

Ephesians

A Four-Week Bible Study

WEEK 3

- 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 3

Ephesians 4 New International Version (NIV)

Instructions for Christian Living

¹⁷So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. ¹⁸They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. ¹⁹Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed.

²⁰That, however, is not the way of life you learned ²¹when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. ²²You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; ²³to be made new in the attitude of your minds; ²⁴and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

²⁵Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. ²⁶“In your anger do not sin”^(a): Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, ²⁷and do not give the devil a foothold. ²⁸Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.

²⁹Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. ³⁰And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.³¹ Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice. ³²Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.

Meditate on verses 17-19. What is “futile thinking”?

Make a list of all the things Paul's calls us to "put off" verses what we are called to "put on":

Put off

e.g. falsehood/lying

Put on

speaking truthfully (v.25)

Day 2/Week 3

Ephesians 5 New International Version (NIV)

5 ¹Follow God's example, therefore, as dearly loved children ²and walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

³But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people. ⁴Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving. ⁵For of this you can be sure: No immoral, impure or greedy person—such a person is an idolater—has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. ⁶Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of such things God's wrath comes on those who are disobedient. ⁷Therefore do not be partners with them.

What is "God's Example" (v. 1)? What does it mean to follow that example?

Meditate upon verse 4 and especially upon "rather thanksgiving"? Is your conversation characterized more by foolishness or gratitude?

How does Paul characterize an *idolater*? Does that surprise you? Why?

Day 3/Week 3

Ephesians 5 New International Version (NIV)

⁸For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light⁹ (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) ¹⁰and find out what pleases the Lord. ¹¹Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness, but rather expose them. ¹²It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret.¹³But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. ¹⁴This is why it is said:

“Wake up, sleeper,
rise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

¹⁵Be very careful, then, how you live—not as unwise but as wise, ¹⁶making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil. ¹⁷Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord’s will is. ¹⁸Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord,²⁰always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Spend some time mining the meaning and personal application in the following phrases:

A. “find out what pleases the Lord” (v. 10):

B. “making the most of every opportunity” (v.16):

C. “be filled with the Spirit” (v.18):

Verse 20 tells us to “always give thanks to God the Father for everything.” What is something in your life right now that you are not particularly happy about? How might this undesirable thing in your life still give you reason for gratitude?

Day 4/Week 3

Ephesians 5 New International Version (NIV)

Instructions for Christian Households

²¹Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

²²Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. ²³For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. ²⁴Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

²⁵Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing^u her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. ²⁸In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— ³⁰for we are members of his body. ³¹“For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.”^u ³²This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

Summarize and put in your own words the admonition directed at wives:

Summarize and put in your own words the admonition directed at husbands:

Since the relationship between husbands and wives is a picture of Christ and the Church, characterize Christ’s relationship toward the Church and the Church’s relationship toward Christ.

Day 5/Week 3

(CONTEXT: Today's passage is a continuation of Paul's exhortation in Ephesians 5:21 to "submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.")

Ephesians 6 New International Version (NIV)

6 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ²"Honor your father and mother"—which is the first commandment with a promise— ³"so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth."^[a]

⁴Fathers,^[b] do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

⁵Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. ⁶Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. ⁷Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, ⁸because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free.

⁹And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

How do Fathers/parents exasperate their children? Brainstorm about ways a parent can provide "training and instruction of the Lord" to their children.

How might Paul's instruction to slaves and masters apply to the way you approach your vocation (mechanic, carpenter, manager, business owner, student, homemaking, teacher, etc.)?