

# Ephesians

## Who am I? Chapter 1:1-14



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### Contents:

- I. Introduction
- II. Diving In
- III. Making Application

### Hints and Highlights

1. The book of Ephesians is letter written by the apostle Paul to believers in Ephesus, one of the leading cities in modern day Turkey. The city was powerful and wealthy, famous for its Temple to the goddess Artemis, one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world. The beginning of the church is described in Acts 19-20, where a riot began when the sale of silver idols for the temple was threatened by so many coming to faith in Christ.
2. In the beginning of a new semester always go back and see those who expressed interest but did not regularly attend.

### Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

#### Option 1:

*Have everyone share one of their nicknames. Have them share how they got the nickname. Ask them "why do we have nicknames?" "What so nicknames tell us about ourselves?"*

#### Option 2:

*Ask them to come up with 5 descriptions of who they are. It could be things like son, daughter, UM student, baseball player, Wendy's employee, etc. Then ask what these things tell us about ourselves.*

#### Option 3:

*Ask them to share where they grew up and what their parents do for a living. What do these things do to help shape who they are.*

- ? Where do most students find their identity?
- ? Why do so many students struggle to find out who they are?

Our identity can be shaped by so many things: our parents, achievements, and so on. No wonder there is so much confusion. Thankfully Paul starts out this letter by letting us know who the believer really is.

### Diving In

*Read 1:1-2.*

1. Who wrote the letter? What do we know about the apostle Paul? (don't assume they know very much about Paul)
2. Who received the letter? What kind of people were they? You could have them find Ephesus on a map and share some things from the sidebar or even look at a highlight from Acts 19.
3. What does he mean by "saint"? (the word could also be translated as "holy one", basically it refers to everyone who places their faith in Christ, not just a few spiritual superstars like Billy Graham or Mother Theresa)

*Read 1:3-14*

1. How would you describe this paragraph? What themes does he pick up?
2. Why do you think Paul might begin a letter this way?
3. Have them take a minute and mark or take note of every occurrence of the phrase "in Him" or "in Christ". You could also have them take a minute and mark or write down everything that was true of the believer "in Christ". You could have them look at each of the verbs in this section.

*Look more closely at 1:3-6*

1. What is a blessing? What might it mean to possess every spiritual blessing?
2. Who chose you (v. 4)? When? Why? *Note: this is not the place to get into a theological*

## Hints and Highlights

1. The structure of the text emphasizes the trinity. 1:3-6 shows what the Father did before time, 1:7-12 describes what the Son did, and 1:13-14 focuses on what the Spirit did.
2. The focus of this passage is on what God did for us “in Christ”. This passage is clear that God did in some way “choose” us before we were even born. There is a lot of debate about how that fits with other passages dealing with the individual’s choice. This Bible study is not the place for this debate. If someone wants to meet with him or her individually. This passage does focus on “positional truths”, things God has done for us that we could not do. God alone could choose, bring salvation, and give an inheritance.

*debate or discussion about predestination. Stick to the text and its simple meaning. It is better to spend time dealing with the author’s argument than to spend a lot of time discussing something the author does not address.*

3. What is adoption? How did God adopt us? Why does Paul use this description? (adoption implies bringing in a child into a family who originally did not belong). How is our salvation like adoption? Why did God adopt you?
4. What does it mean to freely give something? Why is this better than giving out of obligation or duty? How is this true of what we are talking about here?
5. What do we learn in this section about God’s motivation in saving us? What else strikes you as interesting or unique in these verses?

*Look more closely at 1:7-12*

1. What is “redemption”? (look it up in the English dictionary if need be—it involves payment for sin). How did redemption come about? What does redemption bring?
2. What does it mean to lavish something on you? What did Jesus lavish on us? Why? What are the implications on my life as a result?
3. What is a mystery? Why is God’s will described as a mystery? What did God do with the mystery? Why did He let us in on the secret?
4. What is an inheritance? What is our inheritance?
5. What else catches your eye here that we may have missed?

*Look more closely at 1:13-14*

1. What part did you play? What happened after you heard and believed?
2. What does it mean to be sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit? When does this occur?
3. When does it seem that believers receive the Holy Spirit?
4. What does the Spirit in your life guarantee? How does it guarantee our inheritance?

### ***In Summary:***

1. Why do you now think Paul opened his letter with these ideas?
2. How would you summarize who you really are, your real identity?
3. Why is this so important?

## **Making Application**

God has done some absolutely amazing things for us in Christ. Our entire identities have changed.

1. Which one of the promises you wrote down is most meaningful to you right now? Why?
2. How does it make me feel to know that God did these things for me apart from any merit of my own?
3. What are some wrong views of myself that I hold? Where do I look for my identity?
4. Write out a list of these promises, thank God each day that I am adopted as His child, chosen by God, lavished with His grace, etc.

*Let’s thank God for changing our identities in Christ.*

# Ephesians

## What do you know? Chapter 1:15-23



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### Hints and Highlights

1. Remember the context of the passage. Paul has just listed all of the spiritual blessings we have "in Christ". He closes the list by talking about security in being sealed with the Holy Spirit of Promise when they believed. Now he talks about what he prays for them.
2. Ask your Bible study to think of some friends to invite next week. It is important that those who come regularly begin to "own" the idea of reaching out and including others and not becoming a clique.

### Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

#### Option 1:

*Have each one share why they came to college. Which reason might be most important? To get a job, to gain an education, doesn't everyone? Etc.*

#### Option 2:

*Ask them to rank which profession needs to know the most (highest to lowest): doctor, neural surgeon, nuclear engineer, piano tuner, president of the US, head coach of the Detroit Lions, owner of a web-based company. Ask them why they ranked the order the way they did. Or instead you could just have them describe what each person should know instead of ranking them.*

#### Option 3:

*Play Jeopardy. You could ask questions like: the capital of Russia (What is Moscow?), number of UM football national championships (11), highest grossing movie of all time (Titanic), etc. Come up with 3-4 other questions.*

- ? Why is knowledge so important?
- ? Why does society care about what you know?

While knowledge is important what does God think is important to know? That is what we will look at tonight.

### Diving In

*Read 1:15-23.*

*vv. 15-16*

1. Why did Paul pray? (go back to context, especially v. 13 which talks about them being included in Christ and their belief, as well as their faith and love)
2. Why do you think hearing about their love and faith made him thankful?
3. How long does Paul pray? (does not cease) Why do you think he does that? How do you think he does that?

