Cornerstone Congregational Devotional

From the 10th Sunday to the 18th Sunday of Ordinary Time

30 July – 24 September 2023
Dear Cornerstone Family,

As we enter this final section of the book of Ephesians, we are entering the fall season and back to school activities are on the horizon for many of us.

This continuing season after Pentecost is known as Ordinary Time or living in light of Pentecost—the empowering of the Spirit and the work of the Church. As such, it is significant that we find ourselves in these final chapters of Ephesians. Paul gives us instruction to be imitators of God, to walk in love as Christ, to put various sins to death, put off the old self and put on the new, and to live in unity as the Church.

This season after Pentecost gives us ample opportunity to pray thoughtfully about what it means to be the Church—to be Cornerstone Presbyterian in the heart of Franklin, to love and serve one another, to pursue peace and charity. As Cornerstone undergoes various physical renovations and transitions, temporary changes and access to ministries, and other adjustments, this is a helpful time to assess our own understanding of life in the Family of God in submission to Christ (Eph 5:24).

So like, Paul, I pray and encourage us all to:

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\text{walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called,}\quad \text{2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love,}\quad \text{3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. (Ephesians 4:1-3)}
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May this coming fall bring rest—especially rest in Christ.

Your servant,

Date
Sunday Sermon Series

The Family of God: A Study of Ephesians

July 30, Ephesians 5:1-2
August 6, Ephesians 5:3-14
August 13, Ephesians 5:15-21
August 20, Ephesians 5:22-33
August 27, Ephesians 5:22-33
September 3, Ephesians 6:1-4
September 10, Ephesians 6:5-9
September 17, Ephesians 6:10-20
September 24, Ephesians 6:21-24

Sunday, July 30

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 5:1-2

Kingdom Prayers
For the Pastors, Elders, Deacons, those leading in worship

Prayer for the Day
Almighty God,
who has given a day of rest to your people, and,
through your Spirit in the church,
has consecrated the first day of the week
to be a perpetual memorial of your Son’s resurrection:
grant that we may so use your gift, that,
being refreshed and strengthened in soul and body,
we may serve You faithfully all the days of our life,
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen
Monday, July 31

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 5:3-14
- Why does being a saint mean that we shouldn’t even name immorality, impurity, and covetousness?
- Why should we give thanks instead of being crude?

Kingdom Prayers—For Members of our Congregation
For someone in your Home Fellowship Group

Tuesday, August 1

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 5:3-14
- Paul links covetousness and idolatry in verse 5. How are these connected?
- In Ephesians 1:11, Paul speaks of our inheritance as something we have obtained and as something which we will receive in the future. How does this help us understand why immorality, impurity, and covetousness discredit our inheritance?

Kingdom Prayers—For the Work of the Gospel to the Nations
Mark and Lindsey Elliot, Oaks of Righteousness in Belize

Wednesday, August 2

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 5:3-14
- In verse 6, Paul tells us to “let no one deceive us.” How do we avoid being deceived? (see verse 7)
- How do we discern what is pleasing to the Lord?

Kingdom Prayers—For Cornerstone Ministry Teams
Music Ministry—Greg Wilbur & Music Team
Audio/Visual and Media Team
Thursday, August 3

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 5:3-14

- In John 1, Christ is called the “light of men.” Here, Paul says that we “are light in the Lord.” How does this help us interpret verse 11? Consider verse 13: “But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, for anything that becomes visible is light.”
- How can we shine the light of Christ on those who do not have it without being deceived ourselves?

Kingdom Prayers—For Our Civic and Government Officials
For officials to act righteously and with integrity

Friday, August 4

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 5:3-14

- How does Christ shine upon us?
- Why is this tied to his messianic role?

