

EPHESIANS

Remember

As an Individual

Spend time reflecting on the incredible truth that God has done ALL the work in your salvation. Review the list from the sermon of everything God has done—from choosing you before the foundation of the world to sealing you with His Holy Spirit. Which of these truths do you most easily forget when life gets difficult? Ask God to help you remember His faithfulness and to trust Him more than you do your own understanding of what's happening around you. (Completing the section titled review these Scriptures might also be helpful)

As a Group:

1. Share a time when you forgot that God is the one at work in you but you tried to handle things in your own strength. What happened?
2. Paul describes grace as 'unfair'—one man paying the price for all of us. How does understanding grace as 'unfair' rather than something we earn change how we approach God? How we treat others?
3. The sermon emphasized that the church is God's chosen tool to display His wisdom to 'rulers and authorities in the heavens.' What do you think that means? How does that change your view of the church's purpose?

Review these Scriptures

Take out your Bible and review the first three chapters of Ephesians. Spend some time highlighting what God has done for you. If you have time look at what you have done and highlight that in a different color.

Consider these Questions

As you discuss these questions, focus on remembering God's work (the things you highlighted) rather than relying on your own strength (the one thing you highlighted), place greater emphasis on bringing our empty, broken vessels to God for Him to fill and use.

1. When you face difficult circumstances, what is your first response—to trust God's plan or to rely on your own understanding? How can we grow in trusting God first?
2. Paul was in prison when he wrote this, yet he told them not to be discouraged. How can we maintain confidence in God's plan even when life doesn't look like we want it to?
3. Pastor Phil listed all the things God has done (yellow highlighter) versus what we did (pink highlighter—we were dead). Why is it important to remember that God did all the work?
4. What does it mean to bring our 'dead bodies, empty broken vessels' to God? What are you holding back from giving Him?
5. How can we practically 'stay connected to God' throughout our daily lives so we don't forget His faithfulness? (Prayer practices, Scripture memory, community, etc.)
6. Pastor Phil ended with a prayer suggestion: “God help me understand what I'm going through. It's a mystery to me but I know that you are at work.” How can praying this way this week change your perspective on your current struggles?

Unity in Christ

EPHESIANS

Chapter 1 is who God is

GREETING

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will:
To the faithful saints in Christ Jesus^a at
Ephesus.^b

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

GOD'S RICH BLESSINGS

3 Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ.^c
⁴ For he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in love before him.^d ⁵ He predestined us to be adopted as sons through Jesus Christ for himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,^e to the praise of his glorious grace that he lavished on us in the Beloved One.

⁷ In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace^f that he richly poured out on us with all wisdom and understanding.^g ⁸ He made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he purposed in Christ^h as a plan for the right timeⁱ — to bring everything together in Christ, both things in heaven and things on earth in him.

¹¹ In him we have also received an inheritance,^j because we were predestined according to the plan of the one who works out everything in agreement with the purpose of his will,^k so that we who had already put our hope in Christ might bring praise to his glory.

¹³ In him you also were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed.^l ¹⁴ The Holy Spirit is the down payment of our inheritance, until the redemption of the possession, to the praise of his glory. ¹⁵ We get to walk with God in a broken world, but someday in a perfect world.

PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL INSIGHT

¹⁶ This is why, since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints,^m I never stop giving thanks for you

1:1-2 (Introduction)

1:3-18 (God's Will + Purpose)

1:13-16 (Paul's Prayer that we understand God's will)

2:1-10 (We were dead but made alive by God)

2:10-22 (No people group is above the other)

as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷ I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father,ⁿ would give you the Spirit^o of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.^p ¹⁸ I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what is the wealth of his glorious inheritance in the saints,^q and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the mighty working of his strength.

GOD'S POWER IN CHRIST

²⁰ He exercised this power in Christ by raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavens — ²¹ far above every ruler and authority, power and dominion, and every title given,^r not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²² And he subjected everything under his feet^s and appointed him^t as head over everything for the church,^u which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way.

FROM DEATH TO LIFE

2 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins^v in which you previously lived according to the ways of this world, according to the ruler of the power of the air, the spirit now working in the disobedient.^w ³ We too all previously lived among them in our fleshly desires, carrying out the inclinations of our flesh and thoughts, and we were by nature children under wrath as the others were also.

