



Knowing Jesus More

A Study Through Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians

*That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him,
being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. Colossians 1:10*

Lesson 1

Galatians Chapter 1

Memory Verse:

**And they glorified God in me.
Galatians 1:24**

The Galatians, having launched their Christian experience by faith, seem content to leave their voyage of faith and chart a new course based on works - a course that Paul finds disturbing, to say the least! His letter to the Galatians is a vigorous attack against the gospel of works and a defense of the gospel of faith.

Paul begins by setting forth his credentials as an apostle with a message from God: blessing comes from God on the basis of faith, not law. The law declares men guilty and imprisons them: faith sets men free to enjoy liberty in Christ. But liberty is not license. Freedom in Christ means freedom to produce the fruits of righteousness through a Spirit-led lifestyle.

The book is called *Pros Galatas*, "to the Galatians," and it is the only letter of Paul that is specifically addressed to a number of churches ("to the churches of Galatia," 1:2). The name Galatians was given to the Celtic people because they originally lived in Gaul before their migration to Asia Minor.

Paul's letter is widely known as the epistle of freedom and liberty! As he writes this, he puts his pen to paper in the context of a great deal of conflict and controversy. His convictions are clear and his inner voice is strong; the words are flowing from Paul's head, but the passion is evident from his heart.

We will see that one-third of the letter reveals Paul's own personal story: the other two-thirds are the testimony that Paul has learned from his own pilgrimage: that true faith and freedom come only from a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

Let's dig in and hear His heart, and receive all that God has for us this week! Take a moment now, to ask the Lord to speak to you as you study His Word.

Day 1 – Read Galatians 1:1-24

1. What is the overall tone, or what is Paul’s “voice”, of this first chapter?
2. What is the basis of Paul’s right to state his case to the people?
3. From your initial observations, what problem does Paul intend to address?
4. Count the number of times you see the word, *gospel* in this chapter:
5. Using a dictionary, look up the definition of the word, *gospel*, and write it here:
6. Write John 3:16 here:



Stop and Listen: Journal your thoughts. Give thanks for the gospel that you have so freely received by the death of our Lord Jesus Christ. Think about where you might be right now if you hadn’t received this free gift.



*“...Jesus paid it all,
all to Him I owe,
sin had left a crimson stain,
He washed it white as snow...”*

Day 2 – Galatians 1:1-5

Letters written in Paul's day often began with a salutation that introduced the writer. Paul dictated most of his letters to a scribe (secretary) often signing the last few lines in his own hand to prove authenticity.

1. Paul reveals several things about his calling in verse 1. By what specific title does Paul introduce himself?
 - a. On whose authority does Paul stand, and what comment does he make about the power behind this authority?
 - b. Where did Paul's call as an apostle *not* originate?
2. Who adds their greetings along with Paul's? v.2

Paul makes the point that he was not sent from men nor by men (as if to need their approval), but by Jesus Christ and God the Father, and presents himself as an apostle. *"Why? Because to those who embraced and welcomed his ministry, he was a servant; but to those who challenged his authority, he was an apostle, a "sent one", of Jesus Christ."* (Jon Courson) He also adds that all the brethren who are with him are in agreement with what he is about to say.

3. What does Paul wish for believers? v.3-5
4. Turn to Colossians 1:13, write what it says here:
 - a. Who provides these blessings; what is His plan for us?
5. Turn to Matthew 20:28, write it down:



Stop and Listen: Paul was apprehended (called) by the Lord to a life of service for the gospel's sake. He laid down his life for the brethren. His example is one we should consider. Take a few moments to think about this, what has, or what is, the Lord calling you to? How are you serving the brethren? Is there something you may be apprehensive to take a step of faith in? What is holding you back? It's time to lay it all down at His feet - every fear and any thought of disobedience. If you don't know what His calling is for you, ask Him to speak to you! Write down your thoughts here, and date it! See what He will do as you commit it to Him and take a step toward His calling!

Day 3 – Galatians 1:6-10

The believers in Galatia originally knew where to find the truth about salvation; they had heard the Apostle Paul preach the message of the Good News and had placed their faith in Christ to save them. But over time, some had begun listening to false teachers – **legalists** - who were teaching that they had to add *works* to their faith in order to be saved. Becoming confused, they were turning away from God and to the world for answers. They were deceived into believing that it had to be Jesus *plus something else*; but Paul defends the Gospel, angrily and aggressively addressing his readers.

1. What is Paul's response to the changing views of these believers? v.6
2. Look up the definition of the word "marvel" and write it here:

3. Why do you think Paul would marvel at their changing views personally?
4. To what (whom) were the people turning away *from* and turning *toward*?
5. Is there “another” gospel? What does Paul say about it? v.7
6. Turn to 2 Corinthians 11: 3-4, and write it here:
7. If anyone - Paul the apostle or even an angel from heaven - preaches another gospel, what does that person deserve? v.8

(The strong meaning intended here is that such a person should be eternally condemned; *anathema* in the Greek.)

8. Look at verse 10. Paul says, “Or do I seek to please men”. He answers his own question with, “for if I still pleased men, I would not be a bondservant of Christ”. Can you say the same? Share your thoughts.
9. What does 1 Thessalonians 2:4 say?



Stop and Listen: Have you listened to someone attempting to share a false gospel? If you were to embrace a “gospel” other than the one you received by faith in Christ Jesus, how would it affect the genuine *grace* and *peace* you now freely enjoy? Why did Paul so often link grace with peace? *Because man will never know peace until he understands grace.*

Have you considered the importance of pleasing the heart of God in sharing the gospel? How about pleasing His heart right now by stopping to thank Him for such a free gift! Write down the names of those loved ones that haven’t received the gift of salvation yet. Pray for them now, and for an open door to share with them.

Day 4 – Galatians 1:11-24

Paul realized what all of God’s children must realize, that God had a plan for him. He recognized his encounter with Jesus Christ on the Damascus Road as part of that plan. In the remainder of chapter 1, Paul emphasizes that the initiative is always with God; and that we, His creation, respond to His grace.

1. In verses 11-12, how does Paul restate God’s plan?

The revelation that came to Paul on the Damascus Road was not only God’s plan for him, it was also God’s plan for the Gentiles.

2. In your own words, reiterate Paul's previous way of life in Judaism.

a. v.13

b. v.14

The turning point for Paul came at his conversion, which resulted in a personal relationship with Jesus Christ.

3. According to v.15-17, what was the first thing Paul did as a new believer that would prepare him for his call as an *apostle*?

Paul would spend three years in the desert of Arabia before returning to Damascus to begin preaching the gospel. Put yourself in Paul's shoes and try to imagine the communion Paul had with God during that extended time away.

4. What were some of the benefits and blessings that come to mind as you contemplate how Paul spent this time alone with God?


5. Who did Paul see first upon his return to Jerusalem? v.18-21 Why would this visit have been important to Paul?

6. During the fifteen days he was there, who was the only other apostle that he saw?

Although the message Paul would take forth and his personal experience did not require the "endorsement" of the other twelve, Paul no doubt wanted their sanction for the unity he needed in presenting the gospel to the unbelieving Gentiles. It was the beginning of the strong emphasis Paul consistently placed on the church as one body in Christ.

7. Where did Paul go from there? How did the people know about Paul? v.21-24
8. “And they glorified God in me”. Perhaps the most important comment the world can make about us is to say that others glorify God because of what He has done in us. What is there about you that gives others cause to glorify Him? Share your thoughts.



 **Stop and Listen:** Before others can glorify God in you, you must glorify God. It's Christ *in you*, the hope of glory. It's the Holy Spirit who takes up residence in you, and fills you with Himself. This produces fruit that only He can give. Look ahead at Galatians 5:22, and make a list of the fruit of the Spirit that resides in the believer. Examine yourself; do you see those in you? Ask Him for help in the areas you are lacking.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal blue or grey ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are approximately 20 lines visible. The paper has a slight shadow on the right side, suggesting it's resting on a surface.

"In my life, Lord, be glorified... be glorified...in my life, Lord, be glorified today"

The Review



*“...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb
and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me...” Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

It’s time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

1. How has your perspective been altered through this chapter?
2. What word of truth is now more important to you?
3. How have you grown closer in your relationship with the Lord?
4. What relevance is there between this week’s memory verse and your daily life?
5. Write out this week’s memory verse from memory:

[illegible]



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*That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him,
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Lesson 2

Galatians Chapter 2

Memory Verse:

I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. Galatians 2:20

Paul had established several churches in the region of Galatia on his first missionary journey. Now, fourteen years later, he learned that his work there was being undermined by a group of Jewish loyalists – Judaizers – who were violently loyal to the principles and practices of the Mosaic Law. In order to contend with their legalistic attacks on the gospel and at the same time protect the unity of the church, Paul vigorously defends his apostolic authority.

“To Paul, his spiritual liberty in Christ was worth far more than popularity or even security. He was willing to fight for that liberty. His first fight was at the Jerusalem council. Had Paul been unwilling to wage this spiritual warfare, the church in the first century might have become only a Jewish sect, preaching a mixture of law and grace. But, because of Paul’s courage, the gospel was kept free from legalism, and it was carried to the Gentiles with great blessing.” Warren Wiersbe.

Let’s dig in!

Day 1 – Read Galatians 2: 1-21

1. What do you determine about Paul’s heart attitude in this second chapter of the letter?

2. Why do you think Paul would go to such trouble to defend his credentials to the church?

(Note: Pay attention to the way that Paul refutes the Judaizers to understand more about their theological belief based on the law.)



Stop and Listen: Ask the Lord right now if there is an area that you lack in being brave for Him when it comes to the defense of the gospel, or His Word. Journal your thoughts.

Day 2 – Galatians 2:1-2

1. Why did Paul return to Jerusalem and who accompanied him? 2:1, 2
 - a. What did Paul do publicly?
 - b. What was the concern that caused him to meet privately with the church leaders?
2. Turn to Acts 15 to read more about this journey and the reasons why. What stands out to you the most of the reason why they went there?

Barnabas was Paul's spiritual mentor and one of his closest friends when Paul returned to Jerusalem following his conversion. Titus was a Gentile believer who worked with Paul. In later years he assisted Paul by going to some of the most difficult churches to help them solve their problems.

3. Turn to Acts 11: 24-26. We see that Barnabas was full of the Holy Spirit and of faith, and he was led by the Spirit. Write what you find out especially in verse 26.



Stop and Listen: The name “Barnabas” means “son of encouragement”. We all need to be encouragers and we all need encouragement. We make a mistake when we think that someone else “has it all together” and doesn’t need encouraging! Stop and ask the Lord who you can encourage right now, and act on it! Write down what you did here!

Day 3 – Galatians 2:3-10

Paul gave a full exposition of the gospel to the Gentiles. He also spoke privately with church leaders to ensure this preaching was sound. Paul wisely kept open dialogue with the leaders in Jerusalem, adding his respect to their authority.

The presence of Titus, a Greek, with Paul brought into clear focus the debate of whether Gentile Christians should be welcomed into the fellowship of the Jewish Christians without subjecting them to the rite of circumcision. Paul's answer to the debate (v 3) was a resounding yes! – That God accepted Titus based on faith, not on circumcision.

1. According to Genesis 17: 9-14, what was the command for Jews regarding the rite of circumcision?

a. Based upon Old Testament scriptures, what were the Judaizers of Paul's day teaching the people? See Acts 15:1

Paul was not denying Jews the right to be circumcised; he was, rather, stating that Gentiles should not be forced to become Jews first (by being circumcised) before becoming Christians.

2. Who stirred up the matter initially; what was their goal? v. 4

These Judaizers were considered false brothers by Paul. Elsewhere in 2 Corinthians 11:26, Paul speaks of being in perils among false brethren. In other words, they were dangerous, acting as spies, sneaking in among the ranks of true believers.

a. How did Paul, Titus and Barnabas respond to them? v.5

3. Are there false believers in the church today? What are some of the ways they may try to promote their own agenda?

Personal: How can you guard your freedom against those who would hinder the grace of God working in your life?

4. In your own words, summarize how the Jerusalem leaders validated the testimony and teaching of Paul. v. 6-10

5. What did the leaders in Jerusalem exhort Paul and Barnabas to do? v. 10

The phrase *right hand of fellowship* (v 9) means more than a friendly hand shake; it involves a partnership in the work of evangelism: Paul and Barnabas would go to the Gentiles, and Peter, James and John would go the Jews.

The *poor* in Jerusalem included those stricken by famine, the rising number of widows, and those being persecuted following Stephen's martyrdom.

a. What was Paul's response to the leaders? v. 10

b. What does this say to you about the *perspective* and *priority* of true leaders in the church?



Stop and Listen: Identify a situation when your behavior was motivated by the desire to please other people around you rather than the desire to please the Lord. If your desire to please God becomes your perspective and priority, how will it help you to change that behavior?

Day 4 – Galatians 2:11-21

Paul is concerned to the point of alarm; sounding the warning bells as he mounts a defense of his own credentials and then urges the believers not to go back to their former belief in keeping the law to save them. Everything Paul represented and advocated pointed to what mattered most – the free grace of God that comes only through trusting in Christ.

The illustration he uses to drive home his point is none other than the pillar of the apostles – Peter himself. The occasion Paul writes about allows him to exercise his authority as an apostle through his correction.

1. What does Peter do that warrants Paul's public correction? v. 11-13
 - a. What term does Paul use to label Peter? How did his behavior affect those around him?
2. What, specifically, about their behavior made Paul so angry? v. 14a
 - a. Think about it: what does Peter's behavior reveal about the reality of peer pressure - the power of its influence?
3. Summarize how Paul addressed the situation in verses 14-21.

In verse 16, for the first time in his letter to the Galatians, Paul uses the term *justified*, which means *to declare righteous*. It is the sovereign act of God in declaring a sinner righteous in Christ Jesus.

The Judaizers were arguing that if people weren't living under the law, they would freely sin against God; and if people could be righteous in Christ but continue to live as they wanted, their own sinful action would make Christ an advocate of sin. Paul's answer to them is an emphatic "No!" His point is that grace leads to freedom from the slavery of obeying sin and freedom to obey God. This is the reality of radical faith!

In verses 18-21, Paul transitions from the use of the pronoun “we” (v 15-17) to that of “I”. The perspective here in the remaining verses of chapter two is a personal one, based on Paul’s own experience of walking with the Lord.

4. What does Paul say about his Christian walk in the following verses:

a. v. 18

b. v.19

c. v. 20

d. v. 21



Stop and Listen: Are you able, like Paul, to say with all integrity of heart that it is absolutely unthinkable for you as a believer to set aside (or cast away) what God has graciously provided in Christ and to return to your old way of doing things? There is no going back! Please share your thoughts.

The Review

*“...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb
and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me...” Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

It’s time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

6. How has your perspective been altered through this chapter?

7. What word of truth is now more important to you?

8. How have you grown closer in your relationship with the Lord?

9. What relevance is there between this week’s memory verse and your daily life?

10. Write out this week’s memory verse from memory:

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Lesson 3

Galatians Chapter 3

Memory Verse:

**Therefore the law was our tutor to bring us
to Christ that we might be justified by faith.
Galatians 3:24**

Can you remember a time when you heard a message preached from the pulpit only to walk out the doors and not allow it to directly affect your personal life? Even worse is experiencing the opposite – applying the truth of Scripture to your daily life only to turn and exchange it for your old way of doing things. Incredible! But it can happen, and such was the case with the believers in Galatia.

Paul had just concluded (2:15-21) reiterating the message he first preached at the beginning of this letter, the gospel of faith and freedom that comes from God's grace alone. Now he will seek to defend the truth by pointing to the reality of past experience in the Christian life.

Day 1 – Read Galatians 3:1-29

1. Paul's use of the word "foolish" refers not to a lack of intelligence but a lack of obedience. His message in the first five verses is very clear. Look them up in more than one translation to capture their intensity. What do you notice?

The Phillips translation of verse 1 says: "O you dear idiots of Galatia...who has been casting a spell over you?" The passive meaning of the word foolish implies *unthinkable*; in the Greek sense it means *unreasonable*. Paul's accusation against them is that, having known the wonder and freedom of God's grace operating in their lives, they were allowing themselves to be deceived into giving up and laying down that freedom in exchange for the bondage of the law. They were doing what was unthinkable and unreasonable!

2. What vivid picture did Paul work hard to portray about the Lord? v.1

3. What series of questions does Paul pose to press his point?

a. v. 2

b. v. 3

c. v. 4

d. v. 5



Stop and Listen: It's God's unmerited grace to us that enables us to live in freedom. It's not what we say or do that justifies us before our loving, heavenly Father. We are justified by what Jesus did for us on the cross, and our belief in that. He loves us in spite of ourselves. Yet, we sometimes struggle with our flesh nature in this very fact. It's as simple as believe and receive. Write a prayer of thanksgiving for His GRACE, and what it means to you.

Day 2 – Galatians 3:5-9

Paul refers to the believers past experience (v.4) in light of their present circumstances; meaning, if they had suffered so many things at the hands of the Jews, then why would they desire to return to the Jewish laws? He goes on to emphasize the point that they received the Holy Spirit – not when they obeyed the law – rather, when they believed!

