "to lead a life worthy of your calling."

Working Text for Ephesians 4:1-32

New Living Translation (NLT)

1 Therefore I, a prisoner for serving the Lord, beg you to lead a life worthy of your calling, for you have been called by God. **2** Be humble and gentle. Be patient with each other, making allowance for each other's faults because of your love. **3** Always keep yourselves united in the Holy Spirit, and bind yourselves together with peace. **4** We are all one body, we have the same Spirit, and we have all been called to the same glorious future. **5** There is only one Lord, one faith, one baptism, **6** and there is only one God and Father, who is over us all and in us all and living through us all.

7 However, he has given each one of us a special gift according to the generosity of Christ. **8** That is why the Scriptures say, "When he ascended to the heights, he led a crowd of captives and gave gifts to his people." **9** Notice that it says "he ascended." This means that Christ first came down to the lowly world in which we live. **10** The same one who came down is the one who ascended higher than all the heavens, so that his rule might fill the entire universe. **11** He is the one who gave these gifts to the church: the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, and the pastors and teachers. **12** Their responsibility is to equip God's people to do his work and build up the church, the body of Christ, **13** until we come to such unity in our faith and knowledge of God's Son that we will be mature and full grown in the Lord, measuring up to the full stature of Christ. **14** Then we will no longer be like children, forever changing our minds about what we believe because someone has told us something different or because someone has cleverly lied to us and made the lie sound like the truth. **15** Instead, we will hold to the truth in love, becoming more and more in every way like Christ, who is the head of his body, the church. **16** Under his direction, the whole body is fitted together perfectly. As each part does its own special work, it helps the other parts grow, so that the whole body is healthy and growing and full of love.

17 With the Lord's authority let me say this: Live no longer as the ungodly do, for they are hopelessly confused. **18** Their closed minds are full of darkness; they are far away from the life of God because they have shut their minds and hardened their hearts against him. **19** They don't care anymore about right and wrong, and they have given themselves over to immoral ways. Their lives are filled with all kinds of impurity and greed. **20** But that isn't what you were taught when you learned about Christ. **21** Since you have heard all about him and have learned the truth that is in Jesus, **22** throw off your old evil nature and your former way of life, which is rotten through and through, full of lust and deception. **23** Instead, there must be a spiritual renewal of your thoughts and attitudes. **24** You must display a new nature because you are a new person, created in God's likeness—righteous, holy, and true.

25 So put away all falsehood and "tell your neighbor the truth" because we belong to each other. **26** And "don't sin by letting anger gain control over you." Don't let the sun go down while you are still angry, **27** for anger gives a mighty foothold to the Devil. **28** If you are a thief, stop stealing. Begin using your hands for honest work, and then give generously to others in need. **29** Don't use foul or abusive language. Let everything you say be good and helpful, so that your words will be an encouragement to those who hear them. **30** And do not bring sorrow to God's Holy Spirit by the way you live. Remember, he is the one who has identified you as his own, guaranteeing that you will be saved on the day of redemption. **31** Get rid of all bitterness, rage, anger, harsh words, and slander, as well as all types of malicious behavior. **32** Instead, be kind to each other, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, just as God through Christ has forgiven you.

Ephesians 4:25-32

Facts from the passage:

My Research and Personal Observations:

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Key Words and Phrases

Key words and phrases help us understand the main point the writer wants to make. How do we recognize key words and phrases? Here are some simple things to look for.

- When you see a word or phrase repeated, you can be sure Paul is using it to make his point.
- If you are unfamiliar with a word or its meaning, it becomes a key word *for you*. Take time to learn the definition so you will understand how it is being used in the sentence.

List any key words and phrases you found in Ephesians 4:1-32

Write the definition of the following words or phrases. Use a regular dictionary or a concordance with a Greek Dictionary if you have one.

“**put off**...the **old** man” (vs.22) _____

“**put on** the **new** man” (vs.24) _____



INTERPRETATION — *What does it mean?*

Look for a spiritual lesson. Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: “Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid?” **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

APPLICATION — *How does it apply to me?*

We don't study the Bible just to gather information—we want to spiritually grow. Our heart needs to be open to change. The only way to move truth off the pages of your Bible and into your life is to ***put it into action.***

To apply a spiritual lesson, we must examine ourselves and take deliberate steps to do something with what we have learned. Ask yourself: Is this a new insight for me, or does it reinforce what I already know? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? What changes does it require? Think of how the lesson relates to you and what specific course of action you will take. **Write your application in the form of a question to make it personal.**

Ephesians 4:1-6

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Ephesians 4:7-16

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Ephesians 4:17-24

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Ephesians 4:25-32

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Summary

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the passage is about. _____

Give a title to the chapter that will help you personally to remember it.



Take a Closer Look

**Be kind to one another, tenderhearted,
forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.
Ephesians 4:32 (NKJ)**

Memorize God's Word

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize from and re-write the verse here.

