

EPHESIANS

THE MYSTERY OF THE GOSPEL

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OVERVIEW		3
BLESSING	1:3-23	13
GRACE	2:1-10	19
PEACE	2:11-22	25
MYSTERY	3:1-21	31
UNITY	4:1-16	37
NEW	4:17-32	43
LIGHT	5:1-21	49
SUBMIT	5:22-6:9	55
ARMOR	6:10-24	61
SUMMARY		67

EPHESIANS

OVERVIEW

For starters...

“Ephesians is the sublimest and the most majestic expression of the gospel. There are statements and passages in this Epistle which really baffle description. The great Apostle piles epithet upon epithet, adjective upon adjective, and still he cannot express himself adequately.”

- D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones

Setting the stage with key people, places and history will help us better understand the specifics of the book.

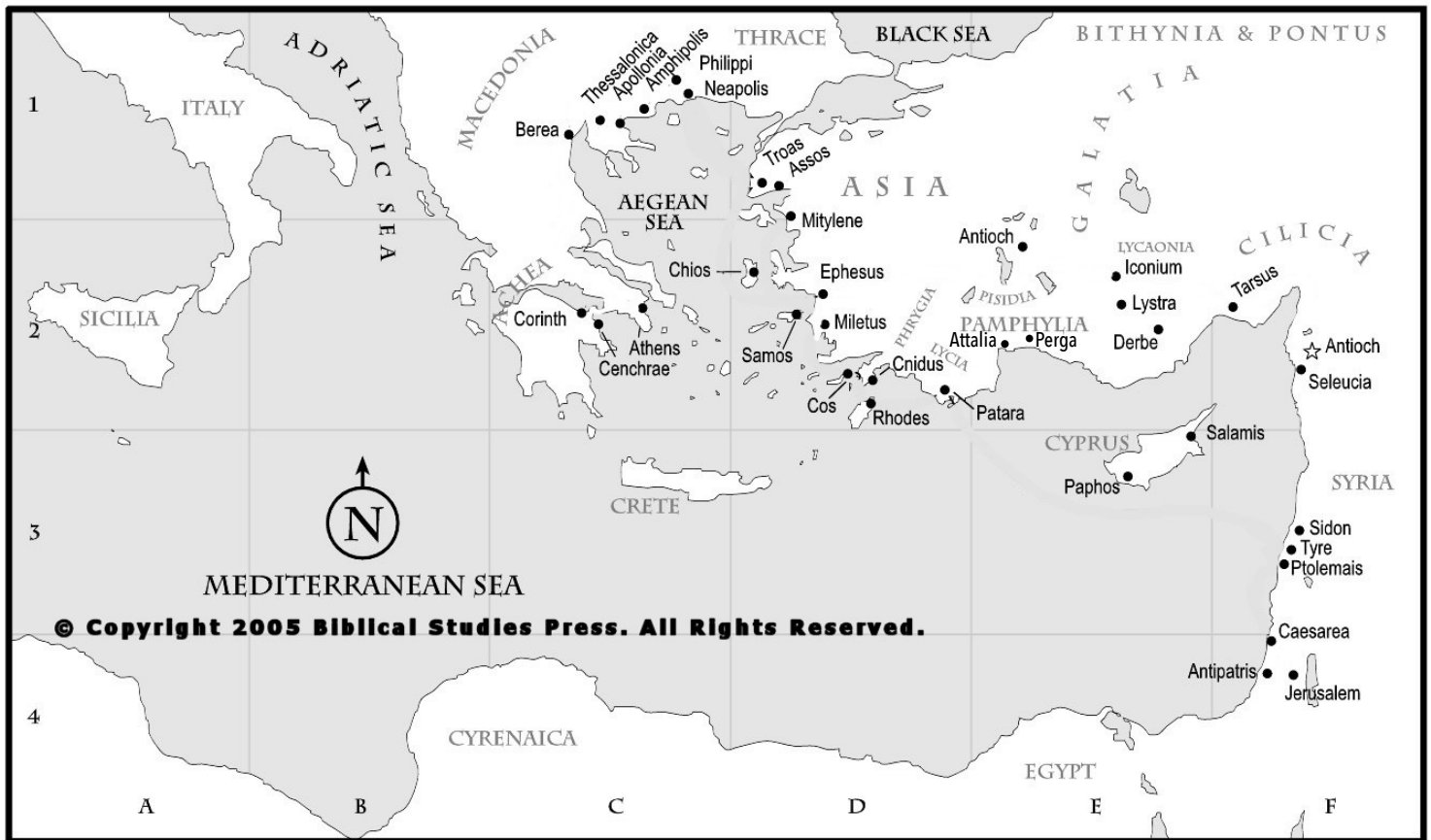
A: AUTHOR AND AUDIENCE:

Ephesians 1:1-2

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1) Paul (also called Saul) identifies himself as the author. What important info do we know about him? (See Acts 9:1-18, 13:1-3)

2) Paul is writing a letter, from prison near the end of his life (A.D. 60), to people in the city of Ephesus, with whom he had a rich history. Read below for a quick background to the city and Paul's relationship with the Ephesians.



Ephesus was one of the largest and most impressive cities in the ancient world: a political, religious, and commercial center in modern day Turkey. At the time of Paul, Ephesus was probably the fourth largest city in the world, with a population estimated at 250,000.

*Paul stopped at Ephesus at the end of his second missionary journey, left Priscilla and Aquila there, and returned to Antioch (**Acts 18:18-21**). Apollos preached in Ephesus soon thereafter and met Priscilla and Aquila who “explained to him the way of God more accurately” (**Acts 18:26**).*

*Later, Paul spent more than two years in Ephesus teaching and preaching in the synagogue and in the hall of Tyrannus. The success of his preaching at Ephesus triggered a riot headed by the silversmiths who feared that their business of selling miniature replicas of Artemis (Diana) or her temple would suffer severely (**Acts 19:24-41**). After the town clerk quelled the disturbance, Paul left Ephesus for Macedonia. At the conclusion of this missionary endeavor, on his way back to Palestine, Paul stopped at Miletus and gave a heart-felt goodbye to his friends in Ephesus (**Acts 20:17-38**)*

3) What observations do you have about Paul's interaction with the Ephesians? Reception? Length of stay?

B: FAMILIARIZE:

Flip through Ephesians in your bible and read the given section headings. Now, **read the first sentence** in each paragraph.

We'll purposefully start very broad, trying to get an overall "feel" for the letter before diving in.

4) What are your initial impressions?

Next, **quickly read the whole letter.** Don't overthink or go too slow. You're looking for initial impressions.

5) What is the general atmosphere of the letter?

6) What strong words or phrases stand out?

C: IDENTIFY

Using the text provided on the following pages read more slowly and **Circle key/intriguing words** and **assign paragraph titles** (left column works well for this). Try to make the titles short and descriptive (2-3 words).

7) Do you notice any turning points? (changes in tone or content, summary statements, etc)

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus:

2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. 13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

15 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, 16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

11 Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands—12 remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility 15 by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. 17 And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. 18 For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father.

19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

1 For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—2 assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, 3 how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. 4 When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. 6 This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

7 Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. 8 To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, 9 and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, 10 so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. 11 This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him. 13 So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is your glory.

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, 16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

1 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. 7 But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8 Therefore it says,

“When he ascended on high he led a host of captives,
and he gave gifts to men.”

9 (In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? 10 He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) 11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is working properly, makes the body grow so that it builds itself up in love.

17 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. 18 They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. 19 They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. 20 But that is not the way you learned Christ!—21 assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, 22 to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. 26 Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and give no opportunity to the devil. 28 Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. 29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

3 But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. 4 Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. 5 For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not become partners with them; 8 for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), 10 and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. 11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. 13 But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, 14 for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Awake, O sleeper,
and arise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

15 Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, 20 giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. 28 In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but

nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, 30 because we are members of his body. 31 “Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” 32 This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. 33 However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 “Honor your father and mother” (this is the first commandment with a promise), 3 “that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.” 4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

5 Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, 6 not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, 7 rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, 8 knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. 9 Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. 14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. 16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; 17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, 18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, 19 and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

21 So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord will tell you everything. 22 I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage your hearts.

23 Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible.

D: SUMMARIZE: Fill in the chart below

Give a simple title to the book (try to use picturesque words from the text)

Choose a key verse. Is there one that summarizes the letter, or carries key themes?

Title:	Author:	Date:	Purpose:
Key Verse:	Recipient(s):		
Visual Summary: How would you illustrate the book?			Other Notes:

E: QUESTIONS:

8) What questions do you have after your initial overview?

9) What section are you most excited to study? Why?

EPHESIANS 1:3-23

BLESSING

For starters...