1. What direct evidence did these believers have of the Spirit's presence among them? v. 5

2. In verses 6-9, who does Paul portray as the model believer?

Apparently, the Judaizers had used Abraham as their example of one who inherited God's blessing of righteousness to argue that every true follower of God needed to follow his example of circumcision.

a. Paul counters their argument by saying that Abraham was justified by God, but on what basis?

b. According to Paul, who qualifies to receive the same spiritual blessings?

Write a definition for the following words using a dictionary, or additional bible translations:

1. Cursed (Galatians 3:13)

2. Promise (3:14)



Stop and Listen: Regarding true believers, Romans 4:3 says, “*Abraham believed God and it was accounted to him for righteousness*”. He believed God’s promise of salvation centuries before it was fulfilled on a Roman cross. What about you; do you take God at His word or are you more inclined to conclude that seeing is believing? Journal your thoughts.

Day 3 – Galatians 3:10-18

With a tone bordering on arrogance, Paul goes for the jugular, attacking the Judaizers where they were the strongest. Quoting from Deuteronomy 27:26, Paul turns the scripture on them: “*Cursed is the one who does not confirm all the words of this law by observing them.*” Contrary to what the Judaizers espoused, the law itself cannot save anyone – it can only condemn.

1. To understand the Old Testament use of the word *curse*, read through Deuteronomy 27. Notice in verses 14-26 that 12 times the use of the word *cursed* is mentioned. Take a moment to list those who are *cursed*.

Paul’s argument is evident – for any and all who did not obey every law there was condemnation (a curse). If a person were to try to merit God’s favor by keeping the law, he/she would have to satisfy all that the law demanded, but no one could do that. The result of attempting to be right with the law in order to be right with God ends in a curse – not God’s curse but the law’s curse (v. 10-12).

2. Who are the “justified” in God’s eyes? v. 11

3. In verse 13, Paul quotes from Deuteronomy 21:23. What did Christ do to lay the foundation for our salvation?
4. The blessing Abraham received is the promise of the Spirit by faith that Paul mentions in verse 14. What do you learn about the Holy Spirit in the following?
 - a. Isaiah 32:15
 - b. Ezekiel 37:14
 - c. Luke 11:13
 - d. Luke 24:49
 - e. John 14: 16-17
 - f. John 14:26

To further explain the principles of law and grace, in verses 15-18 Paul turns to an example from the Galatians' daily life – a contractual agreement. Once a contract is signed and confirmed by two parties it cannot be changed or annulled by anyone. That being true, how much more binding is God's promise to us? His covenant cannot be changed because He does not change. His word is true – He always keeps His promises!

5. To whom did God make the promise of salvation? v. 16

The Jews claimed to be the rightful heirs to God's promise because they were Abraham's offspring but Paul points out the fact that there is only one rightful heir – Jesus. It is through Christ that all believers by faith inherit the promise of salvation.

The Judaizers believed that because the law came after Abraham it was superior to grace (salvation by faith alone). Paul states that the giving of the law 430 years after God's promise of salvation by faith does not nullify the promise. The inheritance – justification by faith – is the gift of grace to all who believe. This gift of grace given through Abraham is permanent and unchangeable and superior to the law.



Stop and Listen: Romans 8:16 & 17 says: *“the Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, then heirs – heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ, if indeed we suffer with Him that we may also be glorified together.”* Look up the definition of the word “heir” and write it here. What does this mean to you personally?

Day 4 – Galatians 3:19-29

Paul will now reveal the purpose of the law, that it was always intended to make us aware of our sin and lead us to Christ.

1. Why was the law necessary? v. 19-20

The word “transgression” in verse 19 means, “a stepping aside from the right track”. The law made people aware that they were deviating off of the right path.

- a. The law was established as a temporary measure - until who came? Turn to Matthew 5:17 for help.

A mediator is needed to work between two or more parties involved in a contract and the agreement is valid as long as both sides keep their part. God commissioned angels to mediate the law to Moses who then gave it to the people of Israel. God in turn kept His promise, but Israel did not keep hers.

According to Paul, does all this mean that the law is opposed to God’s promise? Paul answers, *“Absolutely not!”* (v.21) Righteousness does not come by the law.

2. For whom was the promise intended? v. 22-24

- a. Before faith, the law did what? What was the law’s ultimate purpose?

3. What served to break the power of the law? v.25
4. Look carefully at verses 26-29. In your own words, list the things that every believer is and has because we belong to Christ.
5. Is there one aspect of your inheritance listed above that is of particular significance to you? Please explain.



Stop and Listen: Who doesn't enjoy putting on a little something new? If you perhaps need a new spiritual wardrobe, take a look at verse 27 where Paul talks about "*putting on Christ*". To be *in Christ* means to *clothe yourself with Christ* by putting on His nature, characteristics, attitude and behavior. Spend a little time meditating on Ephesians 4:20-24. How is your study in His Word helping you to *put on Christ*?

*Lord, I want to be like Jesus
In my heart, in my heart
Lord, I want to be like Jesus, in my heart*

*In my heart, in my heart
Lord, I want to be like Jesus, in my heart*

*And Lord, I want to be more holy
In my heart, in my heart
Oh Lord, I want to be more holy, in my heart*



Song by Fernando Ortega

The Review



*“...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb
and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me...” Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

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Lesson 4

Galatians Chapter 4

Memory Verse:

And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into your hearts, crying out, “Abba Father”. Galatians 4:6

“One of the tragedies of legalism is that it gives the appearance of spiritual maturity when, in reality, it leads the believer back into a “second childhood” of Christian experience. The Galatian Christians, like most believers, wanted to grow and go forward for Christ, but they were going about it in the wrong way. Their experience is not too different from that of Christians today who get involved in various legalistic movements, hoping to become better Christians. Their motives may be right, but their methods are wrong.” Warren Wiersbe.

The law could never do what grace has done by making us adult children of God. His grace through our faith allows us the privilege of becoming sons and daughters, uniting together as brothers and sisters in one body. Paul again stresses this point along with the allegory of Isaac and Ishmael, Abraham’s two sons, to convincingly prove that justification comes through grace.

Day 1 – Read Galatians 3:36-29 through 4:1-39

You are there, one of the recipients of Paul’s letter. Using your own words, recap the following from 3:26-29: *Now that you belong to Christ...*

1. Whose likeness do you bear? (think about how this makes you feel; please explain)
2. What distinctions are no longer present between you and other believers?

3. Whose true descendant are you? What does that make you by spiritual birthright?



Stop and Listen: v.28 says “*for you are all one in Christ Jesus*”. What a tremendous claim! The law created differences and distinctions not only between individuals and nations, but also between various kinds of foods and animals. Jesus Christ came not to divide, but to **unite**. Consider how you are contributing to *unity* in the body of Christ in the way that you love one another. Journal your thoughts here.

... they will know we are Christians, by our love, by our love

they will know we are Christians by our love...



Day 2 – Galatians 4:1-7

Paul uses a child to illustrate the spiritual immaturity of living under the law. A child may be a full heir one day of everything his father possesses, but for the time being he lives as a servant or a slave, obeying his guardians until the time set by this father to receive his inheritance.

1. Paul includes himself along with the Galatians, saying that before Christ all were under bondage to what? What does this mean? v. 3

2. What was God's answer to man's dilemma of being held captive by the law? v.4-5

3. As each one receives the Holy Spirit, how are we able to call out to God? v.6

4. Think about it; since you now belong to God, what now belongs to you? v.7

5. Write a definition for the following words:

a. Adoption (4:5)

b. "Abba" (4:6)



Stop and Listen: As an heir of Christ, every child of God, through the Word of God, has unlimited access to the reading of the will; *who we are, what we've received, where we're headed, and what we'll become*. As far as your inheritance is concerned, what role does the Holy Spirit initially play in your life? See Ephesians 1:14. How does this knowledge encourage you as to what is yet to come? Write down your thoughts! Maranatha!!!

Day 3 – Galatians 4:8-20

Wouldn't it be tragic to realize the richness of your spiritual inheritance only to turn away from it and go back to living like a spiritual pauper? But to forfeit your privilege could only mean one thing- that you chose to relinquish it, since it cannot be revoked.

Paul was warning his readers not to listen to false teachers that were seducing them away from their freedom in Christ and back into their former bondage to legalism. His appeal is based upon their former existence prior to salvation.

1. Before the Galatians knew Christ, to what/who were they enslaved? v.8

We can almost hear the disbelief and exasperation in Paul's voice here in verse 9 (paraphrase): *"But now that you know God - or are known by Him - why would you allow yourselves to listen to false teachers who try to persuade you to relinquish your rightful inheritance and return again to slavery?"* To do so would be a tragic betrayal of God's grace!

2. What were these weak believers attempting to do and why? v. 10

3. What was Paul's growing fear for them? v.11

After his lengthy discourse, Paul's genuine love and concern for the Galatians becomes evident. Years earlier on his first trip to the region of Galatia, these same people had warmly received him. He refers to that initial encounter and the relationship that developed to help motivate them to return to God's grace. Paul pleads with them as their friend: "I beg you, become as I am, for I also have become as you are" (NRSV). He had brought the gospel to them without requiring anything; now he wanted them to become as he was – faithful to God and free from all entanglements.

4. During that earlier visit, how was Paul received? v. 13-14

- a. What allowed him to preach the gospel?

- b. Out of a deep appreciation for Paul, to what extent would these people have gone to care for him (an indication perhaps of what kind of illness he suffered)? v.15

5. What, then, had caused their attitude to change toward Paul? v.16

- a. What were the Judaizers doing to win the people over? v. 17-18

6. In verses 19-20, Paul reveals his love for his readers. To what does he compare himself?

- a. What is Paul's passion for these people?



Stop and Listen: Pause and think it over... how sad and self-defeating it is when we allow ourselves to turn from the simplicity of our Christian faith to trust in rituals, rules and routines that are based on our own efforts. What we must learn to desire is less of us and more of Him - we must decrease so that He might increase! How can you fan the flame of this godly desire within you? Will you do it? Please share your thoughts!

Day 4 – Galatians 4:21-31

Finally, Paul wraps up his argument against legalism by sharing an allegory – a symbolic interpretation of a spiritual truth that has literal meaning. He points to Abraham and the ongoing controversy involving his two wives and two sons in order to illustrate the two covenants, one by the law and the other by grace.

The historical account of Abraham's story covers some ten chapters of the Old Testament and, in case you're not familiar with it, we will look at the highlights from the perspective of Abraham's progressive age in years.

- 75 yrs: Abraham is called by God to leave his homeland to go to Canaan where God promises Him many descendants (Genesis 12:1-9)
- 85 yrs: Sarah remains barren for many years and becomes impatient; offers her handmaid Hagar to Abraham to be his wife (Genesis 16:1-3)
- 86 yrs: Hagar becomes pregnant and gives birth to a son, Ishmael, and contention develops in the home. Sarah evicts Hagar, but the Lord sends Hagar back with a promise to care for her and her son Ishmael (Genesis 16:4-16)
- 99 yrs: Abraham again receives the promise from God that he will have an heir by Sarah and will call his name Isaac (Genesis 17-18)
- 100 yrs: Isaac is born, creating a rivalry with Ishmael, whom his father dearly loves (Genesis 21:1-7)
- 103 yrs: Isaac is weaned at age 3 with a celebration to mark the occasion. Ishmael, now 17, mocks (persecutes) Isaac; Abraham makes a gut-wrenching decision to have Hagar and Ishmael expelled from the home (Genesis 21:8-14)

While on the surface this seems like the natural troubles blended families go through, the connections these individuals have with one another represent spiritual realities that convey important lessons.

1. Take a moment to read for yourself the account in Genesis 21:1-10 along with Galatians 4:21-31 before answering the following:
 - a. Who is the *bondwoman*; who is the *freewoman*?
 - b. What does Paul say about the sons born to these two women?

The two women represent the two covenants: Hagar, the Mosaic Covenant- God's law- handed down from Mt. Sinai; her children are slaves (v. 25). Sarah represents the Abrahamic Covenant – God's grace; her children are free (v.26). Just as the law produces slaves, so, too, grace produces freedom.

2. In verse 27, Paul quotes from Isaiah 54:1, contrasting the future ancestry of these two women. What does he say?

In verses 28-31, Paul relates this allegory with the outcome of law and grace in the world today.

3. Like Isaac, who does Paul say the New Testament believers are? v.28
4. Compare the persecution of Isaac by Ishmael (Genesis 21:9) with the persecution of the early believers by the legalists (Judaizers) Paul mentions in verse 29.
 - a. Applying the quote from Genesis 21:10, what does Paul command the Galatian believers to do? v. 30 Put this in your own words.

Paul says in verse 31, “so then, brethren, we are not children of the bondwoman but of the free”. In other words, God has given us in Scripture the guidelines of grace to follow instead of the legalism of the law. Our part is to choose to be free and follow through on that choice by getting rid of all rules, rituals and routines that are based on our own self-effort.



Stop and Listen: What do you see in your own life that is of your own self-effort? If nothing is evident to you, ask God to show you. What change(s) can you make to free yourself and follow the path of grace?

“It is doubtful if there is any greater joy on earth than the joy of being free. And the ecstasy is heightened if a person has once been in bondage, held captive by a power that is impossible to overcome. Being liberated from such clutches brings pleasure beyond description.”

Chuck Swindoll

The Review

*“...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb
and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me...” Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

It’s time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

16. How has your perspective been altered through this chapter?

17. What word of truth is now more important to you?

18. How have you grown closer in your relationship with the Lord?

19. What relevance is there between this week’s memory verse and your daily life?

20. Write out this week’s memory verse from memory:

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Knowing Jesus More

A Study Through Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians

*That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him,
being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. Colossians 1:10*

Lesson 5

Galatians Chapter 5

Memory Verse:

Stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage. Galatians 5:1

Through Paul's preaching, Christ had freed the Galatian believers from slavery to the law. Yet these same individuals were choosing to return to the unnecessary yoke of slavery. Here in chapter 5, Paul moves from the personal into the practical part of his letter. He has been making his case that salvation is the free gift of God – we cannot earn it. Jesus Himself purchased our freedom on the cross, accomplishing for us what we could not do for ourselves. By accepting God's gift of grace, we trade our yoke of slavery for that of Christian liberty, but that does not mean we can go on sinning. The transforming work of salvation begins the sanctifying process of daily working out the crucified life.

The Judaizers are not the only ones afraid to depend on God's grace. Legalists in our churches today warn that we dare not teach people about the liberty we have in Christ lest it result in religious anarchy. These people misunderstand Paul's teaching about grace, and it is to correct such misunderstanding that Paul wrote the final section of his letter (Galatians 5 & 6). The Christian who lives by faith is not going to become a rebel. Quite the contrary, he is going to experience the inner discipline of God that is far better than the outer discipline of man-made rules. No man could become a rebel who depends on God's grace, yields to God's Spirit, lives for others, and seeks to glorify God. The legalist is the one who eventually rebels, because he is living in bondage, depending on the flesh, living for self, and seeking the praise of men and not the glory of God. Warren Wiersbe

Day 1 – Read Galatians 5:1-26

Read the following sections of chapter 5 and write each verse, word, or phrase that stands out to you.

1. Verses 1 – 6:

2. Verses 7 – 15:

3. Verses 16 – 26:



Stop and Listen: Everyone is a slave to something; whether it is something bad or good determines a person's choices as well as their direction in life. From your reading of this chapter, pinpoint the verses that have to do with the flesh and the Spirit. Since we become like the one(s) we follow and serve – identify *whose slave you are*. Please share your thoughts.

Day 2 – Galatians 5:1-12

Paul has the answer to the believer's dilemma and admonishes the people in Galatians 5:1 "stand fast therefore in the liberty by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage."

Stand fast means that it takes *effort* to stay in this place of liberty. Someone who is legally made free in Jesus can still live in bondage; they can be deceived into placing themselves back into slavery.

1. We recognize from the above verse that the Lord died to set us free. What, then, according to this same verse is every Christian's responsibility? v. 1

The main issue at stake here for the Galatian believers is the matter of circumcision (mentioned 5 times in this chapter). *“When we embrace the law as our rule of walking with God, we must let go of Jesus. He is no longer our righteousness; we attempt to earn it ourselves. For the Galatians in this context, to receive circumcision - the ritual that testified that a Gentile was coming under the law - meant that he no longer trusted in Jesus as His righteousness, but trusted in himself instead.”* David Guzik

2. What emphatic statement does Paul make about this in verse 6?

In no uncertain terms, Paul makes it clear that Christ and circumcision are contrary to one another.

- a. What additional insight is there from Paul’s words earlier in 2:21?
- 3. Paul goes on to list six harmful consequences of returning to the law. In your own words, what are they? Verses 2 – 11
 - a. Verse 2
 - b. Verse 3
 - c. Verses 4-6
 - d. Verses 7-10
 - e. Verse 11
 - f. Verse 12



Stop and Listen: Paul could easily have diluted the gospel to appease his hearers and avoid persecution, but he was not willing to do that, because of his love for the brethren and the truth. It was offensive to others that the ground leading to the cross is level to everyone, erasing all human pride and distinctions. There is room at the cross for everyone. That is God's love!! Consider this, *why is love necessary to liberty?*

Day 3 – Galatians 5:13-15

There is a freedom that all persons have the right to, because they are human beings; it is their God-given right by birth. There is also a freedom that is uniquely Christian – born of the indwelling God-given Spirit – available to everyone who receives Christ by faith, who are “called to liberty” (v.13). Jesus Christ gives believers the freedom to truly love others.

