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# Ephesians

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## Author

The book of Ephesians is Paul's letter to a church he planted (located in modern Turkey). Paul spent two years spreading the gospel ([Acts 19:8-10](#)). Paul wrote to reveal the mystery of the church as Christ's body ([Eph 3:2-6](#)).

## Key Phrase and Verse

in Christ, in Him

*till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ; (Eph 4:13, NKJV)*

## Terms

Grace = unmerited favor

Peace = spiritual completeness, shalom

Because Christ-followers have grace **from** God, they have peace **with** God.

## Theme

If you were giving a descriptive title to Ephesians, you might call it "You are God's Masterpiece." The theme is revealing the mystery of the Church.

## Outline

Ephesians 1-3	Ephesians 4-6
<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• doctrinal</li><li>• truths about our riches in Christ</li><li>• gifts</li><li>• wealth in Christ</li></ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• practical</li><li>• application for our daily lives</li><li>• responsibilities</li><li>• walk in Christ</li></ul>

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## Personal Reflection and Application

Paul was thankful for the salvation of the Ephesians ([Eph 1:15-16](#)). How could Paul be sure of their salvation? He states **two indicators of genuine salvation**.

1. Faith in Christ as their Lord and Savior ([Rom 10:9](#))
2. Love for other believers ([1John 3:18](#))

Consider what people see when they observe you. Do they see both those indicators? Do they see you obeying and

seeking to serve the Lord Jesus Christ in your daily life? Do they see you being kind and caring to other believers?

How well do you accept how God made you and who He made you to be? **Do you sometimes wish you had different gifts?** Do you wonder if you have any gifts at all? Read [Ephesians 2:10](#). God has a plan for you. He has given you the exact gifts you need to fulfill the plan. To make your gifts more apparent, volunteer for a role that appeals

to you. Try a few roles, noting which ones bring you satisfaction. Those are indicators of a possible gift. Take a spiritual gifts survey to further explore your gifts.

Spend time in prayer praising God for the forgiveness we have in Jesus. Read [Ephesians 4:23](#) out loud. Think about the people you have not forgiven. Ask God to give you the strength and compassion to forgive them.

Your mind and body require sensory stimulation. How you choose to get it is a choice you make. Do you seek the external sensory experiences of the world or do you seek to allow the Holy Spirit to fill and delight you? Read [Ephesians 5:18-20](#). Simply denying yourself physical excesses won't solve your problems. Something will come to fill the void. Will you choose God?

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## Small Group Conversation Guide

We often pray for peace or strength. **When Paul prayed for the Ephesians, he didn't pray for those things.** Why? Paul knew that God had already given those things to all believers. Instead, Paul prayed that God would open their eyes to recognize and appreciate what He had given them ([Eph 1:18](#)). We don't lack blessings; however, we often lack insight to understand and use our blessings properly. As a group, pray for God to open your eyes to recognize, appreciate, and apply the many blessings He has given you.

[Ephesians 2:10](#) says "we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works." The literal word for "workmanship" can also be translated as "**poem**." In essence, we are God's poem and He is the master poet. He is scripting our lives and shaping our destiny. How does this understanding of the word "workmanship" change your understanding of what God wants to do in and through you?

**Can't we all just get along?** Generally, humans are uncomfortable around those who are different from them. The surest way to get along with others is to take on a new identity in Christ. For those in Christ, there is no distinction in gender, race, or social status. There is simply Christ. The key to harmony is to focus on Christ ([Eph 2:13-18](#)).

Discuss some practical ways to help us focus on what we have in common through Christ ([Rom 10:12-13](#)).

Discuss what it's like to feel accepted by others. Give examples of times when you have felt accepted. Read [Ephesians 3:19-21](#). If you have accepted Christ as Savior, you are part of God's family and He accepts you **unconditionally**. How does knowing this **motivate** you to please your Savior?

[Ephesians 4:20-21](#) contains three words that are powerful descriptors of our faith, "But you have not so **learned** Christ, if indeed you have **heard** Him and have been **taught** by Him, as the truth is in Jesus." What do those three words mean to you as you're striving to make progress in your Christian life?

The will of God can sometimes be elusive; however, Paul makes the will of God clear in [Ephesians 5:15-21](#). In essence, God's will is that we be filled with the Spirit. Paul compares being drunk and being filled with the Spirit. Drinking alcohol affects a person's mind, speech, actions, and company. Similarly, letting the Holy Spirit be in control affects a person's mind, speech, actions, and company. How does knowing this give you more confidence in knowing and doing God's will?

LOVE and RESPECT is a popular phrase in Christian marriage circles. Do you know that it comes from [Ephesians 5:33](#)? Read that verse as a group and discuss why God's perfect plan for marriage requires husbands to unconditionally love their wives and for wives to unconditionally respect their husbands. What does this tell you about how men and women are naturally wired? What does each spouse need?

As you read [Ephesians 6:10-18](#) aloud, make a list of the armor God provides us. Discuss which body parts the armor covers. For which part of the body is there no armor? Hint: We are not supposed to run from the enemy ([Jas 4:7](#)).

How's your walk? As a group, think of practical examples of each aspect of your walk that the table notes.

Walk in love <a href="#">Eph 5:1-2</a>
Walk in light <a href="#">Eph 5:8</a>
Walk carefully <a href="#">Eph 5:15-16</a>

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## Leadership Principles from Ephesians

### Your Gifts, His Plan

In [Ephesians 2:10](#), Paul tells us that God has prepared good works for each of us to do. Following His plan and doing those good works glorifies Him ([John 15:8](#)) and demonstrates that we are indeed His disciples. If you experience dissatisfaction as a leader, take time to assess the talents, time, and treasures God has given you. How are you using them? Make adjustments to be on the plan He has for you, using the gifts He gave you.

### Bring Out the Best in Others

A good leader **develops** others and **equips** them to exercise their gifts ([Eph 4:11-12](#)). To what extent have you identified the gifts of those under your care? What opportunities do you provide for them to use their gifts? What feedback do you give to help them develop their gifts?

### Remain Steadfast

Are you a leader who is "tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind" ([Eph 4:14](#))? How can you remain steadfast? Read [Ephesians 4:11-16](#) to see how.

### Watch Your Words

As a leader, **your words** often have more impact than the words of others ([Jas 3:1](#)). Realize that this makes you more accountable both to God and to those who are under your leadership. Read and meditate on [Ephesians 4:25-32](#). Focus on what this passage suggests about how to communicate as a leader. What convicts you about this passage? What did the passage teach you? What will you apply to your life and leadership?

## Fair Expectations

In [Ephesians 6:4](#), Paul says, “Do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.” Though Paul is addressing this to fathers, it applies to all leaders. This means, we should not tell people to do something without giving them the tools, resources, and

instruction they need to do it. Do you do that as a parent or leader? Do you place unrealistic expectations on those under your care? Ask them if they ever get frustrated with you for giving them tasks without the tools to accomplish them.

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## Something to Find in Each Chapter

As you read through the book, it may help to have something to find in each chapter. Try these:

01. What the Holy Spirit does after we believe the gospel	02. What role good works play before and after salvation
03. What Paul said God is able to do	04. What we do with God’s truth to grow up spiritually
05. What God designed human marriage to picture	06. What Paul asked people to pray for while he was in jail