⁴ But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love that he had for us,^x made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace!^y ⁵ He also raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus,^z so that in the coming ages he might display the immeasurable riches of his grace through his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. ⁶ For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God's gift^{aa} — not from works, so that no one can boast. ¹⁰ For we are

3:1-12 (Paul's Mission to Gentiles)

3:14-19 (Intense Prayer to understand what Jesus did)

3:20-21 (All Glory to God)

Ephesians was written to non-Jewish people

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his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.

¹⁰ Because it is only because of his grace

UNITY IN CHRIST

¹¹ So then, remember that at one time you were Gentiles in the flesh — called "the uncircumcised" by those called "the circumcised," which is done in the flesh by human hands.^{ab} ¹² At that time you were without Christ, excluded from the citizenship of Israel, and foreigners to the covenants of promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus, you who were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.^{ac} ¹⁴ For he is our peace, who made both groups one and tore down the dividing wall of hostility. In his flesh,

¹⁵ he made of no effect the law consisting of commands and expressed in regulations, so that he might create in himself one new man from the two, resulting in peace.^{ad} ¹⁶ He did this so that he might reconcile both to God in one body through the cross by which he put the hostility to death.^{ae} ¹⁷ He came and proclaimed the good news of peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near.^{af} ¹⁸ For through him we both have access in one spirit to the Father.^{ag} ¹⁹ So then you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with the saints, and members of God's household.^{ah} ²⁰ built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the cornerstone.^{ai} ²¹ In him the whole building, being put together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord.^{aj} ²² In him you are also being built together for God's dwelling in the Spirit.

PAUL'S MINISTRY TO THE GENTILES

3 For this reason, I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles — ² you have heard, haven't you, about the administration of God's grace that he gave to me for you?^{ak} ³ The mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have briefly written above.^{al} ⁴ By reading this you are able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ.^{am} ⁵ This was not made known to people^{an} in other generations as it is now revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.^{ao} ⁶ The Gentiles are coheirs, members of the same body, and partners in the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.^{ap} ⁷ I was made a servant

of this gospel by the gift of God's grace that was given to me by the working of his power.

⁸ This grace was given to me — the least of all the saints — to proclaim to the Gentiles the incalculable riches of Christ,^{aq} and to shed light for all about the administration of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things.^{ar} ⁹ This is so that God's multi-faceted wisdom may now be made known through the church to the rulers and authorities in the heavens.^{as} ¹⁰ This is according to his eternal purpose accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.^{at} ¹¹ In him we have boldness and confident access through faith in him.^{au} ¹² So then I ask you not to be discouraged over my afflictions on your behalf, for they are your glory.

PRAYER FOR SPIRITUAL POWER

¹⁴ For this reason I kneel before the Father^{av} from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.^{aw} ¹⁵ I pray that he may grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power in your inner being through his Spirit,^{ax} and that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith.^{ay} ¹⁶ I pray that you, being rooted and firmly established in love,^{az} may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the length and width, height and depth of God's love,^{ba} and to know Christ's love that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.^{bb}

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us — ²¹ to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

UNITY AND DIVERSITY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

4 Therefore I, the prisoner in the Lord, urge you to live worthy of the calling you have received,^{bc} with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,^{bd} making every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.^{be} ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit — just as you were called to one hope^{bf} at your calling — ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one baptism,^{bg} one God and Father of all, who is above all and through all and in all.

⁷ Now grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift.^{bh} ⁸ For it says:

¹1:1 Or to the saints, the believers in Christ Jesus. ¹1:10 Other mss omit at Ephesus. ¹1:14 Or in his sight. In love. ¹1:8 Or on us. With all wisdom and understanding. ¹1:10 Or the fulfillment of times. ¹1:11 Or in him we are also an inheritance.

¹1:17 Or the Father of glory. ¹1:17 Or a spirit. ¹1:21 Lit every name named. ¹1:22 Ps 8:6. ¹1:22 Lit gave him. ¹2:2 Lit sons of disobedience. ¹2:4 Lit love with which he loved us.

God has done everything in my life what we bring to the equation is self fulfilling death

¹2:16 Or death in himself. ¹3:5 Lit to the sons of men. ¹3:12 Or through his faithfulness. ¹3:14 Other mss add of our Lord Jesus Christ. ¹4:4 Lit called in one hope.