1. There is both a *negative* and a *positive* aspect to Christian liberty that Paul mentions; what are they? v.13
 - a. Negative
 - b. Positive
2. In verse 14, what is Paul's summation regarding the law?
3. Paul refers to the same law of love mentioned in the Old Testament Law of Moses and also introduced in the New Testament by Jesus. What do they say?
 - a. Leviticus 19:18b

b. Matthew 22:35-40

c. Mark 12:28-31

d. Luke 6:27-36

e. John 13:34-35

Paul goes on to contrast this love in verse 15: “but if you bite and devour one another, beware lest you be consumed by one another!” This biting and devouring speaks of the type of fighting common among wild animals.

4. The result of this type of behavior – the opposite of love – is found in 5:26 of this chapter; what does it say:



Stop and Listen: Loving others is the way to be responsible in our Christian freedom. If we would live by the **JOY** principle: Jesus – Others – You, in that order, then we would fulfill the essence of the law. Remember, Jesus said, if you will give away your life to others, you will find it! Ask God to show you where you have fallen short in loving others, and what you can do to lovingly serve someone else this week. Write it down here.

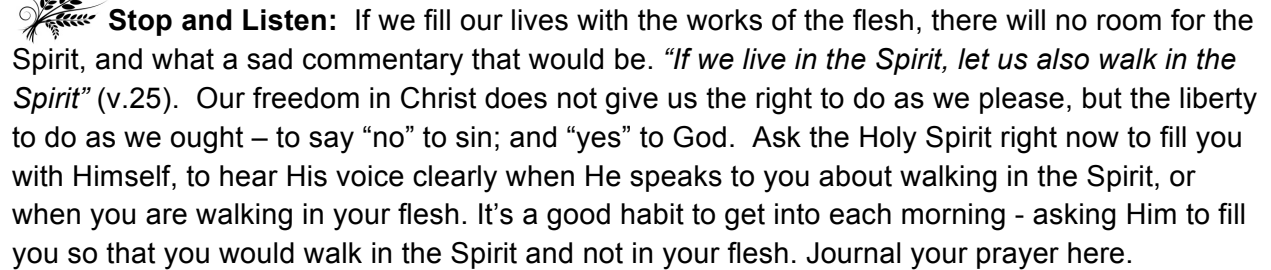
Day 4 – Galatians 5:16-26

The liberty to love others and the freedom from the law; these are the reality of God's Spirit at work in our lives. But there is another reality also at work- the sin nature that is continually at conflict with the Spirit in us to tempt us to disobey. The question to be answered is: which one will dominate – the flesh or the Spirit?

1. What does Paul reveal as the secret to overcoming the flesh? v.16
2. In your own words, summarize the human dilemma in verse 17.
3. What are some ways Christians sometimes "make provision for the flesh"?
4. The law does not give the power to overcome; what gives the believer victory? v.18

Paul provides an explicit list of behavior that stems from the old nature, contrasting it with the fruit (harvest) of the Holy Spirit. Fill in the charts below with the behaviors on one side and the fruitful harvest on the other. Group them by the categories mentioned.

<u>Acts of Sinful Nature</u>	<u>Fruitful Harvest</u>
Unbalanced sexual practices:	Relationship with God:
Perverved religions:	Relationship with fellow believers:
Anti-social behaviors:	Relationship with oneself:
Personal failures:	

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Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me

Spirit of the Living God, fall afresh on me.



The Review



*“...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb
and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me...” Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

It’s time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

21. How has your perspective been altered through this chapter?

22. What word of truth is now more important to you?

23. How have you grown closer in your relationship with the Lord?

24. What relevance is there between this week’s memory verse and your daily life?

25. Write out this week’s memory verse from memory:

[illegible]



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Lesson 6

Galatians Chapter 6

Memory Verse:

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. Galatians 6:7

The area of personal relationships is arguably the most challenging in terms of living out the practical instructions and principles Paul lays out in the book of Galatians. Following Paul's teaching on the believer's freedom in Christ and the importance of walking in the Spirit, learning to live peaceably with all men – Christian and non-Christian alike – is where the real tests will come.

Paul concludes with his wonderful sixth chapter in which he describes how being filled with the Spirit will result in our bearing one another's burdens, restoring one another in meekness, in gentleness of spirit, not in judgment nor in harshness, in giving liberally and freely to one another's needs, and in patient continuing in well-doing---sowing to the Spirit instead of to the flesh.

Paul warns about the attitude he describes in this chapter – pointing out the sin of others when we ourselves may also be tempted. The way to avoid this pitfall is to practice walking in the Spirit (chapter 5) while reaching out in love to those around us.

Day 1 – Read Galatians 6:1-18

Read the following sections of chapter 6, and write each verse, word, or phrase that stands out to you:

1. Verses 1 – 5

2. Verses 6 – 10

3. Verses 11 – 18



Stop and Listen: We are living in perilous days, not only for the world we are living in, but for believers too. Jesus said, “And because in those days iniquity shall abound, the love of many shall wax cold” (Matthew 24:12). It’s time to check our hearts and the temperature of our love for one another. Turn to 1 Corinthians 13, the love chapter, and remind yourself of God’s definition of love. Write down what it says love is, and how you are doing:

Day 2 – Galatians 6:1-5

The path through the Christian life is a shared journey; we do not walk the path alone but alongside many others. Paul is about to share some helpful hints for making that journey together much more enjoyable.

1. Notice who Paul first addresses in verse 1; how is this person to deal with a believer who is caught in sin? Why?

The word, *restore*, means *to mend, as a net, or to restore a broken bone*. The way we are to go about dealing with a brother or sister who is in sin is “gently”, the same word Paul uses in 5:23, speaking of the fruit of the Spirit.

2. Contrast the outcome of dealing with a sinning brother or sister in a harsh legalistic way versus doing it gently and lovingly. If you were the one in sin, which way would you prefer? Please explain.
3. What takes place when we help to address the burden of someone who has fallen into sin? v.2 (see also 5:14 and John 13:34)

Here Paul addresses the danger of comparing ourselves with the one who is in sin – we always feel better!

4. What is the obvious danger involving our heart attitude when we do this? v.3
 - a. Rather than pointing fingers and looking down on someone, what should we do? v.4
5. What is the remedy to feeling superior when comparing ourselves to someone else? v.5

The word Paul uses for “load” in verse 5 actually means *backpack* (or soldiers pack), speaking of the responsibilities each of us carry through life. Our goal is not to form our perspective of how we are doing by comparing ourselves with others, but to carry our load, be responsible for our own needs and, whenever possible, help another with theirs.



Stop and Listen: We’re aware that when we point a finger at others, we have a few pointing back at us! It is sobering to realize that the fault we see in someone else can also be visible in our own lives. Paul says to restore in gentleness; James puts it another way. What do you learn about this principle from James 5:19-20?

As believers, it behooves us to remember that guiding and correcting others should be in the spirit of gentleness, which is also in the Spirit of Christ. We should handle others with the same loving concern that we would like shown to us, always keeping in mind that the goal is not to condemn but to restore.

Day 3 – Galatians 6:6-10

The same gentleness that is required to bear another's burdens and restore the one caught in sin is also needed regarding our financial duties. Paul taught a spirit of giving among the believers in the churches he had founded, particularly regarding those who were in teaching ministries.

1. What does Paul reveal about this principle in Galatians 6:6?
2. Paul elaborates on this same point in other passages; what main point do you learn from the following? See 1 Corinthians 9:3-14; 2 Thessalonians 3:7-9; and 1 Timothy 5:17-18.
3. What serious warning does Paul issue next? v.7

The word mocked means to *turn up one's nose* or to *treat with contempt*. Normally we would not deliberately choose to act that way toward God, but how often do we forget to include Him in our daily choices- including what we do with our finances – which results in the natural consequence of sowing and reaping.

4. Finish the following from verse 8; personalize it and share an example.

a. *If I sow to the flesh I will*

Example:

b. *If I sow to the Spirit I will*

Example:



Stop and Listen: While the principle of *sowing and reaping* applies to all aspects of life, Paul emphasizes here that God expects His children to financially support their spiritual teachers. Those who fail to do so are courting the consequence; those who give what they are able and live accordingly can expect the reward in verse 9: “*for in due season we shall reap if we do not lose heart.*”

When is the believer *expected* to do good toward others? Where is the priority placed – why? (v.10) How do you measure up? Please share your thoughts.

Day 4 – Galatians 6:11-18

Paul now stops dictating his letter and picks up the pen to write in his own hand (v.11). He writes with large letters both to emphasize his words and to prove that the document is truly his.

Paul concludes his letter by referring again to the Judaizers, the false teachers who were causing the problems to the Galatian believers.

1. How does Paul refer to their actions in verse 12?

The phrase “good showing” is the same as “good impression”, but the interpretation here is that the intent was not genuine. The Judaizers were trying to persuade the Galatian believers to be circumcised to avoid persecution and to preserve their sect of Judaism against the political activists of the day. Their motives were impure; they had their own agenda.

2. In contrast to the Judaizers, what was Paul’s motive? v.14

Verse 14 tells us the world was crucified to Paul and he to the world. To Paul, the world was as good as dead – it meant nothing; and he was as good as dead to the world (Galatians 2:20)

3. What was the most important thing to Paul? v.15
4. In Paul's closing blessing, what does he say is available to those who believe in salvation by grace? v. 16-18
 - a. What personal comment does Paul make in verse 17?
 - b. According to Paul's concluding remark in verse 18, what did he hope would be the end result for his readers?



Stop and Listen: Paul's body visibly reflected the length to which he was willing to go for the sake of the gospel. It was what he endured that helped shape his perspective and motivated him to encourage others. What discomfort are you willing to endure so that someone else can hear the message of salvation? Please share your thoughts.

"It is easy to talk about the fruit of the Spirit while doing very little about it. So, Christians need to learn that it is in concrete situations, rather than emotional highs, that the reality of the Holy Spirit in their lives is demonstrated." James Boice

The Review



*“...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb
and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me...” Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

It’s time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

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Lesson 7

Ephesians Chapter 1

Memory Verse:

He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. Ephesians 1:4

Has there ever been a time when you've wondered about the meaning of life and why you were put on this earth? Have you given any thought to what it all means and where you fit in? The letter to the Ephesians presents the answers to such timely questions and offers a world view to the Christian that is unique in Scripture. It conveys the message of the divine purpose being accomplished by the almighty acts of God in Christ – our source for the meaning of our existence. We see Paul beautifully unfold aspects of the Christian life such as: *chosen, adopted, redeemed, forgiven, enriched, sealed, and enlightened*.

It's normal for human beings to go through an identity crisis; in fact, most likely more than one as we navigate through different seasons of life. The important thing is to know who we are in Christ, so that we learn His ways and not the ways of the world. Ephesians 1 gives us a crystal clear look into who we truly are as Christians and the great inheritance that comes with our new identity.

"In Christ" is the most frequently used phrase in the book of Ephesians, and the point is clear: if you're in Christ, you have everything. For example, Christians are saints in Christ (1:1); blessed in Christ (1:3); chosen in Christ (1:4); adopted by Christ (1:5); lavished with love in Christ (1:6); redeemed and forgiven in Christ (1:7); participants in God's good plan in Christ (1:11); glorified in Christ, sealed with the Holy Spirit (1:12-13); made alive in Christ (2: 5-6); created in Christ (2:10); brought near to God in Christ (2:13); growing in Christ (2:21); built in Christ (2:22); and sharers in God's promise in Christ (3:6). Get the picture? Everything in the universe is centered in Christ (1:10).

Actually, the epistle falls into two main parts of three chapters each. In Ephesians 1 – 3 the apostle tells believers what they are *in Christ*; in Ephesians 4 – 6 he tells them what they are to do *because they are in Christ*.

Take a moment now and pray for the Holy Spirit to enlighten your spiritual understanding, and to make clear and dear to you what He has for you both now and in the life hereafter.

Day 1 – Read Ephesians 1:1-23

As you read the following sections of chapter 1, write what verse, word, or phrase stands out to you:

1. Verses 1 – 2

2. Verses 3 – 14

3. Verses 15 – 23



Stop and Listen: As you read through chapter 1, what are some of the benefits of our inheritance that we have *in Christ*? Which of them means the most to you? Write them as praise to God here:



Thank You, Lord, for saving my soul, thank You Lord, for making me whole

Thank You Lord, for giving to me, Thy great salvation, so rich and free...



Day 2 – Ephesians 1:3-6

Paul addresses his letter to the “*saints*” in Ephesus; meaning, those who are set apart for God, and to the “*faithful*” in Christ Jesus, which includes believers everywhere.

1. How does Paul greet his audience?

Paul knew who he was, an *apostle* of Jesus Christ, called to carry out the will of God. He understood that God had a plan for his life and was determined to convince God’s people of the same. In verses 3-14, he begins to almost poetically lay out for the believer the rich blessings to be enjoyed through the ministries of God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit.

God the Father’s Blessings (verses 3-6):

Paul prefaces the unlimited, never-ending blessings of the believer with the gratitude that is due to God. The word *blessed* in verse 3 is the same as *praise*; and the word *blessing* is the same as *gift*.

2. With what has God blessed us? v.3 (Think about what this means to you.)

In case Paul’s readers might miss the magnitude of this statement in verse 3, he spells it out for them in verses 4-6.

3. What, specifically, are our blessings in each of the following verses?

- a. v. 4

- b. v. 5

- c. v. 6

4. What does God’s choice do for us in verse 4?



Stop and Listen: God chose us before the foundation of the world, in the knowledge that we would one day stand before Him holy and blameless in love. Reflect on Romans 8:29-30 in conjunction with verse 4. What do you understand about God's sovereign will?

Day 3 – Ephesians 1:7-14

God the Son's Blessings (verses 7-12):

1. How does Paul state our blessings in the following verses?

a. v. 7

b. v. 8-10

c. v. 11

2. What, appropriately, should be our response to all of the above? v.12

God the Spirit's Blessings (verses 13-14):

3. What are these blessings according to the following verses?

a. v. 13

b. v. 14

4. Write a definition for the following words:

a. Redemption (Ephesians 1:7)

b. Sealed (1:13)

c. Deposit (1:14 NIV)

d. Inheritance (1:11)



Stop and Listen: You were *chosen* by God; *redeemed* by Christ; *sealed* with the Spirit. Think about the love and sacrifice that were brought together for you. How does this affect your perspective today?

Day 4 – Ephesians 1:15-23

Once believers understand the hope of God's calling and the richness of their inheritance, the next step is to realize the power of God through prayer. In verses 15-23, Paul initiates a prayer that concludes in chapter two. Here he displays not only an apostle's leadership, but also a shepherd's heart – Paul was a man of prayer. We can only imagine how encouraging it must have been for these young believers in and around Ephesus to hear these words from Paul in verse 16: *"I...do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers."* He is thankful for them and herein lays the basis for answered prayer: thankfulness. The thankful prayer is also the powerful prayer before God.

1. For what two things does Paul pray in verse 17?

Wisdom involves the ability to understand Scripture and how to apply it in everyday life. Revelation, on the other hand, is divine; it involves God making Himself and His Word known in a personal way.

2. Paul prayed that believers would understand what once they are enlightened?

a. v. 18a

b. v. 18b

c. v. 19

3. How did God demonstrate His power?

4. What does Paul share about the magnitude of God's power in verses 20-23?



Stop and Listen: As you've looked into chapter one, you've been able to get a glimpse of the person you are becoming – your true identity as a believer in Christ.

- How do you feel right now knowing the blessings that are yours in Christ?

- How does Paul's prayer compare with how you typically pray?

- Which of the things Paul prays for do you most need to pray for? Why?

- How could Paul's prayer in verses 15-23 help guide you in praying for others?

"The Trinity is the basis of the gospel, and the gospel is a declaration of the Trinity in action."

J.I. Packer

"The greatest power shortage today is not in our generators or our gas tanks. It is in our personal lives. Will Paul's prayer be answered in your life? Will you, starting today, begin to know by experience God – God's calling – God's riches – and God's power?"

Warren Wiersbe

The Review



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and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me...” Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

It’s time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

31. How has your perspective been altered through this chapter?

32. What word of truth is now more important to you?

33. How have you grown closer in your relationship with the Lord?

34. What relevance is there between this week’s memory verse and your daily life?

35. Write out this week’s memory verse from memory:

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Knowing Jesus More

A Study Through Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians

*That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him,
being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. Colossians 1:10*

Lesson 8

Ephesians Chapter 2

Memory Verse:

**For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus
for good works, which God prepared beforehand
that we should walk in them. Ephesians 2:10**

In Ephesians 1, Paul specifies the blessings that are ours through God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit. He then prays that we might be able to comprehend what we've been given. Here in chapter 2, he discusses in depth the consequences of sin and the reconciliation available through Christ, the Chief Cornerstone of our faith.

