

# Excelling Through Ephesians

## Part 1: Chapters 1-3

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### Introduction

Let me start by saying I'm so glad you are interested in the book of Ephesians. Many have entered this book as you are and walked away marveling. Ephesians has rightfully earned nicknames such as "*The Queen of the New Testament Epistles*" and "*The Alps of the New Testament*". As you go along verse by verse you will find it is like counting and admiring each coin in a golden treasure.

The focus of all Scripture is Jesus Christ (John 5:39). The particular theme of Ephesians has to do with Jesus Christ and the Church, which is said to be His Body (1:23), His Building (2:21), and His Bride (5:25). No attempt to understand the Church would be complete without Ephesians. Certainly no understanding of our Lord would be complete either. And without this letter we would find our own progress in the faith encumbered. For this reason, it is my hope in Christ that this study truly helps you to Excel Through Ephesians.

#### About Ephesians

While in prison, Paul wrote this letter to the believer's living in the city of Ephesus. Actually, he wrote four letters while in chains which have become known as his "Prison Letters". They are Colossians, Philippians, Philemon, and Ephesians. Ephesus was located along the Aegean Sea and was a commercial, political, and religious center. The great temple of Artemis (Diana) was there and was a great source of pride for the city (Acts 19:23-41). As a major trading center, it ranked with Alexandria and Antioch. Paul spent about three years ministering in Ephesus while on his third missionary journey. In addition to Paul, the Ephesians had greats like Aquila and Priscilla, Apollos, Timothy and the Apostle John minister to them.

The letter is easily divided into 2 major parts. The first part is chapters 1 through 3 which contains the letter's deep doctrinal teachings. You will discover great insights into such topics as Christ's supremacy, God's grace, the long-hidden mystery of the Church, and more. The second part is chapters 4 through 6 which contains our instructions for living in a way that is "**worthy of [our] calling**" (4:1). The indication is clear: living the Christian life (chapters 4-6) depends very much on learning Christian doctrine (chapters 1-3). Don't dodge the doctrine - I assure you that you will be poorer for it if you do.

#### How This Study Works

This study guide follows an *inductive* approach. To study inductively simply means that you interrogate the passage with your goal being to find the meaning that the author intended. This means we are ultimately trying to figure out what God meant, as He is the Ultimate Author of Scripture (2 Timothy 3:16; 2 Peter 1:21-22). There are 3 steps in the inductive approach.

1. Observation. We ask the question: *What does it say?* Ask the 5 "W"'s and How questions.
2. Interpretation. We ask the question: *What does it mean?*
3. Application. This is where we ask: *What do I do now?* How do I change?

All the questions in this study will be based on these 3 steps.

#### Prayer

Lastly, no Bible study is *complete* without prayer, and, no Bible study is *effective* without prayer either. Start and finish each study by praying to the Father. Ask that His Holy Spirit would help you better

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understand the passage. Perhaps there is something new for you to know or believe. Maybe there is a change needed in your behavior, speech or attitude. If there is something you should do, or, if there is something you need wisdom for, pray the Holy Spirit would illuminate your need. Ask for wisdom to know how to respond to what you are studying.

May our God and Father bless you as you grow in the grace and knowledge of His Son, Jesus Christ.

Yours in the faith,

Pastor Justin Smith

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### Study #1

1. Who is the **author**? Go back through chapter 1 and underline every reference to the author (“I”, “me”, “my”, etc. Do not mark words like “we” or “our” etc.)
2. What do you learn about Paul from the references to himself? Write them down. Go through the rest of the letter and underline every reference Paul makes to himself: “I”, “me”, “my” etc.
3. What are Paul’s **circumstances** as he writes to the Ephesians? (Hint: look at your underlines in 3:1, 13 and 6:20)
4. Knowing that Paul was in prison when writing these letters, write down your impressions of **his attitude**.
5. What does Paul’s attitude teach you about the kind of attitude believers should have in trials?

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### Study #2: Ephesians 1:1, 2

1. *Paul was a real person who wrote a real letter to real people at a real place at a real time in history. It is important therefore to understand the historical **context** of this letter. Go and read Acts 18:18-20:38. Jot down significant events in the early days of the Ephesian church that you notice in those chapters.*
  
2. Read Ephesians 1:1-2; Philippians 1:1-2; Colossians 1:1-2; Philemon 1-2. How are Paul's **introductions** in his prison letters similar to each other? How are they different? (For example, *how does Paul identify himself in each letter? Or, what words are repeated?*)
  
3. A good way to take your study deeper is to do word studies. Take a look at the word "apostle". Use the online resources recommended in the introduction to learn more about this important word\*. Below are some questions to help you get started in your word study:
  - a. What is the Greek word translated as "apostle"?
  - b. What is its definition?
  - c. Is it used in different ways?
  - d. What other passages do you find the word is used?
  
