

Sermon Application

LIVE IT OUT

1. Practice Daily Worship – Take even five minutes tomorrow morning to say out loud, “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.” Name one blessing and thank Him.
2. Resist Distraction – Identify the one thing that pulls your heart away most often—your phone, your worries, your entertainment—and set it aside during a set time of prayer.
3. Shift from Debate to Gratitude – When you don’t understand everything about how God works, thank Him for the fact that He does. Worship before you analyze.
4. Remember His Faithfulness – Keep a “gratitude journal.” Write down one way you see God’s hand each week. And then, when distraction comes, you’ll have a record of God’s work in your life.

(scroll for discussion guide!)

Community Group Discussion Guide

Step 01: Recap what our current series is all about.

Note: Remind the group what series we're currently on (since not everyone will have been at church recently) and read through the series description provided below to refresh everyone on what it's all about.

Series Title: Ephesians

Main Idea: In the book of Ephesians, we learn how the Gospel creates a new multi-ethnic, covenant family of God and affects how we live every day as a new humanity unified in love. Energized by the Holy Spirit, believers can stand tall against the spiritual evil that threatens our unity as a Church family and maturity as followers of Jesus.

Step 02: Recap of this week's message.

Note: Read through the message outline with everyone briefly. You can stop and make comments as you see fit or read straight through it. Make sure you take time to read through the main text.

Message Title: Distraction Is Stealing Your Praise

Main Text: Ephesians 1:3-14

Supporting Text(s): N/A

Message Outline:

In Ephesians 1:3–14, Paul bursts into a single, soaring sentence of worship, rehearsing the blessings God has given us in Christ. The passage is not first an invitation to debate God's methods but a call to remember His goodness and worship Him. When distraction dulls our worship, Paul's words remind us to pause, recall God's faithfulness, and give Him glory. Our response to salvation should be daily gratitude and heartfelt worship, not apathy or endless arguments.

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Background

- Many of Paul's letters are addressing a particular issue within a particular local church. Ephesians, however, is primarily thought to be a letter meant to circulate between many churches in Asia minor (modern day Turkey).
- Paul writes this letter in a style called Asiatic-Greek—ornate, rhythmic, artistic, meant to grab your attention and stir your heart.

A Call To Worship.

- In this passage, Paul both opens and closes with a call to worship.
- Over and over Paul says, “in him” or “in the Beloved” or “in Christ”. He is reinforcing the idea that everything worth celebrating is bound up in Jesus!
- This passage is a stirring list of blessings from God through Christ. Sometimes as Christians that have followed Jesus for a long time, we are susceptible to tuning out these blessings and not responding with the appropriate awe...
- This passage has caused much debate in church history, but we cannot fall in love with how God accomplished something more than the fact that he accomplished it.

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An Invitation To Remember

- “The rhetorical purpose ... of this discourse is to reinforce by way of reminder what is already believed and practices already followed.” Thus, Paul is not teaching something new but inviting his readers to dwell on what they already know.
- Remember that God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing (v.3)
- Remember that in Christ we have redemption and forgiveness (v.7)
- Remember that we have an inheritance sealed by the Spirit (v.13-14)

Some ways to respond:

- Practice Daily Worship
- Resist Distraction
- Shift from Debate to Gratitude
- Remember God’s faithfulness

Step 03: Lead group discussion.

Note: Do your best to keep the discussion going. Make sure you have read through the questions beforehand and are primed with thoughts of your own. Make everyone get specific with *how* they will apply this message in their own lives and in community—*no vague ideas allowed!*

Specific to this week’s message:

1. Re-read the passage. What are your initial thoughts?
2. Do you ever find yourself indifferent reading passages like this? Despite the amazing truths Paul is conveying, maybe the style is wordy and confusing or the language has become cliché?

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3. Consider your current season of life, what distracts you from worship?
4. How could you practice daily acts of worship?
5. How intentional are you to practice gratitude for all that you have “in Christ”?

General questions:

6. How did this message encourage you? How did it convict you?
7. What is your plan for applying this message to your personal/daily life?
8. What might it look like for us to live this out in community?
9. Was there anything about this message that stood out to you?