Maintaining the right spiritual perspective not only keeps things clearly focused, but also helps in motivating us to do the right thing. When we are able to contrast our former condition with that of our current position in Christ, we appreciate what He has done for us and we want to please Him.

Ask Him right now to give you understanding of this chapter, and speak to your heart personally through it.

Day 1 – Read Ephesians 2:1-22

As you read through the chapter to get an overview of it, write down which verse speaks to you in the sections below:

1. Verses 1 – 10

2. Verses 11 – 13

3. Verses 14 – 18

4. Verses 19 – 22



Stop and Listen: From your initial reading of this chapter, note what you once were and who you are today. How does this contrast strike you? Give Him some PRAISE!

Day 2 – Ephesians 2:1-10

Paul states in the opening verses of this chapter that at one time we were all dead in trespasses and sins. He further says that those who are spiritually dead fall under the influence of three things: the world, Satan, and the flesh. The dynamics of being spiritually dead involve the world's influence from without, the influence of the flesh from within, and Satan's influence from beyond.

1. Before Christ, what kind of children were we? (v.3) See Romans 3:10-11 and Colossians 1:21 to help your understanding of this.

Note that Paul is not speaking of a segment of society that has become wicked or depraved, but all humanity- everyone apart from Christ is dead! And those apart from Christ are held captive by the influences of this present evil age. In other words – think about it – they are under enemy control.

2. There is not a single part of mankind's being – body, soul, spirit – that is unaffected by the Fall. Considering the condition of all human beings, what do Hebrews 9:27 and 2 Peter 3:7 tell you about the wrath of God upon the non-Christian's life?

No matter how it seems at the moment, life apart from God amounts to death. Contrast this bleak picture with that of the believer's new life in Christ.

3. What does Paul declare about our marvelous God before we knew Him in a personal way? v.4-5 (See also 1 John 4:9,10)
4. In addition to this indescribable gift of salvation, what else has God done for us? v.6-7
5. According to verses 8 – 10, how and why did God choose to save you?
 - a. God has saved me by _____ through _____ in Him
 - b. It is _____ of _____
 - c. It is the _____ of _____
 - d. Not of _____
 - e. Lest _____ should _____



Stop and Listen: Since we are His workmanship, and since we are created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared beforehand for us to walk in...what are some "good works" for you to walk in?

Day 3 – Ephesians 2:11-18

It's possible that there may have been some friction between Jewish and Gentile believers that caused Paul to address the relationship between these groups at this point in his letter. The Gentiles were in a hopeless condition before salvation; the Jews were entrusted with God's plan of salvation in the Old Testament. But although the Jews had a special place before God, their hearts were far from Him; they were not submissive to His will. Both groups were in need of His salvation.

1. List the specifics Paul shares about the condition of the Gentiles in verse 12.
2. God did not leave the Jews or Gentiles in their hopeless condition, what did He do? v.13
3. Who is it that gives everyone peace with God? v.14
4. What barrier did Christ break down? v.15-16
5. Who do you think were the ones that were "afar off"? Who were the ones that were "near"? v.17
6. Not only are Jews and Gentiles saved by the same gospel, but they also have the same essential walk with God and **access** to Him. One group does not have a greater **access** than the other does (v.18). Look up the following references and write your thoughts on our access to Him:
 - John 10:9
 - 1 Corinthians 12:13
 - Ephesians 4:4



Stop and Listen: When conflict arises among Christian groups of different backgrounds, you can be sure that they forget that they were saved by the same gospel and that they have the same access to God. One or both groups usually feel they have superior access to God. Time to check our hearts; we are all on the same level with our access to God. Write down what you feel the Lord is putting a finger on in your heart with this.

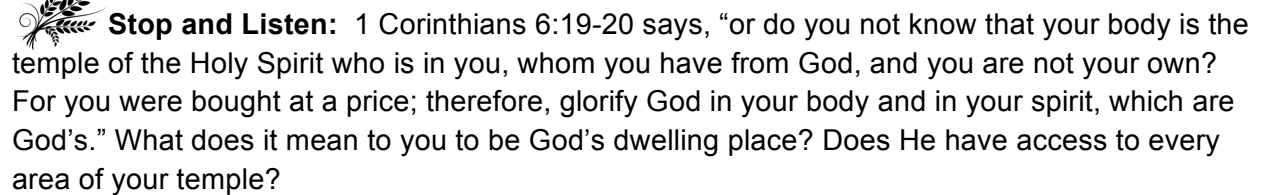
Day 4 – Ephesians 2:19-22

The written commandments - the Law - had created a barrier between Jew and Gentile that only the death of Christ could break apart. He made them one in His eyes, bringing peace. Not only did the Cross destroy enmity between God and man, it overcame the human barriers that separate us from one another. The Father devised the plan, the Son carried out the plan, and the Holy Spirit provided unhindered, permanent access to God.

1. As a result, what does Paul declare about both the Gentiles and Jews? v.19

2. Who is the cornerstone of this foundational relationship? v.20

3. Paul's use of the building as a metaphor reveals that both Gentiles and Jews are "stones". What are they forming? v.21

[illegible]

Melt me, mold me, fill me, use me

Spirit of the living God, fall afresh on me. 🎵

The Review



*“...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb
and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me...” Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

It’s time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

36. How has your perspective been altered through this chapter?

37. What word of truth is now more important to you?

38. How have you grown closer in your relationship with the Lord?

39. What relevance is there between this week’s memory verse and your daily life?

40. Write out this week’s memory verse from memory:

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Lesson 9

Ephesians Chapter 3

Memory Verse:

**Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly,
abundantly above all that we ask or think,
according to the power that works in us, to
Him be glory in the church by Jesus Christ
to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.
Ephesians 3:20,21**

If you're an avid reader the word *mystery* probably conjures up thoughts of a "who-did-it" kind of novel; but that isn't what Paul speaks about here in chapter three. Paul's use of the word *mysterion* in the New Testament means something which was previously unknown but has been divinely revealed to us through the Holy Spirit. Elsewhere in Colossians 1:26, Paul says: "the mystery that has been kept hidden for ages and generations, but now has been revealed to His saints." He first mentioned it in chapter two, but now speaks of it as the mystery personally revealed to him by the Lord.

Let's discover that mystery that God revealed to Paul, for us!

Day 1 – Read Ephesians 3:1-21

As you read through the chapter to get an overview of it, write down which verse speaks to you in the sections below:

1. Verses 1 – 7

2. Verses 8 – 13

3. Verses 14 – 21



Stop and Listen: One of the greatest truths is the “*mystery*” of the church. It is a truth that was hidden by God in times past and is now revealed to those who are in His family. A mystery is a “*sacred secret*” that is unknown to unbelievers, but understood and treasured by the people of God, especially the Gentiles, us! In His great love for us, God made a way through His Son, that all should be a part of His family. Write a prayer of praise and thanksgiving for your salvation! Also, write down the names of those loved ones who have not yet come into the family, and pray for them now!

Day 2 – Ephesians 3:1-7

Paul’s words, “For this reason”, refer back to everything Paul earlier stated in 2:11-22. It is the first time he mentions in his letter that he is in prison for preaching that Jews and Gentiles were fellow-heirs of the promises of God. Here in chapter three, he begins to expound on God’s plan for the ages.

1. Paul is a prisoner, but not of Rome; by who’s will is he a captive? v.1

In verses 2-13, Paul launches into a parenthetical statement that prefaces his prayer for all believers begun in verse 1 and picked up again in verse 14 (“for this reason...”). For a moment he digresses from his point, which is prayer, in order to explain the fullness of God’s mystery. Reread verses 2-13 in more than one translation to grasp the meaning of Paul’s words.

In verse 2, the dispensation, or administration (NIV), of God’s grace refers to the unique stewardship and authority that Paul was given to explain God’s marvelous truth.

2. For whose benefit was the mystery made known to Paul? v.2-4

Paul is not referring to a different letter in verse 3, but rather his earlier comments in this one.

3. What was Paul’s point in disclosing the mystery to his readers? v.4

4. To whom besides Paul did God reveal this mystery? How? v.5

5. In your own words, what is the mystery of Christ? v.6

The unity of the believers Paul speaks about takes place through the preaching of the gospel of Jesus Christ.

6. How does Paul explain his responsibility with this God-given trust in verse 7?



Stop and Listen: Look up Ephesians 4:1, Philippians 1:1, and 2 Timothy 1:8. What do these verses reveal to you about Paul's heart for service? What do they reveal to your heart about your own willingness to sacrifice for the sake of the gospel?

Make me a servant, humble and meek

Lord, let me lift up those who are weak

And may the prayer of my heart always be

Make me a servant, make me a servant, make me a servant... today.



Day 3 – Ephesians 3:8-13

Paul became a servant – *diakonos* – one who is under orders from his master. He knew that he was called and appointed by God to carry out his mission and that he could not fulfill it without the grace and power of God enabling him to do it!

1. How does Paul describe himself and his purpose? v.8-9

God kept His sacred secret hidden until the time when He decreed that it should be made known to all.

2. Who else did God want to know about His divine plan? v.10

Think about it: the very principalities and powers who had tried to thwart God's plan of redemption greatly underestimated the manifold (many faceted) wisdom of God. The sacrificial death of Jesus Christ upon the cross made possible the forgiveness of sins, crushing the power of Satan, and releasing all who were once held captive but now are set free! The existence of the church is a continual witness to the spiritual realm of God's magnificent power and grace in His eternal purpose.

3. As an astonishing result, what did He accomplish for *you*? v.12

4. Thanks to what Jesus Christ did on your behalf, you can come directly to the throne of God through prayer. How do the following verses encourage you? What action do they tell you to take today?
 - a. Hebrews 4:16

 - b. Hebrews 10:19-22

God's infinite plan of salvation, which He purposed before the world began, was fulfilled on the cross, clearing the pathway for all who would come to Him by faith. Paul encourages all believers not to lose hope or give up in the face of his suffering (v.13) because it helped to further God's plan for the church. Paul hoped that through his trial those who read his letter would come to know and experience the salvation of God for themselves.



Stop and Listen: If given the door of opportunity, how would you go about expressing the mystery of the gospel to someone who needs to hear it? Is there a trial or suffering you are experiencing right now? Be encouraged, God may want to use it as a witness! Share your thoughts here:

Day 4 – Ephesians 3:14-21

Paul now resumes his prayer for the realization of God's power in the believers' lives, building on what he first began praying in the latter half of chapter one.

1. In one of the rare times when Paul describes his posture in prayer, what does he say? v.14

As Paul pondered the reality of God's mystery, the responsibility of his own appointment, and the possibilities for all believers, his appropriate response was to kneel in humble adoration.

The bible teaches that prayer can be made in any position – standing (which was common among Jews), sitting, kneeling, or lying prostrate; but there are times when we are pressed to humble ourselves before a holy God. Take a look at Luke 22:41-42, Acts 7:60, 9:40, and 20:36.

2. Though prayed by different individuals, do you see a common thread?
3. What do you glean that will help your own prayer life?

In verse 15, Paul describes God as the Creator of everything: *"From whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named"*. He is the Father over everything visible and invisible; He is in complete control of all He has made. With these words, Paul frames his prayer to follow.

Reread verses 16-19 as one flowing sentence in as many different translations as you can.

4. Where is the emphasis placed in the following verses?
 - a. v. 16b
 - b. v. 17a

Paul is not speaking here of saving faith; but rather the faith that it takes to make Christ *feel at home in your heart* – making room for Him to abide and feel welcome.

5. What, according to Paul, is the foundation for realizing God's power in your life? v.17b
6. What comes to mind when you think of your faith being *rooted* and *grounded*? Please explain.

7. Do some digging on your own to find a Scripture verse that fits how BIG the love of God is (v.18). The verse you find need not contain the literal use of *wide-long-high-deep*; just the essence of the words.

a. His love is wide –

b. His love is long –

c. His love is high –

d. His love is deep –

It takes the church – together in its unity and diversity – to know in a personal, intellectual and emotional way the love of Christ, which is beyond our human comprehension.

8. What is the final aspect of Paul's prayer in verse 19b?

As believers, we all want to be filled with God's fullness; as such, we are satisfied with Him! This means pursuing Him in prayer, asking Him to strengthen us with His power, and making Him at home in our hearts. Paul concludes his explanation of Christ's mystery and his prayer for power with an outburst of praise to God – a doxology.



Stop and Listen: Look at verses 20-21 before answering the following:

- a. What do these verses tell you about God's sovereignty?
- b. What do you learn about God's power?
- c. What is the purpose behind the display of God's power? Will you praise Him today???

"We have not merely been saved that we might escape hell; we have been saved in order that God might present a people which will astonish the whole world." Dr. Martin Lloyd-Jones

The Review



*“...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb
and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me...” Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

It’s time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

41. How has your perspective been altered through this chapter?

42. What word of truth is now more important to you?

43. How have you grown closer in your relationship with the Lord?

44. What relevance is there between this week’s memory verse and your daily life?

45. Write out this week’s memory verse from memory:

[illegible]



Knowing Jesus More

A Study Through Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians

*That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him,
being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. Colossians 1:10*

Lesson 10

Ephesians Chapter 4

Memory Verse:

**I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech
you to walk worthy of the calling with which
you were called... Ephesians 4:1**

There is a direct correlation between how a person behaves and their basic core values; hence, for Paul, there existed a harmony between his doctrinal beliefs and his work ethic. We've arrived at the half-way point in Paul's letter where he begins his appeal to live and work together in the unity that is based upon the common belief in Scriptural principles and in the power of the Holy Spirit to bring it about.

Pastor Chuck Smith says:

"Note that Paul does not begin the book with the exhortation to walk worthy.

1. He lays the groundwork in the first three chapters, letting you know what you are in Christ Jesus, and what God has done for you by Christ Jesus, and the power available to you through the Holy Spirit.

2. He has given you all of the equipment necessary to walk worthy.

3. To try to walk worthy without the aid of all that God has done would be an interesting study in frustration and futility.

4. So many sermons exhort the saints on how they should walk, what they should be doing for Jesus, but never instructing them in what God has first done for them. The result is guilt-ridden frustrated saints."

We will also see in this chapter that the body of Christ should function like a well-oiled machine, every part being important and essential to get the job done. The body of Christ should maintain itself and build every one of its members up so that each can function perfectly where God has placed them; walking in love even as He walked.

Day 1 – Read Ephesians 4:1-32

As you read through the chapter to get an overview of it, write down which verse speaks to you in the sections below:

1. Verses 1 – 6

2. Verses 7 – 16

3. Verses 17 – 24

4. Verses 25 – 32



Stop and Listen: Paul begins this chapter with an exhortation, using the word “beseech”, which means, *to beg, entreat, call upon, admonish, exhort*. Paul is speaking strongly here to the church and to us. As you have read the chapter, what is the Holy Spirit speaking to you personally about? Journal your thoughts here.

Day 2 – Ephesians 4:1-6

The word “therefore” in verse 1 connects Paul’s present exhortation with his teaching in the previous chapters regarding God’s ultimate purpose for mankind and the unveiling of the mystery in Christ Jesus. Once again he refers to himself as “the prisoner of the Lord”, or “the prisoner *for* the Lord” (RSV). Despite his imprisonment, his tone of urgency rings loudly.

1. What does Paul urge the believers to do? v.1

There is a life-lesson in Paul’s words for all believers: Christianity is a walk! One of the big differences between Christianity and other religions is that Christians do not seek God’s attention or to merit His favor; we have a God who seeks us because He has already acted on our behalf. We are justified in His eyes not based on our own effort, but rather by grace through faith.

Paul has been telling the story of grace and now can say, “*Therefore...I beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called.*” Our walk involves a calling, a life vocation for Christ, and Paul gives us the virtues that should be reflected in our walk. Not only do they exhibit the worthiness of our calling, they help us maintain harmony with others.

2. Using your dictionary and the references you are given below, write a definition for each of the virtues Paul mentions in verse 2.

- a. *Humility* (John 13:13-15)

- b. *Gentleness* (1 Thessalonians 2:7)

- c. *Longsuffering* (1 Timothy 1: 16)

- d. *Love* (1 John 4: 10-11)

3. Has the Lord illuminated one of these virtues for you today? Please note it here and then take a moment to ask Him to make it evident through you in your current situation. Thank Him for making it possible.

4. When the above virtues are present, what is the result according to verse 3? What is the continual responsibility every believer must exercise?

It should be noted that believers are called to “keep” the unity of the Spirit, not to try to create it; only the Holy Spirit can do that. Our role is to guard, protect and maintain what has been entrusted to us. The Greek translation of the phrase “endeavoring to keep” means working toward something difficult with the determination to make it happen. May God help us to have that determination today!

5. In verses 4-6, the word “one” is used seven times regarding the unity of the church. The foundation for unity is based on the beliefs that Christians have in common. List the common core beliefs of the church Jesus Christ has created.



Stop and Listen: As believers live, work, and witness together, they exhibit unity to an unbelieving world. How have you become involved with other Christians, allowing them to minister to you, and you to them?

Day 3 – Ephesians 4:7-16

In verses 7-16 of chapter four, Paul introduces the subject of spiritual gifts that are bestowed on every believer in the body of Christ for the good of the body as a whole. As we use our gifts to work alongside one another, we are able to accomplish God’s will.