Meditate on God's Word

Look up. What does this verse teach you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, His promises.)

Look around. What does this verse teach you about the world and people in general?

Look within. What does this verse teach you about yourself?

Look ahead. Does this verse give you reason to hope? Briefly share your thoughts.

Look alive! Given the opportunity, how would you express the truth found in this verse to someone who needs to hear it?

Make God's Word Your Prayer

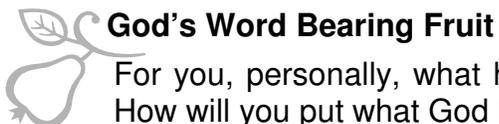
As you memorize and meditate on this verse, pray it back to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit examine your heart, increase your understanding, and help you to pray. Ask Him for faith and strength to *act* on the truth of God's Word.



Something to Think About . . .

No one could ever wrong us as much as we have wronged God. Still, He loves us and forgives us all our sins. This, beloved, should be the measure of our forgiveness.

- Lehman Strauss



God's Word Bearing Fruit

For you, personally, what has been the most important lesson from this study?
How will you put what God has shown you into practice?

Message Notes:

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Lessons from Paul's Life and Ministry

LIVING IN CHRIST

Ephesians 5:1-33

Inductive Discovery Lesson 12

Here's a question for you. Is it imitation...or the real thing? We aren't talking handbags or sunglasses. "Therefore," Paul wrote, "be imitators of God..." Paul's idea of imitation was very different from the impression that word raises in our designer knock-off culture. For an ex-Pharisee like Paul, appearances meant nothing—he was looking for people who carried the authentic love of God into all their relationships.

Paul was keenly aware of the pressures his Ephesian readers faced. They lived in a city that offered everything it takes, humanly speaking, to live the good life. Business and pleasure kept Ephesus humming. The city sat at the intersection of every major trade route—an ambitious man could grow wealthy here. Tourists came for the sports, the arts and theater, and of course the goddess Diana Artemis. The "Lady of Ephesus" was the personification of beauty, worshipped for her sensual power as the mother of all life. Her temple was magnificent, named by *people who knew* as one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Yes, Ephesus had it all. Beautiful streets filled with beautiful people oozing sophistication and influence, pursuing happiness in the dark.

Paul cautioned his Christian friends not to let old habits and attitudes creep back into their life. Then, as now, it was all too easy to relax into a kind of *christianity lite* instead of walking as children of Light. Don't let this happen to you, Paul warned.

You are a woman with influence whether you realize it or not. What do you want to carry into your relationships? Before you turn the page to begin your study, let the urgency of Paul's advice sink in...

"Live life, then, with a due sense of responsibility, not as those who do not know the meaning or purpose of life but as *those who do*. Make the best use of your time, despite all the difficulties of these days. Don't be vague [shallow, casual] but firmly grasp what you know to be the will of the Lord."

Ephesians 5:15-17 Phillips Translation

Working Text for Ephesians 5:1-33

New American Standard (NAS)

1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; **2** and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma.

3 But immorality or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints; **4** and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. **5** For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. **7** Therefore do not be partakers with them; **8** for you were formerly darkness, but now you are Light in the Lord; walk as children of Light **9** (for the fruit of the Light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), **10** trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. **11** Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; **12** for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. **13** But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. **14** For this reason it says, "Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you."

15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, **16** making the most of your time, because the days are evil. **17** So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. **18** And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, **19** speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; **20** always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; **21** and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

22 Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. **23** For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. **24** But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything.

25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her, **26** so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, **27** that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she would be holy and blameless. **28** So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; **29** for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, **30** because we are members of His body. **31** For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. **32** This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church. **33** Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love his own wife even as himself, and the wife must see to it that she respects her husband.

Key Words and Phrases

Key words and phrases help us understand the main point the writer wants to make. How do we recognize key words and phrases? Here are some simple things to look for.

- When you see a word or phrase repeated, you can be sure Paul is using it to make his point.
- If you are unfamiliar with a word or its meaning, it becomes a key word *for you*. Take time to learn the definition so you will understand how it is being used in the sentence.

List any key words and phrases you found in Ephesians 5:1-33

Write the definition of the following words or phrases. Use a regular dictionary or a concordance with a Greek Dictionary if you have one.

“be **imitators** of God” (vs.1) _____

“do not be **partakers** with them” (vs.7) _____



INTERPRETATION — *What does it mean?*

Look for a spiritual lesson. Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: “Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid?” **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

APPLICATION — *How does it apply to me?*

We don’t study the Bible just to gather information—we want to spiritually grow. Our heart needs to be open to change. The only way to move truth off the pages of your Bible and into your life is to **put it into action.**

To apply a spiritual lesson, we must examine ourselves and take deliberate steps to do something with what we have learned. Ask yourself: Is this a new insight for me, or does it reinforce what I already know? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? What changes does it require? Think of how the lesson relates to you and what specific course of action you will take. **Write your application in the form of a question to make it personal.**

Ephesians 5:1-14

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Ephesians 5:15-21

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Ephesians 5:22-33

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Summary

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the passage is about. _____

Give a title to the chapter that will help you personally to remember it.



