

Keys to Triumphant Living

*Foundations for Christian Living
from the Book of Ephesians*

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Foreword

Welcome to this life-enriching seminar for men and women who already know Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior, and others who may be seeking Him.

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Keys to Triumphant Living

Foundations for Christian Living from the Book of Ephesians

Suggestions for success with this Creative Living Bible Study:

- Do the lesson in more than one sitting. Example: do three or four questions a day or do the first part of the lesson at one time and the second part, *Building on the Basics*, at another time.
- If you are new at Bible study and the first part of the lesson seems too difficult, read the passage in the first part of the lesson, then go on to *Building on the Basics*.
- Pray before you begin to study--that God would make His truth clear to you.

Keys to Triumphant Living

Foundations for Christian Living from the Book of Ephesians

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LESSON 1

INTRODUCTION

Our world is unstable, full of uncertainty even for the most established free society. How do we find stability in our world today? What perspectives can allow us to be triumphant rather than defeated amid any circumstances of life and even in the face of evil?

As we study the pages of Ephesians, we will find the answers to these questions. When we grasp its profound overarching truths about our relationship with God (Ephesians 1-3) and how to live life in the real world as God's people (Ephesians 4-6), we can be secure and ultimately stand triumphant in any situation.

Ephesians has been called the holy of holies of Paul's writings. In its pages, Paul shares the awesome revelations given him regarding God's plan of the ages. This plan has at its heart the revelation of the character of God—His goodness, mercy, love, justice, faithfulness, wisdom and holiness. The religions of the world at the time of Paul were much like those that dominate our world today. Often the gods worshiped were harsh, temperamental, distant, cold and often cruel. You could not know these gods or personally relate to them.

Paul's revelation of God recorded in Ephesians is a continuation of God's revelation of Himself in all of Scripture. He is the One true God of love and justice, whose plan of redemption allows people everywhere to know Him personally.

God's plan of redemption began to unfold after man's choice to disobey God. This choice to go his own independent way broke man's relationship with his Creator (Genesis 2-3) and separated him from God. To restore man's relationship with Him, God called one man, Abraham, to be the father of a nation through whom would come man's Savior Redeemer (Genesis 12:1-3). The Old Testament prophecies concerning the Messiah

(Gr. *Christos*) were perfectly fulfilled in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. Through His vicarious death for the sins of mankind, Jesus displayed the magnificent love of God for all mankind (Isaiah 53; John 3:16).

As Paul explains in Ephesians, the divine plan continues to unfold. The risen Lord Jesus Christ, now seated at the right hand of God, becomes personally united with each person who puts their faith in Him. This oneness with Jesus Christ is not only for the believer's benefit, but to unite believers around the world to form the "body of Christ" on earth. With Christ as the head, the body of Christ is called to reveal the loving character of God and His redemptive plan to people everywhere.

The fulfillment of this gracious plan of redemption also displays God's character to "rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms" (3:7-13). Paul explains that the climax of God's bigger purpose will be when all things in heaven and earth at last come under the righteous headship of Christ (1:10). Paul is so excited by this revelation that at one point he breaks into spontaneous prayer and praise (3:14-21).

Even so, how does this awesome plan work in daily life where we deal with personal shortcomings, relationship conflicts and differing racial and background issues? Ephesians 4-6 answers these questions as it gives practical principles which enable the body of Christ to reflect God's goodness and love in and through the everyday challenges of life.

Ephesians has been described as one of the richest and most profound New Testament writings. From beginning to end, its deep and grand and timeless concepts hand us the keys to triumphant living in all areas of life. As we embark on this study, we are on holy ground. Pray that God will reveal rich truths to you through His Word.

THE DIVINE PLAN

Ephesians 1

Ephesus was a port city in the Roman province of Asia. This urban center was on the level of Alexandria and Rome and had many impressive civic monuments. The most widely acclaimed was the temple of the ancient Anatolian fertility goddess Artemis (Greek), or Diana of the Romans, whose grotesque image, with turreted head and many breasts, was said to have fallen from heaven. As with Aphrodite at Corinth, the temple was served by a host of priestess courtesans.

It was in this environment that Paul established the church in Ephesus in A.D. 53 on his way back to Jerusalem from his second missionary journey. Paul then spent three years preaching and teaching in Ephesus during his third missionary journey (Acts 19:1-20). It is believed that he wrote the letter to Ephesus during Roman imprisonment in 61 or 62 A.D. with the intent of its being circulated to the many churches that had formed in Asia Minor.

Paul begins his letter proclaiming the awesome eternal purpose of God in Christ and the incredible blessings He bestows on those who put their faith in Him. Ephesians 1:3-14 (all one sentence in the Greek) declares the blessings of the believer in Christ and a doxology of praise to the Father (1:3), Son (1:4-13a), and Holy Spirit (1:13b-14). The remainder of Ephesians 1 is Paul's earnest prayer for those who will read his letter.

Read Ephesians 1:1-14.

1. To whom does Paul address this letter, and what does he send (1:1-2)?

Note. *Saint* means *holy one* and refers to those God declares righteous through faith in Christ (Romans 3:23-26). *Christ* is Greek for *Messiah*.

2. In Ephesians 1:3-14, Paul praises God for the extraordinary blessings He gives those who put their faith in Jesus Christ. Where are these blessings anchored according to Ephesians 1:3?

Note: *Heavenly realms* is God's domain where Christ lives with the Father in victory over death and all destructive powers of the world.

3. To what are believers predestined?

1:4

1:5,12b

Reference: Note 1, *predestined, chosen* (1:4, 5), p. 16.

4. Where must we be positioned to receive God's grace (1:3, 6, 7, 11, 13)?

Note: the phrase *in Christ* and related phrases occur 12 times in vs. 3-12 and refer to the spiritual union of Christ with believers. God's *grace* is His undeserved love and kindness.

5. What great gift do we have through the redemption of Christ (1:7)?

Note: *Forgiveness of sins* in proportion to the *riches of His grace* is limitless forgiveness.

Reference: Note 2, *Why did Christ have to die in my place?* p. 17.

6. According to Ephesians 1:10, what will be the final result of the cosmic battle between good and evil?

7. What does Paul explain about the Holy Spirit in Ephesians 1:13b-14?

Note: *Until the redemption* refers to the believer's resurrection, the final stage of his/her adoption. **Reference:** Note 3, *Holy Spirit*, Note 4, *deposit guaranteeing our inheritance*, and Note 4b, *final redemption*, pp. 18-19.

Read Ephesians 1:15-23.

8. What two inseparable characteristics of true believers does Paul mention in Ephesians 1:15?

Reference: Note 5, *ever since I heard about your faith*, p. 19.

9. a. What did Paul pray for the believers to whom he wrote (1:17-19a)?

b. What main theme of first century preaching is proof of God's power over all things in heaven and earth, past and future, even death (1:19-20a)?

c. Where is Christ seated, and what is His relationship with the church (1:20b-23)?

Note: *right hand* (1:20) symbolizes the place of highest honor and authority. **Reference:** Note 6, *heavenly realms*, p. 19.

BUILDING ON THE BASICS

Embracing the Ultimate Hope

The words of Handel's classic, *The Messiah*, declare, "And He shall reign forever and ever...King of Kings and Lord of Lords! Hallelujah!" This is the awesome revelation and hope Paul declares in Ephesians 1:10; history will culminate in God bringing "all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ."

The phrase, *to bring...under one head*, not only refers to leadership, but was also used to add up a column of figures. In other words, in a confused world where things do not "add up" or make sense, we can look forward

to a time when everything will be brought into meaningful relationship under the headship of Christ. He will eventually win the cosmic battle between good and evil and will set up His righteous kingdom forever.

Possessing this ultimate hope is an essential key to triumphant living. The degree to which we can rejoice with Paul in these truths depends upon how well we know and trust the One who will be King forever. Who is Jesus Christ? What is His character? What kind of leader would He be in this eternal kingdom? To fully embrace this ultimate hope, we will begin our study of *Keys to Triumphant Living* with a brief look at the person of Jesus Christ and His kingdom to come.

1. a. If you were to choose a king to reign over you forever, what would he be like?

b. What would it be like to live under such a ruler?

2. a. Ephesians teaches that Jesus Christ rules the Church (made up of all believers) in the present age, and will reign in the age to come for all eternity. What event of history is essential in supporting these claims?

1 Corinthians 15:4-8

b. What does the resurrection tell us about:

Jesus Christ? Romans 1:4

The power of God in our lives? Ephesians 1:19-20

Our own future as believers? Philippians 3:21

Note: The resurrection of Jesus Christ was foretold by Jesus (Luke 18:31-33), and is the only reasonable explanation for His empty tomb, His appearance to His disciples (1 Corinthians 15:4-8), and the beginning and growth of the Christian Church (cf. Acts 2:29-32, 37-38, 41-42).

3. What do the following verses suggest about the kind of king Jesus would be?

John 1:14b

Matthew 11:28-30

Mark 1:40-42

Hebrews 4:15-16

4. a, What do you learn about the love of Jesus Christ in the following?

John 10:11 (cf. Isaiah 53:5-6)

John 15:13

John 15:9

b. What is the overarching law in Christ's kingdom?

John 15:10,12,17

c. What results from keeping this law? John 15:11

5. a. What did Jesus come to earth to reveal?

Hebrews 1:3; cf. John 14:9b-10

b. What does Psalm 103:8-14 reveal about the character of God displayed in Jesus Christ?

c. What promise does Jesus make to us in this age?

