

Paul's Greeting to the Ephesians Ephesians 1:1-2

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Believers are saints.
2. Believers are recipients of God's grace and peace.

Practical Application

1. We, too, are apostles by the will of God.
2. Do you know God as Father?

Questions

1. Under what circumstances did Paul write this letter?
2. When was the church at Ephesus established?
3. Were other churches established at this same time?
4. What is an encyclical letter?
5. Is Paul writing to two distinct groups of believers - the saints and the faithful?
6. Define the word "saint."
7. Define the word "grace."
8. Are the grace and peace of Ephesians 1:2 the grace and peace of salvation?

Answers

1. Paul was a Roman prisoner under house arrest, awaiting trial before Nero. (See Acts 28:16, 20, 30-31.) Although under arrest, he was able to teach and preach, write letters, and send fellow workers on missions.
2. Probably during Paul's third missionary journey in the mid-50s A.D. Possibly the church was started by Aquila and Priscilla, a husband-and-wife team dedicated to the work of the Lord. (See Acts 18.)
3. Probably the seven churches that we read of in Revelation 2-3.
4. A letter addressed to one church in an area, which would be passed along to all the churches in that area.
5. No. All believers are saints. God sees saints as righteous in Christ, with sins forgiven.
6. In Greek, the word comes from the same root word as "holy," meaning "separated from sin." So all believers are saints or holy ones before God.
7. Grace means undeserved favor. God's inexhaustible reservoir of grace is available to all believers.
8. Yes, but they are also the grace and peace for daily living.

Discuss / Consider

1. Discuss the full meaning of being a saint, both in salvation and in everyday living. Are you fulfilling the meaning of sainthood in your life? What kind of an impact does your sainthood have on other believers? On those who do not know Christ as Savior?

2. Discuss what it means to be a believer, a recipient of God's grace and peace. Are you saved by the grace of God? Do you have peace with God? How do you reflect these qualities in your everyday life?

Challenge

1. Are you an apostle? (An apostle is a believer sent forth by the great commission) Are you doing what God has called you to do?

2. Are you in the family of God? What does it mean to you, personally, to be a child of the heavenly Father? Do you have that personal family relationship with God and with the Lord Jesus Christ?

The Spiritual Blessings that Are Ours in Christ **Ephesians 1:3-6**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Believers are blessed with all spiritual blessings.**
 - a. Our spiritual blessing of election.**

 - b. Our spiritual blessing of sonship.**

Practical Application

- 1. Do you really understand what it means to be accepted in the Beloved?**

Questions

1. All Scripture is the revealed word of God. Where in the New Test do we find the ultimate revelation of the heart and mind of God?

2. What is a doxology? Where is a doxology found in this portion of Scripture?

3. What are the “heavenly realms” of Ephesians 1:3?

4. List two blessings that are guaranteed to the believer by God.

5. What does it mean to be elected by God for salvation?

6. On what basis did God choose certain people to be saved?

7. What is the responsibility of mankind toward God’s elective grace?

8. Is the spiritual blessing of sonship because of what we have done? Is it because of an intrinsic goodness in us?

Answers

1. In the Epistles of Ephesians and Colossians. In Colossians we have the Person and Work of Christ fully revealed; the doctrine of the supremacy and all-sufficiency of Christ is the theme of Colossians. In Ephesians, we have the full revelation of the believer's position in Christ, saved, exalted, and enthroned with Him in the heavenlies.
2. A doxology is a burst of praise. Ephesians 1:3 – believers are blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.
3. It refers not to heaven itself, but rather to the spiritual realm or sphere into which we are brought as a result of our salvation and position in Christ.
4. Our spiritual blessings of election and of sonship.
5. God, in His grace, chose us to forgive us from our sins, and to be holy and blameless in His sphere of love forever.
6. On the basis of His sovereignty, in His grace.
7. To accept the Lord Jesus Christ for your personal salvation.
8. Not at all. It is because of God's good pleasure and will, and to the praise and glory of His grace.

Discuss / Consider

1. Discuss and consider the doctrines: the full sovereignty of God and the full responsibility of mankind.

2. Discuss and consider the spiritual blessing of sonship, including the First Century idea of adoption. How thankful are you for this spiritual blessing?

Challenge

1. Ponder what it means to be accepted in the Beloved (the Lord Jesus Christ Himself). Think what it means that all of our blessings come because God sees us as inseparably linked with His Son. How do you show your thankfulness for this incomparable blessing?