Take a Closer Look

**Therefore be careful how you walk,
not as unwise men but as wise,
making the most of your time, because the days are evil.
Ephesians 5:15-16 (NAS)**

Memorize God's Word

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize from and re-write the verse here.

Meditate on God's Word

Look up. What does this verse teach you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, His promises.)

Look around. What does this verse teach you about the world and people in general?

Look within. What does this verse teach you about yourself?

Look ahead. Does this verse give you reason to hope? Briefly share your thoughts.

Look alive! Given the opportunity, how would you express the truth found in this verse to someone who needs to hear it?

Make God's Word Your Prayer

As you memorize and meditate on this verse, pray it back to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit examine your heart, increase your understanding, and help you to pray. Ask Him for faith and strength to *act* on the truth of God's Word.



Something to Think About . . .

The great use of one's life is to spend it for something that will outlast it.

- J. Oswald Sanders

God's Word Bearing Fruit

For you, personally, what has been the most important lesson from this study?
How will you put what God has shown you into practice?

Message Notes:

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Lessons from Paul's Life and Ministry

LIVING IN CHRIST

Ephesians 6:1-24

Inductive Discovery Lesson 13

When Paul began this letter, he told the Ephesians why he wrote and what his prayer was for them. *I'm asking God to open the eyes of your heart...so you will get to know Him better...so you will see His plan for you...so you will realize the rich blessings He has given you! And I pray you will begin to understand that God's power—the same power that raised Christ from the dead and seated Him at God's right hand—is available to us who believe in Him.*

Paul talked about why the church exists and how we grow as a body. He spelled out, in practical examples and straightforward instructions, how to walk worthy of our calling. All through this letter, Paul's heart is to help Christians know that living in Christ is a high calling and a daily process. Everything we need has been supplied for us—including the strength we need for the unseen battle we are all engaged in.

Working Text for Ephesians 6:1-24

New International Version (NIV)

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.

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.

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 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.

Key Words and Phrases

Key words and phrases help us understand the main point the writer wants to make. How do we recognize key words and phrases? Here are some simple things to look for.

- When you see a word or phrase repeated, you can be sure Paul is using it to make his point.
- If you are unfamiliar with a word or its meaning, it becomes a key word *for you*. Take time to learn the definition so you will understand how it is being used in the sentence.

List any key words and phrases you found in Ephesians 6:1-24

Write the definition of the following words or phrases. Use a regular dictionary or a concordance with a Greek Dictionary if you have one.

“**obey, obedient**” (vs.1, 5) _____

“be **strong** in the Lord” (vs.10) _____

“be able to **withstand** in the evil day” (vs.13) _____



INTERPRETATION — *What does it mean?*

Look for a spiritual lesson. Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: “Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid?” **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

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We don’t study the Bible just to gather information—we want to spiritually grow. Our heart needs to be open to change. The only way to move truth off the pages of your Bible and into your life is to **put it into action.**

To apply a spiritual lesson, we must examine ourselves and take deliberate steps to do something with what we have learned. Ask yourself: Is this a new insight for me, or does it reinforce what I already know? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? What changes does it require? Think of how the lesson relates to you and what specific course of action you will take. **Write your application in the form of a question to make it personal.**

Ephesians 6:1-9

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Ephesians 6:10-17

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Ephesians 6:18-24

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Summary

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the passage is about. _____

Give a title to the chapter that will help you personally to remember it.



Take a Closer Look

**...be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.
Put on the full armor of God, so that you may be able to
stand firm against the schemes of the devil.**

Ephesians 6:10-11 (NAS)

Memorize God's Word

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize from and re-write the verse here.

Meditate on God's Word

Look up. What does this verse teach you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, His promises.)

Look around. What does this verse teach you about the world and people in general?

Look within. What does this verse teach you about yourself?

Look ahead. Does this verse give you reason to hope? Briefly share your thoughts.

Look alive! Given the opportunity, how would you express the truth found in this verse to someone who needs to hear it?

Make God's Word Your Prayer

As you memorize and meditate on this verse, pray it back to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit examine your heart, increase your understanding, and help you to pray. Ask Him for faith and strength to *act* on the truth of God's Word.



Something to Think About . . .

To be entirely safe from the devil's snares the man of God must be completely obedient to the Word of the Lord. The driver on the highway is safe, not when he reads the signs but when he obeys them.¹

- A.W. Tozer

 **God's Word Bearing Fruit**

For you, personally, what has been the most important lesson from this study?
How will you put what God has shown you into practice?

