

STUDY 1 – EPHESIANS 1:1-14

We recommend and have quoted John Stott's commentary from the Bible Speaks Today series.

1. Summarize this passage in several points, highlighting the main themes.
2. What do we learn about the author and the recipients of this letter from vv1-2?
3. We are told in v.3 that, "God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ" (NIV). What do you think is meant here by 'spiritual blessing'?
4. In this great hymn of praise vv3-14, Paul unfolds what he means by Spiritual blessing. What do we learn? By what means do we receive God's blessings? (v.11-14)

STUDY 2 – EPHESIANS 1:15-23

1. Summarize this passage in several points, highlighting the main themes.
2. ‘For a healthy Christian life today it is of the utmost importance to follow Paul’s example and keep Christian praise and Christian prayer together.’ (Stott) Why is this the case? Which do you think you tend to over emphasize?
3. What is the reason for Paul’s prayer and what is the first thing he does in his prayer?
4. What does Paul ask God for in v.17-18? What reasons does he give for asking for this?(18-19)

4. *'...because...'* v4, v8-10

- How has this transformation from spiritual 'rags to riches' taken place? What should their/our response be?

5. What prompted God to show such grace and mercy towards us? (2:4-5, 7)

6. How does Paul reinforce the point that we cannot earn our own salvation?

7. What do we learn God has recreated us for? (2:10) What do you think Paul means by good works in this context? (notice Paul's use of the verb 'walk' ...in some translations it is the word 'live')

8. In a sentence or two, what would you say is the main point of this passage?

STUDY 4 – EPHESIANS 2:11-22

1. Summarize this passage in several points, highlighting the main themes.

In this section Paul concentrates on the reconciliation of Gentiles and Jews, with implications for the reconciliation of all believers with each other. Let's look at this passage in the same way as the last.

2. ***'You were...'*** v11-12

- What was the previous state of the Gentiles?

- What is the significance of them being 'strangers to the covenant of promise'?

3. ***'...but now you are...'*** v13-22

- How are the Ephesians described now, in terms of their reconciliation to both God and their Jewish brothers and sisters?

- How does this apply to us?

STUDY 5 – EPHESIANS 3:1-13

1. Summarize this passage in several points, highlighting the main themes.

2. Paul turns now to his own special role in God's purpose for the Gentiles. To try and understand the meaning of 'mystery', which he mentions a number of times, list the things we learn about it in this passage.

v.3

v.4-5

v.6

v.9

Gathering what we learn here, what do you think Paul means by the phrase 'mystery' in this chapter?

3. How does Paul describe himself in these verses?

4. Paul mentions 'grace' at several points. What do we learn about grace in this section?

5. What does Paul mean by 'the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms'? (See also Ch. 1:21, 3:10) What is their relationship to Christ?

6. What do we learn is God's purpose for His church? (v.10-12)

7. How does Paul's view of the church and its place in God's plan challenge your view?

8. In this passage, what does perspective does Paul have on his suffering?

9. In a sentence or two, what would you say is the main point of this passage?

STUDY 6 – EPHESIANS 3:14-21

1. Summarize this passage in several points, highlighting the main themes.
2. In this second prayer, what does Paul pray for the Ephesians in verses 14-21?
3. Paul starts by saying, 'For this reason' (v.14). What 'reason' do you think he means? Why, in the light of this, do you think he asks particularly for the things he does?
4. What similarities do you see between this prayer and the prayer in Ch. 1:15-23?

STUDY 7 – EPHESIANS 4:1-16

1. Summarize this passage in several points, highlighting the main themes.

Paul has been unfolding the eternal purposes of God being worked out in history, through Jesus Christ. He now moves from God's new society to the new life that he has called us to.

2. What has Paul revealed is the calling (chapters 1-3) we have received?
3. What do we learn is a life worthy of that calling? (v. 1-3) (notice Paul's link back to the word 'walk' used earlier, in 2:10)
4. What have we learnt about the church in chapters 1-3 that explains Paul's focus on the church in verses 1-16?

STUDY 8 – EPHESIANS 4:17 - 32

1. Summarize this passage in several points, highlighting the main themes.

Paul continues to expand on what type of lifestyle is worthy of the calling we have received. Now the focus falls onto personal godliness. Notice again the use of the word 'walk' in 4:17. (and 5:2)

2. Trace the downward path of evil in verses 17-19.

3. What does Paul say we should discard? What should we be putting on? What is at the heart of this transformation? (v.20-24)

4. Paul now gives five instances of how Christian holiness works out in practice.

Put off

Put on

Why

v. 25

v.26-27

v.28

v.29-30

v.31-32

STUDY 9 – EPHESIANS 5:1-21

1. Summarize this passage in several points, highlighting the main themes.

In Chapter 5 Paul moves on to give reasons to help motivate his readers to live as those who belong to God's new society.

2. What further motivation does Paul give for the new life that God calls us to in verses 1-3?
3. What further motivations do we see in v. 5-7? Why should v.5 'not be understood as teaching that even a single immoral thought, word or deed is enough to disqualify us from heaven'? (Stott)
4. Paul writes in v.6 that the Ephesians should not be deceived about sexual immorality. In what ways is our society deceived when it comes to sex?

5. What does Paul's use of the imagery of light and darkness (v. 8-14) teach us about living as Christians? How is it a motivation?

6. What characterizes those who are wise? (v.15-20)

7. What do you think Paul means in verse 16?

8. Paul lists four results of being filled with the Spirit in v.18-21. What are they?

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9. In a sentence or two, what would you say is the main point of this passage?

STUDY 10 – EPHESIANS 5:22 – 6:9

1. Summarize this passage in several points, highlighting the main themes.

From looking at the new standards that God expects of his church, Paul moves on now to consider some of the other relationships in which God's people are involved.

2. What do we learn in 5:21 was part of the new life God calls us all to?
3. What does Paul instruct wives particularly to do in 5:22-24? What do you think this means here?
4. In order to understand the nature of the husband's headship in marriage, Paul directs us to Jesus. What do we learn from Christ's modeling of headship in 5:23-29?
5. How is Christian marriage meant to reflect Christ's relationship with the church?

STUDY 11 – EPHESIANS 6:10-24

1. Summarize this passage in several points, highlighting the main themes.

Paul turns finally to the challenges and opposition that Christians will face. He makes sure his readers are under no illusions about the reality and seriousness of the forces of evil.

2. Why would Paul move from local and domestic issues in the last two chapters to the cosmic perspective found in these verses?

3. Why do you think the powers of darkness want to wage war on us? (see also Eph. 3:10 and Col. 2:13-15) What does Paul tell us about them? (v. 10-12)

4. Who, does v.10 and v.13 remind us, is the source of all our strength and protection? What have we learned in Ephesians, about God, that helps us to trust him in the Spiritual battle?

5. List the six pieces of armour and what each one signifies. (v.14-17)

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6. What weapons of the devil do they protect us against?

7. Prayer is to pervade all our spiritual warfare. Why? (v.12, 18-20)

8. What does Paul pray for in v.18-20?

9. Have a good look at Paul's final prayer and greeting. (v.18-24) How does what he asks for summarize the message of the whole letter?