Paul digresses for a moment in verses 8-10, presenting a summary of Psalm 68 to reinforce his point. In it, King David describes a victory parade up Mount Zion. After God won a great victory for His people, David returned the Ark of the Covenant to its rightful home in Jerusalem. He also brought home the spoils of battle, distributing some to the temple and some to his brave men. Paul uses this illustration to refer to Christ conquering His enemies, returning to His rightful place in heaven, and bestowing spiritual gifts on His people.

1. According to verse 7, who receives these gifts?

The special grace – *charis* – each believer receives is chosen by God and distributed by Him. No one person has all the spiritual gifts, but all believers do have at least one gift that has been divinely assigned.

Verses 9-10 are difficult to interpret and have puzzled scholars for centuries. Paul states that Christ's ascent was prefaced by His descent to the lower parts of the earth. It's possible Paul is referring to Christ's descent into hell to preach to the captives following His death on the cross (Acts 2:27-28 and 1 Peter 3:18-22), or he could have been referencing Christ's descent to earth in His incarnation. Whichever the case, the point Paul is making here is that because Christ descended and ascended, there is nothing hidden from Him. He completely fills all things and everything in heaven and on earth is under His authority and control.

Paul next returns (v.11) to the thought begun in verse 7, acknowledging the diversity of gifts employed in the church.

2. List the gifts Paul mentions in verse 11, and briefly state what you understand the function of each one to be. Notice that these particular gifts have to do with a life-calling.
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.
 - d.
3. The list of gifts here in Ephesians 4 is not conclusive; others are also mentioned in Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12. Look these up and note the gifts listed.
 - a. Romans 12:3-8
 - b. 1 Corinthians 12:1-31

4. What is the two-fold purpose of spiritual gifts? v.12

It takes the entire community of believers joined in unity to carry out *the work of the ministry*. Together we can accomplish much more than any of us can do alone. Whenever the world looks at the church operating in unity they see us expressing the fullness of Christ!

Earlier in verse 3, Paul talked about a unity that we are to keep; here in verse 13 it is the goal we are to reach.

5. What, specifically, is the culmination of that goal as stated in the following verses?

a. v. 13

b. v. 14

c. v. 15

6. What is one of the identifying marks of a mature Christian? v.15

7. Personal: how are you doing at *speaking the truth in love*?

Verse 16 is the culmination of what Paul has been speaking about in verses 1-15. He depicts the church as a dynamic, growing body, whose head is Christ. Though individual members may seem insignificant in terms of the big picture, each one has a vital contribution to make; no one is more or less important than another.

8. As each member of the body fulfills its part, what dynamic takes place? v.16



Stop and Listen: Take a few minutes to evaluate your place in the body of Christ to the best of your ability. What has God gifted you with to use in serving others? (If unsure, ask Him!)

How are you allowing yourself to develop to your full potential?

What do you believe is your greatest potential contribution to the body of Christ?

Day 4 – Ephesians 4:17-32

The believing and the doing of the gospel are both present in Paul's letter to the Ephesians. The first three chapters are devoted to who believers are in Christ. Then in chapter 4, Paul reaches a turning point, going from the spiritual to the practical; getting specific about what to do and what not to do in developing a Christian lifestyle.

Six times in Paul's epistle he uses the word "walk". It is an action verb that takes in the whole of life - requiring believers not only to "be" but also to "do". When Paul talks about the walk of the believer he is referring to every aspect of their conduct.

1. When Paul says in verse 17, you must no longer walk as the Gentiles walk, to what is he referring?
 - a. What two areas must become new? v.17-18
 - b. Previously, what type of lifestyle did the Gentiles lead? v.19

In contrast to the unbelieving Gentiles, the Ephesian believers were taught how to behave when they put their faith in Christ.

2. What were they taught according to Paul?

a. v. 20-22

b. V. 23-24

Paul goes on to get specific about this new lifestyle in terms of personal relationships. The glimpse we are given from reading verses 25-32 lets us know that the believers in the early church had to face and deal with the same issues that Christians do today. And we find that when we fall short, it is possible to grieve the Holy Spirit of God.

3. What are the “do nots” Paul lays out in the following:

a. v.26

b. v.27

c. v.28

d. v.29

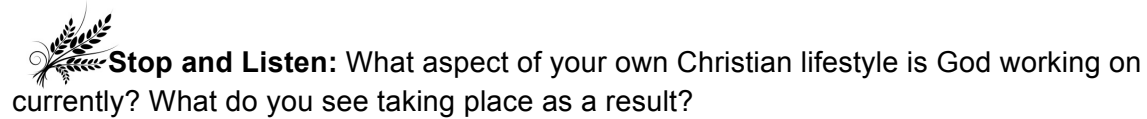
e. v.30

4. What truth from verse 15 does Paul restate in verse 25?

5. What has to be “put away” in order to bring this about? See v.25 and 31.

6. What aspects of the new life must be “put on”? v.32

Paul's description in verse 32 is a depiction of the very character of God. As we come to know and understand more of His character we will desire to become like Him.



*"We are members one of another; Satan wants to get a foothold in our lives;
we ought to share with others; we ought to build one another up;
and we ought not to grieve God.*

Warren Wiersbe

95

The Review



*“...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb
and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me...” Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

It’s time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

46. How has your perspective been altered through this chapter?

47. What word of truth is now more important to you?

48. How have you grown closer in your relationship with the Lord?

49. What relevance is there between this week’s memory verse and your daily life?

50. Write out this week’s memory verse from memory:

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Lesson 11

Ephesians Chapter 5

Memory Verse:

**Therefore, be imitators of God as dear children.
And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and
given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to
God for a sweet-smelling aroma. Ephesians 5:1-2**

As God's dear children, we are called on to behave in our sphere of environment the way God acts in dealing with His universe, proving that we do, in fact, belong to Him. In Ephesians 5, Paul calls on the believers to live a life that is so yielded as to walk in love, being filled with the Holy Spirit at all times.

Day 1 – Read Ephesians 5:1-33

As you read through the chapter to get an overview of it, write down which verse speaks to you in the sections below:

1. Verses 1 – 7

2. Verses 8 – 14

3. Verses 15 – 21

4. Verses 22 – 33



Stop and Listen: From your initial reading of this chapter, you can hear Paul explaining that the Christian walk is to be made in *love*, *light*, and *wisdom* for our relationships to be successful. As you consider your walk today, which of these attributes do you need the most in your current situation? Why?

Day 2 – Ephesians 5:1-7

The King James Version of 5:1 says we are to “be followers of God, as dear children”. The Revised Standard Version (and many others) put it much more strongly: “Be imitators of God, as beloved children.” Since a child will naturally follow the example of the parent, Paul says those of us who are spiritual children should imitate the example of our Heavenly Father.

1. What is the supreme example of love found in verse 2?

2. To follow Christ's example in love means you must give yourself up for Him just as He gave Himself up for you. What does this mean to you? Please explain.

3. The principle of imitating God is one that is used repeatedly in Scripture. What do the following verses say?
 - a. Leviticus 19:2

 - b. Matthew 5:48

 - c. Luke 6:36

4. Paul lists some behaviors that are the opposite of imitating God in verses 3-4. What are the things we must not engage in, or even hint at, if we are to walk in love?

5. For what specific reason should we not engage in these practices? v.5

There are those unbelievers who will try to justify their own immoral behavior and influence others to do the same.

6. What does Paul say about such individuals? v. 6-7

The sins Paul listed all have to do with the “old nature”, the life left behind by believers once they have come to Christ; and they are not any longer to be partakers.

7. Rather than engage in obscenities, how ought we to speak? See v.4



Stop and Listen: Submission – or the “S” word – is difficult for many to accept; and yet, it is our act of submission to God and to one another that precedes blessing. According to 1 Peter 5:5, what is the reward for submission? In what area do you need to submit right now?



Humble thyself in the sight of the Lord,

Humble thyself in the sight of the Lord,

And He... will lift you up, and He... will lift you up

Higher and higher, and He will lift you up 

Day 3 – Ephesians 5:8-14

Paul goes on to state the reason why we once participated in obscene works and why that can no longer be the case.

1. How does Paul refer to unbelievers? v.8-10

a. As such, how should believers conduct themselves?

b. What kind of deeds should we be engaged in? Why?

2. Not only should believers not participate in disobedience; what should we do? v.11-12

3. What statement does Paul make about the works of darkness? v.12

a. What power does light possess? v.13

4. What must a person do to get right with God? v.14

Sins are exposed whenever the light of life shines into sin's darkness. Everything is open and laid bare before God. Light transforms darkness into light! Turning away from the deeds of darkness means to *wake up* and *arise from the dead*. As a result, the light of Christ shines, flooding a life with His own presence.



Stop and Listen: In coming to Christ, a person actually changes identity, going from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light. What promise does Jesus Christ make to all His followers in John 8:12? Think of it: the "*light of life*" is available for you to walk in today!

Day 4 – Ephesians 5:15-33

The Christian who walks in *love* and in *light* also walks in *wisdom*. This is the virtue to which the people of Paul's day aspired. They considered it the climb upward to God.

1. To help us understand what Paul means in these verses about wisdom, take a look at another passage in Scripture. Look up 1 Corinthians 1:25 and 27 and note what is said, using your own words.

a. v. 25

b. v.27

Possessing wisdom is having the ability to apply scripture to the "*what and where*" of daily life. God came to us through the "foolishness of the cross" in order to accept us, forgive us, and enable us to live "*not as fools, but as wise*" (v.15). Wisdom allows us to make our conduct consistent with our faith.

2. There are numerous exhortations by Paul that distinguish wisdom in the believer's life. Please note each below.

a. v.16

b. v.17

c. v.18

d. v.19

e. v.20

f. v.21

3. The dominant theme of the early church was *thankfulness* and *joy*- there was a reason to sing! Knowing who God is and what He's done on our behalf makes us overflow with gratitude and praise! Is this the attitude that overflows from your heart today? Share your thoughts.

The believer who walks in *love, light* and *wisdom* is the believer who will have successful relationships in life. In the remaining verses of our text, Paul will explore the fruit of submission in the model of Christian marriage and the church.

Re-read verses 15-33 for review.

In today's modern world of liberation and liberalism, it is striking to note that no one has done more for women's liberation than Jesus Christ! The gospel emancipated everyone- women included. Paul has emphasized in this letter that God's purpose is to reconcile all things in Christ and the church is the instrument through which He will accomplish that purpose. He now brings that purpose of reconciliation into clear focus by closely looking at the relationship of husband and wife and then the family (chapter 6). Paul begins by addressing the role of the wife.

4. What is the role of the wife in verse 22?

5. Why is the wife called upon to be subject to her husband? v.23

The submission Paul speaks of here does not refer to the wife being inferior to her husband. The bible teaches that both men and women are made in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), and that in Christ there is neither "*Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus*" (Galatians 3:28). But God has given an order to all things, some having authority, others being in submission. A man and woman can occupy different roles in different aspects of life, but in the marriage relationship, God has placed the husband as the head over his wife. As the church is subject to Christ (v.24), so the wife is to be subject to the husband in everything.

6. What statement does Paul add to the wife's role in verse 33?

The word *respect* literally means *fear*; not a cowardly fear, but rather the reverence a person would have toward God. It is a reverential wholesome dread of displeasing Him. It is this kind of regard that a wife is to have for her husband.

Once Paul instructed the wives to be subject to their husbands, he turned to the husbands to say, *"Love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her"* (v.25).

7. According to verse 25, to what degree is the husband to love his wife?

- a. Following the example of Christ, what are some of the ways a husband can "give himself up" for his wife? Share some practical examples.

Paul extends his explanation to include Christ and the church in verses 26-27.

8. What does Christ do for His bride, the church? v.26

- a. What is His ultimate purpose for her? v.27

In verses 28-32, Paul redirects his focus the husband-wife relationship.

9. What instruction does he repeat? Why? v. 28-29

The husband's body is imperfect, yet he nourishes and cherishes it. God expects him to do the same for his wife, who is also imperfect. It is God's high standard for the marriage relationship.

Paul concludes by quoting Genesis 2:24, "for this reason shall a man leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." It is their sacred relationship that is likened to the one that exists between Christ and the church.



Stop and Listen: What are the lasting thoughts Paul closes with in verse 33?

To the husband:

To the wife:

If you are married, how are you doing in this area? What can you do to make room for improvement?

If you are single, how does this minister to you, in your relationship with your husband, your Maker?

The Review



*“...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb
and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me...” Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

It’s time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

51. How has your perspective been altered through this chapter?

52. What word of truth is now more important to you?

53. How have you grown closer in your relationship with the Lord?

54. What relevance is there between this week’s memory verse and your daily life?

55. Write out this week’s memory verse from memory:

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Knowing Jesus More

A Study Through Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians

*That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him,
being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. Colossians 1:10*

Lesson 12

Ephesians Chapter 6

Memory Verse:

**Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that
you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and
having done all, to stand. Ephesians 6:13**

Paul continues his teaching begun in chapter five on mutual submission in the lives of Christians; now addressing parents and children, slaves and masters, and ending with the recognition that all of life is a spiritual war, requiring obedience, and the full armor of God to stand firm against the devil.

We have all we need in Christ Jesus to do all He commands us to do! Be reminded of that as you dig into this amazing chapter.

Day 1 – Read Ephesians 6:1-24

As you read through the chapter to get an overview of it, write down which verse speaks to you in the sections below:

1. Verses 1 – 4

2. Verses 5 – 9

3. Verses 10 – 20

4. Verses 21- 24



Stop and Listen: It is clear from Paul's letter that there will be spiritual warfare in our daily lives, and often that battle is fiercest on the home front, in our relationships with those closest to us. We are learning that God places the responsibility on us to learn to love and live in harmony with one another. Considering the careless permissiveness (lack of discipline and obedience) in American society today, what can we as believers do to make a difference?

Day 2 – Ephesians 6:1-4

The deterioration of today's family and the lack of love and respect in raising up children has led to devastating effects, the results of which we are only beginning to realize. The only hope we have is that Christian parents will accept their God-given responsibilities and start modeling what the Bible teaches. Change must begin with the house of God!

1. What is Paul's instruction to children in verse 1? Why?

Obedying parents *in the Lord* does not just refer to parents who are Christians. Rather, it means that children are obeying the Lord when they obey their parents. The only exception would be a child is asked to do something that is unscriptural: illegal, immoral, or would put them or someone else in danger. In instances such as these, the parental command to obey would be superseded by the command to "*obey God rather than man.*"

2. Paul lays out the fifth commandment, which he says, is the first commandment with promise.
(See also Deuteronomy 5:16)
 - a. What is the commandment? v.2
 - b. What is the promise? v.3
3. What is the father's primary role in child-rearing? v.4
 - a. What, specifically, must fathers be particularly careful not to do?
 - b. In Colossians 3:21, Paul makes the same statement but qualifies it with a reason; what is it?
 - c. List some of the after-effects of continual criticism for a child. (Think about the long term consequences.)

Paul states simply, but emphatically, that discipline is essential; it must be in the context of reciprocal respect for it to be beneficial to a child. Character, communication, compassion and caring, all must be cultivated and nurtured in a loving environment for a child to thrive and reach their full potential. This is the responsibility of every parent who has been blessed to wear the title of father or mother.

4. Look up Deuteronomy 6:4-9, and read it carefully. See the scriptural instructions for training up and admonishing children in the Lord. Write down practical ways you would apply these verses today (if you don't have children, write down how you could apply these verses to those around you, or perhaps those in your future).
 - a. v.4 -5

b. v.6

c. v.7

d. v.8

e. v.9



Stop and Listen: What kind of environment are you creating in your home? What kinds of television shows do you watch? What music do you listen to? What books and magazines do you read? What kind of friendships do you model for your children? If you think your daily personal choices don't influence or impact your family members, or friends – think again – they do! Right at this moment, what has God put His finger on that you should change? Don't hesitate; take action today and the Lord will honor your obedience.

Day 3 – Ephesians 6:5-9

It is estimated that as much as one-third of the Roman population consisted of slaves of all races. Most could expect to be emancipated by the age of thirty. The work of a slave was not limited to hard labor; they worked in different occupations, and many owned land of their own. Because of the widespread poverty of Paul's day, some free laborers chose to sell themselves into slavery for economic reasons.

In the context of Paul's letter, he states that slaves are full members of the body of Christ, sharing equally with their masters in the spiritual blessings as heirs of Christ. From the text, we can conclude several principles for all Christians in the workplace.

1. What do you see in verses 5-9 about the Christian's personal behavior on the job?
2. What should the motive be for serving as unto the Lord?
3. What can you say about the believer's work ethic from these verses?
4. What is our reward for a good job done on earth?
5. What reminders does Paul emphasize to all employers in verse 9?
6. How easy or difficult is it for you to obey someone in authority over you? Why?

Pauls' words to servants here must be heard in the same context as his exhortation to wives, husbands, and children. There is one common thread woven throughout all: that our behavior in every relationship should be influenced by our expectation of the return of Christ at any moment. The reality of this truth should affect our motive and our behavior in every relationship and circumstance of life.



