

SERIES INTRODUCTION

for Connect Group Leaders

SERIES TITLE: EPHESIANS

DATES: SEPT. 10/13-THANKSGIVING

What if the greatest work God is doing isn't around you, but within you? Ephesians reveals God's eternal plan to transform our hearts through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit. As those who belong to Christ, we are invited into a life marked by grace, blessing, hope, and victory, not someday, but beginning now. This series will help us discover how to live in the reality of what God has already accomplished for us.

BACKGROUND:

Paul wrote Ephesians while imprisoned in Rome around A.D. 60-62. Unlike many of his letters, Ephesians was not written to address a specific crisis but to strengthen believers in their understanding of the gospel and God's grand plan for His Church. The city of Ephesus was one of the most influential cities in the Roman Empire, known for its wealth, commerce, and the Temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. For over two years, Paul had an effective missionary presence there and saw many people come to faith in Christ. Paul reminds them that every spiritual blessing has already been secured through Jesus. The first half of the letter focuses on what God has done for us, while the second half shows us how to live in light of those truths. Throughout the letter, Paul continually points believers back to God's grace, the power of the Holy Spirit, and the hope of our future inheritance. (Read Acts ch. 19 to read how Paul came to Ephesus!)

NEED A RESOURCE, HAVE A QUESTION, OR WANT TO HAVE A CONVERSATION?

Let us know how we can help! Contact your groups director or groups@rockbridge.cc

HOW TO PREPARE:

Before gathering with your group each week:

1. Pray that your group would...
 - grow in their understanding of who they are in Christ.
 - develop a greater love for God's Word.
 - become more attentive to the Holy Spirit's work, believe we are victorious, and live out our lives in that expectancy.
 - in increased reverence/appreciation for the divine.
 - encourage one another with grace and truth.
 - apply what they learn throughout the week.
2. Consider watching [The Bible Project's Overview of Ephesians](#) and sending to your group before the series begins. It provides an overview of the book's structure, major themes, and historical context.
3. Spend time reading the upcoming passages several times before your meeting. Ask the Lord to shape your own heart before leading others.
4. Pray Psalm 143:8, 10 over this series:
*"Let me hear in the morning of your steadfast love, for in you I trust.
Make me know the way I should go, for to you I lift up my soul.
Teach me to do your will, for you are my God!
Let your good Spirit lead me on level ground!"*

HOW TO START EACH GROUP:

Taking a few minutes to connect before jumping into discussion helps create an environment where people feel known, valued, and ready to engage.

If You're Leading a New Group:

Break the ice with a couple of simple, no-pressure questions like:

- What is one thing you enjoy doing in your free time?
- If you could instantly become an expert at one skill or hobby, what would it be?
- What's one thing you're looking forward to this week?
- What's one place you've always wanted to visit?
- Share one fun fact that most people in the group probably don't know about you.

If You're Leading an Established Group:

Take a few minutes to catch up before discussing the message.

- How have you seen God at work in your life this week?
- What are you praising God for? What prayers have you seen answered?
- What has been the high point and the challenge of your week?
- Is there anything happening this week that your group can be praying for?
- What has God been teaching you lately?

Transition to the Discussion:

Before opening the guide, help your group reflect on the sermon.

- What was your biggest takeaway from this week's message?
- What challenged, encouraged, or surprised you?
- Was there a point or Scripture that has stayed with you throughout the week?
- Did the message prompt you to think differently about God, yourself, or others?

MEMORY VERSE:

Ephesians 4:1 | *"I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called."*

Spend a little time each week engaging with the verse for this series. Here are some options:

- **Read It Together:** Read the verse aloud as a group at the beginning or end of each meeting. Repetition over several weeks will help the verse become familiar.
- **Fill in the Blank:** Remove a few key words from the verse and invite the group to fill them in together. Add more blanks as the weeks go on.
- **Say It in Your Own Words:** Ask, "How would you explain this verse in your own words?" Then read the actual verse together and discuss what stands out.
- **Connect It to Life:** Ask, "What would it look like to walk in a manner worthy of our calling this week?" Invite a few people to share, then read the verse together as a reminder.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

1. Watch this video on [Encountering God through Scripture](#).
2. Read [this blog from Matt](#) about praying like Ephesians 3:20.
3. [Deeper dive into Ephesians from Bible Project](#).