Matthew 28:20b

Hebrews 13:5c

6. How did the prophet describe the believer's ultimate hope in Christ over seven hundred years before the birth of Jesus?

Isaiah 9:6-7

SUMMARY

7. Why is Jesus' resurrection essential to our hope for Christ's promised eternal kingdom?

8. a. What stands out to you in this lesson about the character of Jesus Christ and the kind of king He would be?

b. Why does the promised kingdom of Jesus Christ give the ultimate hope to the believer? What hope do you find in the reign of Jesus Christ in the age to come?

c. How does His present lordship over the church and your life benefit you today?

A Final Note

The Lord is a gentleman and waits to be invited to share His life with us on a heart level. The New Testament explains that a personal relationship with God begins with faith in His Son, Jesus Christ (John 1:12; 14:6). In Revelation 3:20, Jesus states His desire to have fellowship with us: “Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.” If your desire

is to open the door of your life to Jesus and establish a personal relationship with Him, the following prayer may help you express this desire to Him:

Lord Jesus, I open the door of my life to you. Please forgive the sin that makes me feel awkward in your presence. Thank you that this is possible because of the cross where you paid the penalty for my sin. Help me begin to know and experience the joy of your presence and the freedom of your forgiveness. Amen.

References: *Revelations 3:20; Romans 3:23-26; 6:23; and Colossians 2:13-14.*

LESSON 1 NOTES

1 *chose* (1:4, 11), *predestined* (1:5), *elect*, *election*, *called* (cf. Romans 9:11; 11:28; 9:24; 8:28,30). “In the Old Testament God chose numerous people to serve Him: Abraham, Moses, Aaron, the Levites, Saul, David and the people of Israel in general. This continued in the New Testament with the election of Jesus to bear our cross and to be nailed with our punishment, and the election of the disciples, Paul, the church and individual Christians to a great task--the task of proclaiming the message of reconciliation. The *elect* are chosen not only for a task, but also to be saved. Some emphasize that God did His choosing from all eternity solely out of His love, while others see election as God knowing beforehand who would believe in Christ. God has chosen us in order to demonstrate His grace to us as sinners, to make us a part of a whole new creation brought about by Christ's death and resurrection, and to enable us to praise Him with good works as we witness to others of His love. Many are troubled by this teaching, because only some are chosen while others are passed by, but God's intention is to strengthen our faith and give us assurance, for we know that our salvation is based on God's power, not on human works. In the end, we must remain convinced that God works out His plan in perfect justice and love.” *The NIV Topical Study Bible*, p. 775.

The Scriptures promise that everyone who seeks God will find Him (Jeremiah 29:13-14a; John 6:37; Romans 10:23; 2 Peter 3:9b; Revelation 22:17). Every person may not only accept Christ as Savior but is urged and invited to do so based on the Jesus' work on the cross (Hebrews 2:9; John 3:16). After the individual exercises personal faith in Christ and enters the portals of salvation, he discovers emblazoned on the inside of the doorway "Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world" (Ephesians 1:4). Foreordination and human free will are humanly irreconcilable, but have their solution in God. *Unger's Bible Handbook*, p. 672.

2 "Why did Christ have to die in my place?" This is one of the most important yet least understood questions of the Christian faith. The following explanations of terms used in Ephesians 1 help to answer this question. (See also Note 2, *the gospel of peace*, p. 84.

a. *Redemption* is a biblical word meaning "to buy out" or "to set free by the payment of a price (ransom)" and refers to a slave being purchased out of slavery. Romans 3:24 says we are "justified freely by his grace through the *redemption* that came by Christ Jesus." As born sinners, we are in the slave market of sin, so to speak. But Christ, the only free man who ever lived (because He was sinless), paid the ransom price of His own blood to purchase sinners out of the slave market of sin and set them free to become sons of God. Only by the price of death can one be set free (Romans 6:23), and only one who is free (sinless as Christ was; cf. Hebrews 4:15; 2 Corinthians 5:21)) can buy a slave's freedom. By paying the ransom price of His shed blood, Jesus purchased the person who puts faith in Him out of the slave market of sin and sets him free to become a child of God (Galatians 3:13; 1 Timothy 2:5-6; 1 Peter 1:18-19; Galatians 4:4-5).

b. *through His blood* (1:7) is a first century way of pointing to Jesus' death on the cross. The blood sacrifices in the Old Testament represent death as punishment for sin. These sacrifices established the principle that shedding of blood is necessary for forgiveness of sins based upon the fact

that the life is in the blood and the wages of sin is death (Genesis 2:16,17; Romans 6:23; Leviticus 17:11,14; Hebrews 9:22). The innocent animal would take the death penalty for the individual's sin by shedding its blood. The Old Testament sacrifices also point to the blood of Christ shed on the cross as He became "the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world" (John 1:29). His death on the cross for the sins of those who would believe in Him paid the penalty for sin. Christ's death on the cross made it possible for the one who trusts in Christ to receive the forgiveness of God (Ephesians 1:7), become a child of God (John 1:12), and experience the holiness and victory of God in his life. Christ's voluntary death on the cross was the supreme example of His love for us as individuals.

3 The *Holy Spirit*. God has made Himself known in the Bible as a Trinity; three divine persons (Father, Son and Holy Spirit), all with the same essence of deity. The Holy Spirit, known as the third person of the Trinity, indwells every person who personally receives Christ (John 1:12; 14:16-17; Romans 8:9). The Scriptures reveal the Holy Spirit not as an *it*, but rather as a *He*, a distinct personality. In John 3, Jesus tells Nicodemus that the Holy Spirit brings about regeneration or spiritual birth in the believer. While the Holy Spirit cannot be seen, we can see the evidence of His work (3:8). When we ask God (Luke 11:13) to "fill" us with His Spirit (Ephesians 5:18b), He responds by supernaturally instructing and empowering us to live the Christian life (Galatians 5:22-23; Ephesians 3:16-20; Ezekiel 36:26-27). Sometimes the Bible refers to this as "Christ in you" (Colossians 1:27b). See also Note 2, p. 44.

4 a. *deposit guaranteeing our inheritance* (1:14). The Christian's possession of the Holy Spirit is not only evidence of his present salvation but is also a pledge of His future inheritance—and not only a pledge but also the down payment on that inheritance (see 2 Corinthians 1:22; 5:5; Ephesians 1:14).

b. *final redemption of those who are God's possession* (1:14) refers to the redemption of our bodies (Romans 8:23), the resurrection of our bodies as the final stage of our adoption as God's eternal children.

5 *ever since I heard about your faith* (1:15) makes it apparent Paul did not know many of his readers, even though he had spent three years in Ephesus. The church there may have been greatly enlarged since he was there with many new people he had never met. Also very likely this letter was intended as a circular letter for churches throughout the province of Asia, some of which Paul had never visited.

6 *heavenly realms* (1:3,20-22). “This phrase occurs five times in Ephesians, emphasizing Paul’s perception that in the exaltation of Christ (his resurrection and enthronement at God’s right hand) and in the Christian’s union with the exalted Christ, ultimate issues are involved—issues that pertain to the divine realm and that in the final analysis are worked out in and from that realm. At stake are God’s eternal *eschatological purpose (3:11) and the titanic conflict between God and the powerful spiritual forces arrayed against Him—a purpose and a conflict that come to focus in the history of redemption. Here (v. 3) Paul asserts that, through their union with the exalted Christ, Christians have already been made beneficiaries of every spiritual blessing that belongs to and comes from the heavenly realm. In vv. 20-22, he proclaims Christ’s exaltation to that realm and His elevation over all other powers and titles so that He rules over all for the sake of His church. According to 2:6, those who have been ‘made alive with Christ’ share in Christ’s exaltation and enthronement in heaven. Thus (3:11) by the gathering of Gentiles and Jews into one body of Christ (the church), God triumphantly displays His ‘manifold wisdom’ to the ‘rulers and authorities’ in the heavenly realm. As a result, the spiritual struggle of the saints here and now is not so much against ‘flesh and blood’ as against the great spiritual forces that war against God in heaven (6:12).” *The NIV Study Bible*, p. 1791.

* *Eschatological* refers to Scriptural prophecies concerning last things, such as the second coming of Christ, the end of the age, divine judgment and the future state.

LESSON 2

STEPS IN THE PLAN I

Ephesians 2

In Ephesians 1, Paul declares the great purpose of God to adopt believers as dearly loved children, redeemed and sealed by His Spirit, and to at last bring all things in heaven and earth under the reign of Jesus Christ (1:10). Paul devotes the rest of his letter to explaining the steps in the fulfillment of this great plan of God for the ages.

The first step focuses on individuals being saved by God's grace. Paul reminds the Ephesians of the miserable condition they had been in before receiving Christ (2:1-3,11-12), and the glorious change God's grace brought to their lives as they individually embraced salvation through faith in Jesus Christ (2:4-10,13). The emphasis is on what God has done in raising the believer from a spiritually dead condition to be alive and "seated with Christ in heavenly realms." But this is not as a reward for good works, rather "it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast" (2:8-9). Faith and salvation in Christ are free gifts of God's love and mercy which no human being can claim to have worked to achieve.

The second step in God's great plan is the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile (non-Jew) through the cross of Jesus Christ. God's plan is that the peace and grace of Christ found by believing Jews and Gentiles enable them to work as "one man" in revealing God's goodness to the world. This was a radical idea in Paul's time. These two nationalities could not have been more repelling to each other. The Jew especially looked down upon the Gentile who was so far from God with their pagan worship and blatant immorality. As the early church began, its leaders, like Peter, were initially shocked that the Gentile should even be included in the gracious

plan of God for salvation. Many Jews insisted that to be saved the Gentile believer must follow Jewish laws (cf. Acts 10-11,15).

