

Discovery Group - Ephesians

Overview

Accountability

Share how your obedience commitment from last week went, and who you shared with.

Bible: Book of Ephesians

Read the entire book

- What does this book teach about who God is?
- What does it teach about people?
- What are some of the major themes that this book carries?
- What would you say is Pau's overall intent in writing this?

- * Read the article on the second page.
 - Any further comments or questions?

Commit

What is Jesus calling you to do in ***obedience*** this week?

Who can you ***share*** this with? Who can you reach out to in order to make disciples?

Abide: Read and meditate on the following passages this week:
Ephesians 1

Ephesians

The book of Ephesians was written by Paul to a mature community in which he had heavily invested. In fact, he had spent three intense years building up this church - proclaiming the Gospel, discipling believers, and raising up leaders (see Acts 19-20). He wrote this letter from prison, probably 3-5 years after having last been in Ephesus. His aim seems to have been to reveal the grand purpose of the Church in God's plan for the world, and to call the Ephesians to live up to this glorious calling. In a way, Ephesians is a lofty vision-casting manifesto for the Church - and for all churches.

Paul begins with a brief but dense recitation of what Christ has done for us, giving praise to Him for His wonderful grace. It is a beautiful and inspiring description of the work of Jesus in and for His people, pointing repeatedly to the truth that whatever has been done is "for the praise of his glory." Chapter 1 ends with a prayer for the Ephesians to know the Father better, again highlighting the wonders of who Christ is.

In chapter 2 Paul moves to a description of how those who were far away and dead in sin have been given life and membership in God's great family. He here reveals that God has made 'one new humanity' out of the previously divided Jews and Gentiles. Continuing this line of thought in chapter 3, Paul reveals that this reconciling of Jew and Gentile together in Christ was the great mystery of God's plan, and has now been revealed to the world. This all leads up to Paul's bold assertion that this new people of God - the Church - has been brought into being by God to demonstrate His wisdom on a cosmic scale. The Church's purpose is to represent who God is to the world. This moves Paul into a powerful prayer that the Ephesian believers would have a new and greater revelation of how much God loves them.

In the remaining part of the letter, Paul urges the Ephesians to live up to this amazing calling - that of revealing God's wisdom to the powers. They do this in several ways, which are articulated in chapters 4-6. Firstly, the people of God reveal His wisdom through every believer faithfully walking in the role given them by God, to the end that each member of this new community would be mature in Christ.

Secondly, Christ's wisdom is revealed as His people live radically holy and attractive lives. This is an integral part of His plan, as it is through this distinct way of life that God's people reveal His wisdom and nature to the world. Thirdly, this theme continues in 5:21 as he specifically teaches Jesus followers to radically re-align key relationships to be based around mutual submission. Paul concludes the book with a warning that there is a terrible enemy who opposes all of this work of God, and gives encouragement in how to overcome this enemy.