6. Think about your new understanding of what an Apostle was. How does this affect how you treat the writings of an Apostle like Paul?

\*A short explanation is given in the appendix on the author's view of Apostles.

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### Study #3: Ephesians 1:3

1. Read Ephesians 1 all the way through and note how many times the word “praise” occurs.
2. Write down the ways “praise” is used. Who is being praised? For what, specifically?
3. Read verse 3. Who does Paul say we should praise? Why?
4. Read through verse 14 and write down all the “blessings” that God the Father has given us in Christ.
5. Read through chapter 1 again and circle every reference to Jesus Christ. Review each reference to Him and think about what is being said about Him. Write down some things that stand out to you.

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### Study #4: Ephesians 1:3

1. Notice the phrase “***in Christ***”. Read through the whole book of Ephesians and mark every occurrence of the phrase, “***in Christ***” (or variations like “***in Him***”, etc).
  
2. Now that you are seeing yourself “in Christ”, look at Ephesians 2:1. What does Paul say you used to be “in”?
  - a. Take a moment to think about this difference and write down your thoughts.
  
3. As you are thinking about yourself now “in Christ”, write down why this is something you should praise God for. (Note: the Greek word for “praise” is a word that means “to speak well of”, or, “to eulogize”. It’s where we get our English word “eulogy”).

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### Study #5: Ephesians 1:4

1. Fill in the blank from verse 4: “**For He \_\_\_\_\_ us in Him before the creation the world to be \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ in His sight.**”
  - a. According to this verse, what did God *choose* us for?
  
2. Notice that Christians are called “saints” in verse 1. The Greek word for “saint” means *separate*, or *set apart* and is also translated as “holy” in other places.
  - a. What does it mean that you are “set apart” by God? (Look at Eph. 2:1; John 17:14-18; and 1 Cor. 15:19).
  
3. “Blameless” is a word that means *spotless*, or *without blemish*. This is a word associated with sacrifice. Before a lamb could be sacrificed in the OT it had to be examined and found spotless, without any defects. Only a perfect lamb could be offered, not a blemished lamb. If it had any defects it was rejected as unworthy to be offered to God.
  - a. When someone says God will accept them because they are a good person is that true? Can someone be blameless before God by being a good person? Look at Romans 3:10-11, Romans 3:23, Galatians 2:16, and Isaiah 64:6 to help you explain your answer.
  
4. Look at the phrase “in His sight” in verse 4. Whose sight is Paul talking about? What do you think this phrase means? (see also Psalm 19:14).
  
5. If you know that God is the final Judge of your life then how should that affect the way you live your life?

### Study #6: Ephesians 1:5-6

1. What did God predestine for us according to verse 5?

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- a. How does Ephesians 2:19 relate to verse 1:5?
  
2. Look at John 1:11. How do we become a child of God?
  
3. Look at Romans 8:15-17. What type of “spirit” does it say we received (v15)? Also, because we are God’s children it says that we are \_\_\_\_\_ with Christ (v17).
  
4. Why has God done this according to Ephesians 1:6?
  
5. Who is Paul referring to when he says “**the One He loves**”? Who is “**the One**”? (Some translations say “the Beloved”).
  
6. In verse 6, what is freely given to us “in” the One that He loves?
  
7. How do you see your standing before God now in light of verses 4-6? How does God see you? Do you see yourself the same way?

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### Study #7: Ephesians 1:7-8

1. Read Ephesians all the way through. Mark each occurrence of “blood”. Write down what you see is being said.
  
2. In verse 7 what two things does Paul say we have because of the blood of Jesus Christ?
  
3. “Redemption” has to do with making a purchase. Specifically it means giving a payment to buy someone’s freedom. It was common in the Roman Empire to buy and sell slaves in the slave market. It was also possible that someone could buy a slave’s freedom out from the slave market. This is the idea of the word “redemption” that Paul uses.
  - a. Look at Romans 6:18. What were you a slave to?
  
  - b. Look again at Romans 6:18. What are you now a slave to as a Christian?
  
  - c. Look up Revelation 5:9 and 1 Corinthians 6:19b-20. Who owns you? Why does this Person own you according to these verses?