But Paul explains that God saves both Jew and Gentile by grace (unmerited favor) through the cross of Jesus Christ (2:16). Through His death, Jesus destroyed the “barrier, the dividing wall of hostility” (2:14) to bring peace and unity among Jew and Gentile believers in the household of God. With Christ as the cornerstone and the apostles and prophets as the foundation, believers in Christ become the living stones of a “holy temple” in which “God lives by His Spirit” (2:21-22).

Read 2:1-10.

1. a. What phrases describe the Ephesians’ lives before coming to know Jesus Christ (2:1-3)?

Note: *dead in transgressions and sins* (2:1). Death biblically refers to separation, here our separation from God because of our sin. *transgressions and sins* are acts disobedient to God's righteous laws produced by an attitude of active rebellion or passive indifference toward God.

Reference: Note 2, *objects of wrath*, p. 32. *ruler of the kingdom of the air* (2:2) refers to Satan. See Note 1, p. 31.

b. How do Romans 3:23 and Romans 6:23 describe the universal condition of mankind?

2. a. Some believe God's motive for saving us is to reward our goodness--that we can earn God's favor through performing certain works or rituals. What makes us right with God, according to Ephesians 2:4-5?

Note: *Mercy* is God not giving us what we deserve (condemnation). *Grace* is His giving us what we do not deserve (salvation as a gift).

b. How does Paul reiterate this point in Ephesians 2:8-9?

3. What blessing does God bestow on those who put faith in His Son (2:6)?

4. What is the result of our union with Christ (2:10)?

Read Ephesians 2:11-22.

5. This passage addresses God's uniting Jew and Gentile through the cross of Christ. What phrases describe the Gentile without Christ (2:12)?

Reference: Note 3, *uncircumcision and covenants of the promise*, pp. 32, 33.

6. According to Paul, oneness in the church does not come from having a common heritage, or thinking or acting alike, rather on having a common Lord. How is the Gentile brought into the faith of Abraham (2:13)?

Reference: Note 2b, *through His blood*, p. 17. **Note:** Abraham was the father of Israel whose faith made him right with God (cf. Romans 4:3; Genesis 15:6).

7. a. How is the wall between Jew and Gentile broken down, according to Ephesians 2:14-16?

Reference: Note 4, *abolishing...the law*, p. 33.

b. What is the common bond between Jew and Gentile believers (2:18)?

8. a. How is God's household constructed (2:19-20)?

References: Notes 5, 6, *apostles and prophets, cornerstone*, p. 33-34.

b. What is true of this building (2:21-22)?

BUILDING ON THE BASICS

Transformed by Love and Grace

Life is full of experiences that bring us “to the end of the rope” so to speak. We don’t know how to change or cope or move forward--the situation is overwhelming. We feel powerless and hopeless.

Ephesians 2 begins with such a situation—“you were dead.” It doesn’t get more powerless than that. Paul was speaking of the spiritual state caused by our sinful nature. Sin keeps us from being able to bridge the gap between ourselves and God. This is the greatest of human dilemmas, but there are others as well. Personality weaknesses, relationship problems, emotional woundedness, addictions, losses and more bring us to the end of ourselves and to the need for God’s help.

Ephesians 2:4 declares the hope: “But because of His great love for us, God...” God acts on our behalf in impossible situations as we put our trust in Him. Paul proclaims that when we are powerless, God’s love and grace are powerful--to bring us to life from spiritual death, declare us forgiven, and give us a place in God’s dearly loved eternal family. His grace also changes us on the inside. As the dividing wall between Jew and Gentile was broken down in the early Christian church, so God’s love flowing through the hearts of believers overcomes prejudice, breaks down barriers, and builds a bond of love among believers of all races and nations.

Finally, in everyday challenges of life, God’s love and grace bring healing and change and wisdom that can be found nowhere else.

“But God...” (2:4) promises to bring life out of death and a bright new morning after the darkest night as we trust and follow Him. In this lesson we will look at how embracing the grace and love of God is a key to triumphant living.

1. a. What phrases describe our powerless spiritual condition before placing faith in Christ?

Ephesians 2:1,12c

b. What can God’s love and grace do with our powerless spiritual condition?

Ephesians 2:4-5

Ephesians 2:6

Ephesians 2:10

Ephesians 2:13 (8-9)

2. a. Paul speaks of the barrier (wall of hostility) between Jew and Gentile at the time of the early church. Through Christ, what did God in His grace do with this barrier?

Ephesians 2:14,16,18

b. In light of this, what can we expect to happen regarding prejudices as we relate to believers and people from all walks of life?

3. God's grace in our lives comes through the cross of Christ where we are made right with God. This is why His grace has been described as:

God's

Riches

At

Christ's

Expense.

Biblical grace in Christ is also the supernatural power God gives us for accomplishing His will. How is this described in the following verses?

Ephesians 3:20

Philippians 2:13

Philippians 4:13

2 Corinthians 12:9

4. The love of God is also a great source of healing and change in our lives. Jesus revealed God as a loving Father. Putting aside any negative concepts about fathers you may have, how would you describe the perfect father?

How is God's love for us described in these verses?

Psalm 103:3-5

Psalm 103:8-14

John 3:16

5. Although we may feel unworthy of God's love, remember that God doesn't love us because we earn it, but because of His grace. When we put our faith in His Son, He declares us righteous and loved as His child (John 1:12; Ephesians 2:8-9).

a. What is His promise as we trust in His love and grace in any situation?

Romans 8:28

Romans 8:31-32

Romans 8:38-39

b. What will we experience in life's impossible situations with Him?

Psalms 40:1-3

Isaiah 42:16

SUMMARY

6. The first step for us in being a part of God's plan is putting our faith in His Son Jesus Christ and not our own good works to save us from the penalty of sin. What does this bring to our lives? (Review Building questions 1 and 2.)

7. a. Is there an area of your life where you feel powerless today?

b. What promises or principles from this lesson give you hope?

8. What has stood out to you about God's love and grace in this lesson?

9. a. What ways have you seen God's love and grace at work over the course of your life?

b. How does remembering God's past faithfulness help you face today's challenges?

A Final Note

Maybe you have just discovered that salvation comes as a gift of God through the cross of Jesus Christ and not by your good works. This is wonderfully liberating news. Take a moment to reflect on Ephesians 2:8-9 and thank God for the free gift of salvation in Christ.

LESSON 2 NOTES

1 *Satan* means “the accuser.” He is also called *the devil* (4:27). While Satan and evil adversaries, or demons, are incredible to some, it is important to understand what the Bible has to say about them. In the Gospels, Jesus delivered people from demons in numerous incidents. The

Bible refers to Satan as an angelic being who led a heavenly revolt against God. Consequently, God cast him out of heaven with his rebelling host of angels (2 Peter 2:4; Revelation 12:7-9). Under Satan's leadership, these angelic beings became known as demons, and are organized in their schemes and attacks on human beings (Ephesians 6:12). Satan and his forces work to get people to worship Satan (Luke 4:7) and to prevent individuals from turning to God (Luke 4:8). Satan's defeat is promised in Genesis 3:15 and was completed at the cross of Christ (Colossians 2:15). In the resurrection, Christ was victorious over Satan and his power. Therefore, Jesus Christ is the permanent ruler of the whole world. Satan is still a force to be reckoned with until Christ returns to judge the earth (Matthew 16:27). Satan is the temporary ruler of the part of the world that chooses to follow him. James 4:7 instructs believers to resist the devil (or demonic forces) by continually surrendering to God's leadership in their lives.

2 *objects of wrath* (2:3). "The fact that all people, without exception, commit sin proves that without Christ we have a sinful nature. We are lost in sin and cannot save ourselves. Does this mean only Christians do good? Of course not—many people do good to others. On a relative scale, many are moral, kind, and law-abiding. Comparing these people with criminals, we would say that they are very good indeed. But on God's absolute scale, *no one* is good enough to earn salvation ('you were dead in your transgressions and sins' 2:1). Only through being united with Christ's perfect life can we become good in God's sight. 'Objects of wrath' refers to those who are to receive God's wrath because of their rejection of Christ." *The NIV Life Application Bible*, p. 2132.

3 a. *uncircumcision* (2:11) was a derogatory term used by Jews for Gentiles. *circumcision* (2:11) is the cutting off of the foreskin, a practice which originated in various western Semitic cultures as a religious act. The Hebrew rite was instituted by God as a sign of the covenant between Him and Abraham (Genesis 17:1-14). God commanded Abraham and his entire household to be circumcised. The rite was required of every male Jew (descendant of Abraham) and any foreigner joining themselves to the Hebrew nation. This act assured the recipient admittance to the fellowship

of the covenant people and a share in the promises of God to Israel. Circumcision metaphorically symbolized cutting away “pride and sinfulness of the heart” (Leviticus 26:41, Deuteronomy 10:16, Jeremiah 4:4, Acts 7:51). Because circumcision predated the Law, the heart attitude behind this act was first and foremost true faith in God.

b. *covenants of promise* (2:12) refers to the promises of God made to the patriarchs of Israel--Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, (Genesis 12:2-3, 7; 13:14-17; 17:4-8; 22:16-18; 26:2-5; 28:13-15)--as well as the many Old Testament promises regarding the coming Messiah (e.g., 2 Sam 7:12,16; Isaiah 9:6-7; Jeremiah 23:5; 31:31-34; Ezekiel 34:23-24; 37:24-28).