Stop and Listen:

Day 4 – Ephesians 6:10-24

1. Paul's closing words are to "be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might." What is the only way this can be done? v.10-11

a. Who is our enemy according to Revelation 12:9? See also John 10:10.

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3. What does Paul say about the armor in verses 14-17? Think about the value and purpose of each piece.

a. *The belt of truth* –

b. *The breastplate of righteousness* –

c. *The shoes of the gospel* –

d. *The shield of faith* –

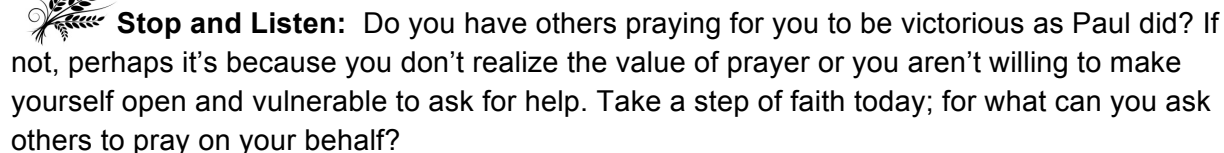
e. *The helmet of salvation* –

f. *The sword of the Spirit* –

4. Lastly, when preparing to engage in warfare, we are to be watchful and what? v.18

5. Acknowledging the utmost importance of prayer, what does Paul pray for himself? v.19-20

6. What was on Paul's heart in his closing thoughts? v.21-24



The Energy

Prayer is the energy that enables the Christian soldier to wear the armor and wield the sword. We cannot fight the battle in our own power, no matter how strong or talented we may think we are. When Amalek attacked Israel, Moses went to the mountaintop to pray, while Joshua used the sword down in the valley (Ex. 17:8-16). It took both to defeat Amalek - Moses' intercession on the mountain and Joshua's use of the sword in the valley. Prayer is the power for victory, but not just any kind of prayer. Paul told us how to pray if we would defeat Satan.

Pray Always: Always be in communion with the Lord, keep the receiver off the hook! Pray without ceasing!

Pray with all Prayer: *There is more than one kind of praying; prayer, supplication, intercession, thanksgiving, praise.*

Pray in the Spirit: The bible formula is that we pray to the Father, through the Son, and in the Spirit. Romans 8: 26-27 tells us that only in the Spirit's power can we pray in the will of God.

Pray with Your Eyes Open: *Watching means “keeping on the alert.” The phrase “watch and pray” occurs often in the bible. Be on the alert so you can detect Satan when he is beginning to work.*

Keep on Praying: The word perseverance simply means “to stick to it and not quit”.

Pray for all the Saints: If Paul needed the prayers of the saints, how much more do you and I need them!

Warren Wiersbe

*...praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end
with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints...*

Ephesians 6:18

The Review



*“...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb
and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me...” Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

It's time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

56. How has your perspective been altered through this chapter?

57. What word of truth is now more important to you?

58. How have you grown closer in your relationship with the Lord?

59. What relevance is there between this week's memory verse and your daily life?

60. Write out this week's memory verse from memory:

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Knowing Jesus More

A Study Through Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians

*That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him,
being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. Colossians 1:10*

Lesson 13

Philippians Chapter 1

Memory Verse:

For me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain. Philippians 1:21

Perspective is everything in the Christian life! The vantage point from which we view our circumstances determines whether we have joy or despair; success or failure. What about you: do you have a clear understanding of what is going on in your life right now? Wouldn't it help if you could see things from God's perspective? It certainly helped Paul; he was able to view his circumstances from "God's big picture" and rejoice in troubled times.

Your goal is to gain God's perspective. Find out what was the secret of Paul's joy! Here is a hint; the word *mind* is used ten times, the word *think* is used five times. Could the secret be the way that the believer thinks in his mind, his attitude towards things, or his view of God? Could that have something to do with his joy in circumstances? Let's find out in this amazing letter of Paul.

Take a moment and ask the Holy Spirit to teach you through this study!

Day 1 – Read Philippians 1:1-30

As you read through the chapter to get an overview of it, write down which verse speaks to you in the sections below:

1. Verses 1 – 2

2. Verses 3 – 11

3. Verses 12 – 18

4. Verses 19 – 26

5. Verses 27 – 30



Stop and Listen: “To live is Christ”. Paul experienced many hard trials, imprisonments, beatings, despair, and yet had joy. Explain how a believer should walk in joy in the midst of hardship and pain. Give practical examples. Look at Proverbs 23:7a and Philippians 2:5. “Let this mind be also in YOU, which was also in Christ Jesus”... Ask the Holy Spirit for help if you need strength to walk in joy right now, He is our Helper.

Day 2 – Philippians 1:1-11

1. We know that Paul authored this letter; whose name does he add in verse 1 to the salutation? Why do you think he did this? See Philippians 2:20 and 22.

Paul writes to all the saints in Philippi, along with the *bishops* - literally, the spiritual overseers (or elders) of the flock- and to the deacons, who saw to the physical needs of the flock - much like those of the early church in Acts 6:1-6.

2. What does Paul wish for these believers that are only possible through the Lord? v.2

Paul first preached among the Philippians approximately a decade earlier and, in turn, they had, over the years, supported him with their prayers and financial gifts.

3. For what is Paul particularly thankful and joyful? v.3-5

4. Why is Paul confident about these Christians? v.6-7

The continual process of good work that is taking place in every believer's life is called *sanctification*. Paul assures that God began this work and He will bring it to completion; literally, He will continue it until *the day of Jesus Christ*, that is until Christ returns to earth for His people as foretold in scripture.

Having expressed his love, Paul begins to pray about the believer's love in verse 8-11.

5. With whom did Paul compare his affection?

(Think about it: Paul loved these people with the same love the Lord exhibited on earth.)

6. In turn, what does Paul pray regarding their love in the following verses?

a. v.9

b. v.10

c. v.11

7. Look up the word *discernment* in the dictionary. Write the definition here.

a. The believer's love should abound in both knowledge and discernment (depth of insight). The knowledge you gain from scripture; the insight comes as you apply scriptural knowledge to daily life. Share an example of your love abounding in both ways.



Stop and Listen: The “fruits of righteousness” are the character qualities that bring glory to God. Take a moment to look at these qualities in Galatians 5:22-23 and then make note of them in the space provided. These are the qualities God is working into your life through your circumstances. When He comes for you, He will see His Son in you!

Day 3 – Philippians 1:12-18


Paul now takes a sudden mental turn, relating that his own adversity has resulted in the advancement of the gospel and the glory of God. In other words, Paul’s restrictions had not restricted the gospel going forth!

1. Why was Paul in prison; what was the result? v.13-14
 - a. Does this outcome make sense by the world’s standard? Please explain.
2. Paul says there were two kinds of people seizing the opportunity to preach because of his imprisonment. Who were they? v.15-17
3. What was the wrong motive of the first group Paul mentions and what did they hope to accomplish? v.16

4. Compare this with the motive of the other group. v.17

5. In what was Paul able to confidently rejoice? v.18



 **Stop and Listen:** What adversity are you facing today? How might God want to use your difficulty to get out the message of the gospel? Are you willing? Please share your thoughts; conclude by lifting them in prayer.

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Day 4 – Philippians 1:19-30

1. What truth made Paul certain that his chains were not permanent? v.19

Paul knew from experience that when the family of God prays, the Spirit of God works!

2. Whether Paul was released from prison or left his life on earth to be with the Lord, what was his greatest desire? v.20
3. What perspective governed Paul's heart-attitude? v.21
 - a. If Paul were to go on living, of what could he be certain? V.22
 - b. What was Paul's personal desire? v.23
 - c. Which option would be better for the believers? Why? v.24

Take note of the fact that Paul would be better off personally in death; it would be far better to be with the Lord than in prison. But Paul's love for the believers allowed him to place the welfare of others ahead of his own.


4. What did Paul believe would be the outcome? v.25-26
5. It was of little importance to Paul whether he lived or died; both ends had their advantages and either way, God would be glorified. Look again at this week's memory verse (adding your name): "*For _____ to live is Christ, and to die is gain.*" Can you, like Paul, honestly make this declaration?

Paul determined to remain committed to the Lord, no matter what the sacrifice. It was his desire that the believers remain committed as well.

6. How would these believers prove out their commitment? v.27a

- a. What was Paul's earnest desire for them? v.27b
- b. What affect would a bold, unified church body have in the world? v.28



 **Stop and Listen:** What two privileges do we have as Christians? (v.29-30) How has your belief in Christ resulted in you suffering for His sake?

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Turn your eyes upon Jesus...
Look full in His wonderful face...
And the things of earth
Will grow strangely dim
In the light of His glory and grace.



The Review



*“...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb
and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me...” Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

It’s time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

61. How has your perspective been altered through this chapter?

62. What word of truth is now more important to you?

63. How have you grown closer in your relationship with the Lord?

64. What relevance is there between this week’s memory verse and your daily life?

65. Write out this week’s memory verse from memory:

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*That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him,
being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. Colossians 1:10*

Lesson 14

Philippians Chapter 2

Memory Verse:

**Do all things without complaining and disputing,
that you may become blameless and harmless,
children of God without fault in the midst of a
crooked and perverse generation, among whom
you shine as lights in the world... Philippians 2:14-15**

The power of *love* displayed through *humility* is Paul's message in Philippians 2. These two powerful virtues are inextricably linked and are essential for maintaining unity and realizing joy in the body of Christ.

"Paul knew what some church workers today do not know: There is a difference between unity and uniformity. True spiritual unity comes from within; it is a matter of the heart. Uniformity is the result of pressure from without. This is why Paul opened this section appealing to the highest possible spiritual motives (Phil. 2:1-4). Since the believers at Philippi were "in Christ," this ought to have encouraged them to work toward unity and love, not division and rivalry. In a gracious way, Paul was saying to the church, "Your disagreements reveal that there is a spiritual problem in your fellowship. It isn't going to be solved by rules or threats; it's going to be solved when your hearts are right with Christ and with each other." Paul wanted them to see that the basic cause was selfishness, and the cause of selfishness is pride. There can be no joy in the life of the Christian who puts himself above others." Warren Wiersbe


The letter to the Philippians is often referred to as the epistle of joy; it is easy to understand why. Paul wrote it from his adversity as a prisoner at a time when he had learned to be joyful, not because of his circumstances, but rather, *in them*.

Day 1 – Read Philippians 2:1-30

As you read through the chapter to get an overview of it, write down which verse speaks to you in the sections below:

1. Verses 1 – 4
2. Verses 5 – 11
3. Verses 12 – 18
4. Verses 19 – 24
5. Verses 25 – 30



 **Stop and Listen:** If we asked ourselves “What would Jesus do?” every time we had a choice to make, how would Christians today impact their world? How might your life look different if you did this?

[illegible]

Day 2 – Philippians 2:1-11

We can assume from Paul's instructions that there may have been a problem with self-centeredness in the Philippian church, as he makes an appeal for unity that is expressed through humility. His repetition of the word "if" in verse 1 in the Greek refers not to uncertainties but rather to realities. Replacing "if" with the certainty of "since" causes it to read much differently. Paul says in verse 1: *"Since there is consolation; since there is comfort of love; since there is fellowship of the Spirit; since there is affection and mercy, fulfill my joy by..."*

1. Paul lists four specific ways in which unity is possible based on the four certainties found in verse 1. Finish Paul's exhortations below; the first is done for you.

- a. *Since there is consolation (encouragement for being united with Christ)...(v.2 fulfill my joy by being like-minded, having the same love, being of one accord, of one mind.*

- b. Since there is comfort of love...(v.3a)

- c. Since there is fellowship of the Spirit...(v.3b)

- d. Since there is affection and mercy...(v.4)

When each of these certainties are accompanied by the believer's proper response, there is evidence of the reality of Christian unity that is expressed by setting aside personal interests and concentrating on the welfare of others.

2. Which of the above responses in v. 2-4 needs to be evident in you to deal with your current circumstances? Note it here and ask God to enable you.

3. The believer's love should abound in both knowledge and discernment (depth of insight). The knowledge you gain from scripture; the insight comes as you apply scriptural knowledge to daily life. Share how you can maintain humility in your present situation.

The supreme example of humility is the Lord Jesus Christ. In an almost poetic way, through the next seven verses Paul puts forth the example of Jesus for us to imitate. Because we have the mind of Christ and the Spirit of Christ, we should also demonstrate the actions of Christ. Let's look at how He humbled himself for our sakes.

Trace the steps of Christ's **humility** on our behalf by filling in the blanks, beginning in verse 5 (example is done for you): "let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, but...

Made Himself of no reputation

Taking the form of a bondservant

Now trace the steps of His **exaltation** beginning in verse 9 (example done for you):

And given Him the name which is above every name

Therefore God also has highly exalted Him

4. How do you feel knowing that Christ willingly left His position in heaven to humble Himself in serving your needs? How might this realization encourage you to put the needs of others ahead of your own? Please share.



Stop and Listen: Think about it: would you rather humble yourself or have God do it for you? Some of us have a little trouble humbling ourselves; and 1 Peter 5:5-6 is a good reminder of *why* we must. What does it say? What is promised to those who do? (See also James 4:10.)

Day 3 – Philippians 2:12-18

In verse 12, Paul says, “Therefore,” connecting what he is about to say with what he previously stated in v.2-4. It seems Paul had a special request for these believers - keeping in mind their needs as well as the example of Christ they were to follow.

1. What are Paul’s strong words to them in verse 12b?

We must understand in context what Paul is *not* saying as well as what he *is* saying. He is not telling them to work for their salvation - God had already given it to them. But in view of the current disunity in the church, they were to work *out* - or put into daily practice - what God had worked *in* them by His Holy Spirit. Some were working for self rather than others, which had created problems in the body.

2. Who would enable them to do this outworking? How? v.13-14

The phrase “do all things” in the Greek is speaking of literally everything the believer does. The present tense of the word “do” implies that it must be done continually.

3. The importance of this type of behavior is spelled out in verse 15-16. How did Paul want them to live? Why?

Paul’s words “hold fast the word of life” (v.16) means to “hold forth” or “offer” the word of life to others.

4. How are you making His word available to others? Be specific.

The Philippians lived in a crooked and perverse generation. In our world today, like theirs, many are living for *self*; others go so far as to turn their backs on God. It is in this kind of dark world that Christians are to shine!

Paul had in view the very real possibility of his own death, and he wanted more than anything to be able to rejoice for the Philippian believers at Christ’s return, knowing he had done all for them in this life.

5. How did he view his service to these dear people? v.17-18

- a. What did he expect for them in return?

Paul used the same word for sacrifice - *thysia* - as he used in Romans 12:1, referring to the presenting of one’s physical body as a spiritual sacrifice of worship. Think about it: the work Christians perform as an act of worship to God brought joy and rejoicing to this apostle’s heart. It ought to do the same for ours as well!



Stop and Listen: Take a moment to examine the words of Jesus in Matthew 5:14-16. What does the Lord say about you as a believer? What does He expect from you; for what purpose?

Day 4 – Philippians 2:19-30

In the remaining verses of this chapter, Paul gives honorable mention to two individuals who modeled this example with their lives.

Paul uses the term *proven character* in verse 22 to speak of those who remain faithful in the face of great difficulty. It's obvious that both Timothy and Epaphroditus had a proven track record with Paul, who was close enough to view their character in everyday life. They had both proven by their choices and lifestyle what it means to be humble and place the interests of others ahead of their own.

1. Look closely at v.19-24; what does Paul say about Timothy in the following:
 - a. His relationship with Paul?
 - b. His different lifestyle?
 - c. His service to the church?

The Review



*“...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb
and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me...” Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

It’s time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

66. How has your perspective been altered through this chapter?

67. What word of truth is now more important to you?

68. How have you grown closer in your relationship with the Lord?

69. What relevance is there between this week’s memory verse and your daily life?

70. Write out this week’s memory verse from memory:

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Knowing Jesus More

A Study Through Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians

*That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him,
being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. Colossians 1:10*

Lesson 15

Philippians Chapter 3

Memory Verse:

...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being conformed to His death... Philippians 3:10

How many times is it necessary to repeat something before it sinks into the human brain? Statistics show that repetition is a key to learning, so it seems that it would serve us well to note those things which Paul continues to emphasize...

“Chapter 3 sets forth Christ again, this time as our confidence---Christ our confidence, our motivating power. He is the One who moves us to want earnestly what we ought to want and who makes us confident that it can be achieved. I do not think there is any quality in life in more desperate demand than confidence. Who is not looking for motivation? All the courses on personality buildup are designed to try to give us the spark that energizes, that motivates us, that makes us want to do what we ought to do and would like to do. All this, the Apostle says, we find in Jesus Christ. He is the motivator. Paul puts it strongly in the well-known verse 10 of chapter 3,

“...that I may know Him and the power of His resurrection...”

For contrast he outlines the things that motivated him and gave him confidence, or rather, a false sense of confidence before he became a Christian. In verse 3 he describes Christians as those who should worship God in Spirit, glory in Christ Jesus, and have no confidence in the flesh. But that is the problem with us. We are constantly trying to build up confidence in the flesh---in the principle of self-effort.” Ray Stedman

Let's dig in and check where our confidence lies...