What is the greatest gift you've received?

What was so special about it?

*Marking the text is one key step
you'll do every week during study.
Try these two this week and watch
for more next week.*

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, 4 even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ 10 as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

11 In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will, 12 so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory. 13 In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

15 For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, 16 I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might 20 that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

OBSERVATIONS

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

This is the key to Bible study, slowing down to see what the author is saying.

This week make one observation for every verse. Writing down even simple observations can help you see the text with new eyes. One observation is given for you as an example

QUESTIONS

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?

Think with curiosity as you read the Scriptures. Asking questions will help you gain deeper understanding. Come up with a question for each paragraph.

WORDS TO DEFINE

WHAT WORDS SEEM IMPORTANT?

Use this space to get a list of interesting key words.

SUMMARY & CONNECTION TO THE WHOLE

Put into your own words what is Paul saying in this chapter? Then connect the current segment to the book as a whole.

DEFINE KEY WORDS

This week, focus your time on the key verse. You will learn more about this step next week.

KEY VERSE

You'll be given a key verse from the passage each week. Spend some time thinking about this verse and try to come up with 10 observations and 5 questions about it.

3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

INTERPRETATION

The following steps help you with Interpretation: discovering what the author intends to communicate.

Verses 3-14 are a single sentence in the original language, the longest sentence in the New Testament. Obviously, Paul was excited about what he was writing! Work with the chart below to investigate what he was talking about.

BLESSING	OBERVATIONS: Any description/definition in this passage? Other clues to discover meaning?	CROSS REFERENCES: Other passages that speak about this?	EFFECT IN MY LIFE
Chosen/Predestined		Romans 8:28-30 Romans 9:14-21	
Adopted		Romans 8:14-17 Galatians 4:5,6	
Redemption		Colossians 1:13,14	
Inheritance		1 Peter 1:3-5	
Others you see listed:			

1) How does Paul's understanding of the blessings he's received effect his prayer for his friends (v15-23)?

2) What major takeaways do you have about these blessings?

Each week you'll have a chart like this to answer one of your own questions. Don't worry about completing it this week though.

Question	Verses from passage	Answer/Notes
Other Observations/Questions	Cross References	

APPLICATION

How can you apply something you learned from this study? Is there a specific belief you need to hold onto? Or action that will help you become more like Jesus?

EPHESIANS 2:1-10

GRACE

For starters...

“Grace is sufficient even though we huff and puff with all our might to try and find something or someone that it cannot cover. Grace is enough.”

- Brennan Manning

This week add the skill of color coding repeated (or similar) words.

1 And you were dead in the trespasses and sins 2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience—3 among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind. 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, 5 even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ —by grace you have been saved—6 and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

OBSERVATIONS

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Sometimes it helps to think with a lens as you make observations. Make two observations for each category below

WHO

WHAT

WHEN

WHERE

WHY

HOW

QUESTIONS

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?

WORDS TO DEFINE

WHAT WORDS SEEM IMPORTANT?

GRACE

FAITH

WORKMANSHIP

SUMMARY & CONNECTION TO THE WHOLE

Put into your own words what is Paul saying in this chapter? Then connect the current segment to the book as a whole.

DEFINE KEY WORDS

Defining words can make clear confusing concepts and/or bring to life religious words you've heard before.

<http://www.studylight.org/dictionaries/hbd/> is a good online resource for a Bible dictionary.

It is also helpful to use an English dictionary, summarize your findings in your own words and look at how other translations define the word.

See the example below for a key word from this chapter

GRACE:

Bible Dictionary:

Undeserved acceptance and love received from another...the New Testament writers used the Greek word *charis*, which had a long previous history in secular Greek. Related to the word for joy or pleasure, *charis* originally referred to something delightful or attractive in a person, something which brought pleasure to others. From this it came to have the idea of a favor or kindness done to another or of a gift which brought pleasure to another.

English Dictionary:

the free and unmerited favor of God, as manifested in the salvation of sinners and the bestowal of blessings.

Summary in your own words:

Try another word of your choice.

KEY VERSE

Try to come up with 10 observations and 5 questions about this verse.

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God, 9 not a result of works, so that no one may boast.

INTERPRETATION

1) What is the **Condition/Description** of people in vs 1-3?

2) How does this compare with the understanding people have of themselves on campus?

3) How is the **Solution** described in vs 4-9?