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### Study #8: Ephesians 1:7-8

1. Forgiveness is a word that means “to send away”. Because of Jesus Christ, our sins have been “sent away” from us. When God looks at us, He does not see us in our sins. He does not associate us with sin. He sees us in Christ. He associates us with His Son.
  - a. What does Hebrews 9:22 tell is necessary for God’s forgiveness?
  - b. Whose blood was shed to make God’s forgiveness available (Ephesians 1:7)?
  
2. How many of your sins does God forgive when you put your faith in Christ? (see Colossians 2:13).
  
3. Sometimes people become afraid that they can lose their salvation. Usually it is the commission of sin that raises this issue. But think this out here a moment: if committing a sin can cause someone to lose their salvation that means that God did not forgive that particular sin. But the Bible says He *did* forgive it because He forgave us “**all our sins**” (Col. 2:13). Furthermore, losing salvation would require God to revoke the forgiveness He already gave for all the other sins in your life. This contradicts Biblical teaching on God’s forgiveness. He forgives all our sins permanently. It is not Biblically logical that we can gain salvation apart from works but lose salvation because of them.
  - a. So when you commit a sin after you are saved are you in danger of losing your salvation? Who is doing what when you sin as a Christian (1 John 2:1)?
  - b. Should God’s grace and the security of our salvation motivate us to sin more (Romans 6:1)?
  - c. What would you think of someone if they said they can sin because Jesus is defending them?
  - d. What should you about your sin according to 1 John 1:9?
  - e. What happens when you do what 1 John 1:9 teaches?

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### Study #9: Ephesians 1:7-8

1. Are you really “your own person”? Can you really say “Nobody owns me” and “I am my own man/woman”? Have you been seeing yourself in this way? If so, you need to start seeing yourself as owned by God. He *bought* you at a very high price.
  - a. Look up 1 Peter 1:18 and notice what inferior things God did not use to buy you with. What does Peter say in verse 19 that is more valuable than these things that God used to purchase you?
  
2. Now think again of what He has bought you *out of* and freed you from (see question #3a, 3b, 3c from Study #7). If we were slaves to sin, could anyone ever really say they were/are their “own person”? Can anyone really say, “*Nobody owns me*” and “*I am my own person*”?
  
3. What in your life needs to change with the realization that God is the One who owns you?

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### Study #10: Ephesians 1:9

1. Have you ever wondered what God's will is? Describe a time or times that you wanted to know God's will in your life.
2. Read through chapter 1 all the way through and mark each reference to God's "will". Write down what you learn in each reference. Read through the rest of Ephesians and mark any references to God's "will". Write down what you learn from those passages as well.
3. Looking at verse 9, what is it that God has made known? Who has He made it known to? (Who is Paul referring to when he says "us"? See also 3:5, 8 for help).
4. Still looking at verse 9, who is it that God's will is "purposed in"? Describe in your own words, based on these verses, the plans God has for His Son Jesus Christ.

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### Study #11: Ephesians 1:10

1. According to verse 10, when is God's will going to "be put into effect"? Is that time right now or in the future?
2. What is God's will, according to the last half of verse 10? (See also verses 21-22; Phil. 2:9-11; 1 Cor. 15:24-28; Col. 1:18)

*\*\*\*Sometimes verse 10 is mistakenly thought of as telling us everyone will be saved. But this verse is referring to the universal dominion of Christ, not salvation in Him.*

3. If God's purpose is to bring all things under the authority and headship of Christ, what does that say about God's purpose for you as a Christian? In what ways do you live under Christ's authority now? Write down your answer.
  - a. Are there parts of your life right now that you are not putting under His authority? Write down how these parts of your life would look differently if you were submitting them to Christ's authority (Headship).

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### Study #12: Ephesians 1:11-14

6. The phrase in verse 11, “**we were also chosen**” can also mean, “*we have obtained an inheritance*”, or, “*we have been made an inheritance*”. Both translations are grammatically and theologically true. It is not strange that Paul would talk about inheritance to the Ephesians. During his last meeting with them nearly 10 years before this was an important point he left them with. Go to Acts 20:32 to see what he said. Write down what you learn about your inheritance as a Christian there.
  
7. There are 2 *time phrases* in verses 13 and 14. Time phrases are very helpful when trying to understand the order of events described in the Bible. They help understand questions like “*When did this happen in the past?*” or “*When will this happen in the future?*” First, there is the word “**when**” in v13, which indicates something that occurred in the past. Then there is the word “**until**” in v14, which indicates something about the future.
  
8. When does Paul say they received the Holy Spirit in Ephesians 1:13?
  - a. Where does the Holy Spirit live when someone becomes a Christian? (See also John 14:17; 1 Corinthians 3:16 and 6:19)?
  