*vv. 16-19*

1. How would you describe what Paul prays for the Ephesians? What themes does he pick up?
2. Have them take a closer look at his prayer. What specific things does he ask for? (knowledge and enlightenment). What exactly are "knowledge" and "enlightenment"?
3. Why of all things he could pray for do you think Paul would pray for knowledge? What are some ways Paul describes "knowledge"?
4. How does he describe God? How does this make you feel about God?
5. What are the "eyes of your heart"? How would they be enlightened? (Paul

## Hints and Highlights

1. The concept of “knowledge” described in this passage has more than just intellectual meaning, it also implies the application of that knowledge morally in your life. The word “Enlightenment” means illumination, bringing light into darkness.
2. In your personal study compare this prayer to the one Paul prays in Colossians 1: 9-14. There are many similarities and Colossians is often considered a sister book to Ephesians.
3. The word “church” refers not to a building, or even one local congregation, but rather it refers to all believers who collectively make up His church.
4. The image of Christ’s church as a “body” is explained extensively by Paul in 1 Cor. 12:12-31.

seems to have the idea of spiritual eyesight in the soul).

6. What things specifically does Paul want them to know? (hope of their calling, knowledge of the wealth of their glory, and knowledge of His immense power) Why do you think he asks they know these 3 things and not others?
7. Why does our calling give us hope?
8. What is our rich inheritance? Why is it important to know about that?
9. How does Paul describe God’s power? Why does he use so many different words to describe it? How is this different than the view of God the average UM student has?

*vv. 20-23*

1. These verses illustrate God’s power that Paul wants them (and us) to know. What are some ways God demonstrates that power?
2. What did God’s power do for Jesus? Why do you think Paul uses this as an example? What are some things we learn about Jesus here? How this different than the opinion of the average UM student of Jesus?
3. What does it mean to place something under someone’s feet? What are the implications of this verse?
4. What does Jesus do for the church? What does this mean? What are the implications of this for you? (note: the Father gives Christ as head over all things to the church)
5. How does Paul describe the church? Why do you think he uses the analogy of a body? How does having Christ as head over the body affect how the it will operate? Why do you think it doesn’t always look like that is true?

### ***In Summary:***

1. What are the most important things for us to know?
2. How do we get to know God in this way? Why would it be important to do so?

What do we learn about God here? About Jesus? About us?

## **Making Application**

God wants us to know Him intimately. He wants us to know His hope, His inheritance and His power.

1. Why do you think so many people do not know God in this way? Why do you think so many Christians do not know God in this way? What keeps you from knowing God more deeply?
2. How are my prayers different than the kind of prayer Paul prays here? How might my perspective on life change if I begin praying like this? Will we take time to pray these verses for each other this week?
3. How would my classes/schedule/stress/relationships/future /etc. look different if I thought about the hope of my calling in Christ? About the riches of my inheritance in Christ? About God’s immense power demonstrated in Christ.

*Let’s take a moment and pray that we would know God more intimately this week.*

# Ephesians

## Dead or Alive? Chapter 2:1-10



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### Hints and Highlights

1. Remember the context of the passage. Paul has just explained his prayer that the Ephesians would know God and His hope, inheritance and power. Now Paul deals with the barrier that keeps us from being able to know God, we all start out "dead".
2. We put a lot of questions in each one of these guides. You do not have to ask each one. You will have a better and deeper discussion if you think ahead which questions to ask and not ask, and maybe create some of your own.

### Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

#### Option 1:

*Go to a cemetery. Spend a couple of minutes walking through the graveyard. Then walk over to a busy street. Spend a couple of minutes walking in the crowd. Ask them what they observed. What was different? What is the difference between the dead and the alive?*

#### Option 2:

*Give a list of words and ask them for the opposite. Words could include black, cold, soft, excellent, the University of Michigan, and conclude with alive. You could also try some words without any clear opposites like football, hockey, marshmallows, trees. Then ask why opposites can often be difficult to discern.*

#### Option 3:

*Have them share their favorite Christmas or birthday gift they received growing up. What did they like about it? What made it so memorable? What did you do to earn the gift? What does working for a gift do to the gift?*

- ? What is the difference between death and life (or between earnings and a gift)?
- ? Spiritually our lives are a black and white contrast. All are either dead or alive. Tonight we will look at the difference.

### Diving In

*Read 2:1-10.*

*vv. 1-3*

1. How would you describe, from these verses, those who are dead?
2. What was the cause of death? What are "sins and trespasses"?
3. What did "you" formerly do? What did "we" formerly do? Why do you think he shifts from "you" to "we"? (he shows that all start out dead, even Paul)
4. How would describe the life of someone who is dead? Who controls his actions? (the world, Satan, and the flesh). How would you describe each of these three controlling influences?
5. How do these three influences control the dead person? Why can't he resist? What are the implications of this?

*vv. 4-7*

1. What is the contrast Paul sets up? How would you describe those who are alive from these verses?
2. Who initiates this change? Why do you think it seems that we have nothing to do with the change from death to life? (if they get stuck here a few more questions: How hard is it to go from dead to alive? What can dead people do to make themselves alive?)

## Hints and Highlights

1. "Sin" implies missing the mark of perfection. "Transgressions" refer to "crossing a line", or going where you should not. Both refer to wrongdoing.
2. "The prince of the power of the air" is a reference to Satan.
3. The "flesh" is a disposition to live independently of God and opposed to His will. At conversion the Holy Spirit gives us a new disposition to live in dependence and obedience to God, though we will still struggle with a "fleshly" desire to live independently of God.
4. "Grace" is unmerited favor, something good you do not deserve. The main idea is that we did nothing to earn our salvation, it is a gift.
5. While works do not save us, as a believer God does give us the chance to do good things. Our motive is not out of necessity for salvation, but rather out of gratitude. This distinction is often confused.

3. How would you say God is described here? Why do you think He is described as being "rich in mercy"? (if they do not get it ask, What did the dead people do to deserve life?)
4. How did God make us alive? What else did God do for us? (raised up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly places) What does this mean? What are the implications of this in your life?
5. How would you describe the kind of power it requires to raise someone from the dead? How does it feel to know the same power that raised Christ is the power that saves you when you place your faith in Christ?
6. Why does God do this? (v. 7 gives us insight) What does this tell us about God?

*vv. 8-10*

1. What do you think "grace" means?
2. What does "saved" mean? From what have we been rescued? (sin and death)
3. What does "faith" mean? What do we place our faith in to be rescued from sin and death?
4. What do you think Heaven would be like if we could earn our way there?
5. What do you think it means that we are God's workmanship? How are we God's workmanship?
6. If works don't save us, how do we walk in the good works that God prepared for us?

### ***In Summary:***

1. How would you describe us before we place our faith in Christ?
2. How would you describe our lives after we place our faith in Christ?
3. What do we learn about our salvation in this section?

What do we learn about God in this section?

## **Making Application**

God has taken you from death to life with the same power that raised Christ from the dead. We did nothing to deserve this, for God offers salvation as a gift.