Spiritual Blessings in Christ, Continued
Ephesians 1:7-14

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Believers are blessed with all spiritual blessings.**
 - a. Our spiritual blessing of redemption**

 - b. Our spiritual blessing of forgiveness of sins**

 - c. Our wisdom and insight**

 - d. Our spiritual blessing of an inheritance**

 - e. Our spiritual blessing of the Holy Spirit**

Practical Application

- 1. You can be sure that there are no maverick molecules in this universe.**

Questions

1. Are we promised both physical and spiritual blessings by God?
2. How many spiritual blessings are available to us?
3. Why is it that some believers do not have spiritual blessings?
4. What does redemption imply?
5. What is the price of our redemption?
6. To what do we owe the forgiveness of sins?
7. Who is our seal and pledge?

Answers

1. No. As believers we are not promised physical blessings, but we are promised spiritual blessings.
2. Every spiritual blessing is ours right now by divine right.
3. Because they fail to appreciate and appropriate them.
4. That we were in bondage – slaves to sin and to Satan.
5. The blood of Christ. See Mark 10:45 and 1 Peter 1:18-19.
6. The riches of God's grace.
7. The Holy Spirit. It is He who guarantees our inheritance.

Discuss / Consider

1. List the spiritual blessings of believers as observed in Ephesians 1:4-14. What do these spiritual blessings mean to you personally?

2. Consider what a blessing it is to be taken into God's confidence and to be able to grasp and comprehend His divine purpose.

Challenge

1. God works all things according to the counsel of His will. What is included in the "all things?" What does this say about God's care and concern for His children?

A Prayer for Spiritual Wisdom and Enlightenment Ephesians 1:15-23

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Believers are capable of being spiritually enlightened.

a. Concerning our knowledge

b. Concerning our hope

c. Concerning His inheritance

d. Concerning His power

(1) God's power was demonstrated in the resurrection, ascension and exaltation of Christ

(2) God's power was declared in the headship of Christ over creation and the church

Practical Application

1. Are you a strong Christian, both vertically and horizontally?

Questions

1. Essentially, what was Paul's prayer for the Ephesian believers?
2. The spiritual blessings are contained in three stanzas. What is the refrain that closes each stanza?
3. Which members of the Godhead are included in this doxology, and for what are they praised?
4. What does it mean to be spiritually enlightened concerning knowledge?
5. How is this knowledge gained?
6. What is meant by the hope of His calling? (Ephesians 1:18)

Answers

1. That they would be able to comprehend, appreciate, and appropriate the spiritual blessings listed in Ephesians 1:4-14. It is a prayer for spiritual wisdom and enlightenment in light of these blessings.
2. "To the praise of God's glory." See Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14.
3. All three members are included
 - God the Father is praised for electing us (1:6-12)
 - God the Son is praised for redeeming us (1:13-14)
 - God the Holy Spirit is praised for sealing us (1:13-14)
4. It is not just knowing facts about God, but knowing Him personally.
5. By reading God's word and communicating with Him in prayer. We can pray for a spirit of wisdom and revelation to know God better.
6. It is not just the fact that we are saved forever, but that we will be fully conformed to the image of God's Son and share in His glory forever. It is a certain hope.

Discuss / Consider

1. We are God's purchased possession, and we will actually enhance and display His glory. That is God's inheritance. Discuss both His and our inheritance.

2. Why does God want us to know about His great power? How does He reveal both the magnitude of His power and that it is working on our behalf?

Challenge

1. See Ephesians 1:15-16. What does it mean to be a strong Christian, both vertically and horizontally? Are you strong in both areas?

2. Do you pray like Paul prayed for fellow believers?

All Believers Are Already Enthroned in Heaven
Ephesians 2:1-7

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Believers are in heaven already.

a. We were dead

b. We are alive

c. We are ascended

Practical Application

1. Remember, we are God's "Exhibit A" forever.

Questions

1. What is our spiritual position in Christ according to Ephesians?
2. Can dead people bring themselves back to life? What does this mean spiritually?
3. List the three characteristics of life apart from God.
4. Why did God make us alive?
5. What is the difference between God's grace and His mercy?
6. Is there a waiting period after we die before believers go to heaven?
7. To whom will God display us as trophies of His grace?