4 *abolishing...the law* (2:15). Jesus (Matthew 5:17) and Paul (Romans 3:31) both teach that God’s moral standard expressed in the Old Testament is not changed by the coming of Christ. What is abolished here is probably the effect of the specific “commandments and regulations” in separating Jews from Gentiles, whose nonobservance of the Jewish law renders them ritually unclean. *The NIV Study Bible*, p. 1793.

5 *apostles and prophets* (2:20) probably refers to gifted men given to the church as its “foundation” (cf. 4:11) aligned with Christ, the chief cornerstone of the foundation. See Note 6 below.

cornerstone (2:20) refers to Messianic prophecy in Isaiah 28:16 and a foundation with a “tested” stone at the corner (cf. 1 Cor 3:10-11). “In ancient building practices ‘the chief cornerstone’ was carefully placed. It was crucial because the entire building was lined up with it. The church's foundation, that is, the apostles and prophets, needed to be correctly aligned with Christ. All other believers are built on that foundation, measuring their lives with Christ.” Walvoord and Zuck, p. 627.

6 a. *apostle* is one who is sent by authority with a commission. The apostles were Jesus' authorized agents or representatives. Sometimes the word is used more generally as messenger (cf. John 13:16). In the technical sense, it is used (1) of the Twelve (Mark 3:14)--in which sense it

is also applied to Paul (Romans 1:1)--and (2) of a larger group including Barnabas (Acts 14:14), James the Lord's brother (Galatians 1:19), and possibly Andronicus and Junias (Romans 16:7).

b. *prophets* in Old and New Testaments were given by God to preach, exhort, explain or foretell.

LESSON 3

STEPS IN THE PLAN II

Ephesians 3

In Ephesians 2, we saw God's plan, revealed to Paul and the apostles, to unite Jew and Gentile believers through the cross of Christ. In Ephesians 3, Paul explains that this unity displays God's great wisdom to "rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms" (3:7-13). Heavenly beings stand amazed at God's plan to reconcile and organically unite Jew and Gentile believers to make up the Church, "the body of Christ" on earth.

These heavenly beings are also amazed that redeemed men and women are given free access and welcomed into God's holy presence through Christ. The repeated phrase "heavenly realms" in Ephesians makes it clear the believer's walk of faith is not just on an earthly plane, but receives its purpose and meaning in heavenly places where Christ is exalted at the right hand of God (1:20).

Ephesians 3 ends as Paul picks up on a prayer begun in verse 1. He prays that believers experience God's love and power within them to do the impossible. He prays for Gentile and Jewish believers to be united through the knowledge and experience of God's infinite love in Christ, and that the Holy Spirit might so strengthen and empower them from within that Christ would be at home in their lives, dominating their attitudes and conduct. Paul closes his prayer by praising God, whose love is able to do the unimaginable in the Christian's life.

Read Ephesians 3:1-13.

1. To whom had the mystery of God been made known (3:2-3,5)?

Note: *mystery* does not mean mysterious, rather *mystery* refers to a fact in God's plan hidden until the appropriate time.

Reference: Notes 5 and 6, *apostles and prophets*, p. 33,34.

2. a. What is the mystery (3:6)?

Reference: Note 3, *gospel*, p. 44.

b. What is God's intent (3:10-11)?

Note: "It is a staggering thought, that the church on earth is observed, so to speak, by these spiritual powers and that to the degree the church is spiritually united it portrays to them the wisdom of God." *The NIV Study Bible*, p. 1794.

3. What was Paul called and empowered by God to do (3:8-9a)?

Note: *administration of this mystery* includes Paul's work in making God's plan known (cf. 3:2) and God's great plan to reveal His wisdom in the "heavenly realms" through the church. *Heavenly realms* means in God's domain where Christ lives with the Father in victory over death and all destructive powers of the world.

Reference: Note 6, *heavenly realms*, p. 19.

4. In addition to amazement over Jew and Gentile believers being united to form the church, what also astounds the heavenly beings (3:12)?

Read Ephesians 3:14-21.

5. a. Paul's first prayer (1:15-22) was focused on the Ephesians gaining "wisdom and revelation" of spiritual truth. What is the focus of this prayer (3:14-19)?

b. What is God able to do within us (3:20)?

6. Who does Paul acknowledge should get all the glory and through whom (3:21)?

BUILDING ON THE BASICS

Receiving the Power

It has been said that the Christian life is not just hard, but impossible to live. No matter where we are in our spiritual journey, the passage defining unconditional love in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8 and perfect character in Galatians 5:22-23 reveal that the Christian life does not come naturally.

Jesus said that apart from Him, we cannot live the Christian life in our own strength (John 15:5).

But what God commands us to do, He enables us to do. The Bible tells us that when we receive Christ, His Holy Spirit comes to live in us. This third person of the trinity ¹⁻² seeks to continually deepen our understanding of God's unconditional love and produce the life of Christ in us. These wonderful truths are reflected in Ephesians 3:14-21.

As seen in this prayer, the Holy Spirit creates godly character in us by deepening our understanding of God's love. He reminds us that God welcomes us into His presence not because of our perfection but because of our faith in Jesus Christ (Ephesians 3:11-12; John 1:12). This frees us from relating to God in guilt and fear to knowing Him as an unconditionally loving heavenly Father who sticks with us through the victories as well as the defeats. So Paul writes, "I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, may have power together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God" (3:17b-19).

As the Holy Spirit continually refreshes us in the love and grace of God, our natural response is to love and long to please God. But the obstacles are great in doing this; our old selfish nature and temptations from the world around us. The Holy Spirit can give us the power to fight these battles and make Christ at home and in control in our hearts. Paul describes this in his prayer "...that out of His glorious riches He may *strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being*, so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith" (3:16-17b).

Understanding how to let the Holy Spirit empower us is essential to living a fulfilled Christian life. In this lesson, we will look at this important *Key to Triumphant Living*.

1. How did Paul describe the fight with sin in our own strength?

Romans 7:18-19,21-23

Note: *sinful nature* means everything in us which is loyal to our old way of selfish living rather than to God.

2. a. What does the sinful nature pull people toward?

Galatians 5:19-21a

b. How can we win the battle against our old nature?

Galatians 5:16,25

Note: *live by the Spirit* (16) is a continual habit of living by the promptings and power of the Spirit. *in step with* (25) means to walk in line with the Spirit.

3. What did Jesus promise about the Holy Spirit?

John 14:16-17

John 14:26

4. Why does God put His Spirit in our hearts?

Ezekiel 36:27

Ephesians 3:16-17a

Ephesians 1:13b-14

5. Being controlled by the Holy Spirit is a command for the Christian. How is this command stated in Ephesians 5:18?

Note: The analogy of wine shows how being filled with the Spirit influences a person's attitudes and behaviors as completely as alcohol does when one is drunk.

6. To be filled with the Holy Spirit, we must:

a. Have no known unconfessed sin in our lives. What does 1 John 1:9 promise?

Note: Confession means to “call it sin, call it forgiven (on the cross) and call on God to change us.”

b. Present every area of our lives to God. What does consecration involve?

Proverbs 23:26; Romans 12:1-2

Note: *body* refers to all the areas and capabilities of our lives.

c. Ask God to fill you with His Spirit. What does He promise?

Luke 11:13

1 John 5:14-15

7. What results from letting the Holy Spirit control our lives?

2 Corinthians 3:17-18

Galatians 5:22-23

SUMMARY

8. a. Why is it important to have our “roots deep in the soil of God’s marvelous love” (3:17 LB) as we seek to live the Christian life?

b. Do you feel you are experiencing the unconditional love of God in your life? What is your prayer in this area?

Recommended reading for understanding of God’s love: *What is the Father Like?* by W. Phillip Keller, and *31 Days of Praise* by Ruth Myers.

9. a. Why is drawing on the power of the Holy Spirit essential to triumphant living?

b. Are there areas in which you are struggling to be more Christlike? What hope is offered in this lesson? What does Ephesians 3:20 promise?

10. a. Have you ever imagined Christ living His life in you through the power of the Holy Spirit? What difference would it make in your home, workplace, neighborhood?

b. What is your prayer regarding the Holy Spirit and your life?

If you have never asked Christ to fill, or control and empower you with His Spirit, perhaps you would like to ask Him now. The following is a suggested prayer that you can pray daily:

Lord Jesus, I acknowledge that I have tried and failed to live the Christian life in my own strength. Thank you that you have forgiven my sins through your death on the cross for me. I now invite you to take control of my life. Fill me with the Holy Spirit as you have commanded me to be filled and as you promise to do if I ask. Live your life through me, Lord, in the power of your Spirit. I pray this in the name of Jesus. Amen.

LESSON 3 NOTES

1 *The Trinity.* While the word trinity is not in the Bible, Christians have historically used this term to describe God as He has revealed Himself. The Bible explains that God is one God in three equal persons: Father, Son, Holy Spirit. Certain passages in the Old Testament hint of a plurality in God (Genesis 1:26-27; 3:22; 11:7; Isaiah 6:8). The Old Testament also speaks of someone coming from God who is God (i.e., Christ, Isaiah 7:14; 9:6). The New Testament clearly portrays Jesus Christ as God (John 1:1; Philippians 2:6; Colossians 1:15-17; Hebrews 1:8) and the Holy Spirit as God (Luke 1:35; Acts 5:3-4; Matthew 28:19; 2 Corinthians 13:14). All three persons of the trinity share the divine characteristics of holiness, power, goodness, omniscience, omnipotence, etc. While they all may be involved in an activity such as teaching, for instance, each is associated

with certain specific works. The Father is associated with the work of creating, the Son with the work of redeeming, and the Holy Spirit with the work of sanctifying believers. In many New Testament passages, mention of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit occurs in the same sentence (Jude 20-21; Ephesians 4:4-6; I John 4:2; 1 Peter 1:2; Titus 3:4-6; 2 Thessalonians 2:13; Galatians 4:4-6; Romans 5:5-6; John 15:26).

