

Ephesians

A Four-Week Bible Study

WEEK 2

- 1) Begin with prayer. Ask the Holy Spirit to give you clarity as you read.
- 2) Then with pen in hand, begin to mark it up and write thoughts and questions in the margin.
- 3) After spending time reading, underlining, circling, and making notes, answer the questions at the end of each passage.

Day 1 /Week 2

Ephesians 2 New International Version (NIV)

Jew and Gentile Reconciled Through Christ

¹¹Therefore, remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by those who call themselves “the circumcision” (which is done in the body by human hands)—
¹²remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of the promise, without hope and without God in the world. ¹³But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

¹⁴For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, ¹⁵by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, ¹⁶and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. ¹⁷He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. ¹⁸For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit.

¹⁹Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but fellow citizens with God’s people and also members of his household, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. ²¹In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. ²²And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

From this passage, contrast your state before you put your faith in Christ with your state after you put your faith in Christ.

Before:

e.g. “Foreigners”

After:

“Citizens”

Take a moment to remember when you were *separated from Christ*. Think back through your journey to God and thank him for bringing you *near by the blood Christ*:

Day 2 /Week 2

Ephesians 3 New International Version (NIV)

God's Marvelous Plan for the Gentiles

3 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—

²Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, ³that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. ⁴In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, ⁵which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. ⁶This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

⁷I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power. ⁸Although I am less than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ, ⁹and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. ¹⁰His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, ¹¹according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹²In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. ¹³I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory.

Paul was a man who at one point was trying to destroy the Church. Then Jesus miraculously intercepted him as he was going to throw believers into prison. Read Acts 9:15 to discover his calling that he mentions in Verse 2 of our passage.

Paul uses the word "mystery" four times in our passage. Find each of these. From this passage, what is *the mystery*?

From our passage, what part does the Church play in the "administration of this mystery"?

Pray for ideas for how you, your family, and the ministries of Westside Chapel might help to bring the mysteries of God's grace that Paul speaks of to our spheres of influence and our community. Write down any specific ideas the Lord gives you.

Day 3/Week 2

Ephesians 3 New International Version (NIV)

A Prayer for the Ephesians

¹⁴For this reason I kneel before the Father, ¹⁵from whom every family[Ⓜ] in heaven and on earth derives its name. ¹⁶I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

²⁰Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, ²¹to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Go through each verse of this passage and put it in your own words. Then use this passage as a guide as you pray for those in your sphere of influence.

Day 4/Week 2

Ephesians 4 New International Version (NIV)

Unity and Maturity in the Body of Christ

4 As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.² Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love.³ Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism; ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

How does knowing Paul was a prisoner influence how you view his words to the Ephesians?

What do you perceive your personal calling to be?

Spend some time meditating on verse 2 and 3 and write down how it applies to your calling?

Day 5/Week 2

Ephesians 4 New International Version (NIV)

Unity and Maturity in the Body of Christ (continued)

⁷But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. ⁸This is why it^(a)says:

“When he ascended on high,
he took many captives
and gave gifts to his people.”^(b)

⁹(What does “he ascended” mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions^(c)? ¹⁰He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.) ¹¹So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

¹⁴Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming. ¹⁵Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. ¹⁶From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

Pull up this passage on your Bible app or computer (www.biblegateway.com) and read it in *The Message* version. Does this bring you clarity in regard to Paul’s use of *grace*, *ascended*, and *descended* in this passage?

What are your spiritual gifts? What does this passage tell you about the importance of your part as a member of a church?

From this passage, what is the main role of a pastor and teacher?

What characterizes a spiritual infant?

Use this passage, as a guide and pray for Pastor Kipp, the elders (Allen, Ed, John, Keo), church council, and various other leaders at Westside Chapel.