Answers

1. We are ascended and enthroned. God sees us in Christ right now. This is our legal standing before a holy and righteous God.
2. Dead people cannot bring themselves back to life. Nor can spiritually dead people do this. God must do all the work to bring us to life.
3. Following the world (2:2), following the devil (2:2), and following the flesh (2:3).
4. Not because of any good in us, but because of His mercy, grace, and love.
5. Mercy emphasizes our great need because of sin. Grace emphasizes our great source of help God Himself. Because of mercy we don't receive what we deserve, namely, the wrath of God. Because of God's grace, we do receive what we don't deserve - all the blessings of heaven.
6. No. We are already seated in heaven - this is our spiritual position, enthroned with Christ. When we die there is no waiting period. We are absent from the body and present with the Lord.
7. To the intelligent universe of people and powers. We will forever be the proof of God's grace.

Discuss / Consider

1. Ponder the point that believers are in heaven already. What does this mean to you eternally? What does this mean to you right now in your everyday living?

2. Consider the three characteristics of life apart from God, and review how you moved from these characteristics to life in Christ. Refer to 1 John 2:16.

Challenge

1. You are God's "Exhibit A" forever. You will be forever the proof of God's grace. Just think of experiencing God's grace forever! Tell your "rags to riches" story to someone today.

A Great Evangelical Summary of the New Testament
Ephesians 2:8-10

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Believers are saved by grace alone.**
 - a. Good works are not the root of salvation**

 - b. Good works are the fruit of salvation.**

Practical Application

- 1. Remember, we are God's masterpiece.**

Questions

1. Review and outline the first seven verses of Ephesians 2.
2. What is the three-fold enemy of the Christian?
3. How does the devil appeal to our fallen sinful natures?
4. What is the good news of Ephesians 2:8-10?
5. "...it is the gift of God..." (Ephesians 2:8). What is the "it"?

Answers

1. Mankind is in a totally helpless condition before salvation:
 - dead in trespasses and sins
 - following the world's system of values and attitudes
 - following the enemy, the devil
 - following our sinful natures, the flesh.
2. The world, the flesh and the devil.
3. By using his satanic world system of values to appeal to our fallen sinful natures.
4. God in His grace rescued us and made us alive in Christ.
5. The "it" refers to God's whole package of salvation.

Discuss / Consider

1. Discuss why is it difficult for some people to understand that you can't mix human works with God's grace, no matter how good the works are. God's grace is not sprinkled with good works. See Titus 3:5.

2. How would you explain to someone that good works follow salvation? (They are not the root but the fruit of salvation). What does James 2 say about good works?

3. What is God's plan for your life? How can you know and follow His plan?

Challenge

1. Do you believe that you are God's masterpiece? Are you living accordingly?

The One True Church, The Body of Christ
Ephesians 2:11-18

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Believers are the body of Christ.
a. The history of the body

b. The formation of the body

1. Now there is no hostility

2. Now there is one new man

3. Now there is reconciliation

4. Now there is access to the Father

Practical Application

1. Let's turn our walls into tables.

Questions

1. Of what two groups was the church at Ephesus composed?

2. How was the great divide between Jews and Gentiles eliminated?

3. What does the wall of separation allude refer to?

4. Where in this portion of Scripture do we find both our past status and our present status?

5. Where in Scripture do we find the basis of the formation of the body? Where do we find the results of the formation?

Answers

1. Believing Jews and believing Gentiles.
2. In Christ. He is our peace.
3. Most likely to the wall in the temple that separated the outer court of the Gentiles from the inner court, which was for Jews only.
4. Past – Ephesians 2:11-12; present – Ephesians 2:13. In the past the Jews referred to themselves with pride as those of the circumcision, and they referred in a derogatory manner to the Gentiles as the uncircumcised. In the past, without Christ, Gentiles were separated from God's chosen people, they had no covenant promises from God, they were without hope and without God. But now they are in Christ Jesus, brought near by the blood of Christ.
5. The basis of the union is found in Ephesians 2:14; the results in 2:15-18. He is our peace and we, both Jews and Gentiles, are made one in Christ Himself.