¹ A.W. Tozer, *That Incredible Christian*

Message Notes:

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Lessons from Paul's Life and Ministry

JOY IN CHRIST

Philippians 1:1-30

Inductive Discovery Lesson 14

Back when Paul first arrived in Rome as a prisoner, many of the local Christians came out to welcome him. *“When Paul saw them,”* Luke wrote, *“he thanked God and his spirits rose.”* At first, curious visitors crowded into his small apartment and stayed all day. But then the weeks stretched into months. Life outside Paul's door went back to normal while Paul adapted to house arrest. It could not have been easy. Think of it—the old preacher who logged thousands of miles can only pace the width of his room. The missionary extrovert, so gifted at engaging crowds in meaningful conversation, must now wait for a knock at the door. But Paul didn't complain and he didn't just adapt—he thrived. *“I have learned to be content in whatever circumstances I am in.”*

Have you ever wanted to encourage someone going through a difficult time, only to find that they cheer you? When the Philippians learned what their loved one was enduring, they did what they could to help. Paul's funds were running low, so they all chipped in. Epaphroditus made the long trip to deliver their gift and stay on as long as Paul needed him. This joyful letter of thanks and encouragement is Paul's heartfelt response.

Tracing Paul's Steps: *The Church in Philippi*

- On his second missionary journey, Paul hoped to visit more cities in Asia and Bithynia; but God clearly shut the door. Instead, Paul is called to preach the gospel in Macedonia. (Acts 16)
- Paul and Silas go to Philippi. They meet a small group of women praying by the riverside and Paul shares the gospel. A businesswoman named Lydia is converted and baptized. Soon others are saved and the church in Philippi is born. (Acts 16)
- When a demon-possessed slave girl is saved, her angry masters have Paul and Silas beaten and thrown into jail. They pray and sing to God while the other prisoners listen. At midnight, a violent earthquake breaks loose the prison chains and doors. Paul stops the jailer from killing himself and assures him no prisoners have escaped. The jailer is converted on the spot and takes Paul and Silas to his home. His family is saved; they are all baptized. (Acts 16)
- While Paul travels, the Philippian church continues to stay in touch. They love Paul and support his ministry, sending help as often as possible. (Philippians 4:16 & 2 Corinthians 11:9)
- Four or five years after Paul's last visit, the Philippians learn that Paul is a prisoner under house arrest in Rome. Anxious to help and eager for Paul to know they haven't forgotten him, the Philippians collect funds and send them to Paul by a messenger named Epaphroditus.

Working Text for Philippians 1:1-30
New King James Version (NKJV)

1 Paul and Timothy, bondservants of Jesus Christ, To all the saints in Christ Jesus who are in Philippi, with the bishops and deacons: **2** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 I thank my God upon every remembrance of you, **4** always in every prayer of mine making request for you all with joy, **5** for your fellowship in the gospel from the first day until now, **6** being confident of this very thing, that He who has begun a good work in you will complete it until the day of Jesus Christ; **7** just as it is right for me to think this of you all, because I have you in my heart, inasmuch as both in my chains and in the defense and confirmation of the gospel, you all are partakers with me of grace. **8** For God is my witness, how greatly I long for you all with the affection of Jesus Christ. **9** And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more in knowledge and all discernment, **10** that you may approve the things that are excellent, that you may be sincere and without offense till the day of Christ, **11** being filled with the fruits of righteousness which are by Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God.

12 But I want you to know, brethren, that the things which happened to me have actually turned out for the furtherance of the gospel, **13** so that it has become evident to the whole palace guard, and to all the rest, that my chains are in Christ; **14** and most of the brethren in the Lord, having become confident by my chains, are much more bold to speak the word without fear. **15** Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill: **16** The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains; **17** but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel. **18** What then? Only that in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

19 For I know that this will turn out for my deliverance through your prayer and the supply of the Spirit of Jesus Christ, **20** according to my earnest expectation and hope that in nothing I shall be ashamed, but with all boldness, as always, so now also Christ will be magnified in my body, whether by life or by death. **21** For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. **22** But if I live on in the flesh, this will mean fruit from my labor; yet what I shall choose I cannot tell. **23** For I am hard-pressed between the two, having a desire to depart and be with Christ, which is far better. **24** Nevertheless to remain in the flesh is more needful for you. **25** And being confident of this, I know that I shall remain and continue with you all for your progress and joy of faith, **26** that your rejoicing for me may be more abundant in Jesus Christ by my coming to you again.

27 Only let your conduct be worthy of the gospel of Christ, so that whether I come and see you or am absent, I may hear of your affairs, that you stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel, **28** and not in any way terrified by your adversaries, which is to them a proof of perdition, but to you of salvation, and that from God. **29** For to you it has been granted on behalf of Christ, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, **30** having the same conflict which you saw in me and now hear is in me.