Day 1 – Read Philippians 3:1-21

As you read through the chapter to get an overview of it, write down which verse speaks to you in the sections below:

1. Verses 1 – 11

2. Verses 12 – 16

3. Verses 17 – 21



Stop and Listen: From your initial reading of Philippians 3, what about Paul's perspective encourages you to look for joy in your circumstances? Journal your thoughts and check your heart. Are you looking for the joy He can bring?

I cast all my cares upon You,

I lay all of my burdens, down at Your feet

And anytime I don't know what to do,

I will cast all of my cares upon You.



Day 2 – Philippians 3:1-11

“Finally, my brethren, rejoice in the Lord (v.1).” Here in chapter three, Paul marks a turning point, driving home the truth that no matter what we believers are facing, it is possible to have His joy manifested in our lives. Now Paul strikes a strong warning that, if unheeded, would certainly be a deterrent from entering into this joy.

1. Who does Paul warn his readers about? v.2 (It would be helpful to look at this verse in several different translations to formulate your answer.)

Notice that Paul is speaking *to* Christians - not *about* them. Like a father to his children, he is attempting to keep them safe from even listening to false teachers who would lead them away from Christ. Some of the Jews were adamant that people had to become circumcised by law in addition to believing in Christ if they were to be saved (see the Jerusalem Council's ruling on this in Acts 15:12-21). These individuals targeted weaker Christians and Paul has harsh words for them.

2. According to Paul, what kinds of individuals are these? v.3

Paul states there is a choice for everyone: glory in the flesh and obey the law, or glory in Christ's atoning work on the cross! It was one or the other; placing one's trust in anyone or anything else is futile.

If anyone had a right to brag about their human credentials or pedigree, Paul did (v.4), but placing his faith in Christ had changed Paul's life

3. Look at Paul's credentials in verses 5-7 and note what he says about himself.
 - a. v.5
 - b. v.6
 - c. v. 7

Day 3 – Philippians 3:12-16

If on occasion we are tempted to think we have “arrived” to full maturity in the Christian life, we have only to read and reread Paul’s words in verses 14-16. In fact, quite the opposite is true: the longer we walk with the Lord, the more we realize how much further we have to go to be like Christ – and that is our goal!

1. Paul knew he was not there yet, but what was his determined perspective? v.12-14
2. What does Paul picture in his mind to keep him focused on what matters?
3. From what you already know about Paul, what motivates him to “press on”?

Paul doesn’t pursue an earthly prize, but a heavenly one, encouraging his readers to be like-minded. He longs to hear Jesus say: *“Well done, good and faithful servant!”*

4. If we are as goal oriented as Paul, should we veer off course for any reason, of what can we be certain? (v.15) How does this encourage you?



Stop and Listen: Christians are accountable to the knowledge we possess, and Paul says that we should walk our course accordingly. Is there an area of your life where God has shown you that you are “otherwise minded”? What adjustment can you make?

Day 4 – Philippians 3:17-21

In order to say, “Follow my example,” one must be an example worth emulating. To follow Paul meant to follow Christ, and those who do are worthy of acknowledgement.

1. What was Paul leaving behind for those who came after him? v.17
2. In contrast to Paul’s example, where did those who lived contrary to the Gospel place their focus? How does Paul describe them? v.18-19
3. Where is your citizenship? v.20 Do you eagerly await your Savior?
4. If you belong to Him today, what are you looking forward to? v.21
5. Those that follow Christ live in anticipation of heavenly things, not participation in earthly things. Is there an area of your life where you can confidently encourage others to follow you?



Stop and Listen: Turn to 1 John 3:1-3 and read the verses. Verse 3 is to be applied to our lives. If you have “this hope”, how are you practically “*purifying yourself, just as He is pure*”? What does that mean to you?

The Review



*“...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb
and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me...” Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

It’s time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

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Lesson 16

Philippians Chapter 4

Memory Verse:

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 understanding, will guard your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Philippians 4:6-7

"If anybody had an excuse for worrying, it was the apostle Paul. His beloved Christian friends at Philippi were disagreeing with one another, and he was not there to help them. We have no idea what Euodia and Syntyche were disputing about, but whatever it was, it was bringing division into the church. Along with the potential division at Philippi, Paul had to face division among the believers at Rome (Phil. 1:14-17). Added to these burdens was the possibility of his own death! Yes, Paul had a good excuse to worry - but he did not. Instead, he took time to explain to us the secret of victory over worry." Warren Wiersbe

Worry can be overwhelming to us, and can render us ineffective in all areas of life. It can paralyze us! Paul is going to teach us that we don't have to worry!

We can hardly wait! Lord, speak to us through this lesson, may we be changed for Your glory!

Day 1 – Read Philippians 4:1-23

As you read through the chapter to get an overview of it, write down which verse speaks to you in the sections below:

1. Verses 1 – 7

2. Verses 8 – 9

3. Verses 10 – 20

4. Verses 21 – 23



Stop and Listen: From what you know of Paul and his relationship with the Philippian believers, how do you think he would define **joy** and **rejoicing**?

Day 2 – Philippians 4:1-7

The word therefore in verse 1 introduces Paul's last exhortation of the letter, which is to apply what he wrote about in chapter three: keep pressing toward the goal of the upward call of God in Christ, remembering that your citizenship is in heaven.

1. How is the apostle's affection for this congregation revealed in verse 1?

a. What does he exhort these believers to do?

2. Paul singles out two women whose disagreement was causing discord in the church body. What does Paul plead with them to do? v.2

Apparently these women who worked for the gospel alongside Paul, Euodia (meaning *prosperous journey*) and Syntyche (meaning *pleasant acquaintance*), were not living up to the definitions of their names. Paul pleads for *contentment* rather than *contention* in their relationship.

He also refers to an unknown “true companion” (v.3) to help them solve their differences.

3. Twice in verse 4, Paul encourages his readers to do what?
4. Notice that Paul does not tell his audience to be *happy* but rather to *rejoice*! Who is mentioned in verse 4 as being the key to rejoicing in all things? What is the difference between happiness and rejoicing? (Think for a moment of Paul’s own example.)

5. In addition to rejoicing, what else are believers to possess? Why? v.5

Joy is an inner quality of spirit that may or may not always be evident to others, but *gentleness* is reflected in how we treat others. An awareness of the Lord’s imminent return, coupled with (inward) joy and (outward) gentleness, should remove from us any tendency to worry or be anxious. But, if we are “otherwise” minded as Paul mentioned earlier (3:15), he presents a sure-fire way of dealing with life issues - PRAYER.

6. What are the points of prayer Paul cites that can help us deal with worry? You’re given a clue to help you define each one.
 - a. Prayer (approach to God) -
 - b. Supplication (specific petition) -
 - c. Thanksgiving (heart attitude) -

7. Jesus warned His followers against worry in Matthew 6:25-34, because it dramatically affects our trust in God. Read these verses through carefully, commenting on how it is impossible for *worry* and *worship* to occupy the heart at any given moment - one will always exclude the other. What has God shown you?

8. When heeding Paul's instruction about prayer, what results? v.7

a. Do you need to understand God's peace to experience it? Please explain.

The point Paul is making here (if we will listen and heed it) is that in everything by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving, **let** your request be made known to God; and also **let** God's peace guard your heart and mind through Christ. The phrase *guard your heart* is a military one (also used in 1 Peter 1:5) meaning, "*to protect or garrison by guarding.*" In other words, God's peace guards your heart's emotions and your mind's thoughts like soldiers assigned to watch over you.



Stop and Listen: When you take your requests to God and allow His peace to guard your heart and mind, what difference will it make in your perspective? What thoughts occupy your mind most often throughout the day? How do your thoughts compare with the ones Paul highlights in this chapter?

What child of God wouldn't like to live a life free from anxiety; one that is praiseworthy and fulfilling? Here in verses 8-9, Paul reveals that secret that *right thinking* leads to *right living*.

1. Instead of defining the words below, write down an example of each one. (A brief definition as it pertains to the text is given for you to consider.)

a. *Whatever things are true* (the opposite of dishonest or untrustworthy):

b. *Whatever things are noble* (dignified, worthy of respect, high opinion):

c. *Whatever things are just* (right - in conformity to God's standard):

d. *Whatever things are pure* (wholesome, uncontaminated, clean):

e. *Whatever things are lovely* (that which promotes peace instead of conflict):

f. *Whatever things are of good report* (admirable - what is positive rather than negative):

2. What is Paul's summation of these thoughts at the end of verse 8? What does he want believers to do with them?

The word *meditate* in the AMP translation means: "*to think and weigh and take account of these things-fix your minds on them.*" How often do you meditate on godly thoughts?

3. How could Paul expect believers to follow him? What would the result be? v.9

The thought life is critically important to the Christian but it is not the only thing; right *thinking* also involves right *living*. Paul could put himself out there as the example to follow because he followed Christ!



Stop and Listen: What can you do to model Christ in your current situation? Is there something you need to do to change how you are thinking, and living? Journal your thoughts.

Day 4 – Philippians 4:10-23

Part of Paul's reason for writing to the Philippian church was to express his thanks for their monetary gift to him (4:18). Epaphroditus was the messenger designated to bring the gift to Paul. His final greetings to this church also include his fellow saints and co-laborers in the gospel who were with him.

In verses 10-13, Paul expresses a glad heart because of the Philippians' love.

1. What life lesson had Paul learned? Have you learned this lesson?
2. What does this lesson convey about his relationship to Christ?

Paul was content no matter what his circumstances, but he was none-the-less grateful for the help sent by the Philippian church.

3. How does he commend them in verse 14-16?

4. In addition to meeting his need, what did Paul want their gift to reflect? v.17-20

5. What did Paul consider this gift in God's eyes?

6. According to what measure would God return the blessing to them?



Stop and Listen: Verse 19 AMP says: "And my God will liberally supply (fill to the full) your every need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus." What does this mean to you right now in the situation you are facing?

"...you met my need, and God is going to meet your need. You met one need that I have, but my God will meet all of your needs. You gave out of poverty, but God will supply your needs out of His riches in glory..." Warren Wiersbe

*"When God's work is done God's way for God's glory, it will not lack for God's supply".
Hudson Taylor*

The Review



*"...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb
and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me..." Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

It's time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

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Lesson 17

Colossians Chapter 1

Memory Verse:

Him we preach, warning every man and teaching every man in all wisdom, that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Colossians 1:28

The book of Colossians is a modern-day reminder that the foundational issues that fashioned the early church are still relevant to the twenty-first century. In it believers are told that character is at the heart of Christian conduct and that the truth must be taught and fought for by each succeeding generation of God's family.

"It was written at about the same time as the letter to the Philippians, and you will notice that it is very similar in its structure and content to the letter to the Ephesians. They were probably written at about the same time, during Paul's first imprisonment, and are therefore called the Prison epistles of the apostle Paul. The primary difference between the Ephesians and Colossians is that the Colossians had a problem, and it is on this problem that the apostle is primarily focusing. They were on the verge of losing their understanding of the power by which Christian life is lived. Therefore, this letter is the great proclamation and explanation of the power of the Christian's life through Christ as the resource of the individual.

"The theme of this letter can be expressed by these words which are part of the apostle's introductory prayer for the Colossian Christians:

"May you be strengthened with all power, (that is why he wrote the letter) according to his glorious might (that is the subject of the letter to the Colossians)". Ray Stedman

Day 1 – Read Colossians 1:1-29

As you read through the chapter to get an overview of it, write down which verse speaks to you in the sections below:

1. Verses 1 – 2

2. Verses 3 – 8

3. Verses 9 – 18

4. Verses 19 – 23

5. Verses 24 – 29



Stop and Listen: The main theme of this letter is that Christ is supreme in all things. From your initial reading, what stands out to you as distinctive about Christ and His work?

Day 2 – Colossians 1:1-18

Paul writes to an audience that views Christianity from a variety of philosophical perspectives, the result of blending ideas with worship of more than one god. He is concerned that the believers in Colosse might become deceived by the lies of false teachers. Some believers were accepting the fact that works (circumcision) must be added to their faith in order to be saved. Others thought that people had to attain a higher degree of knowledge to be like God (Gnosticism). And still others were following the astrological charts of the stars to direct their Christian walk. Paul's purpose is to help these believers protect themselves from those who would undermine the simplicity and sufficiency of their faith in Christ.

1. What close companion of Paul's is acknowledged as helping him write this letter?

a. What words does Paul use to identify his audience?

b. What form of greeting does he use in addressing them?

Rather than immediately dealing with the problem of false teachers in Colosse, Paul presents the truth of the gospel and the pre-eminence of Christ in all things. Repeating a pattern evident in some of his other epistles, he is quick to give thanks for the believers and acknowledge his heart to remember them in prayer.

In verse 4-8, Paul forms his prayer for the Colossian believers on the basis of their need as a body.

2. For what three important virtues does Paul give thanks to God on their behalf? v.4-5

a.

b.

c.

d. What does Paul recognize as the source of this fruit evident in the believers lives?

e. In addition to the church at Colosse, where else is this fruit of the gospel in evidence?
v.6

3. The faith, hope, and love evidenced in the church of Colosse was first planted by one of God's servants; who was it? v.7

a. God uses some of His children to plant the seeds of the gospel and some to water those seeds, but who is responsible for giving the increase and supplying the growth?
See 1 Corinthians 3:7.

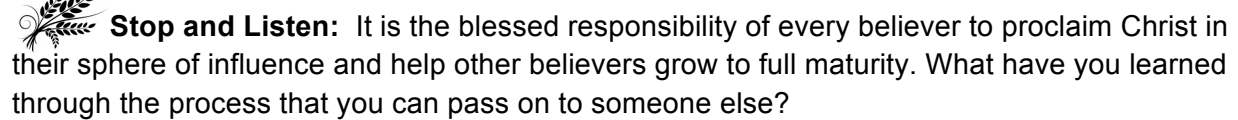
4. Paul was visited in prison by Epaphras, who brought him a good report. His commendation of their love in the Spirit (v.8), refers to the fruit produced by the Holy Spirit working in the lives of Christians (Galatians 5:22-23). Which of these: *faith, hope, love* - is God working into your life at the present time? How?

Paul next shifts his prayer from thanksgiving to supplication for what these people really need. Reflecting back on the good report brought by Epaphras, Paul prays that his readers will live lives that are pleasing to God.

5. In verses 9-11, for what does Paul pray?
 - a. v.9
 - b. v.10
 - c. v.11
 - d. Look carefully at the elements of Paul's prayer. Which part is most applicable to you at this time? Why?
6. Take a moment now and do what Paul describes in verse 12: "Give thanks to the Father who has qualified YOU to be a partaker of the inheritance of the saints in light." What makes you qualified to share in the blessings of salvation?
7. In addition to qualifying us as saints, what else has God done on our behalf? v.13

Paul uses this opportunity to elaborate on the "Son of His love" (v.13), expounding on the truth about Jesus Christ.

- e. v. 18

[illegible]

Jesus Christ is supreme in all things because “*it pleased the Father that in Him all the fullness should dwell*” (v.19).

1. How does God’s fullness dwell in Christ? What does this mean for us?
2. By what means is God able to reconcile all things to Himself? What is the result? v.20
3. Contrast and compare verses 21-22 with Ephesians 2:11-13. What do you learn about your estranged position before reconciliation? (Consider that you were an enemy of God in both your *mind* and your *behavior* and what it took to reconcile you to God.)

The word “if” in verse 23 could best be translated “since” to avoid misunderstanding the context of Paul’s words. Paul is not saying that believers will be presented holy and blameless *if* they remain faithful (salvation does not depend upon performance or works). He is confident, rather, that these believers will avoid false teaching and will remain faithful to the message of the gospel that reconciled them to God.

4. What “safeguards” are you building into your Christian walk that will assist you in recognizing and avoiding false teaching and in remaining faithful to Christ?



Stop and Listen: How does Christ have the pre-eminence in your life? How do you “put Him first” in all things? Have you gotten away from your daily devotions lately? Time to do a little heart search before Him...

a. What is the goal of ministry's labor and the object of suffering for the Lord?

b. What is the good news for everyone who shares in the work with Paul? v.29



Stop and Listen: The aim of ministry and personal goal of every Christian is to please Christ. Is He number one in your life? How are you currently working to please Him?

Jesus at the center of it all...
Jesus at the center of it all...
From beginning to the end,
it will always be, it's always been
You, Jesus!



The Review



"...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb

and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me..." Galatians 1:15-16a

Day 5 – Review

It's time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

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[illegible]



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Lesson 18

Colossians Chapter 2

Memory Verse:

**As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord,
so walk in Him, rooted and built up in Him and
established in the faith, as you have been taught,
abounding in it with thanksgiving. Colossians 2:6-7**

Paul is about to tell his readers the single greatest truth regarding every Christian's struggle to be holy: "For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; and you are complete in Him, who is the head of all principality and power" (2:9-10). Because Jesus is Himself the fullness of God, the believer's relationship with Him allows that same fullness. There is no need to look anywhere else for satisfaction in this world.

