

EPHESIANS

First

Things

First

3 STUDIES
CHAPTERS 1, 4 & 5

For Further Reading in Ephesians:

John RW Stott *The Message of Ephesians*

BST

Walter Liefeld *Ephesians*

IVP

Walk This Way (Study Guide)

Matthias Media

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Study 1

Ephesians 1:1 - 23

- 1.** Someone mentions the word 'church' in a conversation. List some of the possibilities of what they could be talking about

- 2.** What aspect of God's work for you do you give thanks for the most?

Read Ephesians 1:1 - 23

- 3.** What works, achievements or blessings are attributed to the different persons of the Trinity?
 - Father

 - Son

 - Spirit

- 4.** Can you define any of the "spiritual blessings" in your own words?

- 5.** What do we have to do in order to take hold of these blessings of God?

- 6.** What do you think are the differences between spiritual blessings and other kinds of blessings?

- 7.** What do you think could help you appreciate God's blessings more fully?

- 8.** What stands out most clearly for you in Ephesians 1 about God's work?

- 9.** A friend tells you they look at the world and can't see what, if anything, God is doing in his creation. From Ephesians 1, how would you explain God's work in his world?

- 10.** In verse 12, Paul speaks about living "for the praise of his glory". What does this mean and what does it look like for us to do this in our lives?

- 11.** In what areas of your life is this most difficult?

- 12.** What do you think it will look like for Jesus to be “head over everything” (v 2) and with all things “under Christ” (v 10)?

- 13.** If we are “chosen” and “predestined” and will be “under Christ” does it matter what decisions we make?

- 14.** What are some of the ways in which Ephesians 1 could shape our prayers?

Study 2

Ephesians 4:1 - 16

- 1.** Make a list of all the ways that you think the church is different from a local sporting club.

- 2.** Someone for whose salvation you have been praying has just become a Christian. They ask you to help them find a church close to where they live. Over several weeks you and your friend visit a number of churches, attending Sunday services and other groups during the week. What are the signs you look for in identifying a healthy church?
What would be some warning signs of a lack of health?

Read Ephesians 4:1 - 16

- 3.** What does Paul say a mature church will be like?

- 4.** What do the 4 types of 'gift people' whom God gives to the church have in common?

- 5.** What are the different roles of these people?

- 6.** How do we know from what Paul says here that these 4 are not the only important gifts in the life of the church?

- 7.** How do the gifts Jesus gives to his church help us “keep the unity of the Spirit” (v 3)?

- 8.** Paul urges his readers to ensure they are “speaking the truth in love” (v 12). What “truth” will have the outcome he desires for Christian people?

- 9.** How does gospel truth grow Christians to maturity?

- 10.** Is it possible to speak with “truth” or “love” but not both? What happens if we do?

- 11.** Why is there a frequent temptation to try and be loving without gospel truth?

- 12.** What does this passage show us will be the outcome if we allow ourselves to fall into that temptation?

13. According to the Apostle Paul's words here, what do you think will be the likely difficulties for those who try to live the Christian life without being members of a local church?

14. If you were asked, "What is your goal for our church?" how would Ephesians 4 shape your answer?

15. How does this section encourage you to pray for:

- our brothers and sisters in church?

- those who lead in the church

- ourselves?

16. Bob Roberts from Northwood Church in Texas said at the beginning of 2009 that, "The church is alive, healthy, explosive, and transformative like never before in the history of Christianity - just not in the West." How do you respond to this statement?

Study 3

Ephesians 5:1 - 20

- 1.** When you were younger, was there someone you wanted to be just like when you grew up?
What about them made you want to imitate them?

- 2.** What comes to mind if you hear someone described (or describing themselves) as a “spiritual person”?

Read Ephesians 5:1 - 20

- 3.** What stands out most dramatically for you as you read this section?

- 4.** In 4:1 Paul gives a motivation for living the kind of life he wants for his readers. How does this relate to the motivation he gives in 5:1?

- 5.** Which motivation do you feel resonates more strongly with you?

- 6.** Someone asks you, “So what’s the big deal - what’s wrong with foolish talk or coarse joking?” How does Ephesians 5 help you respond helpfully?

- 7.** How does exposing the “fruitless deeds of darkness” (v 11) relate to “speaking the truth in love” in 4:15?

- 8.** Knowing Paul’s argument in Ephesians 5, how would you answer a Christian person who says their private life is completely irrelevant to their public Christian ministry?

- 9.** As we seek to “find out what pleases the Lord” (v 10), what have we already seen in Ephesians that helps us with this?

- 10.** If you heard the Apostle Paul speaking about a “spiritual person” what characteristics or attributes would be identifying?

- 11.** In what ways does Paul show us here that we have some responsibility to look out for other believers and their spiritual lives?

- 12.** Why do we find it hard to look after other Christians as Paul instructs us to?

- 13.** What does it mean to “live as children of the light” (v 9)?

- 14.** Why do you think in this encouragement about how to live the Christian life, there’s the command to sing together?

- 15.** Who is our singing directed to?

- 16.** What should we do during the songs at church if we’re not a very polished singer?

- 17.** What are some ways we can help each other “be careful ... how you live? (v 15)?

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