

A large, dynamic splash of blue water with various shades of blue and white, creating a sense of movement and energy. The splash is centered horizontally and occupies the upper half of the page.

EPHESIANS

FOURTH
STREAM
FINDING HOPE

Welcome to the book of Ephesians!

To begin your study of Ephesians, meditate on the two major divisions of the book reflected in the overview chart below. Use the included passages as guideposts to unlock the vital message of the book of Ephesians. The key verse that we have chosen for the book is found in 4:16. It describes the way that Paul envisioned the functioning, effective local church ministry in each of the regions where he had planted the Gospel. The calling of the Church portion of the book depicts the heavenly, glorious work that God has chosen to do among those He has brought under His Son's amazing salvation. The conduct section explains how this calling is to be worked out in the relationships of those within His body. Christ's Body of believers are His will on the earth. This "mystery" has supernatural and far-reaching consequences!

<p>EPHESIANS</p> <p>The Calling of the Church</p> <p>1:3,18,19; 2:19-22</p> <p>1-3</p>	<p>Christ's Body</p> <p>The Conduct of the Church</p> <p>4:1,16; 5:21</p> <p>4-6</p>
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"By that which every joint supplies." 4:16

Open Your Heart as You Read!

The book of Ephesians gives us a striking picture of God's choice to birth a living organism that is intricate, lovely, and vibrating with life! We must guard this living house from being frozen by overemphasis on organization and tradition. Where do you fit into Christ's great Body? What has God given you to supply to others? Is your body of believers a functioning one or is it frozen through overemphasis on tradition and organization? God intended Christ's Body to be filled with life! May your Christ-following reflect this exciting mystery!

AUTHOR OF EPHESIANS

Paul (1:1) with the delivery of the letter coming by the hand of Tychicus (6:21). The Apostle evidently wrote this letter to the church in Ephesus while he was a prisoner (3:1, 13).

DATE:

Around 61 A.D. from Rome.

OTHER HISTORY:

This book is written to a church that is indescribably rich in Christ - but is living like a pauper. These believers were like the man who died a bum never realizing he had been an heir to a vast fortune. This is a spiritual bank account from which they may have drawn if they only had known of its existence (1:14, 18). Chapters 1-3 beautifully describe "our wealth in Christ" with 1:3 summarizing this theme - "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ."

Chapter 4-6 is very practical. We learn about "our walk in Christ" with 4:1 summarizing this theme: "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called."

The city by which the name of this letter receives its name was one of the largest cities in the New Testament world. Its half-million population was first reached with the gospel by Paul on his second missionary journey. Paul (Acts 20:27) devoted three years of his life to this church and later left his disciple, Timothy, to carry on the Ephesian effort. Toward the end of the first century, John (Revelation 2:1-7), the last living Apostle, made Ephesus his base of operations.

Why Study the book of Ephesians?

1. To understand our spiritual riches in Christ such as: adoption, acceptance, redemption, forgiveness, wisdom, the seal of the Holy Spirit, grace, and citizenship in heaven.
2. This book gives some very practical principles which should govern relationships within the body of Christ - husbands and wives, parents and children, employee and employers, and Satan and the believer.



Ephesians Chapter Chart

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Questions	Chapter	Title	Verse
<p>What do you think is the "mystery of His will" Paul refers to in verse 9? What does Paul specifically pray on behalf of the Ephesian Church? Make a list of what you would feel to be the spiritual blessings that are listed in vs 1-12.</p>	1		
<p>Paul mentions our spiritual dead condition in both verses 1 and 5. What was the extent of this deadness? How did Christ abolish the enmity between Jew and Gentile? What do we learn about our good works from vs 8-10?</p>	2		
<p>What do you feel Paul felt were the chief sources of his trials on behalf of the Ephesians? What was his heartfelt prayer for the Ephesians?</p>	3		
<p>What transition do you feel is being made in 4:1, and how does it reflect the overview? Why did Paul refer to himself as a prisoner, and why would he bring it up twice? What is the goal in the equipping of the body?</p>	4		
<p>What do the deeds of darkness entail? How would you define the deeds of light? What is the mystery of verse 32? Describe in your own words how Paul felt a marriage relationship should function.</p>	5		
<p>What can fathers do to hurt their children? What benefits come from honoring our parents? Note the attached study on the subject of spiritual warfare, as well as the one about a spirit-filled church!</p>	6		

WHAT ABOUT TODAY?