INTERPRETATION — *What does it mean?*

Look for a spiritual lesson. Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: “Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid?” **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

APPLICATION — *How does it apply to me?*

We don’t study the Bible just to gather information—we want to spiritually grow. Our heart needs to be open to change. The only way to move truth off the pages of your Bible and into your life is to ***put it into action***.

To apply a spiritual lesson, we must examine ourselves and take deliberate steps to do something with what we have learned. Ask yourself: Is this a new insight for me, or does it reinforce what I already know? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? What changes does it require? Think of how the lesson relates to you and what specific course of action you will take. **Write your application in the form of a question to make it personal.**

Philippians 1:1-11

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Philippians 1:12-18

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Philippians 1:19-26

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Philippians 1:27-30

Lesson: _____

Application: _____

?

Summary

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the passage is about. _____

Give a title to the chapter that will help you personally to remember it.



Take a Closer Look

**For I am confident of this very thing,
that He who began a good work in you will complete it
until the day of Jesus Christ.**

Philippians 1:6

Memorize God's Word

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize from and re-write the verse here.

Meditate on God's Word

Look up. What does this verse teach you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, His promises.)

Look around. What does this verse teach you about the world and people in general?

Look within. What does this verse teach you about yourself?

Look ahead. Does this verse give you reason to hope? Briefly share your thoughts.

Look alive! Given the opportunity, how would you express the truth found in this verse to someone who needs to hear it?

Make God's Word Your Prayer

As you memorize and meditate on this verse, pray it back to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit examine your heart, increase your understanding, and help you to pray. Ask Him for faith and strength to *act* on the truth of God's Word.



Something to Think About . . .

Whatever God starts, He finishes—and what He does, He does well.¹
– Warren Wiersbe

God's Word Bearing Fruit

For you, personally, what has been the most important lesson from this study?
How will you put what God has shown you into practice?

¹ Warren Wiersbe, *Be Committed*

Message Notes:

A large rectangular area with horizontal lines, resembling a notepad or message template. The area is filled with light gray horizontal lines on a white background. The entire area is enclosed within a dark, irregular, hand-drawn style border that follows the shape of the lined area.



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Lessons from Paul's Life and Ministry

JOY IN CHRIST

Philippians 2:1-30

Inductive Discovery Lesson 15

In chapter one, Paul assured the Philippians that his circumstances weren't hindering him from doing what God called him to do. *As it turns out, this situation is giving me an opportunity to be a witness for Christ.* He couldn't change his circumstances, but he could use them. Knowing this, Paul found reasons to rejoice in spite of the conflicts he had to endure.

Do you suppose Paul spent much time worrying why some people made his life difficult for sharing the gospel? For being faithful to live for Christ? Not at all. You should expect it, Paul wrote. "For to you it has been granted for Christ's sake, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake." Simply put, conflict for the sake of Christ is unavoidable.

But some conflicts can—and must—be avoided. As chapter two opens, Paul urges his Philippian friends not to allow conflicts that stir up from within their own hearts. He encourages them to remain united, avoid selfishness, and work together in love.

Working Text for Philippians 2:1-30
New American Standard (NAS)

1 Therefore if there is any encouragement in Christ, if there is any consolation of love, if there is any fellowship of the Spirit, if any affection and compassion, 2 make my joy complete by being of the same mind, maintaining the same love, united in spirit, intent on one purpose. 3 Do nothing from selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves; 4 do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Have this attitude in yourselves which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, 7 but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant, and being made in the likeness of men. 8 Being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself by becoming obedient to the point of death, even death on a cross. 9 For this reason also, God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name, 10 so that at the name of Jesus every knee will bow, of those who are in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue will confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and trembling; 13 for it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure. 14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing; 15 so that you will prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, among whom you appear as lights in the world, 16 holding fast the word of life, so that in the day of Christ I will have reason to glory because I did not run in vain nor toil in vain. 17 But even if I am being poured out as a drink offering upon the sacrifice and service of your faith, I rejoice and share my joy with you all. 18 You too, I urge you, rejoice in the same way and share your joy with me.

19 But I hope in the Lord Jesus to send Timothy to you shortly, so that I also may be encouraged when I learn of your condition. 20 For I have no one else of kindred spirit who will genuinely be concerned for your welfare. 21 For they all seek after their own interests, not those of Christ Jesus. 22 But you know of his proven worth, that he served with me in the furtherance of the gospel like a child serving his father. 23 Therefore I hope to send him immediately, as soon as I see how things go with me; 24 and I trust in the Lord that I myself also will be coming shortly. 25 But I thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus, my brother and fellow worker and fellow soldier, who is also your messenger and minister to my need; 26 because he was longing for you all and was distressed because you had heard that he was sick. 27 For indeed he was sick to the point of death, but God had mercy on him, and not on him only but also on me, so that I would not have sorrow upon sorrow. 28 Therefore I have sent him all the more eagerly so that when you see him again you may rejoice and I may be less concerned about you. 29 Receive him then in the Lord with all joy, and hold men like him in high regard; 30 because he came close to death for the work of Christ, risking his life to complete what was deficient in your service to me.