2 *Holy Spirit.* When we personally receive Christ (John 1:12), the Scriptures tell us that God's Spirit takes up residence in our hearts (Romans 8:9b). Jesus promised that He would send the Holy Spirit to indwell each believer's heart (John 14:16-17). It is the Holy Spirit who produces the life of Christ in us, enabling us to unselfishly and joyfully serve God and others.

Because the Holy Spirit is the source of power in the Christian's life, it is important to know who He is. Throughout Scripture, the Holy Spirit is revealed along with the Father and the Son as a full and distinct person of the Godhead. As a divine person, the Holy Spirit is eternal, everywhere present, almighty, perfectly wise, perfectly just and perfectly good (Hebrews 9:14; Psalm 139:7-10; 1 Corinthians 2:10-11).

The Holy Spirit's distinct role is the Sanctifier who frees us to lead new lives in Christ (2 Corinthians 3:17). It is the Holy Spirit who leads us to spiritual rebirth, brings Christ's presence to us, keeps us in touch with God, reveals God's love, gives us power to witness and to live the Christian life, and gives us spiritual gifts with which to serve the body of Christ (Titus 3:5, John 14:16-18, Romans 8:26, Romans 5:5, Acts 1:8, Romans 8:5-9, 1 Corinthians 2:4-12). He teaches, encourages, comforts, pleads for us and leads us into all truth (John 16:13; Acts 9:31; John 14:16; Romans 8:27). See also Note 3, *Holy Spirit*, p. 18.

3 *gospel* (1:1) means "the Good News." In the New Testament, the gospel refers to the message that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again, and now is able to save all who trust Him (1 Corinthians 15:1-4). The gospel was promised in the Old Testament, beginning in Genesis

3:15, and touched on by Isaiah (Isaiah 1:18; 53; 55) and other prophets. Although promised by the prophets, they did not fully understand it (1 Peter 1:10-12). Jesus Christ, the Son of God, became a man, born of a Jewish virgin in the line of David as prophesied (Isaiah 7:14; Matthew 1:18-25). Through His substitutionary death and victorious resurrection, Christ is able to give victory over sin and eternal life to all who believe.

LESSON 4

THE CHRISTIAN WALK I

Ephesians 4

The first half of Ephesians focuses on the divine plan of God in the church, the headship and glory of Jesus Christ. Through His blessings on us and in the uniting of Jew and Gentile to form “one new man” (the body of Christ, or church), God’s manifold wisdom is displayed in heaven and on earth.

Paul begins the second half of Ephesians exhorting believers to live “worthy” of their high calling to serve and glorify Christ. This half of Ephesians is about the Christian walk fleshed out in everyday life.

First, the Christian is called to preserve the unity among believers that builds maturity in the church. Paul explains that this unity comes from godly characteristics in individuals (4:2). It also comes through specific gifts Christ has given each believer to nurture the body of Christ. The desired result is stated in Ephesians 4:13, considered a key verse of Ephesians: “...until 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.” This manifestation of His perfectly balanced character in the church and its individual members fosters stability in the church and proves that Christ is in the lead.

Next, we are called to develop personal purity and mutual submission in relationships. As we give God control of our lives moment by moment, He changes our thinking and actions in one area after another. Paul discusses this renewal, with instructions to “put off your old self..., be made new in the attitude of your minds, and put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness” (4:22-24). He mentions several practical areas in which we can choose to follow this instruction.

1. a. How might the high calling of the believer be described in light of Ephesians 3:10,21?

b. What choices allow us to live up to our calling (4:2)?

2. a. According to Ephesians 2:14-22, Christ gave his life to purchase unity for the church. What is the responsibility of Christians (4:3)?

b. What unites those who belong to Christ (4:4-6)?

Reference: Note 1, *one hope, one baptism*, p. 56., and Note 3, *Holy Spirit*, p. 18.

3. In His headship of the church, Christ provides specific gifts to individuals to build the body and equip the church in His service. What do Ephesians 4:7, 11-12 state about this?

Reference: Note 2, *gave gifts* (4:7-8), and Note 3, *ascended...descended* (4:9-10), p. 56, 57.

4. What does the blending of gifts allow the body of believers to do (4:15-16)?

Read Ephesians 4:17-24.

5. In addition to unity and maturity of character, purity is also necessary in the body of Christ. Upon what does Paul insist (4:17-19)?

Note: *Gentiles* refers to nonbelievers in this context.

6. a. How does Paul contrast our old sin nature and our new nature in Christ (4:22,24)?

b. How are we to escape the pull of the old self (4:23-24)?

Reference: Note 4, *old self...new self* (4:22,24), p. 57.

7. How can we put off the old and put on the new nature in everyday life?
4:25

4:26-27

Reference: Note 5. *the devil*, p. 57.

4:28

4:29-30

4:31-32

8. Perhaps nothing glorifies Christ in our lives more than being able to ask for forgiveness when we wrong others and give forgiveness when we have been wronged. What is the basis for forgiveness of others according to Ephesians 4:32b?

BUILDING ON THE BASICS

Transformed on the Inside

The phrase “in Christ” (or its equivalent) appears about thirty-five times in Ephesians. Ephesians 1 says that in Christ:

<i>We are blessed with every spiritual blessing.</i>	<i>1:3</i>
<i>We are holy, blameless, and covered with God's love.</i>	<i>1:4</i>
<i>We are adopted as God's children.</i>	<i>1:5-6</i>
<i>Our sins are taken away, and we are forgiven.</i>	<i>1:7</i>
<i>We will be brought under Christ's headship.</i>	<i>1:10-11</i>
<i>We are marked as belonging to God by the Holy Spirit.</i>	<i>1:13</i>
<i>We have been raised up to sit with Christ in glory.</i>	<i>2:6</i>
<i>We are God's work of art.</i>	<i>2:10</i>
<i>We have been brought near to God.</i>	<i>2:13</i>
<i>We share in the promise of Christ.</i>	<i>3:6</i>
<i>We can come with freedom and confidence into God's presence.</i>	<i>3:12</i>
<i>We are members of Christ's body, the church.</i>	<i>5:29,30</i>

What does it mean to be “in Christ”? To be “in Christ” means to be identified or united with Christ. If you drop food coloring in a glass of water, the water is changed as it becomes united with the coloring. Ephesians tells us that when we receive Christ, we become united with Him. Because God sees believers as “in” His Son, Jesus Christ, He gives us all the blessings listed above.

In our identification with Christ, we are also given a new nature like His--righteous and holy (Ephesians 4:24). This new nature desires only to please God and is absent from any desire to sin. This becomes the “real”

you when you are “born” spiritually (John 3:5-6; 2Corinthians 5:17) through faith in Jesus Christ as Savior.

As we look over the commands of Ephesians 4:25-5:1, we could be discouraged. Our old nature will always be pulling us to do wrong. But realizing who we are “in Christ” can free us from the losing battle of trying to reform our old nature. When we succumb to its pull to do wrong, we can simply confess the sin to God, claim His forgiveness, and ask the Holy Spirit to empower the “real” us, our new person in Christ, to again take control. This enables us to continue to practice godliness and also to use the gifts given us by Christ to bring love, unity and growth to the body of Christ.

As we continue our study, we will review the wonderful transformation that comes through our identification with Christ which allows us to experience triumphant living.

1. Review Questions 7 and 8 above. What are the fundamental differences between the old and new natures?

2. a. What happens at the moment a person places faith in Jesus Christ for salvation according to Romans 6:3-4?

Note: *baptism* (6:3) means to be placed into or identified with. *Live a new life* (6:4) means to be raised with Jesus Christ to new life in God's presence, forever set free from the power of sin and death.

b. How are the results of being united with Christ in His death described in Romans 6:5-7?

Note: *old self* (6:6-7) is the person we are spiritually before receiving Christ. *Body of sin* is a figurative expression for self in its pre-Christian state, dominated by sin. *freed from sin* means set free from the bondage and power of sin.

3. Through our identification with Christ, God gives us a new heart just like the heart of His Son. It is dead to sin and any desire to sin. When Christ comes into your life, this is the new “real” you.

In her book, *31 Days of Praise*, Ruth Myers describes the battle and victory of the Christian life as follows:

Sin fights against the Holy Spirit within us for control of our bodies and our personalities. And sin is cagey. It masquerades as our master who deserves our loyalty. It poses as an essential part of us, pretending to be our true nature...if we yield to its demands or swallow its bait, it either dulls our consciences or plagues us with guilt, whipping us even after we confess to the Lord. In countless ways indwelling sin causes us distress, struggles, and defeats.

But from God’s viewpoint, it is not our true, new self who sins, but sin that lives in us (Romans 7:17, 20). Our sins spring from our old sinful tendencies that are no longer our true identity. The real you, the real me, hates sin and is aligned against it. The real you is distressed when sin prevails and longs for your whole personality to be conformed to the image of Christ. The real you is dead to sin and alive to God.

Ruth Myers, *31 Days of Praise*, pp. 131-132.

a. According to this quote, how does sin seek to control us (paragraph 1)?

b. How does paragraph 2 describe the new you in Christ?