Kingdom Prayers—Mission Partners of Cornerstone
Reformed University Fellowship: Lee Leadbetter, University of Tennessee
Reformed University Fellowship: Ryan Angel, Tennessee Technological University
Reformed University Fellowship: Chase Daws, Vanderbilt University

Sunday, August 6

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 5:3-14

Kingdom Prayers
For the Pastors, Elders, Deacons, those leading in worship

Prayer for the Day
Almighty God, who has given a day of rest to your people, and, through your Spirit in the church, has consecrated the first day of the week to be a perpetual memorial of your Son’s resurrection: grant that we may so use your gift, that, being refreshed and strengthened in soul and body, we may serve You faithfully all the days of our life, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen
Monday, August 7

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 5:15-21

- In verse 8 Paul commands us to “walk as children of the light, and in verse 14, he says that “anything that becomes visible is light.” Why does he now ask us to “look carefully” how we walk?

- Paul in verses 3-14 gives a list of things not to do, while here he commands us to make “best use of the time.” Including things not mentioned in this passage, how can we make best use of our time?

**Kingdom Prayers—For Members of our Congregation**
  For a family that attends whichever service you don’t

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Tuesday, August 8

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 5:15-21

- Paul mentions three kinds of song “Psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs,” but he also makes other distinctions regarding to whom and how we sing. What are these?

- Why and how do we sing to “one another” and “to the Lord”?

**Kingdom Prayers—For the Work of the Gospel to the Nations**
  Tim Tan, Pastor of Crossroads of the Nations, Nashville, TN

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Wednesday, August 9

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 5:15-21

- How can addressing one another when we sing be part of making the best use of our time on earth?

- What does it mean to make “melody to the Lord with your heart”?

**Kingdom Prayers—For Cornerstone Ministry Teams**
  Hospitality & Welcome Team—Dan Fiedler
  Meals Team—Lisa Fiedler
Thursday, August 10

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 5:15-21
- Paul mentions giving thanks once again in verse 20. How does giving thanks help us understand the will of God?
- Why do we give thanks “in the name of Christ”?

**Kingdom Prayers—For Our Civic and Government Officials**
For those who serve in Disaster Relief

Friday, August 11

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 5:15-21
- How can we submit to one another out of reverence for Christ?
- Can giving thanks help us submit to one another? How so?

**Kingdom Prayers—Mission Partners of Cornerstone**
Reformed University Fellowship: James Jardin, Western Kentucky University
Reformed University Fellowship: Weston Duke, Middle Tennessee State University
Reformed University Fellowship: Will Cote, Austin Peay State University
Reformed University Fellowship: Ben Griffith, Samford University

Sunday, August 13

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 5:15-21

**Kingdom Prayers**
For the Pastors, Elders, Deacons, those leading in worship

**Prayer for the Day**
Almighty God, who has given a day of rest to your people, and, through your Spirit in the church, has consecrated the first day of the week to be a perpetual memorial of your Son’s resurrection: grant that we may so use your gift, that, being refreshed and strengthened in soul and body, we may serve You faithfully all the days of our life, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*
Monday, August 14

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 5:22-33
• What does it look like for us to submit to the headship of Christ in daily life?
• Wives, what does it look like for you to imitate that same loving service to your husbands?

Kingdom Prayers—For Members of our Congregation
For growth in our faith both in understanding and in how we live it

Tuesday, August 15

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 5:22-33
• How has Christ loved the church? What does his love look like in daily life?
• Husbands, what does it look like for you to imitate that same loving service to your wives?

Kingdom Prayers—For the Work of the Gospel to the Nations
Colleen McGarry, Bonnie Snyder, and Robin and Dave Dillard of Servant Group International, Nashville, TN

Wednesday, August 16

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 5:22-33
• Paul ascribes roles to both husbands and wives in this passage: how are both of them a giving up of the self and their own desires?
• How would you characterize the love that Paul calls Christians to?

Kingdom Prayers—For Cornerstone Ministry Teams
Elementary—Meredith Suits
Nursery—Christy Shurden
Thursday, August 17

**Scripture Reading**: Ephesians 5:22-33
- What does the self-giving love of Christ accomplish in believers? (vs 26-27)
- How does this passage inform the way in which Christians are to care for one another as parts of the one body of Christ? (vs 29-30)

**Kingdom Prayers—For Our Civic and Government Officials**
For the civic officials of Franklin and Williamson County

Friday, August 18

**Scripture Reading**: Ephesians 5:22-33
- Spend a few minutes reflecting on the profound mystery of our unity with Christ.
- How does the picture of marriage display the wonder of Christ’s love for us? How does it strengthen our hope in our glorification as the completion of our unity with Christ?