Discuss / Consider

1. Discuss the beginning of the Church. What is the Church?

2. What does it mean to you to have access to the Father?

Challenge

1. The wall of separation has been replaced by the table of peace in Christ. How does this apply to you?

The Church is the Temple of the Holy Spirit
Ephesians 2:19-22

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Believers are citizens of heaven**
- 2. Believers are members of God's family**
- 3. Believers are the temple of the Holy Spirit**
 - a. The foundations of the temple**
 - b. The cornerstone of the temple**
 - c. The architect of the temple**
 - d. The materials of the temple**
 - e. The purpose of the temple**

Practical Application

- 1. Let's not make noise in the temple area.**

Questions

1. How would the Ephesian believers know about temples?
2. How does Acts 19:23-28 relate to the temple of Diana?
3. What is the living structure built by God Himself of which Paul writes?
4. On what is the foundational teaching of the Church based?
5. Who is the architect of the temple of believers?
6. What are the materials of this temple?

Answers

1. Many of the Jewish believers would have seen Herod's Temple in Jerusalem, and both Jewish and Gentile believers would have known of the great temple in Ephesus dedicated to the pagan goddess Diana.
2. The merchants made and sold silver models of Diana in this temple.
3. It is the Church, the body of believers.
4. The apostles and the prophets of the New Testament. See 1 Corinthians 12:28 and Ephesians 3:5.
5. God Himself, who fits the whole building together according to plan in relationship to the Cornerstone.
6. All believers who form the one true Church.

Discuss / Consider

1. Read Ephesians 2:19 and Philippians 3:20. Consider the fact that you are no longer a stranger, or an alien, but a fellow citizen with all the saints. What does this mean to you, both positionally and practically?

2. God Himself is the architect, Christ is the Cornerstone, and believers are the building blocks of the living temple of the Holy Spirit. How do you fit into this temple?

Challenge

1. In Jerusalem, the temple was not a place for noise or commercialism. Beware disrupting the church in any way.

The Church, in God's Eternal Program and Purpose **Ephesians 3:1-13**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Believers are an essential part of God's eternal program.**
 - a. The revelation of God's eternal program**

 - b. The proclamation of God's eternal program**

- 2. Believers are an essential part of God's eternal purpose.**
 - a. Angels and God's eternal purpose**

 - b. Human beings and God's eternal purpose**

Practical Application

- 1. Let's have the same view of prison as Paul had.**

Questions

1. Review the broad outline of Ephesians.

2. What is the great theme of the letter to the Ephesians?

3. What is God's eternal program?

4. What is a "mystery" in the Bible?

5. What is the mystery in Ephesians 3:6?

6. Who are the principalities and powers of Ephesians 3:10-11?

Answers

1. Chapters 1-3 are mostly doctrinal in nature. Chapters 4-6 are practical, based on that doctrine.
2. The Church as the body of Christ.
3. God has put everything under the dominion of Christ and has given Him to be head over all things to the church.
4. A mystery is a truth concealed in the Old Testament and revealed in the New Testament.
5. That Gentiles should be fellow-heirs with the Jews, becoming one body in the Messiah.
6. Good angels and bad angels.

Discuss / Consider

1. Paul was given the primary responsibility for the proclamation of God's eternal program (3:7-9). It had a humbling effect on Paul, and it should be true in our lives, as well. Paul was given the power, and the Lord will give us the power to do the job He has called us to do. Do you believe this? Do you act on it?

2. What have the angels observed and learned about God from your life? What have they observed and learned this past week?

Challenge

1. Paul was a prisoner of Rome when he wrote to the Ephesians, but he did not consider himself a prisoner of Rome or of Nero, or of circumstances, but of Jesus Christ. Do you see yourself as a victim of circumstances or a prisoner of Christ?

Paul's Prayer for the Ephesians **Ephesians 3:14-21**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Believers are capable of being spiritually strengthened.**
 - a. The source of spiritual strengthening**

 - b. The results of spiritual strengthening**
 - 1) greater fellowship**

 - 2) greater love**

 - 3) greater comprehension**

 - 4) greater knowledge**

 - 5) greater filling**

 - 6) greater power**

 - 7) greater praise**

Practical Application

- 1. Are you a spiritually strengthened Christian, or still a weak Christian?**

Questions

1. The three chapters of doctrine begin and end with a doxology (1:3 and 3:20-21). What is a doxology?
2. Between these two doxologies a great truth is revealed. What is this truth?
3. What is the primary theme of Paul's prayer for the Ephesian believers (and God's prayer for us, as well)?
4. What is the primary source of spiritual strengthening?
5. What is the inner man?

Answers

1. An expression of praise to God.
2. That the Jews and Gentiles are one in Christ.
3. That they (and we) would be spiritually strengthened for their participation in God's eternal program and purpose.
4. God, the Father.
5. The spiritual part of us that is now alive in Christ.