4.a. How is identification with Christ described in the following?

John 14:19-20 (Jesus speaking)

2 Corinthians 5:17

Galatians 2:20a

b. What picture of identification with Christ is given in Ezekiel 36:26?

5. a. What is the first step toward a believer experiencing victory over sin according to Romans 6:11?

Important Reference: Note 6, *dead to sin*, p. 58.

b. Romans 6 says it is important to *know* we are brand new in Christ, *count on it* being true, and *yield* our lives to Him to empower for His glory. What choices are we encouraged to make?

Romans 6:12-13 (cf. Ephesians 4:23-24)

6. While our new nature in Christ desires to please God, it is the Holy Spirit who enables us to overcome temptation and sin. Paul speaks of the continual battle with the old sin nature in Romans 7:21-23 and Galatians 5:17. What do the following verses suggest we must do to live for God?

Romans 8:5-6

Ephesians 5:18b

Note: To be filled with the Holy Spirit means to be controlled and empowered by the Holy Spirit.

SUMMARY

7. Briefly state the blessings we have from being “in Christ.” (See Building on the Basics Commentary.)

8. a. What does it mean to be “in Christ” or identified with Christ (Building on the Basics Questions 2-5)?

b. How would you summarize what this means in your life?

LESSON 4 NOTES

1 *one hope* is linked to the glorious future all believers will share in Christ (cf. 1:10). *one baptism* probably refers to water baptism in which all new converts participated publicly. At that time, it was a more obvious common mark of the Christian’s identification than it is now.

2 *gave gifts* (4:7-8). “The Bible lists numerous spiritual gifts. Many Bible interpreters divide them into natural gifts (such as speaking, serving others, showing mercy) and supernatural gifts (such as doing miracles and speaking in tongues). Some gifts may be enjoyed privately, but the main reason God gave them is to testify to Christ and to equip individuals to serve others and build up the church. Each believer has been given a special gift of the Spirit, so that he or she can make a unique contribution to the body, Christ's church. Some believe the supernatural gifts were

limited to the apostolic age, while others think they have been, and will be, present in the church throughout her history, right up to the present day.” *NIV Topical Study Bible*, p. 1278.

Spiritual gifts are discovered as we walk closely with the Lord, try different service opportunities, and observe the response of others. Your spiritual gift(s) will be in line with what you enjoy doing and what causes others to grow in faith. References to spiritual gifts: Romans 12:4-8; 1 Corinthians 12; Ephesians 4:7-13; 1 Peter 4:10-11.

3 *ascended...descended* (4:9-10). “Paul is reminding his readers of Christ’s coming to earth (his incarnation) and his subsequent resurrection and ascension to reign over heaven and earth (cf. 1:20-23). Some believe ‘the lower, earthly regions’ (4:9) may be (1) the earth itself (lowly by comparison to heaven), (2) the grave, or (3) Hades (many believe Hades is the resting place of souls between death and resurrection). However we understand it, Christ is the Lord of the whole universe, past, present, and future. Nothing or no one is hidden from Him. The Lord of all came to earth and faced death to rescue all people. No one is beyond His reach.” *The NIV Life Application Bible*, p. 2136.

4 *old self...new self* (4:22, 24). “The Christian life is compared to putting off one garment and putting on another. This is not a reference to our position in Christ, but to our experience. It is possible to be a new man in Christ Jesus and yet be living like an ‘old man,’ that is, having on the garment of the ‘old man.’” *Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, p. 1312 The “new man” is the kind of person Jesus produces in us as we give Him control. It does not refer to the indwelling of Christ (John 14:23,16-17) or to the new nature the believer receives through identification with Christ (Romans 6:1-10).

5 *the devil* (4:27). “Personal sin is usually due to our evil desires (see James 1:14) rather than to direct tempting by the devil. However, Satan can use our sins--especially those, like anger, that are against others--to

bring about greater evil, such as divisions among Christians.” *The NIV Study Bible*, p. 1797. See also, Note 1, *Satan*, p. 31.

6 *dead to sin* (Romans 6:2,11). Ruth Myers clarifies this concept well in her book, *31 Days of Praise*. She explains that death in the biblical sense means separation, as in the separation of body and spirit in physical death or separation from God because of sin (“the wages of sin is death,” Romans 6:23). Therefore, to be dead to sin means that “in our innermost being we have been separated from sin; sin is no longer our nature and we no longer need to let it be our master.

According to Romans 7, sin still indwells us; the old sinful patterns and potential are still written in our minds and bodies. But we are to see ourselves in the light of the cross and empty tomb. These stand within us as a powerful barrier between indwelling sinfulness and the new person we truly are in our innermost being. We’re to let them serve as a powerful blockade, separating our new selves from what remains of our old sinful tendencies. The cross and the empty tomb form an immovable boundary between who we are and who we have become, between our former realm of sin and guilt and death and our new realm of righteousness and life.” Ruth Myers, *31 Days of Praise*, pp. 131-132.

LESSON 5

THE CHRISTIAN WALK II

Ephesians 5:1-6:9

In Ephesians 4, Paul spoke of living in unity (4:1) and purity (4:17) to glorify Christ and build up others. In Ephesians 5, Paul encourages us to imitate God as dearly loved children would imitate a father.

To imitate God is to “live a life of love” as Christ did. It’s a life characterized by other-centeredness and abstaining from vices like greed, sexual immorality and obscenity or coarse joking which pull others down. Love that demonstrates the goodness, righteousness and truth of Christ is constructive in those around us. This “living in the light” not only allows God to produce His character in us, but also to shed His light on the dark areas of human conduct in the world around us.

Paul makes it clear that the believer should not get involved with those who openly practice evil. Rather we should live wisely, letting the Holy Spirit lead and control our lives. The evidence of the Spirit’s control is a heart full of praise and thankfulness to God that builds others up.

Another evidence of the Spirit’s control is mutual submission toward others --a willingness to serve and be under others rather than dominating them and exalting ourselves. Paul first shows how deference for one another plays itself out in a marriage relationship. Filled with the Spirit, the wife respects the leadership of her husband and submits to him out of submission to the Lord. The Spirit controlled husband will devote himself to his wife’s good with the sacrificial love Christ showed the church. Such a marriage becomes a human echo of the love relationship between Christ and His “bride” the church.

The final chapter of this great epistle begins with more instruction on deference in relationships. Out of reverence for Christ, children are to

obey parents, and parents serve their children. Slaves were to serve their masters and masters treat slaves justly and fairly to please and honor the Lord.

Read Ephesians 5:1-14.

1. How can we imitate God as dearly loved children (5:1-2)?

Note: *gave Himself up for us (5:2). See Note 2, redemption, p. 17.*

2. a. What vices should there “not even be a hint of” among believers (5:3-4)?

b. What positive use of the tongue becomes the believer (5:4c)?

3. The greedy person (whether immoral or materialistic) becomes an idolater when he places a higher value on his own desires than on God. What does Paul warn (5:7)?

Reference: Note 1, *do not be partners with them (5:7), p. 69.*

4. “Children of the light” are to be light sources themselves, able to illumine the world around them. List ways we can live as “children of the light in the Lord” (5:8-14).

Read Ephesians 5:15-20.

5. What keys to living as “children of the light” does Paul give in Ephesians 5:15-18?

Reference: Note 2, “*Do not get drunk...be filled with the Spirit*, p. 69.

6. What are results of being controlled by the Spirit in our relationship with the Lord and others (5:19-20)?

Read Ephesians 5:21-33.

7. Ephesians 5:21-6:9 teaches us to practice mutual submission with one another, wives with husbands, husbands with wives, children with parents and parents with children, slaves (employees) with masters (employers) and masters with slaves. How does this passage begin (5:21)?

8. Scan this passage and list the descriptions of Christ's love and "yielding of rights" for His "bride," the church (5:23, 25-27, 29).

9. a. In an environment of mutual concern and mutual submission, what is the Spirit-filled wife's responsibility (5:22, 24, 33)?

Note: To submit means to yield one's own rights. The word "obey" does not appear in Scripture with respect to wives.

Reference: Note 3, *wives, submit* (5:22), p. 70.

b. Summarize how the servant role of a Spirit-filled husband is described (5:25-30, 33)?

Reference: Note 4, *husbands love*, p. 71.

10. What relationship does the Spirit-controlled marriage reflect (5:29-32)?

Read Ephesians 6:1-9.

11. a. Why should children obey their parents (6:1,3)?

Note: *in the Lord* means out of reverence for the Lord. *enjoy long life* refers to the fact that obedience fosters the self-discipline that brings stability and longevity to one's life.

b. What is the parent's responsibility (6:4)?

Note: *do not exasperate*. Parents should not push their children to anger and discouragement through unreasonable demands, petty rules, or favoritism.

12. a. How can employees today apply Paul's exhortation to Christian slaves in his day (6:5-6)?

b. What is the command and promise of Ephesians 6:7-8?

13. How can employers today apply Paul's exhortation to masters (6:9)?

BUILDING ON THE BASICS

Giving Living

Most of us would agree that fulfillment in life does not ultimately come from money, pleasure or prestige, but rather from satisfying relationships with God, ourselves and others. In Ephesians 5-6, Paul gives the important key to satisfying relationships: “as God's dearly loved children, live a life of love ... just as Christ loved us” (5:1-2).