9. There is an event in the early days of the Ephesian Church that illustrates this point. Turn to and read Acts 19:1-6.
  - a. Had these 12 disciples of John the Baptist heard yet who Jesus Christ was and what He did on the cross?
  - b. When was the first time they heard it? (It’s obvious in the passage that they believed what they heard from Paul).

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- c. Did they receive the Holy Spirit later on or at the same time they believed?
- d. Consider again what Paul says in Ephesians 1:13 about when the Holy Spirit is received. In light of these two passages, when does someone receive the Holy Spirit?

### Study #13: Ephesians 1:13-14

1. Now that we've understood that someone receives the Holy Spirit at the moment they put their faith in Christ, we must ask another question: *Can someone lose the Holy Spirit after they received Him?* To answer this question, re-read Ephesians 1:14 carefully. How long will the Holy Spirit be inside of us as **“a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance?”**

(the word **“until”** is what helps here. It is also helpful to understand that **“the redemption”** is a reference to a future **“day of redemption”** \*\*see Eph. 4:30. See also John 14:17).

*This is important because it has to do with two controversial issues regarding the Holy Spirit. Some people believe the Holy Spirit is received at a later time after a person has been saved. This is called “subsequence”. The other issue is that some people believe the Holy Spirit can be taken away from a believer. According to verses 13 and 14 both of those views appear wrong.*

2. According to Ephesians 13-14, write down the 2 reasons why the Holy Spirit is given.
  - a. You can refer back to the introduction's recommended online resources and look up the meanings of “seal” and “deposit”.

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### Study #14: Ephesians 1:15-16

1. Read chapter 1 and mark the word “love” everywhere it occurs. This includes variations like “loved” or “loves”, etc.
  
2. What do you learn about “love” in chapter 1? (Hint: who is the object of love in each occurrence, and, who is giving love?)
  
3. Read through the rest of Ephesians and mark the word “love”.
  - a. What else does Paul say about “love”?

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### Study #15: Ephesians 1:15-16

1. In 1:15-16, what 2 things does Paul hear about the Ephesians?
2. How does it affect him to know about their faith and love?
  - a. (Also read Colossians 1:3-5 and 2 Thessalonians 1:3-4. What similarities do you see in all these passages?)
3. Notice in verse 15 he says, “**For this reason**”. This is a Cause-and-Effect phrase. *Cause/effect phrases link what happens in the previous verses as the cause of what happens in the next verses. Looking for cause/effect phrases not only helps us see what is going on in a passage, but, why things are going on.*
  - a. For example, re-read verses 13-14 and notice the things Paul is saying about the believers in Ephesus. Make a list of everything you can pick out he says. These things are the “cause” of what’s going to happen in the following verses.
  - b. Next, read verses 15-16 and write down what Paul did when he found out about how these believers were doing.
  - c. Paul uses the phrase “**For this reason**” at least 2 other times in Ephesians. Find them and write down their references.
4. Think about your own prayer life. What motivates you to pray?
  - a. What kinds of things do you pray for?
  - b. How does Paul’s prayer in chapter 1 help you see how to pray for others?

\*\*\*Take time now to pray and thank God for what you learned!

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### Study #16: Ephesians 1:17-18

1. Read chapter 1 all the way through again and mark every occurrence of the word “know”.
  - a. Notice and mark any other words that might be related to the word *know*.
  - b. Use the recommended online resources in the introduction to look up and find the meaning of the word “know” in the Greek.
2. Look again at Ephesians 1 verses 17, 18 and 19. What 3 things does Paul want the Ephesians to “know”?
3. Turn to chapter 3 and read verses 16-19. Write down any similarities in this prayer by Paul that you notice with his prayer in 1:17-19. (*For example, I noticed that in both prayers Paul mentions “riches”.*)
4. What differences do you notice between these two prayers? Write down any phrases, or words, or requests that appear in one prayer but not in the other. (*For example, I noticed that in 3:17 Paul uses the phrase “so that Christ may dwell in your hearts” but not in his prayer in chapter 1.*)
5. Think about what kinds of things you pray for. Write them down.
6. As you look over the list you’ve made of things that Paul prays for, does his prayer list show you anything you need to add to yours? Write down something you maybe never thought to pray for but will start praying for.