4) Are there “works” you tend to think will make you acceptable (or unacceptable) to God? What?Why?

5) How should this passage change your worldview/approach to God and others?

6) What **Purpose/Result** does Paul envision in v 10?

Is there a question of your own you'd like to investigate?

Question	Verses from passage	Answer/Notes
Other Observations/Questions	Cross References	

Cross References are other passages in Scripture that speak to the same/similar issue. Often you'll have a cross reference column in your Bible. Superscript letters are placed near words or phrases that translators have linked to similar passages throughout the Bible. The superscript letters refer to a center column that lists the verses you should look up. Give it a try.

APPLICATION

Try making your application SMART

*S: Specific
M: Measurable
A: Accountable
R: Realistic
T: Time-bound*

EPHESIANS 2:11-22

PEACE

For starters...

Why can forgiveness be so hard to extend?

11 Therefore remember that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh, called “the uncircumcision” by what is called the circumcision, which is made in the flesh by hands— 12 remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. 14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility 15 by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace, 16 and might reconcile us both to God in one body through the cross, thereby killing the hostility. 17 And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near. 18 For through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, 20 built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, 21 in whom the whole structure, being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord. 22 In him you also are being built together into a dwelling place for God by the Spirit.

OBSERVATIONS

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

WHO

WHAT

WHEN

WHERE

WHY

HOW

QUESTIONS

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?

WORDS TO DEFINE

WHAT WORDS SEEM IMPORTANT?

SUMMARY & CONNECTION TO THE WHOLE

Put into your own words what is Paul saying in this chapter? Then connect the current segment to the book as a whole.

DEFINE KEY WORDS

KEY VERSE

Come up with 10 observations and 5 questions about this verse.

14 For he himself is our peace, who has made us both one and has broken down in his flesh the dividing wall of hostility

In the first half of chapter 2, Paul taught the reconciliation between God and man. Now, he makes the point that the cross should reconcile man-to-man as well!

1) What relational tensions were the Ephesians experiencing?

2) What hostilities fill the headlines for us today?

3) How have you experienced relational hostility?

Fill in the chart below for some observations on God's design of reconciliation

Image	Implied/stated realities about relationships without Christ	Reveals about Relationships with Christ
v15-16 New Man		
v 19 Citizen		
v 20-22 Temple		

Question	Verses from passage	Answer/Notes
Other Observations/Questions	Cross References	

APPLICATION

Have you been able to follow through with the previous week's applications?

EPHESIANS 3:1-21

MYSTERY

For starters...

What things has God called *you* to?

1 For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner for Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles—2 assuming that you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace that was given to me for you, 3 how the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly. 4 When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. 6 This mystery is that the Gentiles are fellow heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel.

7 Of this gospel I was made a minister according to the gift of God's grace, which was given me by the working of his power. 8 To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, 9 and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God who created all things, 10 so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. 11 This was according to the eternal purpose that he has realized in Christ Jesus our Lord, 12 in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through our faith in him. 13 So I ask you not to lose heart over what I am suffering for you, which is your glory.

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, 16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

20 Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, 21 to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

OBSERVATIONS

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Make 4-5 observations per paragraph for this chapter

QUESTIONS

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?

WORDS TO DEFINE

WHAT WORDS SEEM IMPORTANT?

SUMMARY & CONNECTION TO THE WHOLE

DEFINE KEY WORDS

KEY VERSE

Come up with 10 observations and 5 questions about this verse.

14 For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, 16 that according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

1) In verses 1-13 note some things Paul says are true about...

God:

Him (Paul):

Other believers:

Much like the end of chapter 1, Paul's excitement about the truths of the gospel lead him to start praying for his friends! Fill in the chart below to observe what he says and how it could change your prayers.

Paul Prays...	Rephrase in a way you could pray for your friends

Question	Verses from passage	Answer/Notes
Other Observations/Questions	Cross References	

APPLICATION

Have you been able to follow through with the previous week's applications?

EPHESIANS 4:1-16

UNITY

For starters...

What is something unique that you bring to a group?

1 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. 4 There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. 7 But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8 Therefore it says,

“When he ascended on high he led a host of captives,
and he gave gifts to men.”

9 (In saying, “He ascended,” what does it mean but that he had also descended into the lower regions, the earth? 10 He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) 11 And he gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the shepherds and teachers, 12 to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, 14 so that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes. 15 Rather, speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, joined and held together by every joint with which it is equipped, when each part is

OBSERVATIONS

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Make 1-2 observations *per verse* for this section

See the Verse Analysis page in the back of the study for suggestions on observations

QUESTIONS

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?

