

Ephesians: Living a Life In Christ

Ephesians 1:15-2:10 | Created To Do Good Works In Christ Jesus

→ *Survey: Let's understand the background and context of the passage.*

While under house arrest in Rome, a man named Paul wrote a letter to the Christians in the city of Ephesus - this letter is the book of Ephesians. In the first half of the letter, Paul teaches the Gospel of Jesus, explaining how God's family is now a unified, multiethnic community of followers. The second part of the letter explores how this Gospel should affect every part of our lives, as Paul urges these followers of Jesus to "live a life worthy of the calling you received" (Ephesians 4:1).

Remember that Ephesus was a major hub in Asia Minor, now modern day Turkey. In this city was the Temple of Artemis, one of the 7 ancient wonders of the world, and she was central to all aspects of life for the Ephesians. In this place of idol worship, Paul urges God's people to live according to God's will, to bring unity to all things everywhere under Christ (1:10). Paul wants them to recognize every spiritual blessing they have received through Jesus, as they have been chosen, adopted, redeemed, forgiven, and promised an inheritance of life eternal with God.

We too are promised this inheritance, and are called to be with Jesus, to be like Jesus, and do as he did. Let's explore God's plan & purpose for us as we continue reading the book of Ephesians.

Read: Ephesians 1:15-2:10 (NIV)

→ *Observe: Let's take a close look at what the text is saying.*

1. When you read the first three words of verse 15, what question does it make you ask?
2. What has Paul heard about the Ephesians (v. 15)? What did this lead Paul to do (v. 16)?
3. What does Paul want for the Ephesians (v. 17)? Why is this (v. 17)?
4. What else does Paul pray for them (v. 18)?
5. Who is God's power for (v. 19)? What is noteworthy about this power (v. 19-20)?
6. What are some of the details you see about the risen Christ's rule and reign (v. 20-22)?
7. What is Jesus' relationship with the church (v. 22-23)?
8. What does Paul say about the Ephesian believers as he starts chapter 2 (v. 1)? Who were they following (v. 2)? What are some markers of the ways of this world (v. 3)?
9. How were the Ephesians brought to life (v. 5)? Why (v. 4)?
10. What becomes true of a follower of Jesus (v. 6-7)?
11. How were we saved (v. 5, 8)? Where did this grace come from (v. 8-9)?
12. What were Christians created to do (v. 10)? Where do these works come from?

→ *Interpret: Let's seek to understand the meaning of this text in its original context.*

1. What do we learn about God in this passage? Jesus? The Christians in Ephesus? *Highlight some of the descriptive words.*
2. How have Christians been saved? Why do they need to be saved? What are they saved for? How would you summarize what a life without Christ looks like compared to one with Christ?
3. How do we see Christ's sovereignty on display in this passage? What does it mean that he is the head over the church? Why does this matter?
4. Why were you created (v. 2:10)? What does it mean that Christians are God's handiwork? How does verse 17 also help us understand our relationship with God & why we were created?

→ *Apply: Let's explore where the text intersects with our lives and our world.*

1. Why is it significant that we have been saved by grace, not by works? How does this passage challenge your thinking about works? Where are some of the places at SRU that God has intentionally placed you to do good works, and what are some of those good works?
2. Are you living by the same power that raised Christ from the dead (v. 19-20)? Why or why not? How would your life look different if you lived by God's power & strength and not your own?
3. How does this passage help you understand what God has done through Christ? How does it help you understand His plan for the world broadly, and you specifically?