Discuss / Consider

1. Discuss / consider each of the results of spiritual strengthening. Personalize each of these results in your life.

2. Do you pray for fellow believers like Paul prayed?

Challenge

1. Are you a spiritually strengthened Christian? Go through the results as a check list.

Keep the Unity of the Spirit in the Bond of Peace
Ephesians 4:1-6

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Believers should keep the unity of the Spirit in peace.**
 - a. An appeal for Christian unity**

- b. The basis for Christian unity**

Practical Application

- 1. Remember, unity is not uniformity.**

Questions

1. The word “walk” is used seven times in Ephesians. What does walk mean in this context?
2. As believers, are we exhorted to keep the unity of the body? Are we exhorted to keep the unity of the Spirit?
3. How can believers keep the unity of the Spirit?
4. List the four graces of Ephesians 4:2.
5. What is the seven-fold oneness in the unity of the body of Christ?
6. Which Persons of the Trinity are mentioned in Ephesians 4:4-6?

Answers

1. Walk has to do with our conduct or way of life, which should be godly in view of our calling.
2. We are not exhorted to keep the unity of the body, because we are already brought into the body of Christ by the Lord Himself. We are, however, exhorted to keep the unity of the Spirit.
3. With all lowliness in humility and gentleness. That is the quality that comes from a mind and spirit kept under control.
4. Lowliness, gentleness, longsuffering, and love.
5. One body, one Spirit, one hope of your calling, one Lord, one faith, one baptism and one God and Father.
6. God the Father (4:6), the Son (4:5) and the Holy Spirit (4:4)

Discuss / Consider

1. Review Ephesians 4:4-6 as three concentric circles or spheres. List these spheres and discuss how all three are needed for Christian unity. How do these spheres impact your life?

2. Review the four graces of Ephesians 4:2. Are you practicing these graces daily in your life?

Challenge

1. Unity is not uniformity. Do you recognize the oneness of the body? How do you deal with differences? Take, for example, the area of Christian music.

Spiritual Gifts
Ephesians 4:7-16

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Believers should recognize and use their spiritual gifts in love.**
 - a. the Giver of the gifts**

 - b. the diversity of the gifts**

 - c. the function of the gifts**

 - d. the goal of the gifts**

 - e. the results of the gifts**

 - f. the success of the gifts**

Practical Application

- 1. Are you still an unopened gift?**

Questions

1. What are the four New Testament passages on spiritual gifts?

2. Is there a difference between spiritual gifts and spiritual blessings?

3. Read 1 Peter 4:10 and Ephesians 4:7. Does every Christian have at least one spiritual gift?

4. Does a Christian have any excuse for not using his spiritual gifts?

5. Who gives the gifts? Who recognizes the gifts?

6. Are the gifts of apostles and prophets given today?

7. What is the function of the gifts?

**Let's Put Off the "Old Man" and Put On the "New Man"
Ephesians 4:17-24**

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Believers should put off the old man and put on the new man.

a. Characteristics of the old man

- 1) the old man is living a futile life**

- 2) the old man is ignorant of the truth**

- 3) the old man is separated from the life of God**

- 4) the old man is never satisfied**

- 5) the old man is not like Christ**

b. Characteristics of the new man

- 1) the new man is created by God**

- 2) the new man is renewed in mind**

Practical Application

- 1. Let's be what we are.**

Questions

1. Outline Ephesians 1-3 and Ephesians 4-6.

2. Summarize the exhortations in Ephesians 4:1-6, 4:7-16, and 4:17-24.

3. Define the "old man." What is the primary characteristic of the "old man"?

4. Define the "new man." What is the primary characteristic of the "new man"?

Answers

- Ephesians 1-3 – doctrine
•Ephesians 4-6 – application (exhortations for believers based on the teaching of the first half of the letter)
- Ephesians 4:1-6 – an exhortation to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace
•Ephesians 4:7-16 - an exhortation to recognize and use our spiritual gifts
•Ephesians 4:17-24 - an exhortation to put off the old man and put on the new man.
- The old man is all that a person is apart from Christ - dead in sin, separated from God, not able to please God, characterized by the old nature, the sinful nature of people by birth. It is every human being apart from Christ. It is what characterizes someone before salvation.
- The new man is all that a person is in Christ - a new nature, sinless, partaker of the divine nature, housing the Holy Spirit. It is all that believers are in Christ.