Philippians 2:19-30 (cont.)

Facts from the passage:

My Research and Personal Observations:

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Key Words and Phrases

Key words and phrases help us understand the main point the writer wants to make. How do we recognize key words and phrases? Here are some simple things to look for.

- When you see a word or phrase repeated, you can be sure Paul is using it to make his point.
- If you are unfamiliar with a word or its meaning, it becomes a key word *for you*. Take time to learn the definition so you will understand how it is being used in the sentence.

List any key words and phrases you found in Philippians 2:1-30.

Write the definition of the following words or phrases. Use a regular dictionary or a concordance with a Greek Dictionary if you have one.

“**fellowship** of the Spirit” (vs.1) _____

“**humility** of mind” (vs.3) _____

“**blameless** and **innocent**” (vs.15) _____



INTERPRETATION — *What does it mean?*

Look for a spiritual lesson. Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: “Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid?” **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

APPLICATION — *How does it apply to me?*

We don’t study the Bible just to gather information—we want to spiritually grow. Our heart needs to be open to change. The only way to move truth off the pages of your Bible and into your life is to **put it into action.**

To apply a spiritual lesson, we must examine ourselves and take deliberate steps to do something with what we have learned. Ask yourself: Is this a new insight for me, or does it reinforce what I already know? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? What changes does it require? Think of how the lesson relates to you and what specific course of action you will take. **Write your application in the form of a question to make it personal.**

Philippians 2:1-11

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

Philippians 2:12-18

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

Philippians 2:19-30

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

Summary

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the passage is about. _____

Give a title to the chapter that will help you personally to remember it.



Take a Closer Look

For it is God who is at work in you,
both to will and to work for His good pleasure.
Philippians 2:13

Memorize God's Word

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize from and re-write the verse here.

Meditate on God's Word

Look up. What does this verse teach you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, His promises.)

Look around. What does this verse teach you about the world and people in general?

Look within. What does this verse teach you about yourself?

Look ahead. Does this verse give you reason to hope? Briefly share your thoughts.

Look alive! Given the opportunity, how would you express the truth found in this verse to someone who needs to hear it?

Make God's Word Your Prayer

As you memorize and meditate on this verse, pray it back to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit examine your heart, increase your understanding, and help you to pray. Ask Him for faith and strength to *act* on the truth of God's Word.



Something to Think About . . .

I used to ask God to help me. Then I asked if I might help Him. I ended up by asking God to do His work through me.

- J. Hudson Taylor

God's Word Bearing Fruit

For you, personally, what has been the most important lesson from this study?
How will you put what God has shown you into practice?

Message Notes:

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Lessons from Paul's Life and Ministry

JOY IN CHRIST

Philippians 3:1-21

Inductive Discovery Lesson 16

In this chapter, Paul warns the Philippians not to put their confidence in the flesh. "Been there, done that," he says. "And I'm *not* going back."

Paul was a clear-sighted, straight-thinking man. He knew what to let go of, and what to pursue with all his energy. When it came to physical needs and desires, he said, "I have learned to be content." But when it came to spiritual needs and desires, he humbly declared it was way too soon to say he had arrived. This from a man in the twilight years of a life fully devoted to God! "*I'm pressing on,*" he wrote, "*grasping ever more firmly that purpose for which Christ Jesus grasped me.*"

Working Text for Philippians 3:1-21
New Living Translation (NLT)

1 Whatever happens, dear brothers and sisters, may the Lord give you joy. I never get tired of telling you this. I am doing this for your own good.

2 Watch out for those dogs, those wicked men and their evil deeds, those mutilators who say you must be circumcised to be saved. 3 For we who worship God in the Spirit are the only ones who are truly circumcised. We put no confidence in human effort. Instead, we boast about what Christ Jesus has done for us. 4 Yet I could have confidence in myself if anyone could. If others have reason for confidence in their own efforts, I have even more! 5 For I was circumcised when I was eight days old, having been born into a pure-blooded Jewish family that is a branch of the tribe of Benjamin. So I am a real Jew if there ever was one! What's more, I was a member of the Pharisees, who demand the strictest obedience to the Jewish law. 6 And zealous? Yes, in fact, I harshly persecuted the church. And I obeyed the Jewish law so carefully that I was never accused of any fault.