While the word *love* conjures up warm feelings, Paul's description in Ephesians 5 of the love of Christ worked out in life is not always romantic. First he discusses how saying “no” to immorality, immoral talk and greed is the loving thing to do for others and ourselves, even though we may be persecuted for this stand on the school campus or in the workplace. Living a life of love also involves boycotting and exposing what is contrary to God's dictates, not in an attitude of bigotry but in love for God's principles and concern for man's darkness. To take the kind of loving position that challenges and rebukes, refutes and exposes is to love as God loves and as Jesus modeled in His life and teachings. But this not with malice, rather always aiming at those trapped in ungodliness coming to repentance, forgiveness and integration into the light and love of God.

Paul also discusses how the love generated by the Holy Spirit enables us to submit to others. The word used for submission in Ephesians 5:21 (*hupertasso*) is of military origin and literally means “to rank under.” While authority has become a dirty word and submission to authority abhorrent to many, voluntary subordination in service of others is a mark of Christlike humility and love. Francis Foulkes writes, “There must be a willingness in the Christian fellowship to serve any, to learn from any, to be corrected by any regardless of age, sex, class, or any other division.”⁶ This is a mark of maturity and strength, not weakness, in the believer.

Finally, when we practice the “giving living” that imitates God's love as “dearly loved children” (5:1), we don't just love when we have warm

feelings of love. The Holy Spirit constrains and enables us to see with eyes of compassion and extend love to those who are hard to love as well as the loveable. In his letter to the Ephesians, Paul shows how this love operates, as Jew and Gentile, husband and wife, children and parents, and employers and employees are charged to defer to one another out of “reverence for Christ” (5:21). This unconditional love produced by the Holy Spirit is necessary for healthy relationships in our homes, churches and world.

Success or failure in life truly depends on whether or not we are giving our hearts first to God and then to others. Selfishness destroys people who have everything the world has to offer while “giving living” fulfills people who have nothing by this world’s standards. In this lesson, we will make some observations about the “giving living” that displays the love of God to the world and is a vital *Key to Triumphant Living*.

1. How is God’s love and the love His Spirit produces in us described in 1 Corinthians 13:4-8a?

2. a. How is submission described in Ephesians 5:21-6:9 a part of loving in this way?

b. What can make yielding rights for the good of others difficult without God’s help?

3. a. When might submission not be the loving thing to do within family or workplace?

b. How can we discern God's way in a particular situation?

James 1:5

4. As discussed in the commentary, "giving living" is not an attitude of acceptance of ungodliness. What is the Christian's calling?

Ephesians 5:3-4, 8, 11

5. Ephesians 5:14 shows when we stand for God's truth and goodness and righteousness in the world, people seduced in a worldly stupor can be awakened to have "Christ's light shine on them" (5:14). What are we commissioned to do?

Matthew 5:14, 16

2 Timothy 2:24-26

1 Peter 3:15

6. What encouragement do these passages give:

a. when we feel inadequate as we seek to serve God and others?

2 Corinthians 9:8

2 Corinthians 12:9-10

b. when we become weary or discouraged in serving God and others?

Galatians 6:9

1 Corinthians 15:58

7. What comes from giving our lives to meet the needs of others?

Proverbs 11:25

SUMMARY

8. a. What does selfishness produce that you want to avoid?

b. What does unselfishness produce that you want in your life?

9. a. What aspects of “giving living” stand out to you from Ephesians 5? How would you describe the “giving living” lifestyle that the Holy Spirit produces in us?

b. Why is this lifestyle foundational for dynamic Christian living?

10. a. Are there areas where you feel weak or inadequate as you seek to give your life to God and the needs of others?

b. What is God's provision for your weakness?

c. What do you think is the key to "giving living" over a lifetime?

LESSON 5 NOTES

1 *do not be partners with them* (5:7). "Paul is not forbidding all contact with unbelievers. Jesus taught his followers to befriend sinners and lead them to him (Luke 5:30-32). Instead, Paul is speaking against condoning the life-style of people who make excuses for bad behavior and recommend its practice to others—whether they are in the church or outside of it. Such people can quickly pollute the church and endanger its unity and purpose. We must befriend unbelievers if we are to lead them to Christ, but we must be wary of those who are viciously evil, immoral, or opposed to all that Christianity stands for. Such people are more likely to influence us for evil than we are likely to influence them for good." *The NIV Life Application Bible*, p. 2138.

2 *Do not get drunk...be filled with the Spirit* (5:18). The comparison is between a person intoxicated with wine who acts in an unnatural way that is evil and a person filled with the Holy Spirit who acts in an unnatural way that is good.

The Greek present tense is used to indicate that we are to keep on being filled--continuously be filled with the Spirit. This happens as we stay yielded to Christ and take in God's Word (Colossians. 3:15-16). From the moment of spiritual birth, we are indwelt by the Holy Spirit in all His fullness, so we cannot get more of Him. But He can exercise complete control of the life that is yielded to Him. *Wycliffe Bible Commentary*, p.

1314. “We should not be concerned with how much of the Holy Spirit we have, but how much of us the Holy Spirit has. Submit yourself daily to His leading and draw constantly on His power.” *NIV Life Application Bible*, p. 2139. See Note 3, *Holy Spirit*, p. 18.

3 *wives, submit* (5:22). “Although some people have distorted Paul’s teaching on submission by giving unlimited authority to husbands, Paul emphasized the equality of all believers in Christ (Galatians 3:28). He counseled all believers to submit to one another by choice—wives to husbands and also husbands to wives; slaves to masters and also masters to slaves; children to parents and also parents to children. This kind of mutual submission preserves order and harmony in the family while it increases love and respect among family members. Paul told wives to submit to their husbands because, according to the Bible, the man is the spiritual head of the family, and his wife should acknowledge his leadership. But real spiritual leadership involves service. Just as Christ served the disciples, even to the point of washing their feet, so the husband is to serve his wife. A wise and Christ-honoring husband will not take advantage of his leadership role, and a wise and Christ-honoring wife will not try to undermine her husband’s leadership. Either approach causes disunity and friction in marriage. Both husband and wives should submit to each other (Ephesians 5:21), just as both should love each other.” *The NIV Life Application Bible*, p. 2139.

“In my own experience as a husband and father, I have to say that my wife and children have no doubts that I have the God-given responsibility to make the final decision at times. But I am so aware of my own fallibility that I never make major decisions without adequately exposing myself to the alternatives presented by family in general and my wife in particular. Then because someone has to make the final decision in the light of all the input from the family, I carefully do it, but in great humility because I understand the feelings of all concerned. There is no suggestion of authoritarianism or dictatorial attitude on my part. Neither is there a sense of slavery or inferiority on the part of my wife or children, only a great sense of concern for each other and responsibility to God for

the decisions made and the actions taken.” D. Stuart Briscoe, *Let's Get Moving*, p. 140.

4 *husbands love your wives*, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it” (5:25). “In brief, Paul said that the care of the Lord for His church in sanctifying, cleansing, beautifying, nourishing, and cherishing (see 5:26-29) was a great mystery but should be real in the relationship between man and wife. And it was the husband's responsibility to see that it was done! This means that the husband will gladly make himself a *servant* of his wife to the extent he can bring enrichment to her in every possible way. How do men make their wives more beautiful? How do they nourish and cherish them? The beauty will come from the contented heart, not the corner drugstore. The nourishing and cherishing will come from a stable marriage and a supportive spouse. Incidentally, the word ‘cherish’ means literally ‘to keep warm’ and the word ‘nourish’ is the same word translated ‘bring them up’ in 6:4! So we can readily see that the husband has his hands full when he starts to minister to his wife to make her innerly beautiful, keep her warm, and help her mature! Women, according to the Lord and His apostle, are to be treasured as people of infinite value, not chattels of marketable value and pieces of equipment subject to depreciation and trade-in value. It is in this area that women are wonderfully upgraded by Christian teaching and principle.” D. Stuart Briscoe, *Let's Get Moving*, pp. 142,143.

LESSON 6

THE CHRISTIAN WALK III

Ephesians 6:10-24

Having concluded exhortations in Ephesians 4-6 on how the believer should “walk,” or “live,” to honor Christ, Paul begins the last section of the epistle with “finally...stand.” Here Paul discusses how the believer must draw on God’s resources to help him stand firm and victorious in the battle against evil in the world around him.

From the beginning, Paul’s letter to the Ephesians has pointed to activity on a cosmic level, in “heavenly realms” (see Note 6, p. 17). Now he describes the spiritual battle that takes place against evil in the unseen world. The imagery is of individual soldiers withstanding attacks, clad with the “armor of God,” the divine means for winning the battle. The resources found in Christ that ready the believer for spiritual battle are:

truth (belt),
righteousness or commitment to justice (breastplate),
peace from the gospel (footgear),
resolute faith (shield),
salvation of God, present and future (helmet),
and the *Word of God* (sword of the Spirit).

The sword of the Spirit is the only offensive as well as defensive weapon in the battle. The armor is received through persistent prayer and staying alert in the battle, praying in the Spirit continually about everything and for believers everywhere.

Paul closes this great epistle with a salutation of blessing on the dearly loved brethren who would read its pages. He writes, “Peace... and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.”

Read Ephesians 6:10-20.

1. What is the only means by which we can withstand the assaults of evil in this world and remain standing afterwards (6:10-11,13)?

Note: *whole* armor. The implication from the Greek word is adequacy or splendor and impressiveness. When we put on this armor of God, we are arrayed in God's magnificence, we radiate His power, and we are filled with His strength.

2. What do we have to remember as we take our stand against evil forces (6:12)?

Note: This struggle is not passive and easily handled, rather a muscle-straining struggle (wrestling) that demands enormous concentration and effort.