Discuss / Consider

- Review the characteristics of the old man – he is living a futile life, he is ignorant of the truth, he is separated from the life of God, he is never satisfied, and he is not like Christ. Recall your days as an “old man.”
- Review the characteristics of the new man – he is created by God in true righteousness and holiness, and he is renewed in mind, loving the word of God. Contrast your former days as an “old man” with your current days as a “new man.”

Challenge

- “Be not conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” Romans 12:2 The old man has been crucified with Christ. The new man has divine life. Be what you are.

Examples of Putting Off the “Old Man” and Putting On the “New Man” Ephesians 4:25-32

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Believers should have a changed life-style**
 - a. Believers should tell the truth and not lie.**

 - b. Believers should be angry and not sin.**

 - c. Believers should share and not steal.**

 - d. Believers should speak helpful words and not hurtful words.**

 - e. Believers should practice supernatural virtues and not natural vices.**

Practical Application

- 1. Is your life a Bible or a libel?**

Questions

1. List the five examples in this passage of Scripture that evidence the changed lifestyle of a believer.
2. What is happening to standards of truth today?
3. When is anger not a sin? What is the caution? How should you deal with anger?
4. Is it right to take tools or office materials from the job, or time from your employer?
5. How does one put away the natural vices?

Answers

1. Believers should:
 - a) tell the truth and not lie
 - b) be angry and not sin
 - c) share and not steal
 - d) speak helpful words and not hurtful words
 - e) practice supernatural virtues and not natural vices.
2. Standards are being lowered and truth is being redefined. Most people would say there is no absolute standard of truth.
3. When we hear blasphemy and see blatant sin. But we must be careful that our righteous anger does not become sin, resulting in bitterness or revenge. Anger should be checked and controlled.
4. No. Believers should have a higher standard.
5. By taking definite action to put them away; it's not automatic.

Discuss / Consider

1. Read John 2:13-16 concerning the money changers in the temple and Mark 3:1-6 concerning the hardness of hearts. Consider these passages in light of doctrinal point #2 – Believers should be angry and not sin. Recall how you have dealt with your anger in specific situations. First, was it righteous anger? Secondly, was it controlled? Thirdly, what were the results?

2. Read Matthew 12:36. What is included in hurtful words? Are you concerned about grieving the Holy Spirit because of careless or hurtful words? Give examples of helpful words that have been directed toward you. Give examples of helpful words you have used as you speak to others.

Challenge

1. Is your life a Bible or a libel? Is your life lived to bring honor to the name of Christ? Do people see Christ living in you? Do you reflect the values, attitudes and commands of Scripture?

Walk in Love and Light
Ephesians 5:1-17

Background

Doctrinal Points

1. Believers should walk in love.

a. Imitate God

b. Sacrifice self

2. Believers should walk in light.

a. Practice purity

b. Walk wisely

Practical Application

1. You, too, can know the will of God for your life.

Questions

1. As believers, one in the Spirit constituting the body of Christ, what are we to keep?

2. According to this section of Scripture, how are believers to walk?

3. What is the fruit of light contrasted to?

4. How do believers expose the shameful works of darkness done in secret?

5. Beyond exposing evil, how should Christians live?

6. How does a believer redeem the time?

Answers

1. The unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
2. In love and in light.
3. The works of darkness. Refer to Galatians 5:22-23 contrasting the fruit of the Spirit and the works of the flesh.
4. By living a life of purity and walking in the light. Then what is sinful and shameful is automatically exposed.
5. By not being linked to evil, or even the appearance of evil.
6. By using every opportunity to serve the Lord.

Discuss / Consider

1. Review the principle – Believers should walk in love. How do you walk in love? (Give practical examples from life). How do you sacrifice self? (Give practical examples).

2. Review the principle – Believers should walk in the light. How do you walk in light? What are your standards for purity? Do you exhibit the fruit of the Spirit in your everyday life? How do you expose the evil that you see around you?

