

AN INTRODUCTION

Take time to share your best and worst moments since we last met.

I want you to think about a wedding. It may be yours. It may be someone else's.

What memories stand out for you? Why do you think that is?



“He [Jesus] died so he could give the church to himself like a bride in all her beauty. He died so that the church could be pure and without fault, with no evil or sin or any other wrong thing in it” (Ephesians 5:27).

Ponder that verse. Jesus died for a bride.

The letter to the Ephesians celebrates the beauty of the church—the Bride of Christ. From our perspective the church isn't so pretty... But heaven sees more. Heaven sees the church as cleansed and made holy by Christ. (Lucado, M., 1998).

1. Working in pairs read a chapter of Ephesians, then summarize the chapter in one sentence. Just for fun, link the chapter you're looking at to a song (secular or sacred).

List anything in this chapter that remains unclear or new for you.

Make a note of a takeaway for you from this chapter.

2. Have a flick through your bible at Ephesians. List the main themes that you see appearing.

3. Paul uses the word 'walk'¹ at least seven times, with the first reference in 2:2² What is he talking about? See 2:10; 4:1; 4:17; 5:2; 5:8

¹ *peripateō* (περιπατεω)

² Ephesians 2:1–2 (ESV) ¹ And you were dead in the trespasses and sins ² in which you once *walked*, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—

Background

1. the Ephesian church was founded by Paul but the epistle was written around 62ad while Paul was a prisoner; he is 'an ambassador in chains' (6:20).
2. After spending eighteen months in Corinth (Acts 18:11), he visited Ephesus with Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:18,19).
3. Paul stayed there for only a short time but promised to return (Acts 18:19-21)
4. Aquila and Priscilla remained in Ephesus where God led them to instruct a powerful Bible preacher named Apollos in the details of the Word of God (Acts 18:24-26)
5. Paul returned during his third missionary trip and stayed three years (19:8-10; 20:31)
6. His stay in Ephesus is marked by several noteworthy events
 - a. Paul baptised a dozen of John the Baptist's followers Acts 19:1-7
 - b. Unusual miracles occurred (19:11,12) "Now God worked unusual miracles by the hands of Paul, so that even handkerchiefs or aprons were brought from his body to the sick, and the diseases left them and the evil spirits went out of them."
 - c. Strange events took place (19:13-16)
 - d. sorcerers were converted (19:17-20) "Also, many of those who had practiced magic brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted up the value of them, and it totalled fifty thousand pieces of silver [drachma = days wage]."
 - e. The city rioted over silversmith Demetrius' loss of business because of people who turned to Christ from worshipping the great Ephesian goddess Artemis (19:24-41)

EPHESIANS

	Our Position in Christ	Our Practice on Earth	
<i>Introduction (1:1-2)</i>	Section 1: What God has done for us (1) Emphasis: sovereignty Section 2: What Christ has done in us (2:1-10) Emphasis: grace Section 3: What Christ has done between us (2:11-3:21) Emphasis: reconciliation <i>CHAPTERS</i> 1-3	Section 1: Our new unity (4:1-16) Section 2: Our new walk (4:17-6:9) Section 3: Our new strength (6:10-20) <i>CHAPTERS</i> 4-6	<i>Conclusion (6:21-24)</i>
Emphasis	Doctrinal: vertical relationship with God	Practical: horizontal relationship with others	
Core Phrase	"He chose us in Him." (1:4)	"Walk in a manner worthy of the calling." (4:1)	
Subjects	Declarations of heavenly truths (God's accomplishments)	Exhortations for earthly living (Christians' assignments)	
Prayers	Paul's prayer for Ephesians (1:15-23)	Paul's prayer for the whole church (3:14-21) Christians' prayers for one another (6:18-20)	
Theme	The holy community God is creating and how it is to live out its calling		
Key Verses	1:9-10; 4:1-3		
Christ in Ephesians	Jesus is the source of spiritual blessing, the Cornerstone of the church, and the goal of spiritual maturity (1:3; 2:20; 4:11-16).		

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Ephesians 1:3 (ESV) ³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

Journaling

Take a few moments to record your personal insights from this lesson.

This week as you read Ephesians look for how blessed you are in Jesus Christ. Then prayerfully consider, 'so what does that mean for me today and into the future'?