7 I once thought all these things were so very important, but now I consider them worthless because of what Christ has done. 8 Yes, everything else is worthless when compared with the priceless gain of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord. I have discarded everything else, counting it all as garbage, so that I may have Christ 9 and become one with him. I no longer count on my own goodness or my ability to obey God's law, but I trust Christ to save me. For God's way of making us right with himself depends on faith. 10 As a result, I can really know Christ and experience the mighty power that raised him from the dead. I can learn what it means to suffer with him, sharing in his death, 11 so that, somehow, I can experience the resurrection from the dead!

12 I don't mean to say that I have already achieved these things or that I have already reached perfection! But I keep working toward that day when I will finally be all that Christ Jesus saved me for and wants me to be. 13 No, dear brothers and sisters, I am still not all I should be,

but I am focusing all my energies on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, **14** I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us up to heaven. **15** I hope all of you who are mature Christians will agree on these things. If you disagree on some point, I believe God will make it plain to you. **16** But we must be sure to obey the truth we have learned already.

17 Dear brothers and sisters, pattern your lives after mine, and learn from those who follow our example. **18** For I have told you often before, and I say it again with tears in my eyes, that there are many whose conduct shows they are really enemies of the cross of Christ. **19** Their future is eternal destruction. Their god is their appetite, they brag about shameful things, and all they think about is this life here on earth. **20** But we are citizens of heaven, where the Lord Jesus Christ lives. And we are eagerly waiting for him to return as our Savior. **21** He will take these weak mortal bodies of ours and change them into glorious bodies like his own, using the same mighty power that he will use to conquer everything, everywhere.

Key Words and Phrases

Key words and phrases help us understand the main point the writer wants to make. How do we recognize key words and phrases? Here are some simple things to look for.

- When you see a word or phrase repeated, you can be sure Paul is using it to make his point.
- If you are unfamiliar with a word or its meaning, it becomes a key word *for you*. Take time to learn the definition so you will understand how it is being used in the sentence.

List any key words and phrases you found in Philippians 3:1-21.

Write the definition of the following words or phrases. Use a regular dictionary or a concordance with a Greek Dictionary if you have one.

“**gain**” (vs.7-8) _____

“**loss**” (vs.7-8) _____

“the **power** of His resurrection” (vs.10) _____

“the **fellowship** of His sufferings” (vs.10) _____



INTERPRETATION — *What does it mean?*

Look for a spiritual lesson. Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: “Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid?” **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

APPLICATION — *How does it apply to me?*

We don’t study the Bible just to gather information—we want to spiritually grow. Our heart needs to be open to change. The only way to move truth off the pages of your Bible and into your life is to **put it into action.**

To apply a spiritual lesson, we must examine ourselves and take deliberate steps to do something with what we have learned. Ask yourself: Is this a new insight for me, or does it reinforce what I already know? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? What changes does it require? Think of how the lesson relates to you and what specific course of action you will take. **Write your application in the form of a question to make it personal.**

Philippians 3:1-6

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

Philippians 3:7-16

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

Philippians 3:17-21

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

Summary

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the passage is about. _____

Give a title to the chapter that will help you personally to remember it.



Take a Closer Look

...I count all things to be loss in view of the surpassing value
of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord...

Philippians 3: 8a NAS

Memorize God's Word

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize from and re-write the verse here.

Meditate on God's Word

Look up. What does this verse teach you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, His promises.)

Look around. What does this verse teach you about the world and people in general?

Look within. What does this verse teach you about yourself?

Look ahead. Does this verse give you reason to hope? Briefly share your thoughts.

Look alive! Given the opportunity, how would you express the truth found in this verse to someone who needs to hear it?

Make God's Word Your Prayer

As you memorize and meditate on this verse, pray it back to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit examine your heart, increase your understanding, and help you to pray. Ask Him for faith and strength to *act* on the truth of God's Word.



Something to Think About . . .

The more you know about Christ,
the less you will be satisfied with superficial views of Him.
C.H. Spurgeon



God's Word Bearing Fruit

For you, personally, what has been the most important lesson from this study?
How will you put what God has shown you into practice?

Message Notes:

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Lessons from Paul's Life and Ministry

JOY IN CHRIST

Philippians 4:1-23

Inductive Discovery Lesson 17

It has been said that the trouble with life is that life is trouble. As Job 5:7 says, "Man is born to trouble as surely as the sparks fly upward."

Paul finishes this letter with a plea to stand firm in the Lord and some specific advice about how to do that. He urges two friends to resolve their differences. We don't know what sparked the argument, but it was causing dissension in the church. Paul told his Philippian friends how to keep worry from overtaking their thoughts and dominating their actions. He gave them the formula for peace and contentment, even in troublesome circumstances.