### Study #17: Ephesians 1:17-18

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1. Paul prays in verse 17 that the believers would “**know God better.**” When Paul says “better”, he seems to mean improvement. Paul wants them to improve in knowing God so that the way they know Him today is better than what they knew of Him yesterday. He wants them to progress.
  - a. Do you think a Christian should be showing progress in the faith? Write down your response.
  - b. Then go read the following passages and write down your impressions: Ephesians 4:14-15; 1 Corinthians 3:1-3; Hebrews 5:11-14; 1 Peter 2:2.
  
2. Take some time this week to think about if you have progressed in your faith in the last 2 years.
  - a. Write down the ways you have grown (think of your character, integrity, speech, behavior, things you’ve learned you didn’t know before, good habits and bad, disciplines, etc).
  - b. If you can’t think of anything, think about ways you would like to grow in light of this letter to the Ephesians. Write it down.

Study #18: Ephesians 1:17-18

1. What else does Paul pray for them to know in verse 18?
  
2. You can either read the whole letter, or, use a concordance to find out how many times in Ephesians the word “hope” occurs.
  - a. How many times does it occur?
  
  - b. Look at the way the word is used each time. Write down what you learn about the way Paul speaks of “hope”.
  
3. Notice also that in verse 18 Paul mentions the word inheritance. Compare the inheritance spoken of here with the inheritance in verse 14. Write down any similarities or differences you see.
  
4. Paul says that you will receive an inheritance *from* God and you will also be an inheritance *for* Him. In what ways should these two facts change you as a Christian? (Read John 17:24; Romans 8:17; and 1 John 3:1-3 for more insight).
  - a. How does knowing you will receive an inheritance *from* God affect your thinking and actions?
  
  - b. How does knowing that you will be an inheritance *for* God affect your thinking and actions?

Study #19: Ephesians 1:19-21

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1. Read chapter 1 verses 17-21. Paul is praying the believers in Ephesus would know God's power. According to verse 19, who is that power *for*?
  
2. In verses 20-21, what are the 2 examples of God's power Paul points to?
  
3. When you think about these 2 examples of God's power, does it help you understand God's power better? How?
  
4. Look through the rest of Ephesians and mark each occurrence of the word "power".
  - a. Write down each reference.
  
  - b. What is Paul saying about God's power in each passage? (For example, in 6:10 Paul starts the section on spiritual warfare by talking about God's power).
  
  - c. Think about how you should see God's power at work in your life from these verses. Write down your thoughts.

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### *Study #20: Ephesians 1:22-23*

1. Who does Jesus outrank according to verses 21 and 22?
2. Read Psalm 110:1, Daniel 7:14, 1 Corinthians 15:24-28, and Ephesians 1:10. What do these passages teach you about Christ's authority in the universe?
3. Since God has given Jesus Christ this authority in the universe, how do you think God expects you to respond to His Son? Write down your answer and describe honestly the authority you allow Jesus to have over your life.
4. According to verse 22, what is Christ for the Church? Read Colossians 1:18 to help you understand more of what this means.

Study #21: Ephesians 1:22-23

1. What does verse 23 say the Church is for Jesus?
  
2. Verse 23 says that the Church is “**the fullness of Him who fills everything in every way**”. Paul is talking about the specific relationship between Jesus Christ and His Church. He is the Head and the Church is His Body. Consider two aspects of verse 23:
  - a. “**the fullness of Him**”. Paul is saying that the Church is the fullness of Christ. Fullness is the Greek word, “pleroma”, which means *filled up, replete, or complete*. How might the Church be the fullness of Christ? Read Romans 11:25, 2 Corinthians 1:5 and Colossians 1:24 for help here.
  
  - b. Secondly, Paul says in this verse, “**of Him who fills everything in every way.**” Again, it must be retained that Paul is talking about the relationship between Jesus Christ and the Church. Therefore, it is Christ who fills everything *for the Church* in every way.
    - b.i. Take some time to read through Ephesians and mark every occurrence of the word “*fill*”. Look also for similar words like “*filled*”, “*fills*”, “*fullness*”, etc. After examining each of these write out your understanding of what it means that Jesus *fills* everything for the Church in every way.

Study #22: Ephesians 2:1

1. Take a moment and read chapter 2. What kinds of things do you notice Paul says about their *past*?
2. What does Paul say they *were* in verse 1? What time in their lives is he referring to?