WORDS TO DEFINE

WHAT WORDS SEEM IMPORTANT?

SUMMARY & CONNECTION TO THE WHOLE

DEFINE KEY WORDS

KEY VERSE

Come up with 10 observations and 5 questions about this verse.

1 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, 3 eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

INTERPRETATION

This chapter marks a turning point in the letter. After expounding on the riches of life in Christ for the first three chapters, Paul now moves to discussing some of the gospel's practical implications. How to *WALK* in a manner worthy of this great gospel (4:1, 4:17, 5:1, 5:15).

He starts by calling the Ephesians (and us) to unity.

- 1) Read v 2. Which of these qualities are we urged to do? Which are we urged to be? What's the difference?

- 2) Why are these qualities so important to unity?

- 3) One thing that can make unity difficult, is our diversity. Note below what Paul says about our God-designed differences and similarities.

Differences	Similarities

Question	Verses from passage	Answer/Notes
Other Observations/Questions	Cross References	

APPLICATION

EPHESIANS 4:17-32

NEW

For starters...

Why do you think obedience to God is important?

17 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds. 18 They are darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, due to their hardness of heart. 19 They have become callous and have given themselves up to sensuality, greedy to practice every kind of impurity. 20 But that is not the way you learned Christ! —21 assuming that you have heard about him and were taught in him, as the truth is in Jesus, 22 to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

25 Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. 26 Be angry and do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and give no opportunity to the devil. 28 Let the thief no longer steal, but rather let him labor, doing honest work with his own hands, so that he may have something to share with anyone in need. 29 Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as fits the occasion, that it may give grace to those who hear. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 Be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, as God in Christ forgave you.

OBSERVATIONS

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Make 1-2 observations *per verse* for this section

QUESTIONS

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?

WORDS TO DEFINE

WHAT WORDS SEEM IMPORTANT?

SUMMARY & CONNECTION TO THE WHOLE

DEFINE KEY WORDS

KEY VERSE

Come up with 10 observations and 5 questions about this verse.

22 to put off your old self, which belongs to your former manner of life and is corrupt through deceitful desires, 23 and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, 24 and to put on the new self, created after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.

INTERPRETATION

Read Romans 6:11-14 and Matthew 12:33-35.

1) What do these passages say about sin and obedience?

2) How do they help us understand why Paul taught 4:22-24 before 4:25-32

3) Living the New life is more than what you *can't do*. Paul communicates what you *can* do now that you are made new. Fill in the chart below, tracking the old life, the new life and the reason why the new life

OLD SELF (don't)	NEW SELF (do)	WHY (result)
For example: Lying	speak the truth	we are members of another, i should treat them as I want to be treated. It promotes unity and trust.

Question	Verses from passage	Answer/Notes
Other Observations/Questions	Cross References	

APPLICATION

EPHESIANS 5:1-21

LIGHT

For starters...

Explain a time you needed to confess something. What was it like? What was the result?

1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

3 But sexual immorality and all impurity or covetousness must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints. 4 Let there be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are out of place, but instead let there be thanksgiving. 5 For you may be sure of this, that everyone who is sexually immoral or impure, or who is covetous (that is, an idolater), has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not become partners with them; 8 for at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light 9 (for the fruit of light is found in all that is good and right and true), 10 and try to discern what is pleasing to the Lord. 11 Take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness, but instead expose them. 12 For it is shameful even to speak of the things that they do in secret. 13 But when anything is exposed by the light, it becomes visible, 14 for anything that becomes visible is light. Therefore it says,

“Awake, O sleeper,
and arise from the dead,
and Christ will shine on you.”

15 Look carefully then how you walk, not as unwise but as wise, 16 making the best use of the time, because the days are evil. 17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is debauchery, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 addressing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord with your heart, 20 giving thanks always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, 21 submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

OBSERVATIONS

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Make 1-2 observations *per verse* for this section

QUESTIONS

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?

WORDS TO DEFINE

WHAT WORDS SEEM IMPORTANT?

SUMMARY & CONNECTION TO THE WHOLE

DEFINE KEY WORDS

Sexual Immorality: the greek word *porneia* (from which we get *pornography*), meant illicit sexual relations

KEY VERSE

Come up with 10 observations and 5 questions about this verse.