1. What are some ways that I try to earn God's favor?
2. Take a moment and reflect on what God has done for you. What are some ways I can express to God my gratitude?
3. Perhaps you have not yet received Christ, take a moment and silently reflect on what holds you back. Would you like to receive God's gift of grace? (talk with them privately afterwards)
4. Who might be some of my friends who need to know about what God has done for us? Who could I bring next week to this Bible study?

*Let's take a moment and thank God for taking us from death to life, for no reason of our own, just His own loving gift of grace..*

# Ephesians

## In and Out Chapter 2:11-22



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### Hints and Highlights

1. Remember the context of the passage. Paul has just explained that all of us start life as dead, captive to the world, the flesh and Satan. It is only by God's grace that we can receive God's gift and become alive in Christ, able to perform the good works God has prepared for us. He then transitions into how two distinct cultures and races have been made into one people through Christ.
2. Circumcision was a mark of being in the nation of Israel and sign of God's covenant (see Genesis 17:1-14)

### Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

#### Option 1:

*Suppose you were throwing the world's best party and you could invite anyone in the world. Have each person take a minute and make a list of who they would invite and at least one person they would not invite. Encourage them to think of celebrities, world leaders, etc. Make sure you as the leader do not stack your list with all religious people. Then have them share their list and explain why or why not.*

#### Option 2:

*Ask them why they think racism exists. What are some examples of racism? Why do you think racism is so difficult a problem to solve?*

#### Option 3:

*Have them describe different social groups on campus (or perhaps different social groups that were present in their high school). Who were the popular groups?*

- ? Why are some groups "in" and others "out"? What is the difference between "in" and "out"? How hard would it be to bridge the gaps between the two?
- ? There are always people we tend to like and not like. The Jews considered all Jews as "in" and the Gentiles as "out". Let's see how God solves the problem of the "in" crowd and the "out" crowd in the last half of Ephesians 2.

### Diving In

#### Read 2:11-22.

#### vv. 11-13

1. What would you say are some differences between Jews and Gentiles? (answers could include God's chosen people, great privilege in worship, hope, etc.)
2. What do you think Paul wants the Ephesians to remember? Why?
3. How would you describe the situations of those Gentiles (non-Jews) before they placed their faith in Christ? How do you think the Jews viewed the Gentiles back then?
4. What does it feel like to be a foreigner and excluded? How does it feel to be without hope? What does it mean to be "far off"? Why were the Gentiles considered "far off"?
5. How were the Gentiles "brought near"? How do you think Christ's blood made it possible?
6. Why do you think Paul addresses this issue of the Gentiles to the Ephesians? (the Ephesian church had a lot of Gentiles in it)

#### vv. 14-18

1. What does it look like when two groups are hostile toward each other?

## Hints and Highlights

1. Israel was the chosen people of God. Foreigners who did not become part of Israel were excluded from all of the promises of God's covenant, including worship in the temple. In the early church it was considered remarkable that God would save Gentiles too.
2. The analogy of the body for the church is described by Paul in detail in 1 Cor. 12:12-31.
3. The other analogy used here is that of a building. The foundation is the part of a building upon which the entire building rests. The apostles (New Testament) and prophets (Old Testament) are the foundation on which the church rests. A corner-stone is the stone that holds the entire structure together. It ties in all of the forces in several directions and is the focal point by which all other stones are positioned. None of the other stones would stay together if the cornerstone was in the wrong place or not strong enough.

2. What are some modern examples of hostile groups of people?
3. What are some of the things that Christ did between these two groups?
4. What do you think it means that the two groups are now one? What does that look like?
5. How did Christ make this unity possible? What do you think it means that Christ brings "peace"?
6. What does it mean to "reconcile" the two groups? How is this possible?
7. What are some things that are true "in Christ" of both Jews and Gentiles? What is the difference between Jews and Gentiles "in Christ"? (nothing except for outward circumcision)
8. In a society struggling with racism and ethnic division, what do you think the church has to offer?

*vv. 19-23*

1. How would you describe the situations of the Gentiles after they placed their faith in Christ? How would you contrast that to their position before?
2. What are some of the analogies Paul uses to describe the church? (body in v. 16 and a building)
3. What do you think each analogy teaches us about the church? About the unity of the church? About the diversity of the church?
4. What does a foundation do for a building? Who is the foundation? In what sense?
5. What is a cornerstone? (see hints and highlights) Why do you think a cornerstone is so important for a building? What do you think would happen to a building with the wrong cornerstone? Why do you think Jesus is the cornerstone and not foundation?
6. When do you think this building is completed? (not necessarily looking for a date, just a sense of the fact that it is process of growing, not a one-time event)

### ***In Summary:***

1. What do we learn about our relationship with Christ? How am I different after I place my faith in Christ?

What do we learn about our relationships with each other?

## **Making Application**

God has taken two separate often at odds groups and made them into one church, which is compared with a human body and a building.

1. What groups or individuals do you find yourselves at odds with?
2. What do you think makes people withdraw or separate themselves from other believers? How would you help those who do?
3. How should Christ's reconciliation affect our relationships with others?
4. How does this differ from the way things really are in our relationships?
5. Take a moment and think is there someone with whom I need to reconcile. What will I do about that relationship this week?

*Let's take a moment and thank God for making us part of body, bringing unity out of diversity.*

# Ephesians

## Solving the Mystery Chapter 3:1-13



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### Hints and Highlights

1. Remember the context of the passage. Paul has just shown how God has taken two distinct and hostile groups of people, the Gentiles and the Jews and “in Christ” made them one church. In this chapter Paul describes in detail how that is possible that the Gentiles (those who were not part of God’s chosen people of Israel) became members of God’s family.
2. Don’t forget to invite those who may not have come lately to come again to your Bible study. Remember this is an open group.

### Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

#### Option 1:

*Ask them who they think is the world’s greatest detective. Encourage them to use people like Sherlock Holmes, James Bond, Hercule Poirot, whoever. What makes a great detective? What makes a great mystery?*

#### Option 2:

*Have them play a round of a game like Clue. You know, “Mr. Mustard in the Hallway with a Candlestick.” Or you could play another mystery game. Why are these games so popular?*

#### Option 3:

*Appoint someone as an assassin. Give him or her a dart gun and have him “shoot” someone in the dark. Then have the rest of the group “investigate” the crime. How do solve a mystery?*

- ? Why do you think we love mysteries so much?
- ? Much about God and what He does appears very mysterious. No matter how hard we investigate we cannot understand it unless God Himself makes it known. Let’s look at what God has to share about one of the greatest mysteries in the Bible.