*\*\*\* The word “dead” is the Greek word “nekros”, from which we get our English word “necropsy”. “Nekros” means a dead body. Paul uses the word here to describe their former condition of being spiritually dead before they received life from God (v5). While they may have been alive physically in the past they did not have spiritual life. Death is not extinction or ceasing to exist. Rather death is separation. Physical death is the separation of the person’s soul and spirit from his body. Spiritual death is separation of the person from God.*

3. Read Genesis 2:16-17. What did God command Adam and what was the warning He gave him? What did the serpent say to Eve in 3:4? After they ate from the tree did they die physically immediately?
4. The spiritual death – separation from God – is seen immediately in verses 8-10. How does Adam’s behavior show separation in these verses? The spiritual death occurred immediately, but how long did it take before physical death occurred (see Genesis 5:5)?
5. Think about the relationship of sin and death and write down your thoughts. You may want to read Isaiah 59:2; Romans 5:12; 6:23 and James 1:15 for more insight.

Study #23: Ephesians 2:1

1. Back in Ephesians 2:1 - what does Paul say they were dead in?
  - a. Use the online resources recommended in the introduction to find the definitions of “transgressions” and “sins”.
  
2. What is in your past? What transgressions and sins were you guilty of in your past – and even today? Take some time to make a list. That may seem ridiculous to make a list but it’s not if you realize that God keeps track of our sins (Matthew 12:36-37; Revelation 20:12). To help you, look up the following passages and think about the different sins that come from the old, sinful life. Which ones were you guilty of? (*Romans 1:29-31; 1 Corinthians 6:9-11; Galatians 5:19-21; Ephesians 4:19, 25-31; 5:3-5, 18; 2 Timothy 3:2-5; Titus 3:3*)
  
3. Now that you have thought about your sins and transgressions and made a list of them turn to Ephesians 1:7. What does this verse say about the sins on your list?
  - a. Turn to Colossians 2:13. What does this verse tell you about your sins?
  
4. After doing question #3, take a red pen and draw a big “X” across the whole list. Write the words “Forgiven” and “Cancelled” in big letters and the reference to Ephesians 1:7 and Colossians 2:13.
  
5. Which sins do you still do that you need to stop doing?

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**\*\*\*See appendix for more thoughts on living with the sin nature.**

Study #24: Ephesians 2:2-3

1. Re-read chapter 2. If you were to divide the chapter up into sections how would you do that? It is helpful to think of the author's thoughts here. What is the "flow" of Paul's thinking? Where do his thoughts go to and from in this chapter? (For example, in verses 1-3 Paul focuses his thoughts on the past, sinful life of the believer). Write down how you divided this chapter up.
2. *What* and *Who* did we formerly follow according to verse 2?
3. What 2 names are given to Satan in verse 2? What do these two names tell you about him?
4. Describe the relationship between Satan and the world. (See also, Mt. 4:8-9; 1 John 5:19; John 12:31; Eph. 5:6; Revelation 12:9 and 20:3).
5. In verse 3 Paul says we used to live among "them". Who is he speaking of?
6. What does he say "they" are doing that we used to do as well? (For help, see also 1 Pet. 4:2; Rom. 13:14 and Gal. 5:16)

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### Study #25: Ephesians 2:2-3

1. Look at Ephesians 5:6 and Colossians 3:6. What is coming because of all the sinful acts that come from “gratifying the sinful nature”?
  
2. What does Paul say we were “objects” of?
  - a. How does this describe our relationship with God before we were saved?
  
3. How does your heart respond to the topic of God’s wrath? Do you see yourself as someone who deserved God’s wrath? Does the Bible say you deserved wrath? (See John 3:36 for additional insight)
  
4. It was said in the sermon that “*someone cannot really understand God’s love until they have understood God’s anger towards sin.*” Why would that be true? (It might be helpful to see the article “The Cross is False Advertising” at:  
<http://efcthetaker.blogspot.com/2012/07/response-to-brian-mclaren-cross-is.html>)
  
5. How does it help you see how much God loves you in light of how great His anger is towards sin?

## Excelling Through Ephesians

### Study #26: Ephesians 2:4-7

1. What makes God love you?
  
2. Notice in verse 4 the word “But”. This is a word that indicates a comparison or contrast in the passage. Something being said before this word is being compared to something being said after it.
  - a. What does Paul say about God and us in verse 3?
  
  - b. Now compare that with what he says in verses 4-5.
  
3. As you read verses 4-6 write down the things Paul says God has done for us.
  
4. According to verse 4, why does God do these things for us?
  - a. Then, according to verse 7, why does God do these things for us?

### 31 Excelling Through Ephesians

5. Are you a good person in God's eyes? It would be good to also read Ephesians 2:1-3; Romans 3:10-11; and Mark 10:18.
  
6. Does God know whether you are good or not? (See 1 Cor. 4:5 and Psalm 139:1-4)
  
7. Does He love you even while He knows that you are not good (v4)?
  
8. When someone doesn't meet your expectations how do you typically respond? How does your response compare with God's? Is your love like His?