**Kingdom Prayers—Mission Partners of Cornerstone**
Church Planting: Alec Moyer, Parish Church, Lafayette, LA
Church Planting: David Carrera, Beth Sar Shalom, Shelbyville, TN

Sunday, August 20

**Scripture Reading**: Ephesians 5:22-33

**Kingdom Prayers**
For the Pastors, Elders, Deacons, those leading in worship

**Prayer for the Day**
Almighty God, who has given a day of rest to your people, and, through your Spirit in the church, has consecrated the first day of the week to be a perpetual memorial of your Son’s resurrection: grant that we may so use your gift, that, being refreshed and strengthened in soul and body, we may serve You faithfully all the days of our life, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*
Monday, August 21

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 5:22-33
- How would you define headship? What is its purpose?
- How did Christ become your head and the head of the church? What does that mean for you today?

**Kingdom Prayers—For Members of our Congregation**
For those who are sick or injured—especially the chronically ill

Tuesday, August 22

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 5:22-33
- What does Christ’s giving of Himself accomplish for the church? (verse 26)
- How does Christ’s word act as a means of accomplishing that?

**Kingdom Prayers—For the Work of the Gospel to the Nations**
Chris & Savana Kitchen, Mission to the World Europe

Wednesday, August 23

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 5:22-33
- How does Paul connect Christ’s love to our Sanctification and to our Glorification? How does one lead to another?
- According to these verses, why does Christ care about making the Church beautiful and glorious? How should that motivate our fight against sin?

**Kingdom Prayers—For Cornerstone Ministry Teams**
Prayer Team—Ron Moffat
Thursday, August 24

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 5:22-33
- How might this passage interact with the phrase “love yourself”?  
- Should the Christian love himself/herself? What does that look like in light of this passage?

Kingdom Prayers—For Our Civic and Government Officials
For law enforcement and emergency response personnel in Williamson County

Friday, August 25

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 5:22-33
- How could you pursue the good of the Church today?  
- How might a difficulty in your life be a means by which Christ is nourishing and cherishing you?

Kingdom Prayers—Mission Partners of Cornerstone
Rebecca Giles, Serge, Birmingham, AL  
Tony Giles, Serge Renewal Team, United States

Sunday, August 27

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 5:22-33

Kingdom Prayers
For the Pastors, Elders, Deacons, those leading in worship

Prayer for the Day
Almighty God,  
who has given a day of rest to your people, and,  
through your Spirit in the church,  
has consecrated the first day of the week  
 to be a perpetual memorial of your Son’s resurrection:  
grant that we may so use your gift, that,  
being refreshed and strengthened in soul and body,  
we may serve You faithfully all the days of our life,  
through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen
Monday, August 28

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 6:1-4
- This passage informs the duty of children to their parents and the duty of parents to their children. What is the goal of both instructions?
- Paul is referring back to the 5th commandment in this passage (Exodus 20:12). Why did God give His people the 10 commandments, and how should that inform our motives for keeping His law?

Kingdom Prayers—For Members of our Congregation
For those caring for young children or caring for aging parents

Tuesday, August 29

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 6:1-4
- How do you take the phrase “in the Lord” in this passage? Does it specify the people to obey (obey your parents who are in the Lord), the mode of obedience (obey in the Lord and in your heart, not just in outwardly) or the reason for obedience?
- How is “for this is right” different from “because I told you so?” Does that tell us something about the laws that God has given us?

Kingdom Prayers—For the Work of the Gospel to the Nations
Ryan Akers, Campus Outreach, Edinburgh, Scotland

Wednesday, August 30

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 6:1-4
- How do we apply the promise of the 5th Commandment (vs 3, Exodus 20:12) to our lives and our children’s lives today if it’s not referring to the literal promised land?
- What all is involved in honoring parents? Do children and adults honor their parents in the same way?