Paul didn't just make this stuff up or get it out of a self-help book. He was *living* it. He knew where the source of his help and strength came from... "*And my God will supply all your needs according to His riches in Christ Jesus.*"

Working Text for Philippians 4:1-23
English Standard Version (ESV)

1 Therefore, my brothers, whom I love and long for, my joy and crown, stand firm thus in the Lord, my beloved.

2 I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche to agree in the Lord. **3** Yes, I ask you also, true companion, help these women, who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

4 Rejoice in the Lord always; again I will say, Rejoice. **5** Let your reasonableness be known to everyone. The Lord is at hand; **6** Do not be anxious about anything, but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. **7** And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.

8 Finally, brothers, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence, if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things. **9** What you have learned and received and heard and seen in me—practice these things, and the God of peace will be with you.

10 I rejoiced in the Lord greatly that now at length you have revived your concern for me. You were indeed concerned for me, but you had no opportunity. **11** Not that I am speaking of being in need, for I have learned in whatever situation I am to be content. **12** I know how to be brought low, and I know how to abound. In any and every circumstance, I have learned the secret of facing plenty and hunger, abundance and need. **13** I can do all things through him who strengthens me. **14** Yet it was kind of you to share my trouble.

15 And you Philippians yourselves know that in the beginning of the gospel, when I left Macedonia, no church entered into partnership with me in giving and receiving, except you only. **16** Even in Thessalonica you sent me help for my needs once and again. **17** Not that I seek the

gift, but I seek the fruit that increases to your credit. **18** I have received full payment, and more. I am well supplied, having received from Epaphroditus the gifts you sent, a fragrant offering, a sacrifice acceptable and pleasing to God. **19** And my God will supply every need of yours according to his riches in glory in Christ Jesus. **20** To our God and Father be glory forever and ever. Amen.

21 Greet every saint in Christ Jesus. The brothers who are with me greet you. **22** All the saints greet you, especially those of Caesar's household. **23** The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit.

Key Words and Phrases

Key words and phrases help us understand the main point the writer wants to make. How do we recognize key words and phrases? Here are some simple things to look for.

- When you see a word or phrase repeated, you can be sure Paul is using it to make his point.
- If you are unfamiliar with a word or its meaning, it becomes a key word *for you*. Take time to learn the definition so you will understand how it is being used in the sentence.

List any key words and phrases you found in Philippians 4:1-23.

Write the definition of the following words or phrases. Use a regular dictionary or a concordance with a Greek Dictionary if you have one.

“whatever things are **true**” (vs. 8) _____

“**noble**” (vs.8) _____

“**just**” (vs.8) _____

“**pure**” (vs.8) _____

“**lovely**” (vs.8) _____

“of **good report**” (vs.8) _____

“any **virtue**” (vs.8) _____

“**praiseworthy**” (vs.8) _____



INTERPRETATION — *What does it mean?*

Look for a spiritual lesson. Be careful not to read into the Bible an idea that is not there. Examine each verse in light of the verses around it. To help you find a spiritual lesson, ask questions such as: “Is there a command to obey? Is there a promise to claim? Is there a condition to that promise? Is there a warning to heed? Is there an example to follow or avoid?” **State the lesson in one simple sentence.**

APPLICATION — *How does it apply to me?*

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To apply a spiritual lesson, we must examine ourselves and take deliberate steps to do something with what we have learned. Ask yourself: Is this a new insight for me, or does it reinforce what I already know? What does it challenge me to do? Does it point out error in my attitude or actions? What changes does it require? Think of how the lesson relates to you and what specific course of action you will take. **Write your application in the form of a question to make it personal.**

Philippians 4:1-9

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

Philippians 4:10-14

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

Philippians 4:15-23

Lesson: _____

Application: _____
_____?

Summary

Write a simple sentence that summarizes what the passage is about. _____

Give a title to the chapter that will help you personally to remember it.



Take a Closer Look

**Be anxious for nothing,
but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving
let your requests be made known to God.
And the peace of God which surpasses all comprehension,
will guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.
Philippians 4:6-7 NAS**

Memorize God's Word

Choose the translation you prefer to memorize from and re-write the verse here.

Meditate on God's Word

Look up. What does this verse teach you about God? (For example, look for signs of His character, His attributes, His works, His promises.)

Look around. What does this verse teach you about the world and people in general?

Look within. What does this verse teach you about yourself?

Look ahead. Does this verse give you reason to hope? Briefly share your thoughts.

Look alive! Given the opportunity, how would you express the truth found in this verse to someone who needs to hear it?

Make God's Word Your Prayer

As you memorize and meditate on this verse, pray it back to the Lord. Let the Holy Spirit examine your heart, increase your understanding, and help you to pray. Ask Him for faith and strength to *act* on the truth of God's Word.



Something to Think About . . .

Most Christians are being crucified on a cross between two thieves:
yesterday's regret and tomorrow's worries.
Warren Wiersbe

God's Word Bearing Fruit



For you, personally, what has been the most important lesson from this study?
How will you put what God has shown you into practice?

Message Notes:

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