

Ephesians

God's Glory in His Church

The Letter that appears with the name **Ephesians** in the Bible was written by God through the apostle Paul to a group of churches in modern-day Turkey. The primary theme of this biblical book is God's glory displayed through the Church. If you have questions about what the Church is all about, Ephesians is a great place to look. In six brief chapters God tells us what His design for the Church is. The first half dwells on who He has made us to be as His people and the second half explains what it means to live in this new reality of being the Church.

APPLYING GOD'S WORD

Please ask the Holy Spirit to guide you:

What does it mean that God is One Being in three persons?

How does the Trinity's participation in our adoption encourage you?

Why does God receive all the glory for the adoption of His people?

Ezra-Nehemiah

A Community Restored for Worship

The book of Ezra-Nehemiah was written to encourage God's people returning after exile to believe the covenant promises and restore the temple in Jerusalem. God's people were being restored in the place of promise as a worshipping community. The restoration of purpose was far greater than their real estate. The place always has to do with what God promised would happen there.

Sermon Notes and Daily Devotional
First Congregational Church of Woodstock

Pastor Doug Warren
September 16, 2018

Morning Service

Ephesians 1:3-14

To the Praise of God's Triune Glory

1. Praise God, the *Father*, for *Choosing Us* (3-6).
2. Praise God, the *Son*, for *Redeeming Us* (7-12).
3. Praise God, the *Holy Spirit*, for *Sealing Us* (13-14).

Summary: All three persons of the Trinity (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) are enthusiastically involved in our adoption into the family of God. Our redemption is not the work of a rogue Son, but the affectionate and intentional work of God Himself entirely. This assurance gives us boldness to delight in the God who fully delights in us.

Evening Service

Ezra 3: 1-13

God-Ordered Worship

1. God Alone Directs the Worship of His People.
2. Worship Is an Expression of Faith in God's Promise.
3. His Worship Will Cover All the Earth.

Summary: God restored His people to biblical worship of the true God. The only way to truly worship God is through obedience to His commands as an expression of faith. Rather than finding His restrictions burdensome, we discover freedom within the limits God has set. He alone is worthy of all our worship and adoration.

Taking Gathered Worship Home

Last week we saw God's zeal for His own glory, the Father's love for the Son, and how that is given to us in Christ. This week we will look at the Trinity's involvement in our redemption.

Please use the devotional material below each day this week to meet with Jesus. Please pray that we as a community of faith will learn His ways and walk in them to accomplish His purposes.

Sunday AM

READ today's passage: **Ephesians 1:3-14**. How are all three members of the Trinity involved in our redemption out of death and into the glorious family of God called the Church? How did that connect with the sermon? The songs? The prayers? PRAY for God to work in this congregation to knit us together as a family. Ask Him to embolden us to love our neighbors as ourselves.

Sunday PM

READ today's passage: **Ezra 3:1-13**. How are God's people to worship Him? What is our guide? How authoritative is that guide? PRAY for God to direct us in our gathered worship of Christ. Ask Him to empower us to worship Him in Spirit and Truth.

Monday

READ **Ephesians 1:3-6**. What has the Father done? Why? How did He accomplish this? Who is it dependent upon? REJOICE for God has adopted us into His family. PRAY for neighbors, peers, friends & family asking God to save them. Extend His grace to someone you know today. Lovingly express to them in word/deed the grace Christ has lavished upon you (us).

Tuesday

READ **Ephesians 1:3-6; John 6:35-44**. Who gave us to Jesus? What does this mean? Meditate on this reality—we belong entirely to God who will raise us in the last day! PRAY and thank our Father for making us His in Jesus. Spend some time telling Him how and why you are grateful. Praise His glorious name. ACT on these truths by telling someone about God's kindness to you.

Wednesday

READ **Ephesians 1:7-12**. What has Jesus (the Son) done? MEDITATE on His grace lavished us. REJOICE if you have been adopted through Christ's sacrifice. PRAY, "Lord Jesus, thank You sacrificing Yourself for me. Help me to live in ways that reflect Your grace in my life." ACT: Invite someone you know who doesn't know Jesus to do something together. Build on your friendship and look for ways to tell them about Jesus.

Thursday

READ **Ephesians 1:7-12; Romans 3:21-26**. Who needs to be saved? Why? Are there exceptions? How is anyone saved? How should that affect your life today? CONFESS your need for Jesus' righteousness. PRAY and ask God for forgiveness. PRAISE Him for the finished work of Christ for us.

Friday

READ **Ephesians 1:13-14; John 3:22-36**. What does the Spirit do? Why is that important? REJOICE for the Spirit has sealed all those in Christ! PRAY for your neighbors who are deceived and unable to even see their own sin for what it really is. Ask God for their repentance. Pray that God will use you to bring them into His kingdom to the honor and praise of His name.

Saturday

READ **Ephesians 1:3-14**. What have you been learning from this passage this week? READ tomorrow's sermon passage: **Ephesians 1:15-23**. PREPARE today for the gathered worship service tomorrow. PRAY for God's glory to be more and more manifested in the Upper Valley. Ask Him to use us to extend His grace as we celebrate it together. INVITE a neighbor, co-worker or friend to come with you to worship.