Challenge

1. How can you know the will of God for your life? Do you know the will of God for your life?

Believers Should be Filled with the Spirit
Ephesians 5:18-21

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Believers should be filled with the Spirit.**
 - a. The Spirit-filled believer sings spiritual songs**

 - b. The Spirit-filled believer gives thanks for all things**

 - c. The Spirit-filled believer submits to authority structures**

Practical Application

- 1. Are you a Spirit-filled Christian?**

Questions

1. What does it mean to be filled of the Spirit mean?

2. What is the filling of the Spirit not?

3. Where are we commanded to be filled with the Holy Spirit?

4. Is every Christian indwelt by the Holy Spirit?

5. List the characteristics of the Spirit-filled believer.

Answers

1. It means to be under the influence and control of the Holy Spirit.
2. It is not the baptism of the Spirit, which took place at Pentecost. It is not the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, which took place at the moment of conversion.
3. We are commanded in Ephesians 5:18 to be filled with the Spirit, to be under the influence and control of the Holy Spirit. Note the comparison of being filled with wine in Ephesians 5:18.
4. Yes. See Ephesians 1:13 and 1 Corinthians 6:19.
5. The Spirit-filled believer sings spiritual songs, gives thanks for all things, and submits to authority structures.

Discuss / Consider

1. The Spirit-filled believer sings spiritual songs. Re-read Ephesians 5:19. See Colossians 3:16. Are you a singing Christian? Even in difficult circumstances? See Acts 16:22-25.

2. The Spirit-filled believer gives thanks for all things. Is this characteristic of your life?

3. The Spirit-filled believer submits to authority structures. Do you believe and act upon this doctrine? In all phases of your life?

Challenge

1. Are you a Christian? Have you accepted Jesus Christ as your personal Savior? If so, are you a Spirit-filled Christian? Do you meet the three characteristics listed in this lesson?

The Relationships and Responsibilities of Husbands and Wives **Ephesians 5:22-33**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Believers should submit to one another.**
 - a. Wives should respect their husbands**

- b. Husbands should love their wives**

Practical Application

- 1. Let's follow the golden rule of marriage.**

Questions

1. Review. What does it mean to be Spirit-filled?
2. The Bible teaches believers to submit to an authority, does it mean the one submitting is inferior or unequal?
3. Explain what it means in Ephesians 5:22, "...as to the Lord."
4. Does "...as to the Lord" mean that the wife should obey her husband instead of the Lord?
5. What should the relationship between the husband and the wife reflect?

Answers

1. It is to be under the influence and control of the Holy Spirit, and to exhibit the three characteristics listed in the last lesson.
2. No. Subordination does not mean inferiority. Remember, the Lord Jesus was subject to the Heavenly Father (1 Corinthians 11:3), but He was in no way inferior or unequal.
3. It implies recognition of the authority structure set up for the home, as Christ is the head of the church. When the wife submits to the husband, she is doing it as to the Lord because He, not society, has ordained this authority structure.
4. No. When there is a conflict, she should obey the Lord's higher command.
5. The love relationship between Christ and His bride, the Church.

Discuss / Consider

1. Submission to one another, in almost any realm of society today, is not a popular teaching. But it is what the Bible teaches. Discuss submission in various realms, including the home, the church and the workplace. How would you lovingly yet forcefully teach this? (Select one of the realms).

2. Re-read Ephesians 5:25-27, and review the past, present and future aspects of the Lord's love for the church. In light of this portion of Scripture, husbands, discuss your role and responsibility to your wife. Wives, discuss your role and responsibility to your husbands.

Challenge

1. Husbands, re-read the golden rule of marriage (Ephesians 5:28). Are you so loving your wife (Ephesians 5:33)? In light of 1 Peter 3:7, are your prayers being hindered?

Instructions for Children, Parents, Slaves and Masters
Ephesians 6:1-9

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Believers should submit to one another.**
 - a. Children should obey and honor their parents**

 - b. Parents should discipline and instruct their children**

 - c. Slaves should serve and obey their masters**

 - d. Masters should serve and care for their slaves**

Practical Application

- 1. How do you work when the boss isn't watching?**

Questions

1. Why are slaves and masters mentioned?

2. Why didn't Paul just give a command to release the slaves and abolish slavery?

3. Who is included in the term, "children," in Ephesians 6:1?

4. Why were the children addressed directly in this letter?

5. Does Ephesians 6:3 mean that a godly teenager will not die young?

6. What is likely to happen when a child does not learn to respect authority?

Answers

1. Because they were part of the first century home in the Roman Empire. The principles for slaves and masters can be applied today to Christian employers and employees.
2. Slavery is neither condemned nor condoned in the New Testament as a social institution. However, if the principles of New Testament teaching are followed, slavery would not be practiced for long, and indeed, this is what led to the abolition of slavery.
3. More than pre-schoolers, even teenagers are included in this term.
4. It was assumed that they would be present in the church where it was read.
5. Not necessarily. It means that learning to submit to authority in the home and honoring your parents is a principle that tends for long life. See Proverbs 10:27.
6. They are apt to have psychological and physiological problems that tend for a shortened life span.

