

Ephesians—Series Overview

God's Glory in His Church

The book of Ephesians was written to show Christ's glory at work in winning/perfecting the Church as His bride. It exhorts Christians to walk in the newness of life He has won for us according to the Father's kind intention in adopting us. It shows us who we are—the dead raised to life and made fellow citizens with all the saints. Based on who we already are, it invites us to walk in a manner worthy of our calling.

APPLYING GOD'S WORD

Please ask the Holy Spirit to guide you:

Rejoice! God is the all victorious King. He has captured us and made us a part of His glorious victory train. Sing His praises! Dance for joy! Hoot and holler! Make some noise! We are no longer enslaved as His enemies, but now know Him as Father and Lord.

Express your connection with His Body! Use your gifts for the benefit of some others at FCCW. Consider how to encourage someone you know to use their gifts. Pick up the phone. Send an email. Have someone over. Encourage one another to love and good works.

Pray! Use the prayer in 3:16-21 as a way for praying for our siblings here at FCCW. Ask the Lord to work in us in these ways. Ask others to pray for you in these ways, too.

Ezra-Nehemiah—Series Overview

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
November 18th, 2018

Morning Service:

Ephesians 4:1-16

Maturing Unity

1. We Need to Live Out the Unity Worthy of Our Calling (1-6).
2. God's Work in Each of Us Grows All of Us (7-14).
3. United We Rise (15-16).

This second half of Ephesians applies the truths of our calling laid out so gloriously in the first half. We are to live (walk) in a manner worthy of this calling in Christ. It sounds so simple. Yet the first practical outworking of that calling, humility, is something with which we all struggle. We see here the dynamic of the Christian life—repentance and faith. Repenting from our lack of humility and by faith in Christ trusting that we can bear with one another in love because of the unity Jesus secured for us.

Evening Service

*Praise and Thanksgiving
Service!*

Taking Gathered Worship Home

How do we understand our inter-relatedness together in the Body of Christ? How does this affect the way we live together and individually? Do we consider one another as we seek to mature in Christ? The Holy Spirit deals with these and many other questions in this week's passage. Let's wrestle through together what it means to be in Christ as a Body maturing so that each of us would be equipped to work properly using the good gifts that He has graciously given us.

Please use the devotional material below each day this week to meet with Jesus. Ask Christ to teach us His ways that we may walk in them to accomplish His purposes.

Sunday AM

READ **Ephesians 4:1-16**. DISCUSS How is Christ's work in maturing His Church a comfort to us? What is our responsibility in maturing together? PRAY for God to show us the boldness we have in Christ. Ask Him to empower us live it out by faith in Christ.

Sunday PM

READ today's passage: **Nehemiah 3:1-32**. How did Nehemiah demonstrate faith in God? Where do you struggle? PRAISE God for His loving care for us. REPENT of ways we give His glory to others.

Monday

READ **Ephesians 4:7-16; Psalm 68:1-20**. Where did God ascend on high? Why? What did He do there? What does that have to do with us? Rejoice for God has conquered death and sin in victory! PRAY for your neighbors, peers, friends & family asking God to save them. EXTEND His grace to someone today. Show them the grace Christ has lavished upon you.

Tuesday

READ **Ephesians 4:7-10; Psalm 68:15-35**. What does it mean for God to be all victorious? What kinds of gifts does He give us? Meditate on this—God has made us to share the inheritance of Christ! PRAY, "Father God, we praise You as the God of all the

nations! Jesus, thank You for Your victory. Holy Spirit, enable us to live out these truths."

Wednesday

Read **Ephesians 4:11-13; 1Peter 4:7-11**. These passages both address a diversity of gifts. How are we to use our gifts for one another? MEDITATE on the astonishing privilege God gives to serve with Him. REJOICE if you have been adopted through Christ's sacrifice. PRAY, "Lord, thank You for the fullness of Your love for us. We praise You for doing what only You could do in making us Your people. Help us proclaim and live out the reality of Your grace together."

Thursday

READ **Ephesians 4:14-16; James 1:2-8**. What does it mean to mature in Christ? How is this maturation nurtured? What are we to do? REJOICE in Christ's delight in us together and each of us individually. PRAY, "Jesus, You are our only true Head, the Leader and King of Your Church. We want to love and serve You joyfully together. You have captured us and adopted us into Your family. Holy Spirit, enliven our hearts with fervent love for Christ and one another. Lead us in maturity. Amen."

Friday

READ **Ephesians 4:14-16; Colossians 2:19**. Who causes Christ's Body to grow? How can it be both God and us? Do we grow and build ourselves up or does God cause us to grow? REJOICE for Christ has died 'once for all' obtaining for us eternal life! PRAY for your neighbors who are deceived and unable to even see their own sin for what it really is. Pray for their repentance. Pray that God will use you to bring them into His kingdom to the honor and praise of His name.

Saturday

PREPARE today for the gathered worship service tomorrow. READ **Ephesians 4:17-24**. Come to worship tomorrow expecting to hear from God and to learn more about our God together. Pray for God's glory to be more and more manifested in the Woodstock area. Pray that He will use us to extend His grace as we celebrate it together.