

# EPHESIANS 6

## GREAT CHAPTERS OF THE BIBLE



*A study at Faith Lutheran, Sharpsburg, Georgia, 2009 AD*

We've been studying recently the writings of Paul in Romans and 1 Corinthians. We've seen that these books were written not only to teach, but also to correct specific spiritual problems.

Ephesians is different. There is no specific spiritual problem, but rather Paul writes to the Ephesians to broaden their spiritual knowledge. He reminds them of God's love for them (Chapters 1-3) and then shows them how they can love God (Chapters 4-6) through loving one another. In Chapter 6, we see Paul encouraging all Christians – children, parents, slaves, masters - to be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power (6:10).

### THE BOOK

#### Author

Paul, a prisoner in chains

#### Content

God's salvation plan is by grace alone

Encouragement to live a life of love

Very similar to Colossians

#### Recipients

Small nucleus of believers

Congregation wasn't founded by Paul

#### City

Grand temple to Diana

Large harbor and commercial center

#### Important Passages

He chose us in him before creation (1.4)

For it is by grace you have been saved... (2.8)

Live a life of love, just as Christ loved us (5.1)

#### Paul's Writings

Romans, 1&2 Corinthians, Galatians,

Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, 1&2

Thessalonians, 1&2 Timothy, Titus, and

Philemon

### THE TIMES

Paul, under house arrest in Rome, heard of trouble in Colosse. Those Christians were being led astray by false teachers. Paul wants to help, but he can't go and visit them himself.

He sends Tychicus, who will carry Paul's letter to Colosse. Paul also has met in Rome Onesimus, a runaway slave. Onesimus' master, Philemon, was apparently a member at the church in Colosse.

Paul now sends Tychius and Onesimus to Colosse. The fastest way to Colosse is through Ephesus, so he sends along this letter to a church where he ministered for 3 years.

### THE BACKGROUND

Ephesians 5 encourages Christians to live as children of the light, not following the fruitless deeds of darkness. Instead, we are called to make the most of every opportunity, by worshiping God and giving thanks to him in every situation.

In that vein, Paul finishes chapter 5 detailing the love that is shown in marriage between husband and wife. He reminds us all to "submit to one another out of reverence for Christ" (5:21).

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. In verse 2, we see that we should not only obey, but honor our parents. Give some examples of where children may obey their parents, but actually not honor them.
2. Could verse 4 be the foundation for an effective parenting book? Why or why not?
3. Could verses 6-9 be the foundation for an effective Human Resources book? Why or why not?
4. List some of the devil's schemes (verse 11) that he uses against Christians.
5. There are a variety of ways to interpret what the "day of evil" is in verse 13. List a few options, and choose the best one.
6. In the armor of God section (verses 14-17), is there anything significant to the fact that 5 defensive items and only one offensive item is listed?  
  
What truths about spiritual warfare is Paul trying to stress here?
7. Why, in verse 18, does Paul conclude the section on spiritual warfare with prayer?
8. Does Paul in verse 19 show fear before his upcoming trial with Caesar?

## CONCLUSION

Paul's final verses of Chapter 6 (21-24) concisely summarize the content of Ephesians. We see Paul sending Tychicus, a "dear brother and faithful servant in the Lord" (6:21), to encourage them in their Christian living.

Remember that there were no visible problems in the Ephesian church at this time. Tychicus was only coming to encourage and build up the Christians in what they already knew – the grace of God.

The letter of Ephesians is an encouragement to us, much like Tychicus was to them. This letter reminds us of what we already know – that God had a plan for us. God chose us in Christ, even before the creation of the world, to be his children (Chapter 1).

God not only chose us, but he took us from being dead in sins and made us alive in Christ (Chapter 2). All Christians are not only united to Christ (Chapter 3) but also to each other (Chapter 4).

Paul urges all Christians, members of the body of Christ, to live as children of the light (Chapter 5) – in whatever calling God has given you. If that's a husband, wife, parent, child, employer, or employee – show love to others. In this way, as we show love to others we can truly "love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love" (6:24).

Therefore, we Christians must be armed (Ephesians 6:10-18) and daily expect to be constantly attacked. No one may go on in security and carelessly, as though the devil were far from us. At all times we must expect and block his blows. Though I am now chaste, patient, kind, and in firm faith, the devil will this very hour send such an arrow in my heart that I can scarcely stand. For he is an enemy that never stops or becomes tired. *The Large Catechism, Martin Luther*