#### *Study #27: Ephesians 2:8-9*

1. What does it mean to earn something?
  
2. How is getting something you earned different from getting something you didn't earn?

### 32 Excelling Through Ephesians

3. Is your salvation because you earned it or is it because of God's grace (v8-9)?
4. According to verse 7, does God have a lot of grace for you, or, a very limited amount?
5. As you look at verse 7 again, how does God express His grace towards us?
6. Look at verse 7 again, what is God going to put on display and when?
7. While God's grace makes Salvation available, how are we supposed to respond according to verse 8?

\*\*\*See Appendix "Study #28"

#### Study #28: Ephesians 2:10

1. Read verse 10. Do good works come before or after salvation?
2. What kinds of good works do you think you should do in your own life? Read chapters 4-6 and write down some of the good works Christians should be doing.
3. What does verse 10 tell you about God's work, and, what does it tell you about your works?

### 33 Excelling Through Ephesians

4. Have you put your faith in Jesus Christ for salvation? Are you depending on God's grace, or, on your own works? Explain your answer.

*Study #29: Ephesians 2:11-12*

1. What kinds of things do we like to remember as human beings?
2. What does Paul tell the Ephesians to do in verse 11?
3. Who is Paul speaking to? Were they Jews or Gentiles? How do you know?
4. Read both verses and write down everything he says about their former condition as Gentiles.
5. What do you learn about a person who is separate from Christ from this description and the one found in verses 1-3?
6. Why do you think it was good for the Ephesian believers to remember what they were before their salvation?
7. How do you think taking the time to reflect on what you were apart from Christ would be helpful to you now as a Christian? (See Ephesians 4:22-24, 5:8-11, and 2 Peter 1:8-15)
8. Take some time to describe what you were like before you came to Christ in faith. (See John 14:27 and 1 Cor. 11:24-25)

## 35 Excelling Through Ephesians

### Study #30: Ephesians 2:13-15

1. If you're not near to God then you are far from Him. Look at these verses and write down anything that describes people who are not near to God (Matthew 7:23 and 2 Thessalonians 1:9)
2. According to verse 13 how did the Gentile Christians become near to God?
3. What does "the blood of Christ" mean? Why is this important for us to be able to be brought near to God? (See also Colossians 1:20, 22 and Hebrews 10:19-22)
4. Notice verse 14-16. First, what does it say Jesus Christ is? Second, what does it say He has done?

*"Secondly, Paul says Christ abolished the Law. Let's look at this a second. First Jesus fulfills the Law. Therefore, by all rights He does not deserve any penalty the Law gives for breaking it. But, Christ did suffer the penalty of the Law. Christ suffered the penalty for every single one of our sins and transgressions – the sins and transgressions Paul talked about at the beginning of the chapter. In His death, then, every crime against the Law was paid for. Therefore, the Law no longer has claim to anyone who is joined to Christ. The word for "abolished" does not mean to destroy, but, in the Greek it means to render inoperative, or, to make powerless, or, to put it out of commission. Sometimes when I run the weed whacker I run out of cord and the plug is pulled out and the power is cut off. Jesus pulled the plug on the Law. The Law is made to be inactive and powerless in Christ. In other words, Christ shut down the Law. This means that the Law cannot require me to pay any penalty for my violation against the law because I am now in Christ and any penalty for any violation of the Law was paid by Christ for me." –Pastor Justin, Sermon "The New Man", 11/4/12.*



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### Study #32: Ephesians 2:16

1. In verse 16 Paul says, "... **both of them**". Who is "*both of them*"?
2. What is "this one body" referring to? (see verse 15, "one new man")
3. How does the relationship between Jew and Gentile described in verses 15-16 different from the description of their relationship in verses 11-12?
4. According to verse 16, what do both Jew and Gentile have in common when it comes to their relationship with God?

*Study #33: Ephesians 2:16*

1. Who and what is the means by which Jew and Gentile are now reconciled, according to verse 16?
2. Explain how the cross is an instrument of reconciliation between God and man.
3. Explain how the cross is also an instrument of reconciliation between people.
4. Re-read verse 16 and look closely at the role the cross of Jesus plays. How might you see that the cross is the basis of reconciliation with someone in your own life? In other words, how do you see that the cross of Jesus Christ is the reason for you to make every effort to reconcile with someone in your life? Write down your answer.