### Diving In

#### Read 3:1-13.

*vv. 1-7*

1. What are some things we can learn about Paul in this passage? (make sure they see that Paul was a prisoner for preaching the Gospel to the Gentiles)
2. What are some things we can learn about the mystery Paul describes? How would you summarize the mystery?
3. Why do you think previous generations did not know the answer to this mystery? Why might God have waited until this point in time? (their opinion)
4. What was Paul’s unique role in this mystery? What do you think he means by the “administration” or “stewardship” of God’s grace for you?
5. Why do you think Paul was given such unique insight into the mystery?
6. What do you think is so radical about the mystery as described in v. 6? (remember back to last lesson).
7. What is an heir? What are we heirs to?
8. What does he means by “fellow heir” or “heirs together”? “Fellow members” or “members together” of the body? “Fellow partakers” or “sharers together” in the promise? How do you think a Gentile would feel reading this back then?

## Hints and Highlights

1. Prior to the resurrection of Christ and the establishment of the early church no one knew how God would fulfill His plan of salvation. The Holy Spirit revealed that God saves regardless of race or ethnicity. There was no more ethnic "chosen people" but rather a church where every member has the same privileges. This is the great mystery Paul is revealing.
2. The church was entrusted the message of God's wisdom in salvation before any angels ever heard how God chose to bring His plan of salvation to completion. 1 Peter 1:10-12 describes salvation as being something that "even angels long to look into these things." What an enormous responsibility God has given us! The only way He has chosen to reveal how someone can be saved is by asking believers to tell others about it.

9. What do you think are some implications of this message? (no matter where or to whom you were born, all are equal in God's family). How is this different from the world today? What are some of the world's distinctions that are taken away in Christ?

*vv. 8-13*

1. What some additional things we can learn about Paul? What enabled Paul to serve in this way?
2. How does Paul describe the grace of God? Why do you think he describes it in this way?
3. What was hidden in God before? Why do you think it was hidden?
4. Who is given the responsibility and stewardship of this message? (the church)
5. Look closer at verse 10. To whom is the church making the message known? Who do you think are the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places? (spiritual beings—angels! )
6. Why do you think that God chose to reveal His wisdom to angels through men and women? How might you have revealed the plan of salvation if you were God? What do you think is the significance of this decision to reveal it in this way?
7. What are some things that you learn about your relationship with God in verses 11-13?
8. How does it make you feel to know that you have bold, free and confident access to God"? What do you think that it means? What is the significance of this? How would our lives look differently if we lived according to this truth?
9. Prior to Christ's death what kind of access did humanity have to God?
10. How does Paul conclude about their response to his personal situation? Why do you think he says that his sufferings are their glory?

### ***In Summary:***

1. What do we learn here about the mystery? What is the mystery? What is so mysterious about it?

What do we learn about our relationship with God?

## **Making Application**

God has made his church out of both Jews and Gentiles and chose to entrust the responsibility of sharing this with men and women.

1. What are the implications of this diversity for the church today? What kind of people would we be surprised to find a part of the church?
2. We are heirs to an inheritance and members of a body. What kind of responsibilities does that give us?
3. We are the ones who can make the wisdom of God known. How do we take advantage of every opportunity to tell others about Christ? Who might be some people I should ask God for a chance to talk with?
4. We have unprecedented access to God. How can I develop my relationship with God and boldly approach Him?

*Let's take a moment and thank God for revealing the mystery.*

# Ephesians

## Power and Love Chapter 3:14-21



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### Hints and Highlights

Remember the context of the passage. Paul has just finished describing the mystery of how both Jews and Gentiles make one church. He concludes by sharing that God chose to reveal this mystery to others through men. We believers have bold access to the Father. Paul also encourages the Ephesians not to be discouraged about his troubles on their behalf, for these troubles are their glory. This is why he prays for them, which is the last major doctrinal part of the book. Chapter 4 begins a section applying the truth Paul has taught.

### Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

#### Option 1:

*Do a demonstration. Unplug your computer before the Bible study (or other electronic device). Then tell them it does not work and you need them to figure out what is wrong. You can have the best technology in the world but it is useless without a power source.*

#### Option 2:

*Have them go and pull a couple of different weeds out of the ground. Have them compare the root system. Which plants have better root systems? Which plants would do best in a wind storm? Why are roots so important to a plant?*

#### Option 3:

*What is the biggest and/or most powerful thing you can describe? Have them each share their thoughts. Then ask them to describe the Pacific Ocean. How deep do you think it is? (36,198 feet) How wide is it? (70 million square miles)*

- ? Why are powerful things so difficult to describe? How useful is a powerful thing we do not understand?
- ? God is often described as all-powerful, omnipotent. But the idea of power is difficult to comprehend and useless if we do not know how to plug into it. Tonight we will look at the power we have in Christ and how to become rooted in its source.

### Diving In

#### Read 3:14-21.

*vv. 14-19*

1. Why does Paul pray? Have them look back to the first part of the chapter for clues. (Make sure they see he has great concern for the Ephesians)
2. What are some things you notice about how Paul prays? Why do you think he kneels? What do you think is the main point of the kneeling? (submission of the heart to God, acknowledging Him as Lord) How can we demonstrate this in every day life as we pray?
3. What are some things we learn about the one to whom Paul prays? What do you think is the significance of deriving our family name from the Father?
4. What does Paul pray? You may want to have them look at the verbs and pronouns to help figure out what these long sentences mean. Make sure they see he is asking that for power).
5. What are some of the things he asks that they receive power for? (Christ dwelling in their hearts and knowing God's love)
6. How would you define the word "power"? Where does this power come from? (look at v. 16 - out of His glorious riches and through His Spirit) What do you think this means? What do you learn about power and strength?

## Hints and Highlights

1. The word “family” refers to a group of people who come from a single ancestor. The point here is that God alone is the Father of the whole church.
2. Paul prays that God would strengthen you with power through His Spirit in your inner being. This is an example of the Spirit-filled life, where we allow God’s power to influence our lives. Christ’s dwelling in you is part of the ongoing relationship. Note that the Spirit-filled life, like salvation, comes through faith.
3. Knowing how wide, long, high and deep is God’s love is more than just intellectual knowledge. It refers to a personal experience of grasping and knowing Christ’s love. What a powerful picture of the source of our relationship with God!
4. God not only has power but the ability to use that power (v. 20). That is why He can do even more than we can imagine.

7. Where are we to receive this power? How does the Holy Spirit give us this power? How do you think that faith plays a role?
8. Why do you think we need power so that Christ may dwell in our hearts (v. 17)? What do you think this means? How would this impact our lives? (this is the Spirit-filled life, Christ dwelling in us through faith with power to live the Christian life)
9. What do we learn about God’s love here? (Do not let them get superficial here—this is amazing! You could go to intro #3 and use the questions about the Pacific Ocean to help make the point. The ocean is so big you cannot know all about it)
10. What did Paul pray about this incomprehensible love (v. 18) ? (they would have the power to grasp it). Why does he want them to grasp it? What would your life look like if you grasped God’s love? How would your life look differently?
11. Think about a large tree. Where does its strength come from? (the roots not the trunk). What does Paul pray we would be rooted in (v. 17)? What impact could this rooting in love have in our lives?
12. How would being rooted in God’s love give us power?

*vv. 20-21*

1. What some additional things we can learn about God as Paul closes this prayer?
2. Why do you think Paul concludes with this?
3. What do you think it means to do immeasurably more than you could ask or imagine?
4. What could this look like?
5. Why do you think Paul ties this teaching about God into the end of this particular prayer?

### ***In Summary:***

1. What do we learn about our relationship with God? How does Paul’s prayer impact our relationship?

How can God’s power change us?

## **Making Application**

Paul prays that the Ephesians would know God’s power in both knowing God in your relationship and grasping the greatness of Christ’s love for them.

1. How do you view God’s power? How much of God’s power do you personally experience? Why do we experience so little of what Paul prays?
2. How much of God’s love do you grasp? What are some ways that we can more deeply root our lives in God’s love?
3. What are some things that we can imagine God can do? What would be beyond what we can imagine? Why is our view of God so small?
4. Why don’t we pray like this often? How would we live if we did?

*Let’s take a moment and thank God for His incredible love and power.*

# Ephesians

## Working Together Chapter 4:1-16



University of  
Michigan

### Contents:

- I. Introduction
- II. Diving In
- III. Making Application

### Hints and Highlights

1. Remember the context of the passage. This is the first of the application passages. Having explained our position in Christ, our change from death to life and the unity of both Jew and Gentile in Christ Paul now begins to apply these ideas.
2. This might be a great time to have a party for your Bible study. You can have the group itself plan it or even invite another Bible study to join you. It could also be helpful to invite those who have come once or twice as well.

### Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

#### Option 1:

*Think about making a car, or possibly winning a war. Name those who help make it possible. Keep asking "who else?" Encourage them to think broadly from the engineer to the ironworker to the electrician, etc. Why does it take so many people to accomplish this one thing? What do you think would happen if they lost sight of the objective?*

#### Option 2:

*Ask them to discuss who is the most important member of the Detroit Redwings (or other prominent team). What makes the Wings so effective? (everyone plays a role). You could also ask them about their own experience on teams, both good and bad.*

#### Option 3:

*Get out a puzzle. Throw all of the pieces on the ground and have them solve it. If it is an easy one have someone do it alone first and time both attempts. Then ask which was easier and more effective. Why?*

- ? Why do you think teamwork is so important? What makes teams ineffective?
- ? Teamwork only works when each team member plays his or her role. That is what makes the whole greater than the parts. Christians are part of a team as well. Each person has a role to play as we see in this next section.

### Diving In

#### Read 4:1-16.

*vv. 1-3*

1. What does Paul urge them to do? (live a life worthy of the calling, be humble and gentle, be patient, keep the unity)
2. What do you think each of these things means? What is the calling we have received? Where has Paul mentioned that before?
3. How would you define unity?
4. How do these verses transition from the first three chapters?

*vv. 4-6*

1. What are some things we learn about unity from these verses? Why do you think this is important?
2. Why do you think Paul uses so many times the word "one"?
3. What do you think is the significance of the various things Paul emphasized as being "one"? What do we learn about God here?

*vv. 7-10*

1. The text transitions to what Christ did for each one of us individuals. What are some of the things that Christ did? (apportioned grace, ascended on high, led

## Hints and Highlights

1. The picture in v. 8-10 is like that of an ancient victory march. When the army would win a war they would parade back leading the captives and give gifts from the spoils to the people. This passage is also a paraphrase of Psalm 68:18.
2. Christ's descending to the lower regions of the earth refers to His coming to the world on Christmas. It does not in any way imply that Christ descended into Hell during or after the crucifixion.
3. A pastor is a shepherd, one who guides and feeds the flock. An apostle is a "sent one" or a messenger. An evangelist is one whose role is to announce Good News. A teacher is one who instructs and trains. A prophet is a proclaimer of a divine message.
4. This does not mean only those who have the role of a teacher, evangelist, etc. should teach, evangelize, etc. 2 Tim. 4:5 makes it clear that all are to do this work. All are called to teach, share their faith, etc.
5. The analogy of a body is used at length in 1 Cor. 12:12-26.

captives, gave gifts, descended to earth)

2. What do you learn about Christ here in these verses? What are some of the things that Christ did for us? Why are these things significant?
3. What do you think it means that Christ ascended and descended? How is Christ's victory march similar to that of the Romans (see sidebar)? How is it different?

*vv. 11-16*

1. The victorious army would give out gifts to the people from the spoils of war. What kind of gifts did Christ give? (He gave to the church people gifted to fill various roles)
2. How would you define each of the various roles He gave? Why do you think He chose to give these roles and not others?
3. Why do you think that Christ chose to give people as gifts to the church and not something else? What were His purposes in giving these gifts? (answers could include building of the church, unity, knowledge, maturity)
4. How do these gifted people help build the church? How do they help build unity? Give knowledge? Build maturity?
5. What would the church look like if it were filled only with spiritual infants or children? Why do you think this is dangerous? How could we be misled? How would these gifted people help protect us?
6. What are some things we are all exhorted to do? What does it mean to speak the truth in love? How is that different than the way most people dispense truth to others?
7. Why do you think Paul uses the analogy of a body? How does it fit into this context? How is a body like the church?

### ***In Summary:***

1. What are some things that we learn about the church here?
2. How does unity and diversity fit together in this passage? Why is that so important?
3. What are some of the things we are exhorted to do here? Why might this be important?

How do you think this passage is an application of the first 3 chapters?

## **Making Application**

God has unified the church in purpose and belief, yet He has given different people to the church with different roles in leadership.

1. What are the essential things Christians should be united around?
2. Why do you think we get sidetracked from these unifying essentials? What are the consequences of this?
3. What might be some of the roles God wants you to play in the body of Christ at Michigan? Perhaps take a moment to have them reflect on this question.
4. How can live a life worthy of the calling I have received in my role God has called me? What are some specific things I should do?

*Let's take a moment and thank God for enabling us to work together under a common purpose and common Lord.*

# Ephesians

Out with the Old, In with the New Ch. 4:17-32



University of  
Michigan

## Contents:

- I. Introduction
- II. Diving In
- III. Making Application

## Hints and Highlights

1. Remember the context of the passage. This continues the application of the doctrine taught in the first 3 chapters. Having shown the unity in our beliefs and the diversity of the roles Christians can play (in the first half of ch. 4), Paul then transitions to a passage containing a lot of imperatives (things you should do). He structures it with two "therefores" in v. 17 and v. 25.
2. Remember to pray for each of those who attend your Bible study (or those you would like to start coming as well).

## Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

### Option 1:

*Ask each person to share a New Year's resolution he/she has made in the past. You could also have them share humorous resolutions they have heard others have made. How successful are people in keeping their resolutions? Why do you think it is so difficult for people to keep these resolutions?*

### Option 2:

*Read the police reports in the school paper. Some of these can be rather humorous. Then ask the group to brainstorm some solutions to crime as a society. Why do you think we have yet to solve the problem of crime?*

### Option 3:

*Write out on a piece of paper the word "green" in red ink,, the word "purple" in yellow, the "blue" in green, and the word "red" in orange. Have a volunteer read the words, then have them name the colors the words are written in. Which is harder? Why is it so difficult to read the words of colors written in another color?*

- ? Why do you think old habits are so hard to break? Why is that on some things no matter how hard you try you never seem to succeed?
- ? Much of our difficulties are in reality problems of the heart. Thankfully God shows us how to achieve true life change as we look at the last half of ch. 4.

## Diving In

### Read 4:17-32.

*vv. 17-19*

1. What does Paul urge them to do? (not walk in the ways the Gentiles walk) What does he mean by that? After all, the church consisted of Gentiles too? (obviously he is referring to Gentile unbelievers, using this as a synonym for nonbeliever)
2. How do you think Paul means by "walking like the Gentiles"?
3. How would you describe the minds of the Gentiles as depicted here? How would you describe their hearts?
4. What do you notice about the progression in the cycle of sin described in these verses? What insights does this give us about sin (make sure they notice it creates an insatiable desire for more)

*vv. 20-24*

1. What is the contrast that Paul sets up? (walking in the ways of the Gentiles vs. knowing Christ and His truth)
2. Why do you think that knowing Christ gives us the ability to see victory over sin? If this is so simple then why do so many believers fail so often?
3. How do you not live like the Gentiles? (put off, be made new, and put on)

## Hints and Highlights

1. The old self or old man refers to who you were before you came to Christ. After you place your faith in Christ you still possess the old thoughts, habits, etc. The difference is that they no longer need control you. However that old nature is still corrupting.
2. The new self or new man is what Christ has placed in you at salvation. It is your new nature that is one of holiness and righteousness. The key Paul shows us is put it on. This means we put off the old self by confessing any known sin to God and put on the new self by yielding your life to God's control. This is the essence of the Spirit-filled life.
3. Renewing your mind is something that seems to help us put on the new self. This is a process (not a one-time event) of conforming your inner person to Christ's image (Romans 12:2). Spiritual disciplines like prayer and time in the Word can help greatly in this.
4. Note that the emotion of anger in itself is not a sin. How you respond in your anger is that which may be sin.

4. What does it mean to put something off? Put something on? What are we to put off and put on? What do you think this looks like in reality?
5. How would you describe the "old self"? What are some insights from these verses about the old self? How do we put off the old self?
6. How would you describe the new self? What insights do we gain from these verses about the new self? How do we put on the new self? What difference would it make in our lives to put on the new self?
7. What do you think is the significance of the various things Paul emphasized as being "one"? What do we learn about God here?

*vv. 25-32*

1. You might want them to take a moment and write down all of the commands Paul lists here. Or you could split them up in pairs and have them work on it together.
2. Why do you think Paul puts this list here after the focus on putting off the old and putting on the new self? (it helps us know when we are putting on the new self)
3. Why do you think speaking truth is so important?
4. How would live out the command on anger?
5. What are some principles you could draw about words or things we say from these verses?
6. What are some insights about attitudes you gain from these verses? Why is kindness so important? What should be the root of our attitudes?
7. Which of these commands is most meaningful to you? Most challenging?

### ***In Summary:***

1. How should the lives of believers be different from those of unbelievers?
2. Why do you think they often are not so different?
3. Why do you think it is so difficult to put on the new self all the time?

What would our lives look like if we did? How would our group look if each of us lived out the commands listed here? What would give us the strength to do so?

## **Making Application**

God has changed us within, given us a new self. But we need to choose to yield to Him and put it on.

1. Take a moment to examine your own heart and life. How different do I look honestly from my non-Christian friends and neighbors?
2. Are there some areas of my life where I am living in the old self? You may want to give them a moment silently to confess these things before God (rather than have them share this as a group).
3. Take a moment to look over the list of commands. Which one is most difficult for you? You may want to have them silently confess anything the Lord brings to mind? Then have them take a moment to ask God to help them put on the new self.

*Let's take a moment and thank God for empowering us to live in a new self..*

# Ephesians

Imitation is the Greatest Flattery Ch. 5:1-21



University of  
Michigan

## Contents:

- I. Introduction
- II. Diving In
- III. Making Application

## Hints and Highlights

1. Remember the context of the passage. Here Paul continues the application of the doctrine taught in the first 3 chapters. In chapter 4 he urged them to live lives worthy of their calling, live differently than unbelievers, and speak truth and avoid other sinful practices and attitudes such as lying, stealing, etc. He then continues with 3 more conclusions introduced with "therefore" (v. 1, v. 7, and v. 15).
2. You might want to exchange prayer requests to help build a more caring community.

## Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

### Option 1:

*Ask for several volunteers to do an impersonation of someone famous. They could do President Bush, Elvis Presley, whoever. Who do you think is the most impersonated person? Why?*

### Option 2:

*Play the "face game". Randomly assign each person to draw a picture of another person in the group (every person should be assigned another person). Then have them draw a picture of that person. Then each person in the group has to guess who each drawing is supposed to be. Why do we like to draw pictures of others? What makes a portrait easiest to recognize? (imitation of features)*

### Option 3:

*Ask each person to share as a child who did they most often imitate? Who was their favorite baseball or football player that they pretended to be on the field? Or who was their favorite actress or TV character they acted like?*

- ? Why do you think some people like to imitate others? Who do you tend to imitate the most? What are the difficulties or problems with imitation?
- ? Whether it is our parents, a famous athlete or our friends, we all tend to imitate others in some form or another. Tonight we will look at what the book of Ephesians says about imitation.

## Diving In

### Read 5:1-20

*vv. 1-6*

1. What do you think Paul means by "imitating God"? What are some ways we can do that? Why do you think he added in "as dearly loved children"?
2. How do you live a life of love? What do you think that it means to so? What is the relationship with that and imitating God?
3. What do these verses have to say about morality? What are some of the different moral issues he takes on here? Why do you think he speaks so strongly on this issues?
4. What do these verses have to say about our words? Why do think he tackles the area of our speech?
5. How does he describe the fate of those who live lifestyles of immorality?

*vv. 7-14*

1. What do you notice about Paul's next conclusion? What do you think it means to partner with the disobedient? How would you describe the contrast Paul is setting up?
2. What do you think it means to be a "child of light"? How do you think a child of light should live? What are some insights about living as a child of light?

## Hints and Highlights

1. Since we have been adopted into God's family we are called to imitate and show our family resemblance. Love is one specific way to imitate God.
2. The word "live" (v. 2) literally should be translated "walk". It refers to ethical conduct or way of living.
3. "Sexual immorality" refers to any kind of non-marital sexual intercourse, while "impurity" signifies all unrestrained sexual behavior.
4. Verses 18-21 form one long sentence. Being filled with the Spirit is not a one-time event. This is another way of describing the putting on your new self from 4:24. In the same way drunkenness is yielding control of your life to another power, being filled with the Spirit is yielding control of your life to the fullness of the Holy Spirit. Remember 1:13 makes it clear that all believers are indwelt with the Spirit, but here it is clear that not all believers are filled with the Spirit.
5. It might be good to pass out the booklet "Satisfied" and meet individually with them to talk about it with them.

3. What are some things we learn about light? About darkness? Why do you think Paul uses this imagery?
4. How do you think you would learn what is pleasing to the Lord?
5. What do you think he means by exposing deeds of darkness in the light? What do you think this might look like? (this could involve telling someone else about your sin rather than keeping it hidden)

*vv. 15-21*

1. Why should we be careful how we should live? What do you think this looks like? What are some ways you think that we could make the most of our time?
2. How would you describe Paul's final conclusion? What is the will of the Lord described here? (be filled with the Holy Spirit) Why do you think he is so specific that this is God's will?
3. How would you describe the analogy he makes? What are some ways that you could see drunkenness analogous to being filled with the Spirit? (answers could include doing and saying things you might not otherwise, being under the influence of something besides yourself, etc.)
4. What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? (influenced or empowered by the Spirit—it literally means to be made full) How often do you think you need to do this? (as often as needed—it is clear this is an ongoing process)
5. How are you filled with the Holy Spirit? (yielding control of all of your life to the Spirit's power)
6. What are some results of being filled with the Spirit? (speaking, singing, making music, giving thanks, submitting to one another) How are these things different from the results of drunkenness? (debauchery—it fades away) Why do you think these things come from being filled with the Spirit? Why can't you fake these things? What do these things look like in real life?

### ***In Summary:***

1. What are some ways that we can imitate God? Why is this so important?
2. Where do we get the power to imitate God? How would you describe the Spirit-filled life

## **Making Application**

God asks us to imitate Him, through love and holy living. He gives us the power to do so through the Holy Spirit.

1. Take a moment and have them examine their own hearts. How do I imitate God? How is my life like a child of light? A child of darkness?
2. Are there some areas of my life where I am living as a child of darkness? Immorality? Poor speech? You may want to give them a moment silently to confess these things before God (rather than have them share this as a group).
3. How do you think being Spirit-filled affects these areas? Give them a moment to silently ask the Holy Spirit to fill them and give them the power to obey.

*Let's take a moment and thank God for giving us His Spirit to fill us.*

# Ephesians

## Can you Relate? Chapter 5:22-6:9



University of  
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### Contents:

- I. Introduction
- II. Diving In
- III. Making Application

### Hints and Highlights

Remember the context of the passage. In the first part of chapter 5 Paul is giving the Ephesians instruction in living as children of light through purity, appropriate speech, and through being filled with the Holy Spirit. This filling produces change in attitudes like singing, praise, and closes with submitting to one another in v. 21. That phrase sets up what this next section explains, how we can properly submit to one another in our relationships.

### Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

#### Option 1:

*What do you think are the most popular movies today? How many of them are romances? Why do you think even most action movies have a romantic element? What do the following movies teach us about relationships? Pearl Harbor, Star Wars, Sleepless in Seattle, Gladiator, Lord of the Rings (use whatever movies you want).*

#### Option 2:

*Ask for a few volunteers to describe their first date. When was it? What did you do? How did that relationship end up? What did you learn about relationships through that first date?*

#### Option 3:

*Beyond the obvious physical differences, discuss as a group how men and women are different. How do you think this affects relationships? Marriages? How are parents different from children? How are coaches different from players?*

- ? Why do you think relationships are so important? Why do you think they are so difficult at times?
- ? Relationships are both thrilling and frustrating, enthralling yet heartbreaking. Thankfully the book of Ephesians gives us help. Let's take a look.

### Diving In

#### Read 5:22-6:9.

#### Ch. 5:22-33 (Husbands and Wives)

1. Have them take a minute and write down the instructions to wives, then to husbands. What do you notice about these instructions to each?
2. How would you describe the analogy Paul uses for the relationship between husband and wife? (like Christ and His church) What are some ways the relationship between a husband and wife are like Christ and His church?
3. What are some things you notice that are true about Christ? About His church?
4. How would you define the word "submit"? (see side bar on next page for deeper explanation). What kind of connotation do you think that word has today? Why do you think that is? Why do you think submitting to one another is a product of being filled with the Spirit?
5. What are some principles we learn about marriage here? What is the main command to wives? To husbands? How do they fit together?
6. What do you think it means for wives to submit to their husband in everything? What do you think it means for husbands to love their wife as their own body? Which do you think is more difficult to do?

## Hints and Highlights

1. The word “submit” is also translated “be subject to”. It mainly is a military term that means “to rank under”, “to place under” or “to subordinate”. It does not mean for husbands to dominate or oppress their wives. The husband is called to sacrificial love, the wife is called to be under the authority of the one who loves so much he gives all of himself up.
2. The quote in v. 31 is from Genesis 2:24. He goes back to the creation of man and woman and of marriage. Married couples are to leave their parents (not physically but emotionally) and form their own household as one.
3. Some have made the false claim that this passage condones slavery. It does not. But it does address the reality that slavery was an existing social condition in the Roman Empire at that time. His point was not to comment on a tragic social reality, but to give input on how that relationship should look. He instructs the slaves to serve as if they were serving God Himself! He tells the masters that they have the same Master as the slaves in Heaven and should treat their slaves accordingly (“in the same way” - v. 9). This was the complete opposite of how the Roman culture viewed their slaves.

7. Why do you think Paul addresses these commands to married couples only? Why not to all men and women? What role do you think this plays in our relationships on campus?
8. Why do you think Paul goes back to the creation of Adam and Eve to make his point? (that is the quote in v. 31—see sidebar #2) What do you think it means to leave your parents? Why is this a necessary step for a good marriage?

### *Ch. 6: 1-4 (Parent and Children)*

1. Have them take a minute and write down the instructions to children, then to parents. What are some things that you notice about the commands to each?
2. What do you think it means to obey? What do you think it means to honor? What do you think are some differences between obeying and honoring? (obeying is yielding over your will to while honoring is showing respect)
3. As college students do you think we are called to obey our parents or honor our parents? Do you think we should ever refuse to obey our parents? How do you make that decision? (the issue is one of adulthood—an adult honors and respects his parents but does not give them the final say in their lives, as a child would)
4. How do you think you can honor your parents while not doing what they want?

### *Ch. 6:5-9 (Slaves and Masters)*

1. Have them take a minute to write down each command to slaves, then to masters. What are some things that you notice about each one?
2. Do you think that this passage condones slavery? Why or why not? (see sidebar #3). What might be some possible applications of this text for us today? (Employee and Employers). What might be some ideas we can use on how we should work and treat our bosses at work?

### ***In Summary:***

1. What are some things that we learn about relationships between husbands and wives? Between children and parents? Between slaves and masters? How did God model submission to us?

What do we learn about the relationship between Christ and His church? Why do you think Paul focuses so much on relationships?

## **Making Application**

Relationships are an important part of life. God has given us important instructions as to how to make any of them work.

1. How do you feel about the relationship between husbands and wives? What seems hardest about this? What role does this play in my relationship with my boyfriend or girlfriend to whom I am not married? (there is no submission at all, although you are trying to build a foundation for marriage)
2. How do you feel about your relationship with your parents? Where do you need to honor them? Where do you need to obey them?
3. What are some ways I need to change my attitudes or habits at work? How about in class? On my team?

*Let's take a moment and thank God for giving us relationships and showing us how to live them.*

# Ephesians

## This Means War Chapter 6:10-24



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### Contents:

- I. Introduction
- II. Diving In
- III. Making Application

### Hints and Highlights

1. Don't forget the context! Having spent 3 chapters outlining what we believe then the last 3 applying it, Paul concludes with a passage on spiritual warfare. He then closes by asking the Ephesians to pray for him, and using typical closings and greetings for a letter.
2. Don't forget when you ask questions to not make them limited to yes or no answers. What we want in any good Bible study is discussion. Try to involve in a small way every person that is present in the conversation.

### Introduction *(choose the option that best fits your group, or create your own)*

#### Option 1:

*Get out your GI Joes or green army guys. Or perhaps a bunch of squirt guns or dart guns. Or throw playing cards at each other. It's time to play a 5 minute game of WAR!*

#### Option 2:

*Play a 5 minute game of Risk. Just start the game. Or play 5 man (or 6 or 7 or 8) chess. Have each person take a turn playing the board with a 15 second time limit.*

#### Option 3:

*Ask everyone what is their favorite war movie. Pearl Harbor? Hunt for Red October? Crimson Tide? Saving Private Ryan? What did you like about the movie? What scared you about it?*

#### Option 4:

*Discuss the wars from our history. Ask about the Gulf War or the War on Terrorism or Vietnam? What do you think brings victory? What brings defeat?*

- ? What do you think is most dangerous for the soldier in a war? When do you think they are most likely to be killed? What happens when you forget about or underestimate your enemy?
- ? Believe it or not as believers we are in a war. This one is not physical but spiritual and we fight enemies we cannot see. Let's see what Ephesians has to say about this war as we look at the last section of the book.

### Diving In

#### Read 6:10-24

*vv. 10-13*

1. How would you describe the imagery Paul uses here? Why do you think he uses the war motif? What is he communicating by doing this?
2. How does Paul describe the enemy? Why do you think he describes him in this way? What are some things we learn about Satan here? Who do you think are the powers of the dark world and the spiritual forces of evil?
3. What are some things the armor helps you to do? Why do you think Paul uses the word "stand" so many times? What do you think he means by it?
4. How do you think you put on the armor? How is this like putting on the new self in 4:24?

*vv. 14-18*

1. What role do you think a belt played in armor back then? How do you think truth acts like a belt? (see sidebar on other side for more information about the armor)
2. What role do you think a breastplate played? Why do you think righteousness is our breastplate?
3. What do feet usually wear? What are we to wear? What do you think this

**Hints and Highlights**

1. The rulers and authorities refer likely to spiritual demonic forces, not political ones on earth (although Satan can use them as well).
2. The metaphor of “full armor” Paul uses is not just Roman. It has its roots in the book of Isaiah (11:5, 52:7, 57:19) referring to God and the Messiah.
3. The belt was a leather apron hanging under the armor which protected the thighs. It prepared the soldier for vigorous activity. The breastplate was a piece of armor covering the chest protecting it against blows and arrows. Roman soldiers wore half-boots enabling them to be ready on long marches. They also carried large shields which covered the whole person (think of the opening scene of Gladiator). They would douse their shields with water to help extinguish the flaming arrows fired at them (these arrows were dipped in pitch and lit before firing). The Roman helmet was bronze with a cheek piece to cover the head. The sword described is short-handed and used in close combat.
4. Tychicus was in Paul’s inner circle and is mentioned in Acts 20:4 and 2 Timothy 4:12.

readiness implies? What are some ways that we can live this out?

4. What does a shield do? How does a shield protect you from fiery arrows? What do you think are some of the fiery arrows the enemy fires at you? How does faith protect you like a shield?
5. What does a helmet do? What are some ways that salvation acts like a helmet?
6. What does a sword do? How is the Word of God like a sword? Why is the Word of God an offensive as well as a defensive weapon? (If you want you can have them read Hebrews 4:12 and gain more insight about the Word of God as well.)
7. Why do you think Paul brings in prayer in a passage where he is using such an extended metaphor? How often are we to pray? What do you think that look like? What role does prayer play in spiritual warfare? How does his change your view of prayer? How does this impact your motivation to pray?

*vv. 19-24*

1. Why do you think Paul asks the Ephesians to pray for him? What are some of the things he asks them to pray for? Why do you think he asks for those things and not to be released from prison?
2. From this passage (or even this book) what do you think are some of the things that motivated Paul in his life?
3. What are some ways that Paul describes himself? What are some things we learn about Paul’s situation?
4. Who is Tychicus? How does Paul describe him? What is his role in Paul’s ministry?
5. How would you describe Paul’s close to this letter? Why do you think he closes this way? (note that v. 23 focuses on what God did for us like ch. 1-3 and v. 24 focuses on our response of love like ch. 4-6)

***In Summary:***

1. How would you describe the armor of God? Why do you think we need it? How do you put it on?

What are some things we learn about Paul’s driving force in life?

**Making Application**

We are in the middle of an intense spiritual battle and God has provided for us the armor to wear so we can stand firm.

1. How aware am I of the spiritual battle? What are some ways that the enemy is attacking me?
2. Which of the parts of the armor do I most often use? Which do I tend to forget? What can I do to put on the “full armor of God”?
3. How similar or different are my prayers from what Paul challenges the Ephesians to pray? How would recognizing the urgency of the battle encourage me to pray?
4. What are the driving forces of my life? Have them take a moment and reflect on that and ask them to put on the full armor of God.

*Let’s take a moment and thank God for giving us His full armor and the ability to pray.*