1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. 2 And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

INTERPRETATION

1) Trace the characteristics of light and darkness in this chapter

LIGHT	DARKNESS

2) How would you explain living as “children of light”?

3) Why do you think Paul commanded his readers to “be filled with the Spirit”? (See Romans 8:1-17)

Question	Verses from passage	Answer/Notes
Other Observations/Questions	Cross References	

APPLICATION

EPHESIANS 5:22-6:9

SUBMIT

For starters...

What is your initial reaction to the word Submit? Why?

22 Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior. 24 Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit in everything to their husbands.

25 Husbands, love your wives, as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her, 26 that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 so that he might present the church to himself in splendor, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, that she might be holy and without blemish. 28 In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. 29 For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the church, 30 because we are members of his body. 31 "Therefore a man shall leave his father and mother and hold fast to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh." 32 This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Christ and the church. 33 However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. 2 "Honor your father and mother" (this is the first commandment with a promise), 3 "that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land." 4 Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

5 Bondservants, obey your earthly masters with fear and trembling, with a sincere heart, as you would Christ, 6 not by the way of eye-service, as people-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, 7 rendering service with a good will as to the Lord and not to man, 8 knowing that whatever good anyone does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether he is a bondservant or is free. 9 Masters, do the same to them, and stop your threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

OBSERVATIONS

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Make 3-4 observations *per paragraph* for this section

QUESTIONS

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?

WORDS TO DEFINE

WHAT WORDS SEEM IMPORTANT?

SUMMARY & CONNECTION TO THE WHOLE

DEFINE KEY WORDS

KEY VERSE

This week's key verse is actually from last week! Remember that Paul did not write with chapter divisions. They were added later for organization. While extremely helpful, sometimes the divisions cause a break in thought where there is not one.

The key verse for this study section is the very last phrase from the previous section. It serves as an introduction for the content in these paragraphs.

Come up with 10 observations and 5 questions about this verse.

5:21 submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ.

INTERPRETATION

Paul continues to expound upon the effect of the gospel in our lives. This time turning to the way we operate within key relationships...day-to-day-to-day. Fill in the chart below with some observations about these roles.

	ROLE	COMMANDS	CONNECTIONS WITH CHRIST
MARRIAGE	Wives		
	Husbands		
FAMILY	Children		
	Fathers		
WORK	Servants		
	Masters		

- 1) What do these relationships reveal about God?

- 2) How do these commands compare with our usual attitudes and practices?

- 3) What is challenging to you from this passage?

Question	Verses from passage	Answer/Notes
Other Observations/Questions	Cross References	

APPLICATION

EPHESIANS 6:10-24

ARMOR

For starters...

Do you tend to be a “fight” or “flight” kind of person?

10 Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil. 12 For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand firm. 14 Stand therefore, having fastened on the belt of truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and, as shoes for your feet, having put on the readiness given by the gospel of peace. 16 In all circumstances take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming darts of the evil one; 17 and take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God, 18 praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, 19 and also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

21 So that you also may know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord will tell you everything. 22 I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage your hearts.

23 Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Grace be with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with love incorruptible.

OBSERVATIONS

WHAT DO YOU SEE?

Make 3-4 observations *per paragraph* for this section

QUESTIONS

WHAT DO YOU WANT TO KNOW?

WORDS TO DEFINE

WHAT WORDS SEEM IMPORTANT?

SUMMARY & CONNECTION TO THE WHOLE

DEFINE KEY WORDS

KEY VERSE

Come up with 10 observations and 5 questions about this verse.

11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the schemes of the devil.

INTERPRETATION

Paul began his letter explaining our **fullest reality**:

2:5-6 “God made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—and raised us up with him and SEATED us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus.”

He moved in his letter to our **current reality**:

4:1 “Urge you to WALK in a manner worthy of the gospel.”

4:17 “you must no longer WALK as the Gentiles do.”

5:2 “And WALK in love.”

5:15 “Look carefully how you WALK, not as unwise, but as wise.”

Now he ends with our **needed reality**:

6:10 “Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to STAND against the schemes of the devil.”

6:14 “STAND therefore...”

“Stand” was a military term meaning either to “take over,” or “hold a critical position on the battlefield.”

- 1) What does this word (“stand”) tell you about our needed mindset as Christ followers?

- 2) Who/what is our battle against?