Ephesians is filled with encouragement to walk in a manner consistent with our high calling in the Gospel. Our inheritance is not only very special, it is very secure. Our high calling demands ethical standards worthy of the children of our heavenly King. May your walk be one of royal calling!



SPIRIT FILLED CHURCH

There are those who would characterize a Spirit-filled church as one that displays an abundant selection of gifts. This is obviously only partially true, because the Corinthian Church, though very gifted, was also very carnal (1 Corinthians 3:1,3 and the rest of the book). It is also short-sighted to believe that just because a local assembly is organized, numerically successful, and has endured over a period of time, that it is necessarily experiencing a spiritual existence. The condition of the Jewish nation and the older churches of Revelation 3 indicate quite the contrary.

A Spirit-Filled assembly of believers will evidence the fruit of the Spirit in all things. These characteristics are quite evident. The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control (Galatians 5:22,23). Consider the group of believers among whom you walk. Are these qualities the growth atmosphere of your meetings, planning, and everyday treatment of one another?

What we believe has everything to do with how we treat one another!

The early believers were instructed very specifically in the way they were to treat one another. By completing this study we can glean specific principles to help us to be a Spirit-filled church in deed as well as intention!

The passages are listed to the left and grouped by God's desire for a particular deed toward One Another. List the appropriate One Another and a brief definition of each.

PASSAGE	ONE ANOTHER	DEFINITION
Ephesians 4:32	Be Kind.	Show kindness, don't be harsh.
Romans 12:5; Ephesians 4:35		
Romans 12:10; 1 Cor. 12:25;		
Philippians 2:3		
Romans 12:16		
Romans 13:8; Ephesians 4:2;		
1 Thessalonians 3:12		
Romans 14:13		
Romans 14:19; 1 Thes. 5:11;		
vs. Galatians 5:15		
Romans 15:17		
Romans 15:14		
Romans 16:16; 1 Cor. 16:20		
Colossians 3:16; Eph. 5:19		
Ephesians 5:21		
Colossians 3:9		
Colossians 3:13		
1 Thessalonians 4:18		
1 Thessalonians 5:11;		
Hebrews 3:13; 10:24		
1 Thessalonians 5:13		
1 Thessalonians 5:15		
James 4:11; 5:9; 1 Peter 4:9		
James 5:16		

SPIRITUAL WARFARE

While spiritual wickedness is in no way shared by our Sovereign God (Job 1,2) it is none-the-less a deadly force among men (Jude 1:9). If we wish to war successfully in spiritual warfare, we must wage war in a spiritual manner (2 Corinthians 6:7; 10:4). Satan is active to destroy the work of God in and through the children of God (1 Peter 5:8). If we are to successfully war in the Spirit, it is to the Spirit we must go for knowledge and power!

Ephesians 6:10-20 outlines the full armor necessary to wage spiritual warfare. Verse 12 reveals the nature of our struggle. How does this description make you feel? What does it tell you about the big picture when it comes to the true arena of conflict in our lives?

There are six pieces to the full armor of God. Name each item of armor and record what you feel each piece provides to help in our daily struggle with the enemy.

ITEM	What it provides for war...
Example: Insides surrounded with truth.	protects the vitals of our life, our will to go to war, and our availability and readiness. Protects our strength (and possibly from being stabbed in the back).

The deeds of the Spirit and the deeds of the flesh are quite evident. James outlines these two spiritual realities in 3:13-18 when he designates two types of wisdom. What are the characteristics of each type, and how could each impact our effectiveness in warfare?

The greatest weapon at our disposal is defined in 2 Corinthians 2:10,11. What is it, and why is this weapon important for "the destruction of fortresses and spiritual wickedness in heavenly places?"