Reference: Note 1, *not against flesh and blood*, p. 83.

3. The *belt of truth* (6:14) refers to the clothing of the Messiah prophesied in Isaiah 11:5. This suggests that the character of Christ rather than brute strength wins the battle against evil. What does the belt of truth call for in the believer?

4. a. The *breastplate of righteousness* (6:14) points to upright living and a commitment to justice that Christ produces in the believer. Again, Christlike character is the believer's defense.

What does the breastplate provide the soldier in combat, and what does this imply for the Christian battling evil?

5. a. *Feet fitted with the readiness of the gospel of peace* (6:15). Why is footwear important for the soldier in battle?

b. What does this imply the *gospel of peace* provides in the believer's battle against evil?

Note: *Gospel of peace* here does not refer to being ready to share the gospel, but from the believer's stability or surefootedness from the peace he has found in the gospel.

Reference: Note 2, *the gospel of peace*, p. 84.

6. *The shield of faith* (6:16). What does this term suggest about resolute faith in the Lord?

Note: *extinguish flaming arrows* (6:16). The Roman shield was covered with leather which would be soaked in water to put out fiery arrows.

Reference: Note 1, *the evil one*, p. 83.

7. a. The helmet and sword are the pieces of the Roman armor only taken up for an impending battle. How is the helmet a protection in serious battle?

b. What protects the believer in this way (6:17a)? What is implied here?

8. The sword is the only offensive and defensive piece of armor. Who gives the *sword* to us, and what is it (6:17)?

Note: The Greek for *Word* here denotes utterances given by the Spirit in the heart or preached Word; e.g., Christ in Matthew 4:1-11. This speaks of Christ's presence in our lives--guiding, directing, encouraging.

9. What is Paul's final exhortation in the battle against evil (6:18)?

Read Ephesians 6:19-24.

10. What is Paul's prayer request (6:19-20)?

Note: Paul would soon go to trial before Caesar and wanted boldness to fearlessly explain the phenomenon of the church (2:11-3:11), thought by Romans to be a Jewish cult and by Jews to be a heretical group.

11. What was Paul's benediction upon those who would read his letter (6:23-24)?

BUILDING ON THE BASICS

Winning the War Against Evil

Ephesians begins and ends with the preeminence of Christ, and the love and grace of God for mankind as He fulfills His eternal plan of redemption through His Son. Understanding the truths of the first chapters of Ephesians is the foundation for "standing firm in the Lord" against evil presented at the end of this great work.

Paul has explained that it is through God's grace in Christ that believers receive forgiveness, transformed lives and eternal life with Him who will reign in righteousness forever (1:3-8, 10-14). Also in the cross of Christ, human prejudices are broken down as Jew and Gentile believers of all nations and races form the body of Christ on earth, from which God's goodness and truth is declared throughout the world.

It is also in Christ that we, as individual believers, are brought to life from spiritual death (2:1-5) and become a dwelling place for God by His Spirit (2:22). In Christ, we receive the change from within that allows Christ to live His life through us by His Spirit. He gives us spiritual gifts to build His body, the church (4:7-8), and because He "gave Himself up for us," we can know God as dearly loved children and draw on His power to live a life of love toward others (5:1).

Finally, it is as we allow Christ to produce His character in us that we are able to “stand firm” against powers of darkness and evil in our world. As we allow His truth, His righteousness, His supernatural peace, His faith, the assurance of eternal salvation, and His Spirit’s comfort and direction to dominate our lives, we have the character with which Jesus Himself won the battle with Satan’s evil forces. And Christ promises to be there with us in the battle, welcoming our continual prayers about any and everything (4:15-16) as He continually prays for us (Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25).

Paul ends Ephesians encouraging us to “be strong in the Lord and in His mighty power.” We will conclude our study on *Keys to Triumphant Living* with a review of what it means to “stand firm” in Christ to win the war against evil.

1. a. Where do you see evil in the world today?

b. How does evil touch your life? Why do you have to be armed as a Christian?

2. a. Fighting invisible forces of evil seems impossible, but what does God promise as we wear His armor in the battle for good?

Ephesians 6:13b

b. What are the keys to winning the battle?

Ephesians 6:10,18

3. The parts of the armor of God (6:14-17) are all characteristics of Christ or ways God builds Christ's character in us. What do the following verses say about the facets of the Christian walk that allow us to stand against evil in God's power?

a. Truth (*belt*).

John 18:37 (John 14:6a)

Zechariah 8:16 (Proverbs 12:19)

Verses in parenthesis are optional.

b. Righteousness (*breastplate*).

Romans 3:22

Romans 13:12b, 14

Proverbs 2:7-8, 20

c. Peace (from embracing the gospel; *footwear*).

Romans 5:1

Philippians 4:7 (John 14:27)

d. Faith (*shield*).

John 5:24

Psalms 18:30b,32,35

e. Salvation (*helmet*).

John 3:16 (Ephesians 2:8-9)

Isaiah 12:2-3

f. The Spirit's promptings through the Word of God (*sword*)

Hebrews 4:12 (Psalm 119:105)

Psalm 32:8 (Isaiah 30:21)

g. Prayerfulness and spiritual alertness (6:18).

Philippians 4:6

1 Peter 5:7-9a

4. What does the Lord promise as we stand with Him against evil?

Hebrews 13:5b

Deuteronomy 20:4

Isaiah 52:12b

Zephaniah 3:17

SUMMARY

5. a. What are some situations in which you are called to take a stand on the side of good in your world today?

b. List the facets of Christian living that allow you to stand triumphant against powers of evil in the world around you (Building Question 4).

6. Are there promises about the Lord being with you in the battles that you want to claim at this time in your life (Building Question 5)?

EPHESIANS SUMMARY

7. a. Ephesians 4:13 is considered by many to be the key verse of this book. According to this verse, what is God's desire for His "dearly loved children"?

b. What keys to this triumphant living stand out to you from your study of Ephesians?

LESSON 6 NOTES

1 *not against flesh and blood* (6:12), *the evil one* (6:16). This is a caution against lashing out against human opponents as though they were the real enemy (*NIVSB*, p. 1799).

It also points to the fact that the struggle against satanic forces is not physical (against flesh and blood). It is a spiritual conflict against the spiritual "Mafia." *Rulers and authorities* are categories of rank in these forces, along with *powers of this dark world* and *the spiritual forces of evil* in their sphere of activity, *the heavenly realms*. The purpose of putting on God's armor is to stand against the schemes or strategies of the adversary. Christians are not to attack Satan, or advance against him; they are only to "stand" or hold the territory Christ and His body, the church, have conquered. Without God's armor believers will be defeated by the "schemes" of the devil which have been effective for thousands of years. His effort is to rob believers of the spiritual blessings God has given them (Ephesians 1:3). Walvoord & Zuck, p. 643. See Note 1, Satan, p. 31.

2 *the gospel of peace* (6:15). The following terms describe the peace that comes from embracing the gospel of Jesus Christ. Assurance of these aspects of the gospel ready the believer to stand in the battle against evil.

a. *Reconciliation* means to change a person from enmity to friendship. The Bible says that man is born at enmity with God. Sin erects a barrier between man and God because of a sense of guilt in man. This guilt puts him at odds with God. Reconciliation is the aspect of Christ's death on the cross which removed the barrier of man's sin and its consequences and thus took away the guilt which caused enmity against God. Christ's death on the cross removed every barrier between a holy God and sinful man. Reconciliation is available to all men, no matter how sinful. While reconciliation is available and sufficient for everyone, only those who accept the gift of this reconciliation personally by faith receive it. "Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 5:1). "When we were God's enemies, we were reconciled to Him through the death of His Son" (Romans 5:10).

b. *Justification* is a closely related biblical term which refers to God declaring us "not guilty" and righteous in his sight, even though we are guilty of sin. God is able to do this because of the life and death of Jesus Christ acting as man's substitute. When God declares a person righteous in His sight, He does so on the basis of the life and death of the One who was acting on his behalf. "Jesus our Lord...was delivered over to death for our sins and was raised to life for our justification" (Romans 4:24-25). When we put faith in Jesus Christ to save us from sin, God declares us justified, or not guilty, and righteous. We are justified by the death of Christ which paid the penalty for our sin, and we are justified by the life of Christ whose life of righteousness is also credited to us. This justification, which is all by God's grace and received by faith, brings us into fellowship with God as a child in His family. This is the gospel of peace that makes us stable and surefooted in our battle against evil forces. See also, Note 3, *gospel*, p. 44.

Major Footnote Directory

Lesson	Page	Note	Reference
1	16	1	chose, predestined, elect, election, called
	17	2	“Why did Christ have to die in my place?” a. redemption b. through His blood (1:7)
	18	3	Holy Spirit
	19	6	heavenly realms (1:3,20-22)
2	31	1	Satan
	32	3	Uncircumcision
	33	5-6	Apostles and prophets
3	43	1	The trinity
	44	2	The Holy Spirit.
		3	The gospel
4	57	2	Spiritual gifts (4:7-8)
	58	6	Dead to sin (Ruth Myers quote)
5	69	2	Be filled with the Spirit (5:18)
	70	3	Wives submit (5:22)
	71	4	Husbands love (5:25)
6	83	1	Not against flesh and blood (6:12)
	84	2	The gospel of peace (6:15) a. Reconciliation b. Justification

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KEYS TO TRIUMPHANT LIVING
FOUNDATIONS FOR CHRISTIAN LIVING
FROM THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

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Printed in the United States of America

Sponsored by the ministry of: