

Hey My Friends: I love you guys and pray that you will use these notes to make disciples and extend God's Kingdom!!

- If you ever have any questions, I can be reached at DavidNewman@ymcachurch.com

- Our church website is YMCACHURCH.com
- May the Lord use each of you in awesome ways!!!!

Ephesians Teaching Notes

-**John Calvin** "Ephesians is the theological Jewel of the New Testament"

-**This book is so important to Discipleship!**

-2 main questions: (1. How do I disciple? 2. What do I teach them?)

-2 most important books for discipleship: 2nd Timothy + Ephesians

2nd Timothy = How

Ephesians = What

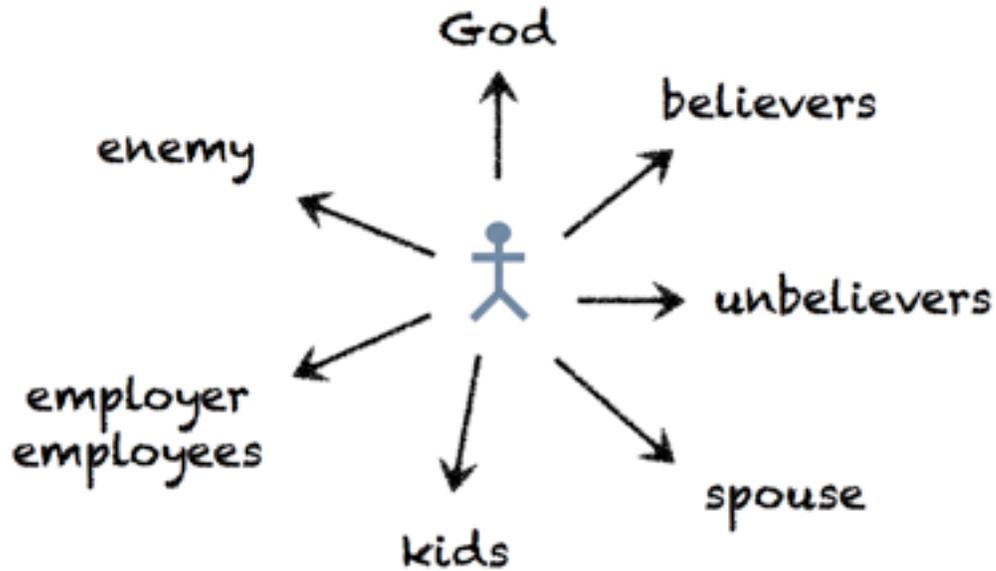
Relational
Inspirational
Doctrinal
Experiential

Timothy was the Pastor of the Church of Ephesus. This is **what** Paul taught him! Paul intended him to teach this!!!!

-- **Thematic Outline:**

- * **Identity** (1-2:10)
- * **Unity** (2:10-4:12)
- * **Maturity** (4:13-6:9)
 - in life
 - in the home
- * **Warfare** (6:10----)

-- Discipleship Outline:



Relationship to.....

- Man God
- Man others (**Church, unbelievers)
- Man Family (Spouse, kids)
- Man Enemy

**Main Point: 1:9-10 "To unite all things in Him"
"the summing up of all things in Christ"**

The mystery of the will of God has been revealed. Vs. 9-10

-Most biblical scholars feel that this next truth is really the essence of this whole book. This is the thesis statement. The Big Picture comprehensive plan of God for the ages.

A. Mystery means something hidden that is now revealed..

-Mystery: There is one critical piece of information that is essential to the entire plot of the story. The entire movie or book hangs on the answer to the question. The answer is known by the author, and clues are revealed by the author, but it is not revealed to the audience until the end. Usually chaos and confusion happens in the plot, until the answer is revealed, and then everything makes sense. Everything ties together!

When it comes to the story of this world and humanity, God is the author, and the story has been a divine mystery. A mystery in the sense that there is critical component to the plot that makes the whole thing hang together. Massive chaos and disunity broke forth in the story, yet all along the author gave us clues that He was up to something in the story. There was the main point that was concealed until God's exact moment when He chose to reveal the main point of the plot and that main point (verse 10) is that all things would be brought to unity in Jesus Christ.

NASB -- "Summed up" - literally, this is a mathematical term for when a mathematical equation that is not solved, is finally solved or summed up, or unified.

God's main point is that the world is broken, hurting, spinning out of control and disjointed. Every relationship is disunified and broken, but through Jesus Christ, God is putting it back together. All things can only find unity through Him!!

Each relationship (Man to man, Man to God, Husband and wife)
Broken --- to unity

This book plays a part in the redemption story as the means to reveal the mystery: (last 5 minutes of a Scoobie doo episode, how it's all tied together)

In Christ, God is putting everything that is broken back together!!! All things are brought to unity in Jesus!!!

(Discipleship Appointment #1 --- Talk through the diagram of their life's relationships. Have them talk through each one... Explain the main point in the book of Ephesians 1:9-10 --- The Mystery Revealed --- Everything broken ---- to Unity in Christ)

Prologue (1-2) (62 A.D. From a Roman prison)

Apostle

Image: “A sent one”. If a King wanted a message delivered He would send an apostle, to deliver that message. (Jewish Sanhedrin- Judgments)

1. He would speak the WORDS of the King.
2. He would speak with the AUTHORITY of the King.

What is Paul saying by starting out with this Phrase?

I Speak for the King! These are not my words. This is not my opinion. These are the words of the living King being delivered by me to you. This letter holds the weight of the authority of God himself!

Why is that important in a post-modern culture like ours?

- There is a great big, fat explosion of everyone’s opinions into writing.
- People (especially young) don’t approach the text with intrinsic authority.
- Begin each book like this!

2nd Timothy 3:16-17 --- The very breath of God
Hebrews 4 --- Living and Active

Saints in Ephesus

Ephesus -- (One of the most wicked cities the world has ever seen. Most sexual of the ancient world. Magic-obsessed, full of idolatry, immorality, rotting cesspool of sin.)

-Even today: Get off the docks of the Mediterranean sea at Ephesus... Ancient carving in stone, pointing to the brothels... The ruins to the theatre of their goddess, Artemis (20 k seats)

-“Saints” (called out ones, set apart to be different ones)

-“Faithful” (Not just called apart, but living in a way where their conduct is consistent with that calling.)

-circular letter

-Not to the 1 mega-church with mega-staff and superstar pastor... but to a whole scattering of little house churches. (groups of 20, 30, 40 people that usually met in a room or a courtyard of a home. Later we will find out that they were multi-racial, multi-generational, Socio-economically diverse. There were male and female, slave and free, young and old.

-Read it, pass it on, Read it, pass it on...

Grace and Peace

-Grace -- You were guilty and deserving nothing but death, wrath and hell, but you have been given undeserved mercy.

-Peace – (Shalom) You were at hostility with God, but through Christ you are living in peace with God.

Grace and Peace (16X in letter)

**** The words of the King to my faithful, Holy ones that get to live in the Grace and peace that I have given!**

We've only read the Dear _____ section, and already Paul has infused it with the authority of God and the calling of man and the Grace and Peace that only come from the accomplished work of Christ.

(Discipleship app. #2 --- Authority of God's word, meaning of grace and peace)

(Our Identity in Christ) Verses 3-14

Macbeth quote:

“Life is a tale told by an idiot, full of sound and fury, and signifying nothing!”

A lot of people in this world feel that way about their lives. (no significance, no identity, nothing great to live for, no higher purpose.)

(This will tell us where you came from, who you are, and where you are going!)

Ephesians will basically begin by saying that if you are a Christian, you don't have to think that way. This passage will cry out that your life has significance, your life has purpose, you have an identity greater than yourself, and there are breathtaking spiritual blessings that are yours because you are in Christ.

-Spiritual outburst of Praise (3-14)

-Greek Language --- 1 sentence long!!

-English Teacher ---- Take out a red pen and flunk Paul (Run-on Sentence)

E. Nordon "The most monstrous sentence conglomeration that I have ever found in the Greek Language."

C. Masson: "One is struck by the fullness of its words, of its liturgical majesty and its perceptible rhythm from beginning to end!"

Symphony --- 3 movements

Work of the Trinity: Father, Son, Holy Spirit
Scope of all of Eternity: Past, Present, Future

Outline: What the Father has accomplished in the past.
 What the Son has accomplished for the present.
 What the Holy Spirit has accomplished for the future.

I think that it is the most significant sentence that has ever been written.

I. What the Father has accomplished in the Past (3-6)

Verse 3 (thesis statement of the passage)

Blessed ---- "Eulogetos" --- 3x

(give everything back to Him, for He's given everything to us with everything that could possibly be given... In Christ!)

In Christ ---- 13x in one sentence (In Him, in the One, In Christ) !!!

Paul wants to make something very clear. We are blessed, not because we are worthy, we are blessed because we are connected to Christ.

***** The Theological Vortex--** Vortex = a spinning, moving mass that sucks everything to its center....

Bless Him, whose blessed us, with every blessing in Christ!!

(Magnitude of that thought ---- Causes gushing.... Turns on the fire hydrant!!!

Verses 4-6 **ADOPTION**

-Key Word (Think like they would think..) What images would have popped into their mind... that's who Paul was writing to...

-Revolting, disturbing, yet later you will see... amazingly beautiful image...

Ephesian concept of Adoption:

*** In this time period, The Ancient world was influenced by **Greek thought**.

Greek -- 100's of years earlier, Alexander the Great and the Greeks crushed everybody, conquered the whole world. They would conquer a city, build buildings, place gymnasiums and schools of Philosophy and basically have the goal of converting the world to the Greek way of thought.

Human Body focus:

-Highest center of Greek thought --- Human Body. Celebrated the perfect, naked human body. (Thinner, faster, more beautiful, dominate in competition, make your body better.... Sound familiar.)

They wanted their bodies to be perfect, and they wanted their **children's bodies** perfect...

Quotes:

Plato: The nature of Justice in the Republic

"The offspring of the good are reared, but the offspring of inferior parents as well as deformed offspring will be secreted away. (Left exposed to die in the wilderness)

They didn't want any kids that were not perfect. Burden to society.

Plutarch's account to Lisurgious

"If the baby is sturdy and strong, the Father was instructed to rear it. If it was ill-born or misshapen the Elders sent it to a place called "apathate" and ravine at the foot of Mount Tegatus."

Medical center in Ephesus, a doctor in Ephesus wrote a book on the criteria for establishing whether or not your child was worth rearing.

“A strong cry and complete in all of it’s parts... not sluggish or weak. The joints should bend and stretch, all parts sensitive to touch. Conditions contrary to these indicate that the infant is not worth rearing.”

*** Any **blemish** on a baby, was the mark of **Divine Displeasure**.

Ephesian image

There was a large Hill (small mountain) crossed the South part of the city of Ephesus. Any baby, born with a blemish, was immediately marched up to the mountain and left to die. These babies would be dead, except for **one slight ray of hope**. People would climb up on the mountain and sort through the babies looking for any that might make good slaves. In other words, though the Divine displeasure was on their lives, perhaps they still had potential. And they would choose a child as their own to one day be their slave.

(City, hill, dying-blemished-babies, that the gods hated, Only hope.. Fathers choose blemished kids to take them as slaves.)

Text (4-6) (remember, audience was multi-diverse, masters and slaves...)

-Before the foundation of the World -- Verse 4

Before time began, Before God said let there be light, He knew you, and He chose you and what did He choose you to be?

-Chose us... to be Holy and Blameless

-Blameless = “Ammomos” ...

It is a sacrificial/priestly term that means...“Without blemish”

-Without Blemish -- They were in a culture that was all about being blemished. Work to get your body perfect. If your kid is blemished, leave him to die....

-Many of them would have thought, “as soon as I was born, I was labeled imperfect and left to die, but here is a God who is saying, before I was ever even born, in a Spiritual sense, He has chosen to see me as Holy and Blameless in His eyes because I am in Christ.”

Our World

How does God see you?

-If you are a Christian, then because of the cross and because you are connected to Jesus Christ and indwelt by Jesus Christ, when God looks at you, He sees you as Holy and Blameless.

-That doesn't mean that our sin doesn't grieve Him. That doesn't mean that He is never disappointed with our choices. But it does mean that His view of us is a forgiven, blameless child...

For some of you, it's hard for you to believe that God even likes you... You may know He loves you... but that He looks down on you and likes what He sees, is beyond your comprehension...

-Not Divine Displeasure/Pleasure (verse 5 NIV)

-According to His Pleasure!!!!

-Remember, that if you were a slave, then the mark of Divine displeasure was on your life... according to His Pleasure???

(I think that they would have been blown away!!)

(But, as mind-staggering as these concepts would have been to them... there would have been one concept that would have made them weep in the room.)

-Adopted... as Soss!!

-This was not just going to the mountain and choosing a rejected child to be a slave. We have a God who was willing to go to the mountain, to see you as Holy and Blameless, and to chose you, not to make you a slave, but to make you His Son!!!!

Image:

-A God who loves to strap on Hiking boots. "I'm going to get my kids!!"

What is your identity? If you know Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, then you are a son or daughter of God. You are an adopted child!!!!

(By the way, there are certain privileges that come with being a son or a daughter of God.)

The Roman concept of Adoption:

1. The adoption process of a slave to a son.

In the Roman world, the significance of this statement would have been profound. In that day and age, if a father decided to take a free child or a slave and make him a son, a fascinating procedure occurred. The original father and the adopting father would have to appear before a Roman magistrate. Twice, the original father would symbolically hand his child over to the adopting father and twice he would symbolically buy him back. However, on the third time, the adopting father would stand forth and plead a case before the Magistrate as to why he should become his new father. If the magistrate was convinced, then the new father would reach into his robe and pay a redemption price, a sum of money. The old father would then hand his son over to the new father and in that moment, the son became a brand new person! What do I mean?

2. The adoption results.

-The adopted son, literally, became a new person
Not only was this son given a brand new dad, but...

- a slave became totally free
- if any debt- cancelled
- If any crime against- slate wiped clean
- New Name
- New Robe
- new family
- Equal heir
- From this day forward, considered a new person.

(Jesus implications on all of these...)

***** New Name --- Revelation 2:17** – Ancient World --- A white stone was given in 2 situations:

- 1 – Courtroom -- jury handed the defendant a white stone = “innocent”
2. – Competition – white stone of victory = entrance to the post-game celebration.

Full Image:

-A God who loves to strap on Hiking boots. “I’m going to get my kids!!” and I’m bringing a new robe, a new name, and a full pardon with me...

(Discipleship appointment #3 -- Adoption. Communicate: “before you were even born, you were loved by God. And He wants you to be His Child!” Remember, the depth, yet simplicity of God’s Word and communicate it appropriately to their maturity!)

II. What the Son has accomplished for the present (7-10)

- illustration: Mark Twain once wrote a short story about an old slave who lived on a narrow peninsula of land that jutted out into the Mississippi River from the “mother body” of the state of Missouri. Each evening after work, he would leave the plantation and go to his small hut on the peninsula. During the spring of one year, when the River was flooding beyond its banks, a powerful swirling eddy of water cut through the upper arm of the peninsula one night and severed it from its connection with the state of Missouri. The peninsula was now an island! But the law said that when it was severed from Missouri, it automatically and immediately became a part of the state of Illinois across the River. But here is the punch line of the story: the state of Missouri was a slave state, while Illinois was a free state. That man went to bed a slave, and woke up a free man. This man was given a brand new identity!!

Redemption Image (foundational word)

1. Redemption was when a ransom was paid to buy freedom.

-Usually this word was used in 2 major contexts.

a. A slave

In the ancient world, Slavery was a part of life. There were over 60 million slaves in the Roman Empire. If you had any money at all, you owned slaves and slaves were bought and sold like furniture. It was a part of everyday business. If you were a slave, then you were owned by someone else. You had no personal freedom, your life was not your own.

In fact, if you longed for freedom, you had one hope and one alone and that is if someone loved you so much that they would redeem you from slavery.. To be redeemed meant that a friend or loved one could pay a ransom price, and if the proper ransom price was paid, your identity could be changed from slave to free.

b. a prisoner of war

Another example of how this word was often used was in the realm of dealing with prisoners of war. When Rome would go out and conquer other lands, they would take prisoners of war and as they did they would either turn them into slaves or throw them into these horrible, dirty, dark, hole in the ground dungeons to rot and die. The prisoners of war were considered “dead”. And if you were a

prisoner of war and longed for life and freedom, then you really only had one hope and one alone and that is if someone from back home would journey to this distant land for the purpose of paying a ransom price for your freedom. If someone paid your ransom, though you were considered a dead man, You could be redeemed from death to life!

Jesus implications....

Charles Wesley Hymn --- “Long my imprisoned spirit lay fast bound in sin and nature’s night. Thine eye diffused a quickening ray; I woke the dungeon flamed with light! My chains fell off, my heart was free! I rose, went forth, and followed Thee! Amazing love how can it be? That though my God, Shouldst die for me!”

(Goes deeper than just that.... If a prisoner is on death row and escapes, He is still a guilty man. If He is caught, he’ll still have to pay the penalty)

II. Our Sins have been forgiven.

-Great exchange.

-lavishing grace on us in Christ. Is that how you see God?
(A God who is so passionate about His Son... and likewise, passionate about us who are connected to His Son that He is lavishing

(Shawshank redemption image)

What tense is verse 7 in? Present tense. Daily reality!!!

market in India illustration:

Story of a man who went to a market in India. There was a man with a large cage... in the middle a large pole... pigeons... had a string around their legs... and a ring around the pole and they just walked around in circles... not free/empty life.

Man was moved... said, I want to buy all of them. Now, cut the strings from their legs... and they flew away... landed about 20 feet... and began walking in a circle again. Shewed them away... landed about 20 feet away and began again!! They were free... yet going back to a pattern of life that is in bondage and empty!

Set Free/but don’t live free!!!

Civil War illustration:

“-Shelby Foote wrote a great work on the Civil War and in that book, He noted a tragic phenomenon. On the first day of 1863, Abraham Lincoln set the slaves free. He gave the emancipation proclamation and, “The Word Spread”, in the words of one historian, “from Capitol Hill out across the city, down into the valleys and fields of Virginia and Carolinas, and even into the plantations of Georgia and Mississippi and Alabama. “Slavery Legally Abolished!” read the headlines, and yet something amazing took place. The greater majority of the slaves in the South went right on living as though they were not emancipated. .. “The Negro remained locked in a caste system of race etiquette as rigid as any had known in formal bondage. Every slave could repeat what one Alabama slave said about Lincoln and the freedom he had been given, “I don’t know nothin’ ‘bout Abraham Lincoln cep they say he set us free. And I don’t know nothin’ ‘bout that neither.” How tragic. A war had been fought, a document signed, Slaves were legally set free. And yet most continued to live out their years, and their children after them, as slaves. Most served the same master throughout their lives.”

Set free and yet in bondage... Ever see that in the Christian life?

Jesus has accomplished redemption in the present.

How do we make Ephesians 1:7-8 a part of my daily reality, not just a postcard of a place that I have visited in the past?

Process of Redemption:

Very mysterious to describe... God’s redemption in your life began with God... God choosing you, dying for you, and drawing you to Him... and Yet, if you are a Christian, There was a point in your life, where God looked down on your heart attitudes and said... “You are redeemed.”

Heart attitudes:

Belief (I choose to believe that you died on the cross to redeem me!)

Confession (I confess that I am a sinner/wrong/ asking your forgiveness)

Relationship (I realize that you don’t want religion—relationship/ With me/you!)

Trust (In faith, I am trusting in You! I am depending on you!)

Eternal Focus (More to life than this)

Main Point:

**** The heart attitudes that were present at the time when you were redeemed are the heart attitudes that you must pursue continually to live in redemption.**

**** The heart attitudes that set you free are the keys to living free.**

(Discipleship #4 --- Redemption. The process of being set free and the keys to living free)

III. What the Holy Spirit has accomplished for the future. (11-14)

Engagement story (mark of Identity on her)

1. Belonging (taken woman)
2. Authenticity (not just a piece of jewelry, a mark of me on her life)
3. Security (there is another ring coming)

I. Being sealed with the Holy Spirit is a Mark of belonging. (13)

-In Bible times, each man would take his animals and brand them with His mark. The mark was a “seal” that was unique to him and him alone. It was an identity mark. So if an animal ever got lost, if an animal ever got stolen, one could look upon the animal to see the **Mark of the Master. The Mark of the Master was a mark of belonging.**

-We do that.... Kids at camp... their clothes are marked.

This sense of belonging is core to the very heart of God.

-All throughout Scripture you hear the echo, “I will be their God and they will be MY people.”

-Isaiah 43:1 “Fear not, for I have redeemed you. I have called you by name, you are MINE!”

-God’s plan of redemption is to have a remnant of people that are his very own. He has a passion for people that are His very possession.
A sense of belonging is central to the very heart of God.

II. Being sealed with the Spirit carries a sense of authenticity.

A. A seal was a mark of identity that showed authenticity.

-There is a 2nd way that a seal was used in Bible times. When a King wanted to send a written message, or an important document, it was always sealed. And what that meant was that he folded it up, dripped a lump of hot wax on it, and then stuck his signet ring in the wax. And that mark that was made upon the wax was a mark of identity. That seal signified authenticity. This letter is from the King. It is not a fake. Other’s might try to fake you out with messages that are said to be from the King, but only have this signet ring. Therefore, you can have 100% confidence that this is authentic.

B. God has placed the Holy Spirit in the life of a Christian to authenticate that He or she is truly Saved.

How does the Spirit manifest Himself? The authentic mark?

-Galatians 5:22 “Love, Joy, Peace, (The fruit of the Spirit, or the visible outworking of the Spirit) If a girl has love, joy, etc... she is authentically of God. That is the signet stamp of God.

-Flipside... no fruit, you are not a tree.
James “faith without works is dead.”

III. Being sealed by the Spirit brings a sense of security for the future.

1. The seal was a guarantee of what was to come. (v. 14)

-This word, “guarantee” is the Greek word “**Arrabon**”. And what it is used for is for business transactions. IF you made a significant purchase you were required to put forth a down payment. The down payment, or earnest, was a guarantee that the rest was coming. Something valuable is given as security that something of even greater value is yet to come.

-If you’ve ever bought a home... wrote a big check... signed your life away... I’m serious about this. The rest is coming.

A. As a Christian, you have eternal security!!!
-Don’t live in fear that you will lose your salvation.

2. The Spirit is just a foretaste.

Verse 14.... Until the redemption of God’s possession!

-Movie preview

Vs 14b. To the Praise of his Glory!!! This is all for the Glory of God!!!

-Macbeth was wrong. Life is a master story told by a Sovereign God. He has had a purpose from the beginning to the End and part of His master plan was to choose you before the foundation of the World as an adopted son, to redeem you by the blood bought redemption of His Son and to seal you with His Holy Spirit for all of Eternity. That is your identity in Christ!

(Discipleship appointment #5 -- The Sealing of the Holy Spirit. Who + What)

Metaphors of the Gospel

Justification Model	Adoption Model	Redemption Model
Loving/Holy God	Loving/Pursuing God	Loving/Redeeming God
Guilty man	Imperfect/isolated Man	Enslaved Man
“Paid the price”	“Makes you a Holy Son”	“Sets you free”

How metaphor would you use to share the Gospel with.....?

A friend of yours that is totally hooked on pornography and feels trapped and unable to get out?

A teenage kid who lives at home with his single mom after his dad abandoned them at a young age.

A college girl who seems to have an eating disorder and is obsessed with her body.

A businessman who thinks he is always right and is full of himself

1:15-23 **Prayer of realization.**

Garbage Mary (Max Anders)

Those who knew her called her, “Garbage Mary” and for good reason... Her neighbors would see her scrounging through garbage cans looking for food and for garbage that she collected. She then hoarded this garbage all throughout her car and in her 2 bed room apartment. There were mounds of garbage stuffed in the refrigerator, in the bathroom, in the cabinets... there was no place to sit, no room in the bathtub, only piles of garbage. Police picked her up in a shopping mall in Delray Beach, Florida, thinking that her mind had faded away, this woman who was living in garbage.

But when they dug into her life, they found some fascinating things. Her Father had been a successful banker who had died and left her a massive inheritance of money. She had passbooks for 8 large bank accounts. She had Mobil stock worth more than 400 thousand dollars as well as stock from many major companies. She owned oil fields throughout Kansas. “Garbage Mary” was a multi-millionaire.

There was this amazing life that she could live, that she could have, I mean it was hers... but she did not know how to appropriate it into reality. She had a miserable existence instead of living in that which was rightfully hers.

Paul is going to pray that we would take everything that we just learned and live like that is part of our daily reality. Live with these characteristics...

Since I heard of these things.... I'm praying for 2 things.

1. -Spiritual wisdom (17)

2. -Eyes of your heart enlightened (18)

-(not just that your eyes would see or that your heart would feel... but that the eyes of your heart would be opened.)

-Mindset and Heartset (echoes of Colossians 3)

If so.... Then certain Characteristics will happen.

1. Hope

Biblical Hope? (Certainty)

Edwards "Let us live this life with eternity stamped on our eyes!"

-This life is not all there is... C. S. Lewis called it the "Shadowlands" We live in the shadows of the bright reality that is yet to come!!!

2. Value

The Glory of **His** inheritance. (not the inheritance that is ours, but the Glory inheritance that is His. We magnify His glory back to Him and therefore we are to live like people that are immeasurably valued.

-Psychologists tell us that the need to feel valued is one of the highest needs of man. The more you feel valued by other people the more your life takes on significance.

(We've got to show people that they hope in God and they are valued by God!)

3. Power

Ephesus

* One of the main thing that you need to know about Ephesus is that it was the very center of the world for magic, the occult, witchcraft, and Spiritism. Crystals, spells, and evil spirits were a part of everyday life. Magic was glorified, kids were trained to be little Harry Potters.

* It was a culture obsessed with powers. The goal of everyday life was to try to get a hold of supernatural powers that could be worked towards you for your benefit.

1. **Cults, mystery religions, secret magic clubs.** And people would join these secret cults because they wanted to gain access to the powers that each cult claimed that they had. And when you were initiated into one of these clubs, it was said that you were “enlightened”, meaning, you now had new access to a higher reality of power.

2. **In Ephesus, they also believed that the Spirit world was divided into a power structure.** Some Spirits were higher than others and they divided the ranks of evil spirits into rulers, authorities, powers, and dominions.

3. And the main magical procedure that we need to know is that when someone was engaging in a spell or incantation, they would **name the name** of a spirit or god. And when they named that name they believed that they invoked that god to work his power towards the individual.

-And you would show respect and worship towards your spirit or god by chanting, “great is _____”

** So Paul enters the scene of Ephesus. And you may remember in Acts 19, that Paul comes to Ephesus, people start coming to Christ, and one of the first things they do is bring out their scrolls, and magic books. They burned them in a big fire and it was estimated that the value of these burning magic books was 50 thousand days of wages. And then, when the non-Christians thought that Artemis was being threatened, do you remember what they did? They rushed the temple and they chanted for over 2 hours, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians. Great is Artemis of the Ephesians.!”

-So suddenly, you have got this new Christian Church and most of these believers have been converted out of the occult. And these Christians are scared. They are afraid of the demonic spirits that they once worshipped. They are afraid that their enemies will name names to work powers against them. They afraid of the rulers and authorities and powers and dominions, that the whole power structure will unleash power against them!

18-23

-Do you see what Paul just did? He used their language, He used their cultural dynamics, He used the very concepts that were a part of their every day life, and most importantly, he went for the very fear of their hearts. And did you hear what He said?....

Enlightened... Everyone is all concerned about being enlightened in their own little groups, My brothers and sisters, I want you to be truly enlightened. I want your new life to radically alter your reality. Enlightened towards what?

The immeasurable greatness of his power towards us who believe.... That word immeasurable in Greek is something like “Super-beyond anything” greatness of God’s power. Your city is obsessed with magic power being worked towards them, God worked immeasurable power towards you... it is the power that God used when He raised Christ from the dead. That resurrection power is yours!!! And where is Christ in the whole power structure.

He is high above every rule and authority, power and dominion and every name that can be named. Ephesians, don’t you worry about some sorcerer trying to name a name over you and work magic powers against you. The greatest power in the universe has been given to you. The one high above any name that can be named has been given to you.

*** Because of all of these Spiritual blessings that I have told you... I pray that you would realize that you have hope. I pray that you would realize that you have value. I pray that you would realize that you have power!

Vs 22-23

-All things are in Subjection under His feet. He is head over the Church, and He fills all in all.

Meaning, The King is on His throne. He is in control of everything. And as it says in Habakuk,, His Glory will one day fill the earth, as the waters fill the sea!

(Discipleship appointment #6 -- prayer of realization. Help people understand their hope, value and Power that are theirs because of Christ.)

Chapter 2

2:1-10

As Bad as it was----- As Good as it gets!!!

3 of the most depressing verses in the Bible, followed by 2 of the most encouraging words, followed by a beautiful image of who we are!

I. As bad as it was. (verses 1-3)

A. We were dead.

Dead means dead. (Dead tree in front yard illustration)

-A spiritual corpse

B. We were disobedient.

-“Sons of disobedience” -When a Hebrew Rabbi would want to describe one’s very nature, he would use the phrase “Son of something.”
(Barnabas – son of encouragement)

- The culture of Ephesus, much like the culture of America, was a cesspool of sin. There was idolatry, drugs, illicit sex, murder, gladiator games, a temple to the pagan goddess Artemis. And there very nature was to be sinful...

C. We were doomed.

-Object of wrath... As sinners, we are doomed to receive the penalty of our sin and that is the wrath of God inflicted on us for all of eternity in Hell.

II. As Good as it gets. (vs. 4-5)

A. “But God” is perhaps the two most significant words in all of Christianity.

-dead... but God made you alive.

-Disobedient... but God chose to forgive you!

-Doomed... but God chose love and mercy!

Tupperware illustration:

You (1st Tupperware)

– Sin in you --- (verse 3)- we lived in it! We did it and it was the nature that we lived in...

But God... (verse 6) Made you Alive!!!

Colossians 1:27 --- The riches of the mystery: “Christ in You!” the hope of Glory.

(verse 6) -- You are in Him!!!

It used to be that sin is in you and you are in sin but now He is in you and you are in Him!!!

(When God looks at you---- He mostly sees Him!!)

(All of these Spiritual blessings that are lavished on you are less about you and more about Him. When He looks at you, He sees Him!!! And the central passion of the heart of God is His Son!!!)

(One final Tupperware)

Colossians 3:3 - **In God!!!**

**** Used to be... Sin is in you and you are in sin but now He is in you and you are in Him and He is in God!!!**

(Can you lose your salvation... Is there anything in the world that can break Christ out of you and you out of Christ and Christ out of God?)

What caused God to do this?

Several years ago, many of the Christian theologians of the world gathered to answer one question... What fundamentally separates Christianity from every other religion in the world?

C.S. Lewis ----- Grace (5, 7, 8)

-8-9 – Not your own doing... Do you think that on your own, you can do this (Tupperware thing)... No it is a work of grace through faith.

Undeserved Mercy...

Every other religion of the world -- (work to please the god)

-Not extreme Makeover God --- Look for a really deserving, really good person, who is worthy of great blessings...

No, Unworthy, in fact, Dead, disobedient, and doomed, But by God's grace through Faith he gave us what we could never have deserved.

What purpose does God want to accomplish by doing this?

A. Ποιημα .

It is the word that you would use for an artist that intentionally shapes and forms and molds something into the perfect vessel that she would want it to be. In that sense, I like how other versions translate that word, "Masterpiece".

-Poem ----- Power, passion, purpose. Verbalized love. Captures the heart of the poet.

-Artist Illustration: An artist intentionally designs each and every intricate aspect of his or her masterpiece to communicate something. It is displayed in the optimum location. The lighting is set just perfect. So that the work can best communicate the message of the artist. And when the art is displayed people rejoice in the art and praise the artist!!!

Likewise, God has carefully planned each and every intricate detail of your life. He made you and shaped you and formed each and every aspect of you, And then He placed you in the exact location, so that when the people God has placed in your life look at you, they would see a masterpiece of God's grace before their very eyes.

Living Poem of God's grace.

Goal: Be blessed by the art and give praise to the artist!!!

(Discipleship Appointment #7 -- The Gospel and the Masterpiece)

2:11-22 The walls torn down!

Fence Illustration: Rita Snowden tells a story during the French-English war of a group of French soldiers that sought to bury their comrade who was killed on the battlefield. They came to a church cemetery, and the priest came out and gently said, "I must ask was he a baptized member of the Roman Catholic Church?" His friends said, "I don't know?" And the priest replied, "I am sorry, but you can not bury him within the cemetery. Sadly, the friends buried him directly outside of the cemetery. The next day, the soldiers came to check on the gravesite and lo and behold, they could not find it. When they asked the priest, He said "Oh the gravesite is still there, but I was woken up this morning with such conviction that with my own hands, I moved the fence!"

I. You didn't belong. Vs. 11-12

A. Remember that you (Gentiles) did not belong.

A Jew grew up learning that there were 2 types of people in this world. The Jew, and everyone else (the gentiles). They were the people of God, they had the covenant promises of God, and the Gentiles were the outsiders.

- It was a Jewish belief that Gentiles were created to fuel the fires of hell. After a Jew left the house of a Gentile, he was to shake off his sandals, to shake the Gentile dust away from him.
- Righteous Jewish Man's prayer, every day: "Dear Lord, thank you that you did not make me a dog, a woman, or a gentile."
- Nickname for the "in" crowd: **"The Circumcision"**

Paul was saying, "Don't forget, Ephesians, that at one point, there were insiders and outsiders, and you were outsiders. You didn't belong."

-strong language... (separate, excluded, alienated, strangers.)

-Without Hope and without God in the world (echoes of last passage)

II. Now You do Belong. Vs 13-18

Germany Illustration: After the defeat of Nazi Germany in WWII, a wall was erected in the city of Berlin. On one side of the wall, marked Western Germany, a country marked by freedom and democracy. On the other side of the wall was Eastern Germany, a country that was ruled under the influence of communism. For 30 years this was a wall of hostility. It was a wall that marked the separation of two distinct nations. If you lived

in Eastern Germany and desired to live in Freedom, there was nothing you could do, you were separated, excluded, a foreigner. But in 1987, maybe some of you will remember a speech by Ronald Reagan when He was in Germany and He paused in the middle of his speech and said, “Mr. Gorbachev, Tear down this wall!” And sometime after that, the wall came down. People ripped pieces of it and saved it as souvenirs, and now the most common question in Berlin is “Where was the wall?” Because of Peace, the wall was ripped down and two nations became one.

Temple Illustration: There was once a major dividing wall of hostility in the Church as well. In the Old Testament when you went to the temple, it was a place that was filled with walls, the first courtyard was the court of Gentiles and anyone could enter, but you could only walk a little bit before you hit walls and a sign. And on that sign it said in three languages, (Aramaic, Greek, and Latin) “No Gentile can enter on punishment of death)

(By the way, Paul wrote this letter from Prison, and the reason He was in Prison was that He was falsely accused for bringing a Gentile into the Temple. Acts 21:27)

***There were two separate groups, a command or regulation that kept them separated, and they were physically divided by a wall of hostility.

A. Jesus broke down the **vertical wall of hostility**. (14)

-Do you see the power of that verse? When Jesus died, He broke down the wall of Hostility. He took the commands and the regulations that separated Jews and Gentiles and He abolished them in His flesh. In His death, it is as if He busted up the wall, took the two groups and made them one through Him.

-The vertical wall of Hostility between Jews and Gentiles has been broken down, and men can be reconciled through Christ...

(But that is not the only wall that Jesus broke down.)

B. Jesus broke down the **horizontal wall of Hostility!** (16)

** So we can have peace with man and peace with God...
that’s why Paul makes a very profound statement in this letter...

(Very Profound next statement...)

C. **He himself is our peace.** (verse 14)

In that day and age “peace” was very much the buzzword.

The World was ruled by Rome and Rome had 1 vision and 1 pursuit and that was peace". The called it the "pax Romana". The peace of Rome.

Now, in first century Rome, the Word "peace" wasn't quite used as it is today. The Word "peace" carried 2 main concepts.

1. **When Rome had authority over every nation.**
2. **When every nation had access to Rome. (by Roads)**

Peace wasn't pursued by negotiating and avoiding war, they went out and battled in every nation in pursuit of "peace"... And when they conquered each nation, they would begin building roads back to Rome, so that each country could access Rome. And they believed that when every nation was under the authority of Rome and every nation had access to Rome, that the world would experience Peace.

David McClister said that it was a dominant belief in that day and age that the emperor who would achieve peace must be Divine.
(The mark of divinity is on He who brings peace!!)

** And Paul says in verse 14... "He himself is our Peace" He says in verse 17, "He preached peace to those who were far off and peace to those who were near." Jesus is our peace...

*** Those who would have been listening would have been stunned by the implications... Their mindset of peace is that all nations of the world would be under the authority of Rome... Jesus is our peace... does that mean all nations of the world are under the authority of Christ? They would have thought.. Peace means all nations of the world have access to Rome... Jesus is our peace... That means that all nations of the world have access to Christ!!!

-Not just a Jewish Messiah coming for His own people... The King of the World who broke down the walls of hostility between man and man and man and God!

-Peace is a person.

III. A picture of what belonging looks like. 19-23

Paul's a preacher and so He says "Picture a great big building that rises to the sky"

A. Cornerstone.

In Biblical times, the first thing you did when you made anything was to have a cornerstone. It is the main focal point of the foundation. It is that which gives structural integrity to the whole building. The walls were held together by the cornerstone.

B. The look of the building.

Picture a building built on the cornerstone with all kinds of different bricks and stones. They are different shapes, different sizes, different colors, Yet formed together as one. There are no walls in the middle of this building, and it rises (verse 21) says it grows... Present tense... meaning different stones are being added. All kinds of very different stones are being mortared in...

C. Who lives there?

God does. We are God's house. We are the dwelling place of God. He lives in each of us individually, and when we are together, we are God's house together.

Application:

1. All over this world there are walls of Division.

Whether we like it or not, this world is filled with all kinds of divisions. There is divisions of race, divisions between young and old, between the affluent and the poor, between the healthy and the sick. Between nation and nation, language and language, denomination and denomination, republican and democrat. And anytime you gather all of these divisions together there will only be animosity, hatred, and conflict. No Peace.

But the beauty of the Church, is that it is meant to be the only group of people in the world where different races, socio-economic backgrounds, ages, political views, etc. can gather together in a community of Peace. Because that peace is from Jesus. He has broken down the walls.

** All things are brought to unity under HIM!!

2. Our peace can be the greatest proof to an unbelieving world of the validity of the Gospel.

-When an unbelieving world looks at us, it doesn't do a whole lot of Good to tell them the truth that "the walls of hostility have been broken down between Jew and Gentile and now we all can be brought near by the blood of Christ."

But when they look at us and see a totally diverse group of people, living in Biblical Community, somehow loving each other without fences, then they will know that there is something strange there.

***** Our peace can be the greatest proof to an unbelieving world of the validity of the Gospel.**

Robert E. Lee Illustration

The story is told that during a white church service in Virginia, immediately following the civil war, a black man entered and sat in a pew. When it came time for communion, each person came forward to partake, and then it came turn for this man to come forward. He rose from his pew and went to the front of the church. A silent hush fell over the congregation. Some started saying things under their breath. Some started saying things out loud. The essence of their words were, “we are not giving communion to him.” The pastor looked at the man, looked out across the congregation, and didn’t know what to do. After a moment of silence, another man from the back, stood up, and slowly walked forward. He took the communion cup and gave it to the black man who took a drink, then he, himself, took a drink. He then raised the cup high and said “In Christ, we are all brothers.” The man’s name was Robert E. Lee. Lee was making a statement that sounded loud and clear, “The divisions end here.” Moved the fences... walls torn down in Christ....

(Discipleship Appointment #8 - How Jesus breaks down walls and creates peace)

What is the Church?

I want you to picture this image...
(We are all a part of the Church in Ephesus.)

And we are not meeting in a building, we are meeting in a home. There are probably about 15 to 20 of us and if you look around the room there are slaves and masters, Jews and Gentiles, men and women, young and old. The type of group that if anyone walked in off the street couldn’t help but say, “What would possibly cause all of you to be together? What could unite a group of people like this together (that’s the point) But no matter how strange it might look, we get together, and we pray together and we sing together, and we take communion together and we love each other, and we don’t have a Bible, but we’ve got a letter from this Jewish Rabbi named Paul, and one of our leaders is going to stand up and read it and then we will pass it along to other house churches.

And outside of these 4 walls is the massive, wicked, immoral, rotting city of Ephesus. Our city is known as the witchcraft center of the world. (Full of Harry-Potter want to be's). Our city is known for immorality and temple worship and infanticide, worship of the dead and every evil you can imagine.

-The most sexual city the world has ever known.

(**Artemis**. Goddess of fertility and War. Which translated to the goddess of sex and violence. "Short, fat, stone statue, many breasts." Many breasted one. Worship Artemis by having sex with one of her temple prostitutes.)

Small little house churches, massive lost city... (pretty intriguing way to think of Church...more on that later)

And in this group of basically new believers, I imagine that a question was probably in a lot of their minds. And that question was, "I have decided to follow Jesus, now what? I'm in, now what? What does it mean to take the Jesus message to this wicked city? What does it mean to be the Church?"

3 images in this section of Scripture...

I. We are His Body. (1:22-23)

-Now I know that you have heard that phrase a thousand times, but pretend you just heard it for the first time... And I imagine they thought, "His body... We are Jesus' body on Earth?"

"I have understood that God loves this earth so much that He sent His Son. That the living God was **embodied** in Man and that Jesus said "the kingdom of God is here" and "follow me" and then he died for my sins, and rose from the grave and ascended into Heaven... But apparently, though Jesus is on a throne in Heaven, He intends that His hands and feet and heart would still be present on Earth and the way He does that is through us!! We are supposed to be a tangible expression of the body of Christ on earth.

-Apparently, Church isn't something that we go to. Church is something that we are.

-Apparently, Church isn't a place where we go to hear a message. Church is a message that we embody to all the places that we go.

-The Strategy to reach Ephesus

-The strategy to reach Ephesus, was that this little rag-tag bunch of believers would literally embody the Jesus message to the city.

-In all of the different avenues of life, they would attempt to live out the hands and feet and heart of Jesus.

Do people see Church like that Today?

II. We are His Artwork (2:10)

Paul gives them a second image of what they are supposed to be. And for this image, you also need to know something very important about Ephesus.

-Ephesus was known for its artwork of the gods.

Ephesus was known world wide for its artwork of the gods. People would do sculptures and paintings and mosaics and other types of images of their gods. The most common thing was to make images of the their goddess Artemis out of metal or marble.

And when this workmanship of these gods was made, they were bought and then they were worshipped.

***** They made artwork out of their gods.**

2:10 -Poima -- artwork. Masterpiece. We are God's artwork!!!

(however, there is also some massive implications to the Church. Here is this little rag-tag group of believers in a totally art dominated culture.... Trying to figure out... what is the church)

-Implications

We live in a culture where people make art work out of their gods, but here is a God who makes art work out of His people.

We live in a culture where people make art in their gods' images, but here is a God that makes people in His own image.

Living Drama of God's grace...

God has made us like a living drama or a moving picture to this world. And as we learned, the message of the artwork is God's grace. We are a piece of Art work displaying God's grace to this world.

How we live and act and treat each other displays His grace, so that the world might see the art and praise the artist.

III. We are the Temple (2:19-22)

The Ephesus context.... (credit to Rob Bell)

Ephesus was an Evil city and at the centerpiece of this city, and the centerpiece of that region of the world was the massive temple of Artemis, known as the Artemesian.

The temple of Artemis was one of the 7 wonders of the Ancient world. It was the world-wide epicenter of Artemis worship. People would travel from all parts of the world to see the temple and to worship her. During the Spring festival, over 1 million Artemis worshippers would be present at the temple.

Artemis was the goddess of fertility and war. She was worshipped as the blessed protector and provider of all things. So when anything good would happen, Artemis followers would attribute it to her. If you had a good crop, it was because Artemis blessed it, If you had a child, it was because Artemis blessed you, if you won a battle, if you hunted an animal, if you were successful at anything, then you worshipped Artemis as the one who provided it. They called her the blessed provider of all things.

And in the ancient world, the way to honor a god was **to build him or her a temple**, a place where the god dwelt and the god could be worshipped. The greater the temple, the greater the god, was the logic...

The temple of Artemis was a massive, beautiful, compelling building. It was the center of their world!!!

Philon, the Greek philosopher once wrote, “He who lays eyes on the temple at once, would be convinced that the world of the immortal gods has moved from the heavens to the earth.”

Another philosopher said, “I have seen the great pyramids, I have seen the walls of Babylon, and all pale in comparison, to the great temple of Artemis.”

Stats... The temple was 180/160 feet. The main altar itself was 66/100 feet. It had 127 marble columns that were 65 feet high. It also had hundreds of marble pillars that were 6 feet across. In the ancient world, buildings were built very slowly and it took 120 years for a full-time laborer to build one pillar. That means that a man would spend his entire life building one pillar, wouldn't finish it but instead, he would pass it down to his son who would spend his entire life working on it, and most likely, the man's grandson or great-grandson would finish the pillar. And there were hundreds of them.

The temple owned 70 thousand acres of land (110 miles... here to Indianapolis) They leased this land as farm land and the temple became the **financial center** of all of Asia. If anyone wanted to borrow money, you did it from the temple.

4 major categories of the function of the temple...

(from Rob Bell)

1. Protector of the Accused.

If were accused of a crime and you didn't do it, you had one place of refuge. One shelter where you could escape to and be safe at the temple. And though you may be accused and considered guilty anywhere else, the temple was a place of refuge.

2. Social Welfare.

-If you fell on hard times and lost your job or your house burned down or something bad happened to you, and you needed water or food or money or shelter, you would go to the temple and they would help you out. The temple is a safe place where needs can be met.

3. Cultural influence

-If you wanted to know where the greatest art was, the greatest poetry, the greatest theatre, the cutting edge of culture, you went to the temple.

4. The place where the gods dwelt.

If you wanted to encounter Artemis, you did so at the temple.

(Do you get a feel for what life would have been like in Ephesus? Here is this little rag-tag group of believers in some house, and if the sun was shining, there is a good chance they were in the shadow of the temple. There is a good chance that there were people walking out side going to the temple... And they are asking, what are we supposed to be about?)

(Verses 21-22)

What would that have sounded like in their ears??

We are the temple!!!

1. Protector of the Accused.

-Some of the believers would have immediately thought, well the temple is meant to be this protector of the accused. The place of refuge, a safe house. That must mean we are supposed to be that. That must mean that we are to be a group of people that the hurting and accused and judged can go and find peace... spiritual refuge.

2. Social Welfare.

-Some would have connected social welfare. They would have thought, well the temple is meant to be the social welfare force...to help those in need, I guess that means that we are supposed to help those in need. We look to meet the needs of the hurting, helpless, hopeless, those who need food and money and help... That's us!!!

3. Cultural influence

-Some would have undoubtedly thought, "well the temple is the cutting edge of cultural influence.. the best art, the best theatre, the best poetry... Wow we have a God who is the creator of the universe, maybe He is saying we should be the ones influencing culture with art, and poetry and theatre.

Even today... isn't the best movies done by Christians???

4. The place where the gods dwelt. If you wanted to encounter Artemis, you did so at the temple.

But I think most significantly, I think they looked around the room in each other's eyes, and were collaborately stunned by one truth. If the temple is the place where God dwells, where people go to encounter God, then the Living God of the universe dwells in us! That temple down the street is just a hunk of rocks, It is a fake. It is a fraud. God's presence is in us. And just like people all over the world travel to encounter their god at the temple, The living God of the universe intends for people to encounter Himself, through us.

We're a bunch of stones, multi-colored, different shapes and sizes, all different stones, Jesus is our cornerstone, and the living God of the universe dwells in us!!

What is the Church? It is a place where the living God of the universe is present.

***** Final thing.

Massive, wicked city, little tiny house church.... This letter was written and received around 60 AD. A little after, 100 AD (50 years) after this letter was read, Historians tell us that Ephesus was 90% followers of Jesus Christ. This world center of Artemis worship, became the thriving center of Jesus Worship.

Scholars and Historians writing on this period simply remark, “something happened in Ephesus.”

What Happened? **They DID IT!!!!**

This little rag tag bunch of believers heard the truth and lived the truth.

They were the body!

They were the artwork!

They were the temple!

God said this is what I want you to be. They went after it. And 50 years later, their city was radically transformed.

-Now that doesn't mean in those 50 years they were always perfect... About 30 years after this letter of Ephesus was written, Jesus himself rebuked them through John that they had left their first love and had to go back to the passion they had at first... but when you look at that whole chunk of time together... they did it....

Little while ago, they dug up Ephesus, and all that was left of the temple was a pile of rocks buried under 20 feet of dirt, and we are still here today!!!

They did it.

And if they can do it, we can do it!

(Discipleship Appointment #9--- What is the Church? Are they truly part of the church or do they have a messed up viewpoint of God's heart for the church?)

Ch. 3

1st 13 verses are personal reflections on Paul's role in the mystery.
"My role in this deal." The mystery that the Gentiles are part of the promise as well and that all things are brought to unity in Christ.

How is Paul involved in each of these?

Do these question style....

1. Prisoner of Jesus Christ!

(after a whole letter of freedom, released from bondage and slavery... now, "I am a prisoner once again!")

Voluntary Captivity ... my chains are gone, but now, I am chained to Christ.

Abraham Lincoln Story: (not sure if this is historically accurate)

A young girl was being sold on the slave auction block and legend has it that Abraham Lincoln stepped up to the auction, outbid everyone else, and bought her as a slave. She put her head down and followed him. After about 10 steps, he stopped, unlocked her chains and said, "You are free." She paused for a moment, looked back at him and said, "Then... then I choose to be your slave. For I will serve a man that has paid the price to set me free."

2nd Corinthians 2:14 --- "Chained to the victory chariot of Christ."

- Ancient World Triumph image.
- Chained to Christ.

Verse 2

2. Steward of God's Grace. (verse 2... stewardship of God's grace)

Steward? ---- head manager of estate. Takes care of the master's stuff.

(usually think of it in terms of \$, but stewards of Grace?)

- Manager of Master's grace... dispensing it fully, wisely, abundantly...

-He mentions “grace” 16 times in this letter... He is so radically focused on grace because he speaks as one who has received so much!!

3. Servant of this Gospel.

Greek work “diakonos” (deacon) (verse 7 – “minister”)

-one who serves... often serving tables... (a cook cooks it, I bring it out and serve it to people.” (I don’t change it... I serve it)

-I take the message of the Gospel that I have been given, and I serve it to others...

-I serve by bringing to light the mystery!!

(Discipleship appointment #10 – teach them to see their role as Serving Christ by being a prisoner of Christ, a steward of grace and a minister of the Gospel)

3:14-21

Vs 14

I bow my knees before... In the ancient world the most common posture of prayer was standing. The phrase, “I bow my knees before” is typically the phrase used for the posture you take before a King. He starts out his prayer with the tone that he is approaching the King. **(King)**

Father... But instead of saying King, He says Father. In the Greek this is a very intimate-daddy-like term. It is the protector, provider, daddy-at-the-door figure. **(Father)**

From whom every family in heaven and earth is named... And then He adds, “” In Bible times, a family, or tribe, or even a nation would derive it’s name from it’s original ancestor. The Benjamites came from Benjamin. He was the life-originator and His identity was upon them. TO say that every family in heaven and on earth derives its name from God is to say He is the Life-originator, or the Creator of all... **(Creator)**

Paul starts out praying, but it’s important that you see that He is not just saying, “Hey I’m going to shoot some requests heaven-ward and hope that the higher power hears.” Paul is saying,

“I am bowing before Creator-Father-King.”

Asks for 2 great things...

I. You can experience God's power. (vs 16-17a)

A. God, with unlimited resources of Power, will strengthen you with power, through His spirit, in your inner being.

Laptop Illustration

-I know very little about laptop computers. But I do know this. When the little battery picture in the corner of the screen is full, there is power and it works. When it is empty, there is no power and it doesn't work. And I also know that in the wall there is an unlimited amount of power. But most important for me to know is that If I will only plug in to that unlimited power, a lightning bolt appears on my screen and my laptop is able to be strengthened from the power source through a plug in its inner being.

-By the way, If it is connected through the plug to the power source, it can run for ever. If it is disconnected from the power source, it is only a matter of time, before it stops working.

1. The meaning of Power

-Power is the Greek word "dunamis" WE get real cute with it sometimes, like that is where we get our English word dynamite etc. But the meaning of dunamis means inherent ability. Or ...a power that has the ability to accomplish something. What does that mean?

(What does that power consist of? I think the answer to that question is in the next statement)

B. The Power is Christ dwelling in your hearts.

1. The meaning of "dwell"

-In the Greek language, there are 2 words that one would use for this word "dwell". One is (**paraoikos**) which means to temporarily dwell (often used in the Bible when a traveler would rent a room), the other word is (**kataikos**) which means to permanently dwell! It is the difference between renting a room and owning a home.

Rent versus own

-you can't make changes... when you own something, you bust down walls if you don't want them there. You renovate. You take over and change everything because you own the home!!

-Life as a house illustration:

Has He been given access to every room? When He has full ownership... that is when the power comes.

More of God = less of You

Dwight L. Moody - Someone once said to him, "The world is yet to see what God can do with a heart that is totally devoted to Him." Moody replied, "Then I will be that man."

"They found the Secret": Many of the Great Christian leaders of the world give a common testimony... "There was a time where I felt like I loved God and was trying to serve God and yet I felt kind of ineffective, like I was trying hard, grinding it out and missing something..."

Crisis of total surrender: The presence of Jesus through the Holy Spirit becoming an inexhaustible fountain.

Hudson Taylor: "The exchanged life"

John Bunyon: "The unchained life"

Amy Carmichael: "The Radiant Life"

Oswald Chambers: "The Highest life"

Andrew Murray: "The Satisfying life"

Practical: A daily choice of repentance/surrender/asking in Faith.

II. You can experience God's love. (vs. 17-19)

A. You must be rooted and established in love.

-Tree illustration/Architecture illustration

B. You can know how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ.

-The extravagant dimensions of the love of God

C. Knowing what surpasses knowledge.

-Ocean illustration

(we used to live near the ocean... the ocean surpassed their knowledge.

Could never know how many gallons, the depth, etc... could never know it comprehensively. But they could know it experientially. Meaning: they could splash in the water and jump in the waves...

They could know what they could never fully know!

We can't know comprehensively, but we can know experientially!

III. We can experience more power and more love than we could ever fathom.

A. He is able to do “immeasurably more”

-Paul is about to close this prayer, and actually He is about to close the first half of this book. And with these concepts of God's love and God's power through Christ that we can experience, He says “Now to Him who is able to do -- ...and I think He paused for a second... thought for a little bit... and then said, “Now to him who is able to do... “Hooperekperisou”.... Than all we ask or imagine. If you look that up in a Greek dictionary, you won't find it. It doesn't exist. He made that word up. In fact what he did is string a bunch of superlatives together... the literal translation would be something like... “super, incredibly, way, more” Tichicus who was transcribing this would have been like, “Paul that's not a word! ... I know just write it down anyways. The only way to describe what God can do is super, incredibly, way, more than all we ask or imagine!!!

-Do you realize how beautiful that is---

-If you realize the fullness of God. There is more power and love than you could ever fathom. Ask me anything, I can do beyond what you could ever ask. Imagine what I could do, Dream it up, and I will blow the categories off of what you could ever think.

-Tozier “What you think about God is the most important thing about you!”

B. He does this by His power at work in us.

(Energieio – operative power)

Engine illustration --- If you are a Christ follower -- Picture it like this. Your life is a car and inside that car you have the most powerful engine possible. It is possible, to sit in the driveway with the engine off... or it is possible to turn the ignition switch and drive. (A vast amount of Christians never really turn the ignition switch on and experience the power of the Engine)

What is the switch?

“God Himself is our source of power, but fellowship with God is that which

“throws the switch” and makes that power operative and effective in our lives.” - Leroy Eims *The Leader you were meant to be* 16.

“When God finds a person who will place as his first priority a life of intimate, personal, dynamic fellowship with Him, He directs His power, guidance, and wisdom into and through that person. God has found a man through whom He can change the world.” - Leroy Eims pg. 19

(Not just having God in you... but a relationship of Dynamic fellowship/or dynamic interaction and connection with God!!)

Exodus 33:7-8

-Outside of the Israelite camp, there was a place called the tent of meeting. Anyone who wanted to meet with God, could go the tent of meeting. It was open for all... And Moses would often go and meet with God. And when Moses went to meet with God, the people would step outside of their tent and watch...

Exodus 33:9-11a

-pillar of cloud descends...

-Everybody worshipping outside of their own tents...

-** Moses and God –speaking face to face –like Friends!!

A lot of the Israelites --- Content to follow God and worship God and live lives where they are trying to please God --- but not living in this dynamic communion with God... where they are connected to Him and experiencing His power.

-But Moses experienced God.

Practical:

But many of you would say --- “I don’t know how to make that real!”

3 Ways ---- (Experiencing God through Prayer, Word, Obedience)

1. Experiencing God through Prayer.

A. Frank Laubach example

There was this missionary by the name of Frank Laubach. He was a missionary to the Philippines and he, honestly, was lonely, discouraged and feeling very ineffective.

-He began to try to focus on God for a portion every hour. So He would have a conversation with someone, but would internally pray, God would be present in this. I want to hear from you. Experience you... He'd be on a walk and He'd be talking to God. Cultivate this flowing, inner conversation with the Lord.

-then to half an hour... then to every minute... struggling with it...

-Cultivating the continual practice of the presence of God.

B. Willingness to "Ask the Lord"

- Eph. 3:20-21 Remember that this prayer of God doing super-incredibly-way more than all we ask or imagine, is in the context of Paul boldly asking God!

-He is a God who says... "I want to do amazing things... But I want you to ask me!"

-Do we ask God enough? Do you ask Him to empower you? Do you ask Him to let you experience His love? Do you ask this for others? Or do you know those things to be true, but you just don't really ask? "you have not, because you ask not!"

C. Prayer that listens

Mathew 17:1-2 (up on a mountain... 3 ... amazing moment!!)

Mathew 17:5 (God speaks truth into this... What does He say? **Listen!**)

-When we pray, what do we mostly do? Talk! Talk! Talk!

WE have to learn how to pray with a heart that is listening for the voice of God as He directs our heart and prompts our Spirit...

2. Experiencing God through His Word.

Not simply talking about reading the Bible...

2nd timothy 3:16-17

The very breath of God –(the warmth of His breath through the pages... to you -beth moore)

Living and Active - more than just words of a page. This living, active, voice of God... God speaking to you about your world, your day, your relationships, His will for you! IN the tent, face to face...

Read (Often a short little section... maybe just a paragraph...)

Reflect (usually... a small part that I'm drawn to...)

Respond (Ask God... apply...)

Rest (meditate on it... lozenge... sharing it...)

3. Experiencing God through Obedience:

-Last week, we asked our kids to go in from the minivan, hang their coats up. Put their shoes where they belong. Put on pajamas. Brush their teeth... we came inside... DISOBEDIENCE... shoes everywhere. Jackets on the ground... Kids wrestling...

Not in dynamic fellowship with parents... disobedience blocks this.

1 John 5:3 a

-if you want to be in dynamic fellowship with God. Obey... when you sin, keep short accounts with God and repent... then obey...

Review: God says, "I want to do super-incredibly-way more than all you could ever imagine. According to my power at work within you!! How do you tap into that?"

You be in dynamic connection with Him ---

***Through prayer that is continual-prayer that asks-prayer that listens.**

***Through meeting with God through His Word.**

***Through obeying God.**

The proper response to this truth: Doxology

**(Discipleship appointment 11-12: Experiencing the Power and Love of God.
Practically teach them about a prayer life, devotional life and obedience)**

Chapter 4 (massive transition in the text)

Please notice... He hasn't told you to do anything! It has all been about who you are!

Outline;

(1-3) The Calling of the Christian (4-6) The Conduct of the Christian

-Who you are!

-How you should behave!

-Not a single command

-35 commands (in light of what I've told you, this is how you should act towards your wife, your kids. This is how you should act in the marketplace. This is how you should act on the Spiritual battlefield!)

4:1-6

Our conduct must be balanced with our calling. (vs 1)

(Paul starts out this section not by saying, "Hey I here is something I want you to try, or I want to encourage you give this a shot.... He says I urge you!!!)

"urge" has a sense of urgency. Immediately do this!!!

"Worthy"

-The word "worthy" is the Greek word "axios" and it means balance. If your calling is up here, don't let your life be down here, out of balance with that calling.

I. Unity !!

Paul says that spiritually we ARE one. Verses 4-6

-In a single sentence, Paul repeats a single word 7 times. He wants a single concept to be in your face and that single concept is that, in a spiritual sense, we ARE all one.

-Paul is writing to a local congregation IN Ephesus. They are filled with masters, slaves, Jews, Gentiles, men, women, and He wants to make it very clear that though they may all come from different backgrounds, in a spiritual sense, they are one.

-Spiritual sense they are one... now they have to live like that!!

Illustration --- Marriage: When I marry someone, I declare them one, and then say, "Now live like what you are!".

Great! How? (Unity in your Church, marriage, friendships)

A. Humble

Definition (Piper) : Humility is a heart attitude that esteems oneself correctly before God.

Therefore, a word that is always associated with Humility in the Bible is lowliness. (Isaiah 6 vision) "My eyes have seen the King – not Wow/Woe"

** Theological Arrogance (particularly reformed... Great Hypocrisy)

If your theology shouts out that only He is sovereign and all-knowing but your biography shouts out, I am always theologically right, then your biography will diffuse your theology—because you will seem hypocritical.

-Would your wife/friends describe you as a humble man?

-Soil of humility leads to a harvest of unity....

(If Humility is an attitude in your heart, then the way that humility will manifest itself towards others is the next word. Gentleness, or it is often translated as Meekness.)

B. Gentle

Defn. Meekness or gentleness is being willing to wave your own rights, in consideration of others. It is the same Greek term used for when they would bridle a Stallion. Here is something with Power and ability, yet held under control.

-Do you remember Jesus' self-description? He said in Mathew 11, "Take my yoke and learn from me for I am Meek and humble in heart." If anyone ever waived his own rights and bridled the stallion within, it was Jesus.

-When you know you are right in an argument.... Win?

Unity with people? --- Meek.

C. **Be patient, bearing with one another in love.**

-attitude of your heart when your wife is annoying you or someone is incompetent. (Church, marriage, hurt by Elders, etc...)

-Bearing -- Christians are called to "bear" with each other. "longsuffering"
-to hurt with those who hurt ...

-At times, God allows pain within a group as a path to unity. It is through bearing with each other in pain that you get below the shallow and the surface relationships.

D. **Make every effort** to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of **peace**.

1. Bond

Bond.... Is the Greek Word used for ligaments and tendons. Paul is started to set up body language. It is as if Paul says, "Hey you are the body, you all are different parts, but without one aspect the body won't work, the parts will just grind together, there is a critical element that makes it work.... The bond of peace.

2. Peace.

You must pursue peace towards one another. I told you earlier in this book, that when Paul was talking about Jesus, he said, "he Himself is our peace. We were once at enmity with God. We were separated from God, but because of Jesus, the strife has been removed and we can have peace with God. But, because of Christ, peace isn't just a vertical concept, it is a horizontal concept as well. Because of Jesus, we can have peace with each other... Do you think peace is something easy to attain? No way...that is why Paul says....

3. Make every effort... In the Greek this is a very intense phrase. Not just try, Not just give peace a shot. Use every bit of effort that you have. Go after peace!! Go for this peace with each other with all your heart.

**** Conclusion of this section...

In the Roman and Greek world, the most offensive thing you could do was to say that there is only 1. It was a pluralistic culture. They believed in many gods, and many paths to salvation, In fact, everyone could have their own god if they wanted, the only thing that no person should do was to say that their God was the only way. Tolerance was the central value. If you preach an exclusive religion, everyone got offended. Does that culture sound familiar?

And then you have this little rag tag bunch of Christians that were the early church. Their message was that there is one God, one way to Heaven, one savior, and that is Jesus Christ. Their message would have been offensive to everyone, but yet something about them caused the world to be turned around for the cause of Christ. It wasn't just that their theology said that they had unity, it was that their behavior matched their beliefs. The world saw **their humility and gentleness and patience and peace** and it validated their message. Their lives were so compelling, because they lived their message. They were spiritually one and they lived like it.

(Discipleship appointment – #13 -- teach them how to be united)

Maturity

Ephesians 4:7-16

I. God gave us all gifts and made us His gift to a Church. (7-10)

A. Image of King giving gifts (vs. 8)

What in the world? This passage begins with an image that needs a little bit of explaining... In the Ancient world, when a King would win a battle, He and His army would not only lead the captives behind them but they would take the plunder of the defeated nation, and give out gifts to the people back home. This verse comes from Psalm 68 that prophetically looks to the time when God will win a battle, ascend on high and give gifts to men. Jesus Christ won the battle of the ages against sin and death. It was he who not only descended to earth, but then ascended to Heaven and as he did, He gave out Spiritual gifts to His people.

B. You've each been given Spiritual gifts.

C. You are God's gift to this Church.

-You have not been given a gift **to you for you**... to you for the Church.

-To say that you are God's gift to something else, usually sounds arrogant. If someone thinks, He is God's gift to women, for example, it means He is

pretty vain. But you need to know, in a very real sense, that you are God's gift to the body of Christ!

-Illustration: Kid, gift in mail, don't open it for 2 weeks.
Don't do that to the body of Christ!!!

(Teach people that!!!) (Teach disciples spiritual gifts..)

A. God gave the Church leadership (11-12)

(Greatest grammatical error in the history of the world: 1903 English Bible... comma in verse 12. To Equip the saints, for the work of ministry, until....)

What do church leaders do? They equip the saints and they do the work of ministry. Normal people come to church and they get ministered to by the church leaders who come and minister to us.

B. To mend the nets and to set the bones...

The word "equip" here is the Greek word (Katartismos) and it means to restore to its original purpose...

-One example of its use is for a fisherman that takes the nets, fixes the holes, so that the nets can fulfill the proper function of catching fish. If there are holes in the net, fish swim in, fish swim out, but when the nets are prepared, or equipped, they can then function optimally.

It is also used for when a doctor sets a broken bone in place to heal.
(Restores even stronger!!)

-So then, my job as a leader in this Church is to help prepare and equip you to perform your proper function.... And what is that??? What is the essence of your life? What is the function that I am to prepare my people to do?

C. The work of Ministry.

That is the word (diakonian) and it means both ministry and service I am to prepare my people to do the work of ministry. I am to prepare them to minister, or let me say it even clearer, **I am called to equip each of my people to be the ministers.**

I am called to make disciples who will make disciples...

Time out....

That is not the normal view of Church.

Scene that I would love!!!

-Who is the minister?... what.... We all are!!
Needs? --- we do
Leads? --- Jesus!
Guy on Stage? -- **The BONE SETTER!!!**

-Plant a Church ---- don't make it about you!!!!

Cruise ship vs. Battle ship analogy

What will the Church look like (15-16) A body!!!

When you are connected to a body you have both unity and maturity!!!

Characteristics:

Maturity – (13)

-a crowd in a church that is not functioning as a body where everyone uses their gifts is immature.... But when all minister, there is maturity.

-steadfastness 14

You won't be tossed around... all keep each other grounded...

-Growth in love (16)

-Everyone speaks loving truth to each other... and the body grows in that!!

(Discipleship Appointment #15 – Teach and challenge them to truly serve and connect to a local church. Give them a Spiritual Gifts test! Help them discern and connect to a local body!)

What does maturity practically look like? (4:17-middle of 5)

Putting off and putting on

17-19 Don't live like the Gentiles do.

Their thinking is messed up, understanding is messed up, ignorant, their hearts are hard, given themselves to sensuality, and every impurity, and all they want is more.

-Don't live like that.... But instead....

Verses 21-24

At 8 o'clock every night, in my home there lies a pile of dirt stained, food-splattered, smelly, grimy Kid's clothes. They love mud, they wipe fingers, they spill drinks and at the end of every night we peel the battle garments off of them, bathe them, and put them in fresh, clean pajamas before we put them to bed. The actions of the day have changed and now it is appropriate for there to be a change of clothes. There is a putting off and a putting on. And today, we are going to look at what God is telling us in His Word and we're going to learn that in this faith Journey there should be a pile of clothes. There should be a putting off and a putting on. There should be a clothes change.

Practically ---- putting off certain things and putting on certain things

-25 – It will affect the way you speak. (put off falsehood put on truth)

-26- put off anger

-put off stealing

29 -- Let no/But only (ESV)

I. Let no words that bring decay come out of your mouths. (29a)

-“corrupting” The word corrupting is the Greek word that is used for a spoiling or molding or decaying of food. So Paul is saying, “Don't speak in such a way that brings decay to the food...?”

-Have you ever walked up to the refrigerator and opened up your little Strawberry container and found that there was mold on a Strawberry? If you have you know how frustrating it is because it's not just take that strawberry and throw it out. Because the thing about mold is that it gets in, grows and infests one strawberry,

somehow gets airborne and then grows and infects other strawberries. Mold is rarely isolated, it Spreads and destroys.

(Paul says our words can be like that. The way we communicate can have a decaying effect.)

II. But only communicate words that give grace.

A. The goal: Building up.

-Paul uses a construction image here. When you build something, you take materials and use them to build physical growth. Likewise, when you have a conversation, you are take materials and use them to build Spiritual growth. Your speech can tear and destroy, but your speech can also build up.

B. as fits the occasion. (as is appropriate)

C. The Purpose: Grace may be given.

-Let your words be full of Grace to build others up...

-We speak 25 thousand words a day. 25 thousand opportunities.

(Discipleship Appointment: #16 -- Teach them practical maturity: How to speak about others, etc...)

5:1-7 The enemies of maturity

(What will take you down!)

Lust and Greed. (those of you who will go down, will probably be in 1 of these 2 areas)

Model of Maturity: God

You be an imitator of Christ. (a fragrant offering)

-have the smell of Jesus.

Lust:

immorality -- Greek Word "pornea" not even named = not even a hint

DVR illustration --- SI .com illustration

Coarse Jestings - Greek Word to apply wit to a word and to turn it to a sexual joke.

Covetousness: Greed

Darkness/Light

(Discipleship appointment #16 --- Teach them sexual purity. If you are with guys, consider pausing and doing a whole section on this. Read, "Pure Desire" or "The 40-day game plan" Set up an accountability structure.)

The Spirit-filled Life (the power source of maturity)

Ira Yates illustration

There was once a man named Ira Yates who was a poor sheep farmer in Western Texas. He raised sheep on his land and had absolutely no money. He lived during the great depression and survived on government subsidy because he didn't even have the money to feed and clothe his family. They were on the brink of going hungry. They didn't have the resources to make it. Ira lived a dry, desert like, impoverished life.

--And then one day an oil company came and asked if they could drill on His land. They did a test drill and that day 80,000 barrels of oil shot up. IN 1930, 80K barrels equalled 2.5million dollars. Since that day, they have mined 125,000 barrels of oil every single day. It has become known as the legendary, "Yates pool"

--Ira live a dry, desert like, impoverished life until one day His life was transformed because of the realization that there was an immeasurably valuable, inexhaustible resource that He could tap into. And it was His all along.

Dominant Command (vs 18) --- Be filled with the Spirit.

15-17

15: Redeem the time (Life is short, eternity is long... Time is wasting away, but you can buy it back!!! You can live effectively!)

17: The will of the Lord (everyone wants to know that!!)

-Not so much something to be sought for the future, but something to be lived for the present. A present reality that you live in....

***** The Spirit-filled life is the Key to living in effectiveness and living in His will!!**

I. What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit?

A. Don't get drunk on wine, which is debauchery.

In Ephesus, and all over the ancient world, a few times a year, people would have the world's largest Keg party. They would to festivals for Dionysus, (Bachus) the wine goddess. The way that people would worship the wine goddess was to get drunk out of their minds and then proceed to spend several days in excessive eating, frenzied dancing, and days upon days where basically their lives were squander away in a massive party. They also felt that when they were thoroughly drunk, Dionysus would then empower them, control them, and cause them to do her will. Paul basically starts with an image that is in their world in their daily reality, that hey all are very familiar with and says, "Picture someone totally drunk."

Ever been drunk?

- I won't make you raise hands but if you have ever been drunk or known someone that is drunk, you know that when people are intoxicated, the influence of that alcohol makes them act differently. They speak differently. They respond differently. They sing differently. They walk differently. In that moment, they tend to view life and live life differently.

-Someone could be very down, but if you put the right amount of alcohol in him, he could be singing and dancing on the table.

**It is an influencing agent that radically affects your attitude, perspective, and demeanor.

-Debauchery

-Paul says, don't get drunk on wine which is debauchery. Some of your versions say, "Which leads to a life of dissipation. It's the same Greek word used for when something is scattered away or thrown into the wind." If you live a life yielded to that influencing agent, your life will be Scattered.)

(But Paul's point is not so much about alcohol as it is about something else. Paul is saying, "You got that picture of this influencing agent that leads to this kind of life... Then let me command you to be yielded to an influencing agent that produces another kind of life!"

B. Instead, Be filled with the Spirit.

1. Characteristics

Remember how I said that when someone is drunk the alcohol empowers them to act different, think different, speak different, view life and live life differently. Likewise, when someone is filled with the Spirit, the Spirit is an influencing agent that empowers them to act differently, to speak differently, to respond differently, to view life and live life differently.

**it is an influencing agent that radically affects your attitude, perspective, and demeanor.

Fullness.

People often get confused about this concept of fullness. Not fullness like a cup of water is filled or half filled, but the Bible refers to fullness in a relationship sense.... For example... when a guy is full of himself it means that his desires, his agenda, his interests are the focus of all that he does. When someone is full of the Spirit it means that the Spirit's desires, agenda, interests are the focus of what he does. Are you full of yourself or full of the Spirit?

2. Present, passive, continual command.

That means that this is saying, "Keep on Letting yourself, over and over, day by day and moment by moment be filled with the Spirit"

-many of the roles of the Holy Spirit are things that He accomplishes at Salvation and are in His court. Eph 1, "you are sealed by the Holy Spirit for all of eternity" Col. "You are baptized by the Holy Spirit at the time of your conversion." John 14 "You are indwelt with the Holy Spirit." All those things God does, when you are saved. But in this aspect the Bible is saying, Let yourself, over and over, day by day, moment by moment, be filled with the Spirit.

Point...He's there, but the ball is in your court... You must yield yourself!!

Engine illustration

-There are times when I sit in my car with the engine off. And though the engine is there, and though it is powerful, it is present, and it is able to empower the vehicle to great movement, I am sitting there, not depending on it's empowering presence.

-Or use Paul's illustration... Just like it is a daily decision to be yielded to alcohol and therefore experience the life effects of alcohol, it is a daily

experience to be yielded to the Spirit and to experience the daily effects of the Spirit.

What does it mean to be filled with the Spirit? **It means to be empowered, controlled, totally influenced, intoxicated with the Spirit of God!!**
Be inebriated with God!

(If that is what it means, then what does that look like?)

II. What does it look like when you are filled? (19-21)

Command verb followed by a bunch of dependant participles.

Play basketball, shooting, passing, dribbling, jumping, running. The command is to play Basketball, and these other areas are the aspects of what playing looks like.)

1. Worshipful: Your life seems to make music

-That seems strange... We're supposed to become walking minstrels?

-Paul's point is less the specifics and more that the general demeanor of your life is worshipful.

-Have you ever been around someone that just seems to have the "glow". There is a joy-source that seems to be there and they just seem to bust out with songs and verses and a joyful presence.

-My dad used to drive around our family cars and sing non-stop. He'd mangle the words and get the tunes all wrong, but yet you knew that there was this joyful, worshipful presence about Him.

-The central passion of the Holy Spirit is to exalt Christ. His desire is to get people pointed to Christ and worshipping Christ and it would only make sense that if you are empowered, influenced, controlled by the Spirit of God that your life would be characterized by that. There is a glow... Your life seems to make music.

-Very clear in my own life... times when I am yielded to the Spirit.

2. Thankful.

-When you are filled, empowered, influenced by the Spirit of God, your life seems to have a grateful presence.

-When I am empowered by the Spirit, The reality of Jesus and grace and Heaven, and that I am blessed beyond what I could ever deserve, causes me to have a grateful demeanor. When I am not, I tend to be in this “Eeyore sort of mode.” Nothing to be thankful for, everything is bad...

3. Submissive

-Big “S” word. It means to place yourself under someone else... Or to place someone else’s desires, wishes, needs, over yours.

-I’m Third! (God is first, others second, I’m third)

-I don’t naturally think like that. I naturally think. I’m first. That is my default mode. That is my depend on my self mode. And I don’t live in a submit myself to others mind-frame unless I am influenced or empowered by an intoxicating agent that makes me think and act and respond differently.

What does it look like to be filled with the Holy Spirit?

When you are worshipful and thankful and when you make yourself third.

How do you assess if you are living the Spirit-filled, God-intoxicated life right now?

-Here is the Spiritual **breathalizer**. If you are worshipful and thankful and third, then you are.

III. How do you get this?

Take Inventory... Am I worshipful, thankful and third?

Repentance

Yieldedness..... Conscious surrender. (Throne transfer)

Faith

(Discipleship Appointment #17 - The Spirit-Filled life. Teach them what this means and how to live in this truth. Use the Campus Crusade for Christ booklet if you need a practical teaching resource.)

Maturity in the Home

Ephesians 5:25-33

I. You love her like Jesus loves you. (25a)

-Status of Women in Ephesus.

-In that day and age the status of women in Ephesus was very low. Their job was to cook, clean, serve, and raise the kids. If you were a husband back then, you owed your wife two things... A roof over her head and food on the table... You were not emotionally attentive towards her, or faithful towards her, or, by any means, a servant to her. She existed to serve you. And in the midst of that culture, in first century Ephesus, Paul makes a statement that sounds simple to us, but would have been a complete paradigm shift for them. He says....

You love her as:

-As Christ loved the Church.

-Pursuing love.

-Unconditional love.

-Serving love.

-Sacrificial love

-Faithful love

-Greatest marriage book you can ever read.

-maybe our wives should be able to say, "I understand the love of Jesus better day by day because God has given me a living model."

II. You be willing to die for her (25-27) (What does that all mean?)

-Historical context (Hang with me... acknowledge sexual stuff)

(-Artemis – the many breasted one. Mother Goddess of fertility. Any blessing in life came from her and you thanked her for it. If bad things happened it was because she wasn't blessing you.

-Whole religious culture was how can we be better for her and do more for her and give more from her so that we can get more from her. (You can distill down Any religion that comes from man into that basic formula)

-Artemesia Since it was all about pleasing her, they come up with the idea of a month long worship celebration to her. (march to april) million and a half people packed out Ephesus... This is sick and twisted and vile, but how you worshipped

the many-breasted mother goddess of fertility was to spend that month in rampant sexual immorality with as many of her temple prostitutes as possible...

-high point of the festival. There were 31 statues in the temple of Artemis, including Artemis herself which was 36 feet tall. At the high point they would parade these statues from the temple, down the main streets, to the harbor, and they would dip each statue in the harbor.

-Artemis was called the "Perpetual Virgin" Her purity was very important to the people. She was washed in the harbor when this month was done and it was called... "The cleansing of Artemis through the washing of water." If you lived in Ephesus, you loved her so much and respected her so much that you wanted her to be pure and stain free...

Verse 26-27

-Picture this little house Church in Ephesus reading this letter. And Paul enters their language, their concepts, their world, and says... "It's not about the cleansing of Artemis, so that she could be temporarily pure.... Christ loved you so much that He would splatter His blood on Calvary's cross to cleanse you from your sins, eternally. His death has made you pure. You are stain free before the living God once and for all. You are His spotless bride. And you are clean and holy and blameless before Him. You don't get excited about this fake goddess and her fake washing to give her a fake cleansing. You have been washed eternally clean by the cleansing water of the word of God....

***** Jesus loved you so much that He would die for you..... And Husbands, you love your wives like that!!!! You love her with the type of Agape Jesus love, that is laying down your life for your wife!!!**

What does that mean? Does it mean if house is burning, you jump in to save her? Yeah... but I think it goes deeper than that....

-Pre-Marriage Counseling --

-Sit down young couple... **"Marriage is a call to die"**

-Marriage is one of God's greatest tools to teach an individual to die to themselves.

-God's goal for everything in your life is to shape you and form you and mold you and break you to make you look more like Jesus. And God has put her in your life as a crucifixion tool so that you would die to yourself and live with a love that looks like Jesus. Husbands love your wives as Christ loved the Church and gave himself for her..

-Marriage is about daily dying to your own needs, your own rights, your own desires and putting another's needs and rights and desires above your own... And as she does that to you and you do that to her, a beautiful, agape love happens...

-Marriage counseling...

“You don't understand how tough it is” Did you expect death to be easy?” God wants you to love her with a Jesus-like, die to yourself and die for her mentality.

Paul says... “You love her like Jesus loves you!”

Wives -- 22-24

-“Hupotasso” - Military term “to place under”

-An officer was expected to protect, guide, and lead and He was accountable for that responsibility. (He had to give an account)

-A soldier was expected to honor, respect, and follow that lead...

You are given a model: Jesus

-You treat Him like You would treat Jesus!! (Hard.... He's not even close!)

The Mystery of Marriage:

(Can I show you something Beautiful, profound... Mystery... if you don't get it, it's ok, Paul says, it's a profound mystery?)

III. When you love her like Jesus loves you, when the world looks at you, they will see Him. (31-32)

-Narnia illustration

-If you've jumped into the Narnia craze you know that C.S. Lewis wrote a story about a Lion, and a Witch and four children. And if you know the story you that the Lion loves the Children and protects the Children and even dies to bring redemption to one of the Children.

-But if you know anything about the author, you know that he wasn't just telling a story about a Lion. C.S. Lewis created another world. And then showed a picture of Christ in the world he created.

C.S. Lewis said, “My intent was to use the Character of Aslan to show how Jesus would act if He lived in Narnia.” He used a character to display Christ, and he did so in such a way that any one who would read the story would have their hearts drawn not just to the character but to a higher love.

-God has done the same thing. God wants to display the love of His Son all over this world. He wants to show the world a picture of His Son, a living drama of His Son. And the way that He chooses to do that is by how you love your wife.

-When the world sees you loving your wife with a pursuing, unconditional, serving, sacrificial love, something profoundly mysterious happens. Their hearts will somehow sense the love of Christ.

***** When you love her like Jesus loves you, when the world looks at you, they will see Him.**

**** If you treat Him the way you would treat Christ when the world looks at you, they will see Him.**

31-33 Main Point*** Your marriage is not about you!
Your marriage is supposed to point to the message!

-Your marriage is a mirror of Christ’s love.

***** Your marriage is one of the greatest tools of evangelism that the world has ever seen!**

(Discipleship appointment #17 -- teach them the mystery of marriage. If they are married, teach them God’s heart for a husband/wife. If they are not married, challenge them in what to look for in a future husband or wife.)

6:1-9

Essence of passage...

Kids, you treat your parents as you would treat the Lord.
Parents, you treat your kids as the Lord would treat them.

Slaves, you treat your masters as you would treat the Lord.
Masters, you treat your slaves as the Lord would treat them.

Wives, you treat your husbands as you would treat the Lord.
Husbands, you treat your wives as the Lord would treat them.

(The Lord is the center and model of all relationships)

Main point of Ephesians: Through Christ all things (all relationships) are brought to unity!

(Discipleship Appointment #19 -- teach them about what it means to be a Godly parent ... spend some time on parenting issues, etc...)

Dressed for the Battlefield (Eph 6)

Intro:

History has revealed to us that when a nation is at war, it's people act a little differently. When war is declared, the very passion of the nation seems to suddenly be focused upon the war at hand. Newspaper headlines begin to be dominated by the war. The nightly news tends to focus on the war. People hang ribbons, and stick bumper stickers and wave flags. People pray for their sons and daughters as they fight upon battle-fields, accomplish objectives, and face an enemy. Again, I say, the passion of the nation seems to become radically focused upon the reality of war...

We have drawn near the end of the book of Ephesians. Paul has talked about a lot of wonderful themes, but as He draws to the end, He is going to say "Finally" Meaning "I've got one final message for you." I have one perspective that I want to leave you with so that it remains at the forefront of your minds. I want you to be radically focused upon the reality of war. This Christian life is a Spiritual battle.

Paul is going to end his book by, not only telling us that life is war, but by telling us what we have to do to live victoriously in the midst of this war.

Ephesians 6:10-18

I. Your life is war. (vs. 10-12)

A. Be strong (In the Lord)

-Present, passive, command.... If I were to translate this literally, it would not so much read, “Be Strong” but it would read, “Be made strong”.

There is a large difference between “be strong and be made strong.”

One may imply, “Life is a battle, toughen up, you can do it, hang in there.” One is saying, life is a battle, but you can be strengthened by a source of strength far greater than your own.!

-Paul says “be made strong” and then proceeds to tell us the place of our strength and the source of our strength...

-Be strong in the Lord and in the strength of His might.

-How are you to be strong in the battle of life? You place yourself in Him and become completely reliant on Him.

-I think of David and Goliath. David ran to the battlefield to face the Giant, knowing, “If it’s my strength vs his strength, I lose. But if it’s God’s strength in me vs. his strength, He loses.

(Paul says, “be made strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.... Because....)

A. We have an enemy! (12)

-- Any good coach begins to prepare his team for the game, by studying the opposition. Any commanding officer prepares his troops with a bio of the enemy. Paul is telling us that life is war, so He’s going to start out by telling us that there is an enemy.

- “The text says, WE are wrestling against them”

Now that sounds a little strange. I don’t feel like I’ve wrestled any demons lately...

Elisha Story

One of my favorite stories happens in 2nd Kings 6, Elisha and his servant wake up one morning in a desert valley to see that they are surrounded by Aramean chariots and fighting men. The servant begins to panic and says,

“Elisha, what are we going to do?” Elisha prays, “Oh Lord, would you please open his eyes so that he may see.” When he does he sees the hills and valleys completely covered with chariots of angels protecting them.” Elisha’s servant realized “there is far more going on around me than what my human eyes can see.” And I would like to say to us this morning, “there is far more going on around us than our human eyes can see.” There is a spiritual war raging all around us. There is more than meets the eye. As Christians, we are at war.

(Now remember that Paul is a prisoner, chained to a couple roman soldiers, dictating this letter to the Ephesians. And Paul has just said that He has a final word for us and that word is that we are at war and He wants us to stand firm until the end. And now He is going to tell us how to do that. But as He was dictating this letter I think at this point He paused for a moment. Now the text doesn’t say this, but I think He paused, looked down at his chains, and looked to his left and to his right at who he was chained to. And I think his mind started spinning as He saw a visual illustration before His eyes. He realized these guys are trained for war and they are equipped with armor that is designed with the purpose that as they engage in war they will remain standing to the end. He realized, likewise, we Christians are called to war and we have been equipped with spiritual armor that is designed with the purpose that we will remain standing until the end. Physical armor for a physical battle, spiritual armor for a spiritual battle.)

I. The Belt of Truth (13-14)

The importance of the Belt. Paul begins by saying “Stand, therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth. Now why would he start with the belt? Why would the first piece be the belt? The belt doesn’t seem all that important.... (Honey, I am going to war, I need my gun and my belt.) But in that day and age, the belt was absolutely critical to the armor. The belt is what firmly bound everything else together. In that day and age, people wore long, one-piece, toga-robos, which was fine unless you had to have quick action. A soldier simply wouldn’t fight well in a loose flowing dress, so the first thing a soldier would do is to take a leather, strap like belt, wrap it around and gird themselves for action. But even more important than that, is the fact that the second thing that they would do is to connect each piece of armor to the belt. So the breastplate would be connected to the belt, the sword would hang from the belt. It was the piece that most of the pieces were connected to---Take away the belt, and it’s like taking away the middle Jenga piece. Everything wobbles around and falls apart.

The Belt of Truth. So Paul says, Life is war and as you step upon the battlefield, you gird yourself with Truth. Paul is saying, it is truth that will bind everything together.

-As we talk about other areas of the armor we will mention faith and righteousness and the Word of God and others, but if it is not bound together in

truth, it is ineffective armor. For example, having faith is a concept that the world applauds. It is a good thing to have faith. Our culture says let's all have faith, you have faith, I'll have faith, everyone should have faith. It is faith to wear a crystal necklace around one's neck or to believe in the daily horoscope reading. It is faith when one believes the Dalai Lama or prays to Mecca or does transcendental meditation. It was faith in their eternal reward that caused terrorists to fly into the world trade center. Unless faith is bound together in truth, it is ineffective armor.

The message of Jesus/ The strategy of Satan.

-Jesus said, I am the way the truth and the life." Jesus prayed, "Father, sanctify my people in the truth, Thy word is truth!" Jesus has said, there is one exclusive path of truth and I am it. That means your faith is got to be bound together in me and my word, your salvation has to be bound together by me and my word, your peace, your righteousness and everything that we talk about has to be bound together by me and my word.

-The enemy will launch a strategy of lies to detour us from that path. Look at the lies of the enemy as they come through our culture. Our culture says you can be passionate about truth as long as you don't claim to have the only angle on it. Believe what you want, but start being exclusive and literally, hell will break loose on you.

If you are going to stand firm against the lies of Satan, you have got to go dressed for the battle. Take up the belt of truth.

II. The breastplate of Righteousness. (14)

A. The importance of the Breastplate.

A second piece of armor that Paul says a Christian must pick up for the battle is the breastplate of Righteousness. The breastplate was a piece that covered the chest and sometimes even the thighs. You wouldn't dream of going to battle without your breastplate because your breastplate covered your heart and your vital organs. An arrow to an unguarded heart was a fatal blow.

-In the Roman mindset, the heart was also the source of your emotions and feelings. Therefore, the Breastplate protected a very important part of your life.

B. The strategy of Satan

-In this battle called the Christian life, I think that Satan often launches an attack upon our hearts. And I think that attack often takes the form of guilt. The enemy

loves to attack you by saying “Remember your past? Remember the ways you have screwed up, the sexual immorality that you were involved in or the decisions you made, Well you are not a worthy Christian. Withdraw from the battlefield, for you are not righteous enough to stand.

Or, he will say, “You see how you are living now? You are not doing enough, you’re not good enough, you are not righteous enough, When God looks at you, He is disappointed.”

** The enemy is launching an attack upon your heart. On your emotions, on your feelings.

C. The Breastplate of Righteousness.

That is why when you live this battle of the Christian life, Paul says, “take up the Breastplate of Righteousness!” Romans 6 is clear, “When you accepted Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord and became a child of God, you were given the righteousness of Jesus Christ. The righteousness of Christ covers your heart. When God looks at you, He doesn’t see your sinful past and the times you screw up in the present and the times you will screw up in the future. He sees your life through the lens of the righteousness of His only Son. You are holy in His eyes. “Based on His righteousness alone, faultless to stand before the throne.”

- The next time you feel a sense of guilt and remorse about who you are and how you have lived, I want you to remember this truth and grab onto it or strap on this piece of armor. It will fill your heart with gratitude and it will protect your heart upon the battlefield.

***If any of us are going to stand upon this battlefield, Satan will launch an attack upon our hearts. How are you going to stand? Be dressed for the battle. Take up the breastplate of righteousness.

III. Feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of Peace.

A. The importance of the shoes.

Shoes don’t seem like a very important part of armor, But To a Roman Soldier, his shoes meant readiness. A soldier’s shoes were studded with sharp nails. Therefore, there was a certain readiness that came with the ability to walk over any terrain that might come their way. There was also a certain readiness that came when they were attacked. Their shoes would spike firmly into the land and they could hold their ground.

B. The shoes of the readiness of Peace

-Paul is saying, “When you go to Battle, you go ready with the Gospel of Peace.

The word “peace” is an important word here. In the Greek, it literally means the exact opposite of the distress that one feels under the weight of sin. As Christians we have a readiness that comes from the fact that we have a supernatural peace that the rest of the world does not have. We are not absolved from the battle, we are in the midst of the battle, yet our right standing with God, gives us divine peace.

-Paul probably had Isaiah 52:7 in mind here.

-As Christians we are called to be “ready” with the message of peace that our God reigns.

-So when a friend looks at you with a look of quiet desperation. When the terrain that they are in is chaos, hate, and stress. Be ready to show forth supernatural peace. No matter what they are facing, be ready to say, “God reigns over that.” There is peace that you can experience.

When the terrain that you come to is filled with distress and pain and you are attacked on all sides, you can hold your ground, you can have confidence and comfort, if you continually hold on to the gospel of peace.

It is that paradox of being at peace in the midst of war.

IV. The Shield of Faith. (16)

A. The soldier’s shield.

-The most dangerous weapon that was used in warfare in the ancient world was the flaming arrow. The enemy would take an arrow, dip it in tar pitch, light it on fire and shoot it at the soldiers. Tar pitch would burn slow and hot and as soon as it would hit, it would splatter, so that there would be little burning tar fires all over one’s clothes or a house or whatever the target was.

-Therefore a Roman soldier would not dare go to war without his shield. Not the shield was 4 1/2 by 2 1/2, designed to cover the whole body. It was made with 2 long pieces of wood that were bound together. They were then covered with linen and thick strips of leather and then bound together by iron. Now here’s the key. A soldier would take his shield and soak it in a large basin of water. When it was thoroughly saturated, he would then pick it up and go to the battlefield. The reason that He did that is so that when the fiery arrows would be shot upon them, they would hit a water soaked shield and be extinguished. The shield neutralized the flaming arrows.

B. Faith.

-Paul says, "When you go to the battlefield, take up the shield of faith."

-Paul uses this word "Faith" all the time, and I think the best way to sum up the essence of what He is talking about is "a heart attitude that is dependant upon God." The author of Hebrews adds further to this and talks about a heart attitude that has certainty or sureness about the things that God has promised, even if it is something that we can not see.

(John Patton Illustration: When the great missionary John Patton was translating the Bible for the South Sea Islanders, he found that there was no word in this island language for the word for believe, trust, or have faith. He had no idea how to communicate this essential concept. One day, as he was translating, a native came up running to his house, came inside, and flopped himself on Patton's chair. In his own language the native said, "It is so good to rest my entire weight upon this chair" Patton realized that that is the word that He needed. He then translated the gospel message and a massive revival took place upon that Island.")

-That is what faith is. Not only is it a heart attitude that is completely dependent upon God and a confidence in the promises of God, but It is resting your entire weight upon God.

C. The arrows

-As Christians, our faith is called a shield and you want to know why? Because on this battlefield of the Christian life, the enemy takes all kinds of flaming arrows and seeks to take you down.

-Arrows of Anxiety.

Arrows of Doubt

** Jesus said, "anyone who believes in me will have living water flowing from them. When you truly believe and depend and rest in God, you are taking your faith and letting it Saturate in the living water of Jesus Christ.

When you charge forth upon the battlefield and the arrows come, the text says not **some of them, but all of them will be extinguished**, they will be neutralized by your Christ- saturated faith. How you going to stand firm? Be dressed for the battlefield.

V. The Helmet of Salvation

A. The soldier's helmet

-No soldier would dream of going to battle without his helmet. It would be like a football player going out in full pads but forgetting to protect his head. The helmet, obviously protected the most important area on your body, the source of your thinking, your vision, your hearing, your communication, The head is central to a human being.

-But specifically, what was the helmet designed to protect against? These helmets were designed to protect against the broadsword. The broadsword was a sword that was four feet long, with a big massive iron handle. A soldier on horseback would have these swords and they would ride in on their opposition and try to deliver a massive crushing blow on the skull of their enemy. A blow like this would either kill them or knock them on the ground, totally immobilized from the battlefield.

B. Salvation

-Paul says, "When you go to the battlefield, take the helmet of salvation." What does that mean?

(theological parenthesis) – Bible talks about salvation in a past sense, in a present sense, and in a future sense. We call this Justification, sanctification, and glorification.

I think He is referring to our future salvation.

-Men and women, if you living the battle of the Christian life, Satan will try to ride up and whack you across the head with the broadsword of discouragement. He will take some circumstance, some relationship, some issue and try to hit you on the head so that you get knocked on your face and so stuck in what you are going through that you become immobilized on the battlefield.

-That is why Paul says, "when Satan tries to whack you on the head with the broadsword of discouragement, put on the helmet of your future salvation." This means, "Live with the vision of heaven before you. When you start to feel discouraged, remember, one day you will reign for all of eternity in paradise. One day you will walk streets of gold, and live in a mansion, and have everlasting relationships, and most of all be in the presence of Jesus.

(please notice: TO this point every piece of armor has been defensive in nature...)

VI. The sword of the Spirit.

A. The Soldier's sword.

-A soldier also had a sword, for precise hand to hand combat. This type of sword refers to anything from a 6 inch dagger to an 18 inch sword. When used correctly not only could it give fatal blows but it could also deflect fatal blows. It was offensive and defensive in nature.

B. The sword of the Spirit – The word of God.

When you become a Christian and enter this battle, Paul says you have a sword. It doesn't just mean that you have been given a Bible, it means that now you have the Spirit inside of you to teach you what the Bible means. Before you were a Christian, much of it sounded like mere foolishness. Now that you have the Spirit, He will guide you to the truth.

*** The Word of God can be used in a defensive and offensive way.

1. Defensive way

-Do you remember when Jesus was tempted in the wilderness. Every time the devil took a swing of temptation at Him, Jesus deflected it with His sword. He deflected it with the Word of God.

Every time Satan threw temptation in His face, Jesus threw Scripture in His face!

** Likewise, my brothers and sisters, when you are tempted in all of the ways that Satan wants to tempt you and slash his cutting sword at you, your defense is the Word of God.

2. Offensive way

-It can also be an offensive weapon
(My word will not return void)

(2 Timothy 3:16) It is God breathed and useful for teaching, correcting, rebuking, and training in righteousness.

(Hebrews 4) "Living and active, sharper than a double edge sword and able to penetrate to the center of the heart.

*** Prayer -- He closes with a participle that each of the other verbs... To put that in normal terms... Take the shield praying, put on your shoes of peace, praying, take the Sword of the Spirit, praying. Prayer is the very oxygen of the Battlefield.

Falsehood ---- Belt of Truth

Guilt ---- Breastplate of Righteousness

Distress ----- Peace

Anxiety, Doubt - Faith

Discouragement --- Salvation

Where is the armor for the Back?

-No Retreat

-Most importantly, a Roman soldier didn't need armor for His back because In Battle, the Roman legion would march together. Their shields would be positioned together and they would march forward and not break rank. Everyone knew that if a soldier would break rank and go fight by himself, he would easily be defeated. However, The marching Roman legion in unbroken rank was considered by the Ancient World, Invincible.

- you try to do this Christian life thing alone, you are dead. You are meant to be in Biblical community with a group of believers that will love you, draw swords with you, hold you accountable, and lock shields with you on the battlefield.

Vince Lombardi-- (13 world championships, 2 super Bowls.)

“I believe any man’s finest moment, is when he has given his all for a worthy cause, and he lays exhausted on the field of battle, victorious!!”

[\(Discipleship appointment #20-21 --- Teach them how to fight\)](#)