

CITIZENS & SAINTS

A JOURNEY THROUGH EPHESIANS | PART 1

GROUP GUIDE

This guide is designed to help you study the Scriptures and deepen your relationship with God. Use this guide by yourself or with others.

To find a group, visit brookwoodchurch.org/groups.

Message Title: Beyond What You Can See

September 6, 2026

OPEN

If new people have joined your group, take time to introduce yourselves to each other.

1. Describe a time when something turned out better than you expected.
2. What's something God has been showing you lately?

ABOUT EPHESIANS

Ephesians is Paul's letter celebrating God's grace in Christ and showing how the Gospel creates a new kind of people. Chapters 1-3 lift our eyes to the grace of God and what He's done. Believers have been chosen, redeemed and the Spirit has sealed them as His own. Salvation is not earned by good works; it is God's gift, received by faith, so we may now walk worthy of our calling. Paul also explains that Christ has broken down the old wall between Jew and Gentile, making one united family, one temple, and one body under one Lord. Chapters 4-6, then, turn doctrine into daily life. Because Christians belong to Christ, they are called to humility, unity, truthfulness, purity, forgiveness, wise speech, thankful worship, faithful marriages, obedient households, honest work, and spiritual alertness. Ephesians closes by reminding believers that the Christian life is a real spiritual battle, but God provides armor through truth, righteousness, the Gospel, faith, salvation, His Word, and prayer. In simple terms, Ephesians teaches us to know who we are in Christ, live worthy of that calling, and stand firm together in God's strength as His church today.

PRAY

Invite someone to open your time in prayer.

GROUP TIPS

- If your group has eight or more people, it might be helpful to break into circles of four or five for greater participation and deeper discussion. When you come back together, invite each group to share a few takeaways from their conversation.
- Don't worry if you don't get to all the questions. Spend time reading and really thinking about what the Bible is saying and what God is revealing to you personally.

STUDY AND DISCUSSION

Ephesians 3:1-13 (NIV)

¹For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—

²Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you,³that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly.⁴In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ,⁵which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets.⁶This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

⁷I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power.⁸Although I am less

than the least of all the Lord's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the boundless riches of Christ,⁹and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things.¹⁰His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms,¹¹according to his eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.¹²In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.¹³I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory.

1. What words or ideas seem to repeat throughout this passage?
2. Why does Paul refer to himself as a *prisoner* and a *servant*? What's your reaction to that?
3. For what purpose did God give grace to Paul?
4. What responsibility, relationship or opportunity might look different if you saw it as something entrusted to you by grace?

Christian mysteries are truths which, although beyond human discovery, have been revealed by God and so now belong openly to the whole church.

– John Stott, *Ephesians: Building a Community in Christ*

5. What mystery is Paul talking about?
6. What might Paul mean when he describes the riches of Christ as *unsearchable*?
7. What does this passage suggest about God's ability to use people who feel unlikely, inadequate or undeserving? How can you relate?
8. Verse 10 gives the church an unexpectedly large role in God's purposes. How does that challenge a view of church as simply a weekly gathering?
9. What do verses 11-12 reveal about what Jesus has made possible in our relationship with God? What do those mean for you personally?
10. What would approaching God with greater freedom and confidence (verse 12) look like for you this week?
11. How does Paul's perspective on suffering differ from the way people often interpret hardship?
12. Are there people you find difficult to imagine being equally included in God's family? What might that reveal about assumptions you carry?
13. Paul's imprisonment could have looked like evidence that everything had gone wrong. Where is it difficult for you right now to believe that God may still be at work?

ONE THING

What's one thing you'll take with you from this week's study and discussion? Ask God what He wants to say to you, then spend a few minutes quietly listening for Him to speak. This could be a word or phrase from the passage that stands out to you, or a simple thought He brings to mind.

PRAY

Share what you sensed God saying to you and pray for each other.

SCRIPTURE MEMORY

Memorizing Scripture helps us carry the words of God with us all the time, wherever we go. His Word gives light and direction and ultimately has the power to change us and deepen our relationship with Him. Here's a good verse to memorize based on this week's teaching:

So please don't lose heart because of my trials here.

I am suffering for you, so you should feel honored.

Ephesians 3:13 (NLT)