- 3) Consider the use of each piece of armor Paul describes:

Armor	How do you put on this piece?	Why important in the fight of faith?
Belt of Truth		
Breastplate of righteousness		
Gospel of Peace		
Shield of Faith		
Helmet of Salvation		
Sword of the Spirit		

- 4) Why does he end this section with a command to pray?

Question	Verses from passage	Answer/Notes
Other Observations/Questions	Cross References	

APPLICATION

EPHESIANS

SUMMARY

For starters...

From this semester, what are some of your favorite things about your Bible study?

About your leader?

About your group?

TO REMEMBER

Flip through your study and write down the key things you want to remember from this study.

APPLICATIONS

Review your applications. Can you see change in your life after this study?

SUMMARIZE

Create a final summary of the letter. Something that can help you remember the contents and main points. Choose what works for you: a written paragraph? A picture? An acronym? A poem? An outline?

VERSE ANALYSIS

Here are some helpful keys for slowing down and focusing on a verse from the passage. Try a dozen or so of these suggestions on a verse to see it from a variety of angles.

- 1- PRAY and ask God for wisdom, guidance, and an open heart
- 2- Read the verse MULTIPLE TIMES
- 3- Look at the CONTEXT of the immediate paragraph. Then Chapter. Then Book.
- 4- Notice REPEATED words within the context
- 5- Consider the PUNCTUATION of the verse
- 6- ASK who, what, when, where, why, how
- 7- Look at MULTIPLE TRANSLATIONS of the verse
- 8- PARAPHRASE the verse. Put it in your own words
- 9- Note what the verse IS NOT SAYING
- 10- Boil the verse down to A FEW WORDS
- 11- Identify the KEY WORD and explain why it is so important
- 12- DEFINE the key word
- 13- Look at some CROSS REFERENCES
- 14- State the OBVIOUS about the verse
- 15- EMPHASIZE each word in the verse. How does each bring meaning?
- 16- Note the ACTION (verbs) in the verse
- 17- ILLUSTRATE the verse with a picture, story or song
- 18- Give an EXAMPLE of how the verse could be lived out
- 19- List the practical PRINCIPLE from the verse
- 20- Find a QUOTE that relates to this verse
- 21- Apply the verse to your FIVE SENSES
- 22- List some possible APPLICATIONS
- 23- Write a PRAYER to God about the verse
- 24- Read a COMMENTARY on the verse
- 25- DISCUSS it with others
- 26- MEMORIZE the verse
- 27- REMOVE some words and see how it impacts the meaning
- 28- Consider how THE GOSPEL impacts this verse
- 29- Note how FAITH, HOPE and LOVE are evident within the verse
- 30- What is the OPPOSITE of the verse?
- 31- How does this verse point to or reveal JESUS?

QUESTION PROMPTS

When will this be most useful?
When was this written?
When is this most true?

Who is in focus?
Who do I relate with most?
Who do I not want to relate with?
Who is left out?
Who else is mentioned?
Who is compared?
Who do I think of?
Who is God using?
Who could I tell this to?
Who is a modern day parallel/example?
Who is active?
Who is included?
Who is excluded?
Who does this apply to?

Where else can I find similar verses?
Where would obeying this take me?
Where do I see this?
Where is he going with this?
Where is he coming from?

How do I see this in the world?
How would this read from _____
perspective?
How would the audience receive this?
How does the author communicate the
truth?
How does the author think this is
experienced?
How can this be misconstrued?
How can I recommunicate this truth?
How can I use this in evangelism?
How does this link to what we've already
studied?

Why did he use that word?
Why didn't he say _____?
Why did he say ____?
Why is this in the Bible?
Why in this chapter?
Why in this book?
Why is this important?
Why this concept in this context?
Why this verb?
Why did God act this way?

What does it mean to....?
What is my reaction to?
What does this say about God?
What are the boundaries to this verse?
What do/did I expect to come next?
What does it look like today?
What words would be used today to say
this same thing?
What would be the opposite of this
statement?
What is comparable to this?
What is the context here?
What do we know about the audience?
What do we know about the author?
What jumps out at me?
What is similar?
What emotions does this bring out in me?
What is the cause and/or effect?
What is my role?
What does this remind me of?
What would you have said here?
What was author's emotion?
What is the next logical step in this
argument?
What made him say this?
What

What would it look like if more people
knew/did this?
What if this verse was left out of the
Bible?

Do I believe this?
What would it look like if I did?