*Study #34: Ephesians 2:16-17*

1. What was preached according to verse 17?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
2. What does that message mean? (Also see Ephesians 6:15; Romans 5:1; John 14:27; 20:19).
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. Who was this message preached to?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Who are those “far away” and who are those that are “near”? (See 2:11-13)
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
5. Jews felt a great superiority over Gentiles because they were God’s chosen people.
  - a. How do you think a Jew would have felt to realize that Gentiles were offered salvation on the same grounds as a Jew?
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
6. Have you ever felt like there are some people who are too “far away” for God to reach? Is anyone really beyond God’s reach?

*Study #35: Ephesians 2:18*

1. What do we have according to verse 18? (See also John 14:6; 16:23-24)
  
2. What does this access mean for your daily life? (See Hebrews 4:16)
  
3. Notice the Trinity in verse 18. What do you learn about your relationship with the Triune God? What role does each member of the Trinity (Father, Son, Spirit) have in your relationship with God? Does this change your perspective on who you address when you pray? (See also Ephesians 1:17; 3:14)?
  
4. Look at verse 17 and verse 18.
  - a. In verse 17 who comes to who?
  
  - b. In verse 18 who comes to who?
  
  - c. Do you see any relationship between the 2 answers above? (See also 1 John 4:19; Romans 3:11-12; 5:8)

*Study #36: Ephesians 2:19*

1. According to verse 19, what does Paul say that we are no longer? Is he talking to Jews or Gentiles?
  - a. How does verse 12 help you understand this statement more?
  
2. There are 2 things that Paul says are true about believers in this verse. Write down what he says
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
3. What are we citizens of? Turn to Philippians 3:20 and 1 Peter 2:9 for help.
  - a. What was your previous citizenship? (See Ephesians 2:1-3, 12; Colossians 1:13)
  - b. “God’s people” in Ephesians 2:19 is the word “hagios”. It is a word that means “saints”, or, “holy ones” - people set apart by God as holy. Hagios is the same word as “saints” in 1:1 and “holy” in 1:4. We as Christians have a holy citizenship and belong to “a holy nation” (1 Pet. 2:9).
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
  
4. Think about the comments in 3.b for a minute. Think about your citizenship. If this is your citizenship, how does that affect the way you see yourself, your fellow Christians, and your way of life?

Study #37: Ephesians 2:19

1. Paul says also that we members of what?
2. Inside a household there are sons (and daughters) and servants. What is the difference according to John 8:35?
3. Think about Ephesians 1:5. What does it tell you about God's attitude in adopting you into His household?
4. God takes *pleasure* in adopting you. Do you take pleasure in being adopted by Him? How so?
5. Read the following passages and write down what you learn about God's household: Heb. 3:5-6; 1 Tim. 3:15; John 8:35; Eph. 2:20-22.
6. When you realize that you are now a member of God's house forever does it make you feel like you belong? Describe your thoughts.

Study #38: Ephesians 2:20

## 43 Excelling Through Ephesians

1. What is a foundation and why is it important when constructing buildings?
  
2. What does Paul say is the foundation of the Church in Ephesians 2:20?
  - a. Look up 1 Corinthians 3:9-11. Describe how this passage is similar and different than Eph. 2:20
  
3. Read through Ephesians chapter 3 and 4 and note where else the phrase “**apostles and prophets**” occurs.
  - a. Look closely at what Paul says about the apostles and prophets in each occurrence. What do you learn about them in chapter 3 and 4? How does what you learn help you understand what is meant in 2:20 - that they are the “foundation” of the holy temple (the Church)?
  
4. If the apostles and prophets are the foundation of the Church, and Jesus Christ is the cornerstone, what does that make you? (See 1 Peter 2:5 for help)
  
5. Think personally and practically here a minute. In your life, how are you making Jesus Christ the cornerstone of your life? (See Matthew 7:24-27)

*Study #39: Ephesians 2:21-22*

## 44 Excelling Through Ephesians

1. What is “***the whole building***” in verse 21 referring to?
2. According to verse 21, what two (2) things are being done to this building?
3. What does Paul mean when he says “joined together” (v21) and “built together (v22)? (Read also 2:14, 15; 4:3-6, 13, 16 for more help)
4. What is the goal of this building? What is it *becoming*?
5. Do you think there is a relationship between the degree of unity in the church and its ability to grow? Explain your thoughts.
6. Sometimes people say, “*I can be a Christian but not have to go to Church*”. In light of this passage explain why you agree or disagree with this statement. (See also Eph. 4:13, 16 and 1 Cor. 12:12-27 for more insight. Also, see <http://www.efcthetaker.blogspot.com/2014/01/were-all-together.html>)

## Appendix