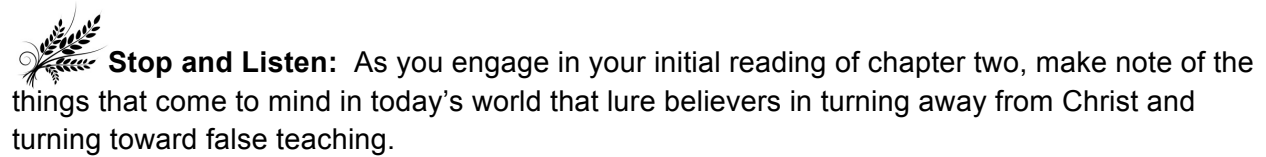
Day 1 – Read Colossians 2:1-23

As you read through the chapter to get an overview of it, write down which verse speaks to you in the sections below:

1. Verses 1 – 10

2. Verses 11 – 15

3. Verses 16 – 23



Day 2 – Colossians 2:1-10

- Paul was anxiously struggling on behalf of the believers in Colosse and all others who had not met him in person. He understood the attractive influence of some false teachers and how successful they could be in winning over young believers and those who did not have a strong scriptural foundation.

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The words “*knit together in love*” are the same as *being united in love*. The image Paul portrays here is that of a body being held together by *joints and ligaments* (v.19), to ensure a strong, cohesive component. Since false teachers were divisive and destructive, the strength found in unity prevents believers from becoming vulnerable, providing the support needed to remain spiritually sound and healthy.

- a. In contrast to the false philosophical teaching that was prevalent in the church, what specific understanding about Christ does Paul state that all believers need? v.3
- b. Why does Paul feel the need to make this case? v.4

If believers come to an established understanding of who Christ is and their sufficiency in Him, smooth persuasive talkers will have no influence over them.

3. Though Paul was not with them in person, what about the Colossian church gave him cause to rejoice? v.5
4. What command does Paul give for living the Christian life? v.6

The Christian life is sometimes referred to as a race that believers run in order to win a prize, which is the upward call of God in Christ. But here, Paul uses another word to describe the believer’s progress: “*as you have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him.*”

- a. In order for there to be steady continued growth, describe what must take place? v.7

Attaining to a higher degree of knowledge isn’t the answer. The understanding that we are complete in Him, coupled with daily growth in Him, provides the strength and abundance that Paul is speaking about in these verses.

5. Paul’s warning becomes increasingly straightforward in verse 8; what is it? Whose responsibility is this?

The words “cheat you” literally mean to be taken captive, carried away, or kidnapped. The reference is to someone who is carried away into slavery because of departing from the truth. The argument Paul makes here is not against all philosophy but, specifically, against that which was being propagated by false teachers.

6. What two sources does Paul cite regarding this philosophy that is not of Christ? v.8
7. What point does Paul drive home to help believers realize they do not need to look to the world for answers or satisfaction in life? v.9-10 (In verse 10, personalize your answer by inserting the pronoun "I".)
- a. v.9
- b. v.10



Stop and Listen: How does realizing that *in Christ all the fullness of God lives in bodily form*, and that *you are complete in Him*, help to strengthen you right now? Take time to thank Him!

Day 3 – Colossians 2:11-15


In verse 11-15, Paul completes the point he started in verses 9-10 about the believer's completeness in Christ.

1. Paul uses two illustrations to explain that our salvation is the work of God alone. What is the spiritual significance of each one? v.11-12
- a. Circumcision made without hands (see Deuteronomy 30:6 and Romans 2:29) -
- b. Buried with Him in baptism (see Romans 6:1-7) -

2. In your own words, describe the fullness of your salvation as Paul relates it in verse 13-14.

The victory was won, the battle was done – Satan was defeated and conquered! Defeated, however, still present in this world and still seeking to rob, kill, and destroy Christians. But once we understand our fullness in Christ, we are able to have power over his evil influence!



 **Stop and Listen:** Learn to be spiritually strong because of who you are in Christ; don't allow the enemy's tactics to intimidate you. What understanding are you gaining through your study this week that will help you overcome? Reflect on this point throughout the week and see the difference it will make in your perspective and the application of God's truth!

[illegible]

Day 4 – Colossians 2:16-23

Not only are we as believers *full in Christ*, but we are also *free in Christ* – free from sin’s power; free to live full lives that are pleasing to God.

1. Because of our fullness and freedom in Christ, what must we not do? v.16-17

This is a difficult area for many believers, but Paul says we must not allow others to judge us. The word *judge* means to pronounce unfavorable judgment on, to find fault with, or to criticize. Apparently, the Colossian believers were being swayed by those who were judging them on what they ate or drank and on the religious days they celebrated. The basis for this criticism was *legalism* - measuring one’s own or another’s spirituality by keeping man-made rules and regulations. It is not any way to live and God has set us free from it! Paul states that keeping man’s rules is just a shadow of things to come; but the substance – reality - is found in Christ.

2. What is the other area being targeted for criticism?
 - a. v.18
 - b. v.19
 - c. What do you think happens when a believer loses connection with the Head?

Paul’s final word of caution is found in verses 20-23, where he warns of asceticism - the deprivation of the body’s normal desire in order to achieve God’s favor and approval.

3. What is wrong with this philosophy? v.20-23
 - a. Can you think of some everyday examples of this kind of false humility?
4. Self-denial has an appearance of wisdom; it looks good but has absolutely no value against what? v.23 Give an example.



Stop and Listen: Look again at verse 8. What lasting reminder will help you to avoid the pitfalls of asceticism and the other forms of legalism? Ask God to seal this to your heart.

“...But, put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts.”
Romans 13: 14



Redeemed – how I love to proclaim it!

Redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;

Redeemed through His infinite mercy, His child and forever, I am

Redeemed, redeemed, redeemed by the blood of the Lamb;

Redeemed, redeemed, His child and forever I am!



The Review



*“...it pleased God, who separated me from my mother’s womb
and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me...” Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

It’s time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

86. How has your perspective been altered through this chapter?

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88. How have you grown closer in your relationship with the Lord?

89. What relevance is there between this week’s memory verse and your daily life?

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Knowing Jesus More

A Study Through Galatians, Ephesians, Philippians, and Colossians

*That you may walk worthy of the Lord, fully pleasing Him,
being fruitful in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God. Colossians 1:10*

Lesson 19

Colossians Chapter 3

Memory Verse:

Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom, teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. Colossians 3:16

Is it possible to become saved and yet not find satisfaction and significance in the Christian life? Yes, sadly, it is possible to receive Christ as Savior but not progress very far in Christian growth or fulfillment. Paul realized this fact all too well; hence, he calls all believers to gain ground in their daily walk by looking up through a higher perspective.

Let's gain some ground together in our walk through this chapter! Put on your hiking shoes, and tie up those laces!

Day 1 – Read Colossians 3:1-25

As you read through the chapter to get an overview of it, write down which verse speaks to you in the sections below:

1. Verses 1 – 11

2. Verses 12 – 17

3. Verses 18 – 25



Stop and Listen: As you read through this chapter initially, make mental note of the *virtues* of the new life that stand in stark contrast to the *vices* of the old life and note the difference today in terms of your human relationships.

Day 2 – Colossians 3:1-11

God does not want His children to simply endure the disciplines of the sanctified life; rather He desires that we passionately pursue our relationship with Him, spiritually prospering every step of the way! Here in chapter three, the challenge is to make the ordinary – extraordinary by placing Christ in the center of everything.

The false teachers in Colosse were attacking the deity as well as the sufficiency of Christ. Paul corrects this thinking by stating that believers do not need to follow more rules or obtain more knowledge, but come to an understanding of their spiritual identification with Christ.

1. What truth does Paul begin with in verse 1?

Paul goes on to more fully explain our new life in Christ in the verses that follow. The reality that we have been raised with Christ should produce a new kind of motive in us.

2. Because of our identification with Christ, where should our minds be focused? Why? v.1-3

- a. Conversely, where should our minds not be? What do you think Paul means by this?
See Romans 6:2 and Colossians 2:20

3. Because of your new identification with Christ, the “old you” has died to sin, and the “new you” is *hidden with Christ in God*. In order to understand this better, look at Galatians 2:20, Philippians 1:21; and 2 Corinthians 5:17. You are once and for all sealed with the Holy Spirit, safe and set apart for Him! What is the biggest change you have noticed in your perspective?

Paul is not suggesting that believers disregard the details of earthly life so as to mentally dwell in some mystical realm, but to view life from a different perspective - a heavenly one - with the aim of impacting temporal choices and circumstances. We should learn to calculate (work through) our thoughts, emotions, and actions from an eternal perspective.

4. What has been hidden in the past will one day be revealed. As a believer, what are you promised in verse 4? See also 1 John 3:1-3.

Within the context of the first four verses, notice how many times Paul mentions Christ. Using this as his foundation, Paul goes on to elaborate on how spiritual living is based on the character of Christ.

Because of everything Paul has previously mentioned in verses 1-4, “therefore,” he says, “put to death your members which are on the earth...”

5. List the specific things that are to be put to death in verse 5.

6. Why are these behaviors and heart attitudes to be eliminated?
 - a. v.6

 - b. v. 7

Some things are worthy of being put to death; others must be replaced with something else. In verse 8, Paul switches the imagery to that of old worn out clothing that must be discarded and something new put in its place.

7. In verses 8-9, what are the old habits that must be replaced with new ones befitting a godly lifestyle?

As we put off the old, we also make room to put on the new – that which is created in the image of Christ (v.10).

8. What distinctions have been abolished within the Christian community, revealing that your relationship with Him is all that really matters? v.11



Stop and Listen: Think of something you've either put to death completely or discarded like old clothing, as you've learned what it means to be a Christian. Journal your thoughts.

*I have decided to follow Jesus
No turning back, no turning back...*



Day 3 – Colossians 3:12-17

Verses 12 -17 list the virtues that stand in contrast to the previous mentioned vices. The old things put away are now to be replaced with the character of Christ.

1. Of what does Paul remind the believer? v.12a
2. The above words are specifically descriptive of God's chosen people in the Old Testament – the nation of Israel (Deuteronomy 7:6). How are they applicable to you today as a Christian? See 1 Peter 2: 9-10.

3. Take time to briefly define (in your own words) what the “well-dressed” Christian wears.

Show-off your new lifestyle by putting on the following: (v 12-13)

a. tender mercies (compassion) –

b. kindness –

c. humility –

d. meekness (gentleness) –

e. longsuffering (patience) –

f. bearing with one another-

g. forgiving one another –

h. By what standard of measurement are you to forgive others? v.13

4. Paul saves the most important article of the Christian's clothing for last; what is it? Why is it so important? v.14
5. In order to maintain unity in the body of Christ, what must believers do? v.15
6. What is essential to exhibit the character of Christ and grow on to maturity? v.16



Stop and Listen: When the Word of Christ finds a comfortable home in the believer's life, there will be evidence of loving instruction and correction as well as corporate thanksgiving and worship. Whose name will be honored by the person adorned in this way?

How "well- dressed" are you? Can others see Him in you?

Day 4 – Colossians 3:18-25 and 4:1

Exhibiting the character of Christ is proof of His transforming power at work in your life! Godly choices and behaviors reveal that you are being made into His image.

Paul has moved from the foundation of the Christian life, to the Christian lifestyle, and now to the home and workplace - the areas that are most often tested. In a sense, he presents us with a prayer list, beginning with the relationships most important to us.

1. What instruction does Paul give to each relationship? Why do you think this is?

a. Behavior at home toward: (v.18-21)

- Wives
- Husbands
- Children
- Fathers

b. Behavior at work: (v. 22-25; 4:1)

- v.22
- v.23
- v.24
- v.25
- v.4:1



Stop and Listen: Which relationship is most difficult for you right now; and what article of “new clothing” do you need to put on to exhibit Christ? Ask God to help you today.

The Review

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and called me through His grace to reveal His Son in me...” Galatians 1:15-16a*

Day 5 – Review

It’s time to see what God has revealed to you this week. Revisit some of the points that stood out to you and share them here.

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Lesson 20

Colossians Chapter 4

Memory Verse:

**Let your speech always be with grace,
seasoned with salt, that you may know how
you ought to answer each one. Colossians 4:6**

Is it possible for a Christian navigating through a world filled with all manner of enticements, deceptions, and substitutions to live an undiluted, uncorrupted life before God? Yes! It isn't a matter of God accomplishing His will by using exceptional people, but of ordinary people taking deliberate steps in obedience to Him. Paul wants every believer to *know* the God we serve and to serve the God we know.

God wants to use us while we are still here on this earth! You are a part of the body of Christ and you have something to do! Something to give! God wants to fulfill His mission in you with the gifts He has given you, no matter where you are or what circumstance you are in! Let's give Him our all, while we still can! The finish line is just ahead!

Take a moment to thank Him for these lessons we have studied, and ask Him to speak to you personally in this last chapter of Colossians.

Day 1 – Read Colossians 4:1-18

As you read through the chapter to get an overview of it, write down which verse speaks to you in the sections below:

1. Verses 1 – 6
2. Verses 7 – 15
3. Verses 16 – 18



Stop and Listen: Paul's encouragement in this chapter has to do with basically three things: (1) being watchful in prayer, (2) walking in wisdom, and (3) using words of grace, so that you know how to answer every man, woman, and child He brings across your path. Imagine what a difference you can make for the kingdom of God by giving heed to these three priorities. Please share your thoughts.

Day 2 – Colossians 4:1-6

Paul had just finished making his appeal to believers (3:18 - 4:1) regarding their relationships within the Christian home and workplace. He now broadens that counsel to include the whole church body. His closing remarks in this letter have to do with a plea to deepen the personal devotional life with the Lord and a call to witness with the whole life to the world.

1. What is the nature of Paul's three-fold appeal for prayer in the following? Why is each one so vitally important? v.2
 - a. *earnest* – (see also Romans 12:12 and Acts 1:14)
 - b. *watchful* – (see also Matthew 26:41; 1 Thessalonians 5:6 and 1 Peter 5:8)
 - c. *thankful* – (see Ephesians 5:20 and Colossians 2:7)

2. Even though Paul is in chains, his focus in prayer is on others. What are his specific requests?

a. v. 3

b. v. 4

The fact that Paul is in prison physically does not prevent him from proclaiming Christ to all who would listen. The Word of God is not bound by the things of this world!

3. If believers are to be effective in using every opportunity to get the message of the gospel across, what does Paul say they must do? v.5

4. What does Paul insist must accompany a wise walk? For what reason? v.6

There's an old saying that "*you can draw a lot more people with honey than you can with vinegar.*" That being true, how careful we, as Christ's representatives, must be to make sure we are drawing people *to* Christ rather than driving them away.

In Paul's time, salt was used for two main purposes: as a preservative to keep food from spoiling and as a favorable additive.

5. Think about it...in order for your words to be favorable and salty, what would your speech need to consist of? Cite a couple of examples.




Stop and Listen: Reflect back on some of your conversations this past week. How favorable has your talk been lately? Please explain.

Day 3 – Colossians 4:1-6 (Continued)

Praying, proclaiming the word, witnessing, and sharing burdens - these are four wonderful ministries of speech. How much better it is to be involved in these ministries than to be using our tongues for gossip, malicious criticism, and other sinful purposes. Let's make David's prayer our prayer: "*Set a watch, O Lord, before my mouth; keep the door of my lips.*" Psalm 141:3

1. In sharing your faith, which is more important: your life or your lips? Why?
2. Sometimes, we don't know what to say in a circumstance that is before us. How important is it to you to ask God for His wisdom in what you should speak to someone?
3. Look up Ephesians 4:15. What does "speaking the truth in love" mean to you?



 **Stop and Listen:** How aware are you of the open door opportunities the Lord gives you to speak about Him? Pray that God would give you an increased sensitivity to the leading of His Spirit in this area and then walk through the next open door. Journal your thoughts here.

[illegible]

Day 4 – Colossians 4:7-18

Verses 7-18 should be read and examined closely from the perspective of being much more than a list of Paul's co-workers and friends. They are real individuals - ordinary in themselves - but whose lives and ministries became extraordinary because of their God!

1. As you look closely, make a note of what made each of them important to Paul, and also what you can learn personally from their example. (Use your cyclopedic index or concordance to add additional information, noting any cross-references.)

- v. 7-8: Tychicus
- v.9: Onesimus
- v. 10: Aristarchus
- v. 10: Mark
- v. 11: Jesus Justus
- v. 12-13: Epaphras
- v. 14: Luke
- v. 14: Demas
- v. 15: Nympha
- v. 16-17: Archippus



Stop and Listen: Paul's consuming passion was to communicate the message of Jesus Christ. He was careful to fulfill the ministry he had received from the Lord. Where has God entrusted you to get out the message of His Son? How are you doing?

*"I charge YOU therefore before God and the Lord Jesus Christ,
who will judge the living and the dead at His appearing and His kingdom:*

Preach the Word! Be ready in season and out of season.

Convince, rebuke, exhort, with all longsuffering and teaching.

For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine,

but according to their own desires because they have itching ears,

they will heap up for themselves teachers; and they will turn their ears away from the truth,

and be turned aside to fables.

But YOU, be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist,

FULFILL YOUR MINISTRY."

2 Timothy 4: 1 - 5

May the Lord help us to live as those who are complete *in Christ*.

The Review



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