Kingdom Prayers—For Cornerstone Ministry Teams
Men’s Ministry—Mark Mitchell
Women’s Ministry—Martha Brooks
Thursday, August 31

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 6:1-4
- How can you honor your father and your mother today?
- Since we have been adopted into the family of God, how does this passage speak to all believers?

Kingdom Prayers—For Our Civic and Government Officials
For Governor Bill Lee and the State Legislature

Friday, September 1

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 6:1-4
- Parents, how does this passage teach us to love our children?
- If God expects this of earthly fathers, how much more does he do this as our Heavenly Father? How does that change our perspective of his loving correction?

Kingdom Prayers—Mission Partners of Cornerstone
New College Franklin
Covenant College

Sunday, September 3

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 6:1-4

Kingdom Prayers
For the Pastors, Elders, Deacons, those leading in worship

Prayer for the Day
Almighty God, who has given a day of rest to your people, and, through your Spirit in the church, has consecrated the first day of the week to be a perpetual memorial of your Son’s resurrection: grant that we may so use your gift, that, being refreshed and strengthened in soul and body, we may serve You faithfully all the days of our life, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen
Monday, September 4

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 6:5-9
• This passage informs the Christian duty of servants to masters as well as the Christian duty of masters to servants. What similarities exist between their duties?
• What is the purpose of both of Paul’s exhortations?

Kingdom Prayers—For Members of our Congregation
For those who experiencing joy and excitement

Tuesday, September 5

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 6:5-9
• Though none of us are actual bondservants, each of us has his earthly masters for whom he works. How would you describe the way to which Paul calls us to work?
• How does our work and heart change when we see it as service to the Lord rather than to men? How could that transform your work today?

Kingdom Prayers—For the Work of the Gospel to the Nations
Jim & Shari Whittle, Kiran Bodu, Equipping Leaders International South Asia

Wednesday, September 6

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 6:5-9
• Though we do not have servants, many of us have those whom we have influence or authority over. How would you describe the way to which Paul calls us to use that influence and authority?
• How should God’s impartiality affect the way in which we interact with everyone in our church?

Kingdom Prayers—For Cornerstone Ministry Teams
Young Adult Ministry—Taylor Thompson
Thursday, September 7

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 6:5-9
- While men only see what is on the outside, God sees the heart of things. Where are you tempted to serve the Lord and others from an insincere heart or to just go through the motions?
- How could you turn this passage into a prayer for yourself and for others?

**Kingdom Prayers—For Our Civic and Government Officials**
For the US House and Senate

Friday, September 8

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 6:5-9
- How does this passage (vs 5-9) and those which proceed it (ch 5-6:4) reveal a pattern for how all Christians are to “submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” (5:21)
- Where could you apply this heart of service today?

**Kingdom Prayers—Mission Partners of Cornerstone**
- Raise the Roof Academy
- Graceworks Ministry

Sunday, September 10

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 6:5-9

**Kingdom Prayers**
For the Pastors, Elders, Deacons, those leading in worship

**Prayer for the Day**
Almighty God, who has given a day of rest to your people, and, through your Spirit in the church, has consecrated the first day of the week to be a perpetual memorial of your Son’s resurrection: grant that we may so use your gift, that, being refreshed and strengthened in soul and body, we may serve You faithfully all the days of our life, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen
Monday, September 11

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 6:10-20

- In what way does the Lord show/reveal the strength of His might?
- Paul tells us to be strong in the Lord. How do we draw our strength from the Lord for the day?

**Kingdom Prayers—For Members of our Congregation**
   For those who experiencing sorrow, grief, or hurt

Tuesday, September 12

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 6:10-20

- What does it mean that we fight against the rulers, authorities, cosmic powers, and spiritual forces of evil? Where are you at war with spiritual forces of evil in your life today? Did you realize that you were at war today?
- How does knowing that you’re at war against evil and the evil one change the way you engage with challenges and temptation today?