Discuss / Consider

1. Consider how parents should discipline and instruct their children. These ways are by not provoking them to wrath by nitpicking and nagging. Parents should be reasonable and consistent, not using undue harshness. Avoid breaking their spirit. Parents should discipline and instruct their children, bringing them up in the training and admonition of the Lord. List some well-defined rules and practices that have worked in your home.

2. Slaves were to recognize the authority structure and be subordinate to their masters. How does this apply to today's work structure? If you are an employer, how can you apply this portion of Scripture to the treatment of your employees?

Challenge

1. How do you work when the boss isn't watching? Apply Ephesians 6:6 to your work situation.

**Believers are to Put On the Whole Armor of God
Ephesians 6:10-17**

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Believers should put on the whole armor of God.**
 - a. The purpose of the armor**

- b. The pieces of the armor**

Practical Application

- 1. Let's memorize more Scripture.**

Questions

1. Why was there no armor listed for the back?
2. According to James 4:7, what will happen when you resist the devil?
3. What is the purpose of the armor?
4. What is the good news / bad news concerning spiritual warfare?
5. List the pieces of the armor.

Answers

1. A Christian is not to run away scared and capitulate to the enemy, but stand and resist and fight the good fight.
2. He will flee from you.
3. That you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. You are to stand and fight and be victorious in spiritual warfare.
4. Good news – Satan cannot take away our salvation, and we never have to be defeated if we put on the whole armor of God. Bad news – We don't always put on the whole armor of God, and Satan sees and attacks where we are vulnerable, defeating us in spiritual warfare.
5. The belt of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, the sandals of the preparation of the gospel, the shield of faith, the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the spirit.

Discuss / Consider

1. Satan and his fallen angels and demons are referred to as the principalities and powers and rulers of the darkness of this age, and spiritual hosts of wickedness in heavenly places. These forces of Satan are using every trick to try and defeat us. How can we be victorious in this spiritual warfare?

2. Go deeper into the intent and meaning of each of the pieces of armor.

Challenge

1. Do you have some kind of Scripture memorization program going on in your life right now? The Holy Spirit cannot bring Scriptures to your mind to use in spiritual battle unless you know them. The Lord in His temptation in the wilderness quoted three times from the book of Deuteronomy.

Final Instructions about Prayer

Ephesians 6:18-24

Background

Doctrinal Points

- 1. Believers should pray at all times.**
 - a. Pray for the needs of the saints**

 - b. Pray for the proclamation of the gospel**

Practical Application

- 1. Are we content to only deliver the mail?**

Questions

1. Why does Paul refer to himself as an ambassador in chains?

2. Is prayer an option for believers?

3. What does it mean to pray at all times? See also 1 Thessalonians 5:17.

4. What does it mean to pray with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit? See also 1 Thessalonians 5:18.

5. How should we pray for the needs of the saints?

Answers

1. He was literally chained to a guard while he wrote this letter from his own rented house (Acts 28:16, 30-31). He was under house arrest while he awaited his trial in Rome, but he did not let this situation hold him back. He considered himself an ambassador for the Lord in chains, witnessing to the guards, preaching to all who came to the house, mobilizing a team of fellow workers, and writing letters to encourage Christians in the faith.
2. No. It is an exhortation, not an option. In view of the context here, it could be considered another piece of the spiritual armor.
3. It means being in an attitude of prayer and ready to pray at all times; it means to be watchful, with perseverance.
4. It means to be involved in more than just formal prayer. We are to be sensitive to the Holy Spirit's guidance as to the content of our prayers in public and in private.
5. We are to pray not just for physical needs, but for their spiritual needs. Remember, we are involved in spiritual warfare.

Discuss / Consider

1. Read Philippians 1:9-11, Ephesians 1:15-21, Ephesians 3:14-21, and Colossians 1:9-12. This is a great way to pray for your unsaved friends. Pray that someone (maybe yourself!) will have boldness to preach the gospel to them.

2. Paul requests prayer for boldness to proclaim the gospel (6:19-20). Do you pray for boldness to proclaim the gospel?

Challenge

1. Ask yourself, "Am I content to only deliver the mail?" Tychicus was a mailman – a faithful mailman and he was content to be a mailman. Are you content to take a behind-the-scenes role? Every role is important in the sight of God.