**Kingdom Prayers—For the Work of the Gospel to the Nations**
   Andy Young, Oxford Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Oxford, U.K.

Wednesday, September 13

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 6:10-20

- Paul talks about the shoes of the gospel of peace and tells us to put on readiness. Are you ready to share the gospel of peace at all times? What is the gospel of peace?
- Paul tells us to put on the belt of truth. The belt was an essential piece of armor, and it held together all of the armor of a Roman Centurion. How does truth hold all things together as we go to war?
- What truth do we need to know? How does truth and knowing truth protect us in the spiritual battle we face every day? Where do we find the truth?

**Kingdom Prayers—For Cornerstone Ministry Teams**
   Home Fellowship Groups—Tony Giles
Thursday, September 14

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 6:10-20
- How does faith (the shield of faith) protect us from flaming darts of doubt?
- How does salvation (the helmet of salvation) protect our minds?
- How do we arm ourselves with the Sword of the Spirit (the word of God)? Do you write it on the tablet of your heart? Are you ready to use the sword when temptation strikes?

**Kingdom Prayers—For Our Civic and Government Officials**
For the Judicial System

Friday, September 15

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 6:10-20
- How does the whole armor of God wholistically prepare us for battle?
- Paul says, “to that end, keep alert with all perseverance.” What ends is he talking about? How do the pieces of the armor of God establish and create in us perseverance?

**Kingdom Prayers—Mission Partners of Cornerstone**
Gospel Reformation Network
Reformed Theological Seminary

Sunday, September 17

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 6:10-20

**Kingdom Prayers**
For the Pastors, Elders, Deacons, those leading in worship

**Prayer for the Day**
Almighty God, who has given a day of rest to your people, and, through your Spirit in the church, has consecrated the first day of the week to be a perpetual memorial of your Son’s resurrection: grant that we may so use your gift, that, being refreshed and strengthened in soul and body, we may serve You faithfully all the days of our life, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen
Monday, September 18

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 6:21-24

- Tychicus is mentioned five times in the New Testament. What role does he have?
- How significant is it to be known as a “beloved brother” and “faithful minister in the Lord” (vs 21)?

Kingdom Prayers—For Members of our Congregation
For someone you sat next to yesterday

Tuesday, September 19

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 6:21-24

- How do you think Paul intends for Tychicus to encourage their hearts (vs 22)?
- How does this interaction remind us of the importance of others to serve on the behalf of others?

Kingdom Prayers—For the Work of the Gospel to the Nations
Brett & Valeria McAlpin, Mission to the World, Leeds, England

Wednesday, September 20

Scripture Reading: Ephesians 6:21-24

- What is difference is the character of “peace” that comes from “God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ” (vs 23)?
- What do you think “love with faith” means (vs 23)?

Kingdom Prayers—For Cornerstone Ministry Teams
Youth Ministry—Drew Abercrombie & Youth Ministry Team
Thursday, September 21

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 6:21-24
- What is “love incorruptible” (vs 24)?
- How is that reassuring and encouraging?

**Kingdom Prayers—For Our Civic and Government Officials**
For President Biden and his Cabinet and advisors

Friday, September 22

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 6:21-24
- How does Paul tie together numerous themes from the entire letter in verses 23-24?
- How have you grown in knowledge, understanding, and wisdom through our study of the book of Ephesians?

**Kingdom Prayers—Mission Partners of Cornerstone**
Harvest Prison Ministries: Rick Allen & Richard Jennings
Dan & Julie Meyers, Pilgrim Road Ministries, Clarksville, TN

Sunday, September 24

**Scripture Reading:** Ephesians 6:21-24

**Kingdom Prayers**
For the Pastors, Elders, Deacons, those leading in worship

**Prayer for the Day**
Almighty God, who has given a day of rest to your people, and, through your Spirit in the church, has consecrated the first day of the week to be a perpetual memorial of your Son’s resurrection: grant that we may so use your gift, that, being refreshed and strengthened in soul and body, we may serve You faithfully all the days of our life, through the same Jesus Christ our Lord. *Amen*