

BREAKING DOWN EPHESIANS

EPHESIANS 1-6

Paul's letter to the Ephesians - One book, six chapters, 155 verses, 3,177 words, 13,826 characters...

And this morning, *we're breaking it all down...*

First, into **halves**...

This book divides into two halves. Chapters 1-3 teach us **how to see ourselves**. Then in light of those truths, Chapters 4-6 teach us **how to live our lives**.

How we see ourselves effects *how we live our lives*.

I love the picture of the kitty cat looking at its reflection in the mirror... *and beholding a lion staring back at him*.

There's a verse that goes with this picture, Proverbs 23:7, "**For as (a man) thinks in his heart, so is he...**" *How we see ourself* really does impact *how we live our life*.

And this is the message of Ephesians...

In Chapters 1-3 Paul puts you in front of the mirror.

You're not who you think you are! You're no longer the boy from the hood or the girl next door. When you come to Christ everything changes! In the eyes of God you're now somebody special! And it's time to step up - put on this new identity - live a lifestyle that fits this new you!

That's what Chapters 4-6 teaches us - what that life looks like. How a child of God walks worthy of his calling.

Our *spiritual position* impacts our *practical living*. The relationship we have with Christ influences all our other relationships. This is Ephesians broken down in **halves!**

But let's also break it down in **thirds**...

Ephesians is all about our **wealth** - our **walk** - and our **warfare**. In Chapters 1-3 Paul unlocks God's treasure chest. He unveils all the blessings we're given in Christ.

In Chapters 4-5 he describes our *walk*. You can tell a lot about a person on the inside by how they walk on the outside. *A prideful person struts. A sheepish person shuffles.* Likewise a believer in Jesus will conduct himself in a way indicative of his or her spiritual status.

Then finally, in Chapter 6, Paul takes up the believer's battle plan. For *the Christian walk* isn't a tiptoe through the tulips - it's war, and we're expected to take a stand.

That's Ephesians in **threes**... **wealth, walk, warfare**.

But here's another way to cut Ephesians in **thirds**...

Chapters 1-3 are a believer's **habitat** - we're *in Christ!*

Chapter 4-5 we're heaven's **diplomat** - we're children of the King - we now represent Jesus. Let's do it well.

And chapter 6 is our **combat**. We're part of God's kingdom, but God's kingdom is at war with the devil.

So break it down: **our habitat, a diplomat, the combat**.

And here's a third way to think of Ephesians in **thirds**... 2:6 tells us we now "**sit together in heavenly places in Christ...**" God sees us "*in Christ*" - and not struggling but sitting - spiritually we're rich and righteous.

In 4:1 we're told "**to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called...**" Now that you're a child of God it's time to live like one! Let this divine calling color in all the practical corners of your life - even among people...

Then in 6:10 we receive our orders, "**be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might, put on the whole armor of God that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.**" We're equipped to stand and fight.

When a baby is born all he or she can do is lie around and look cute. A baby is defenseless and immobile.

But before long he starts to get his balance. He learns to sit up - then puts one foot in front of the other - then stands... And is the progression for a believer in Christ.

We too **sit**, then **walk**, then **stand**. And Ephesians is a good guide for that process. It's Ephesians in **thirds**...

But now let's break this book down into **sixes**...

Chapter 1 - **God's plan, let's play!**

Chapter 2 - **Won by Christ, One in Christ**

Chapter 3 - **Now Hear This!**

Chapter 4 - **Git 'Er Done, Until We're One**

Chapter 5 - **You Light Up My Life**

Chapter 6 - **Get On Your Knees And Fight Like A Man**

Here's where I need to give a little credit where credit is due. At our last CC Pastors Get-together we spent a day dissecting the book of Ephesians. And this is what we came up with... *I think it's an awesome synopsis...*

Chapter 1... before the foundation of the world God had a plan to bring all things together in Christ.

He knew that sin would *scatter and fracture*. But God had a secret weapon to *restore and reconcile*. All that sin would **undo**, God was willing to **redo in Christ!**

Chapter 1:20 closes with a prayer. For God wants us to participate in the plan that **“He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and... put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over... the church.”**

Thus Chapter 1... **“God's plan, let's play!”**

Chapter 2... begins describing just how lost we were without Christ, **“dead in trespasses.”** But we were saved by grace, through faith - not of our good deeds - but as a gift - earned by Jesus... And we're now God's **poema** - *His work of art*. We've been **won to God in Christ.**

But that's only part of God's salvation. For He saves us individually *and corporately*. Jesus not only unites us to God, but to each other. We're no longer strangers. We're now one new race - a new people group in Christ.

Chapter 2 teaches, **“Won by Christ, One in Christ.”**

Chapter 3... explains how this wonderful plan of God was a centuries-old secret that had just been revealed to mankind. *And it was Paul who got to spill the beans...*

This blew his mind. Paul considered himself “less than the least of all the saints.” Yet God in His grace gave him the honor of revealing to the world “the unsearchable riches of Christ.” What was once an OT mystery Paul was now shouting from the rooftops, “Now Hear This!”

Chapter 4 tells us... What God has revealed, we now should apply... Our high and holy calling demands a low and loving walk. We need to humble ourselves.

People are fragile so be gentle... People take time so be patient... Not everyone is like you - people are peculiar - so let's bear with one another... And people make mistakes, so let's forgive, as Jesus forgives us...

As believers God has given us a “unity of Spirit,” but it's up to us to keep from upsetting that unity. Chapter 4 is a call to action - “Git 'Er Done, Until We're One.”

Chapter 5... I love this theme. You can tell the pastors who worked on this lived in the 70s. “You light up my life” was a Debbie Boone song, but it's perfect here...

Paul tells us that as Christians we're no longer subject to the darkness of this world. Christ brings us into the light of God's love and life. Let's now “walk as children of light.” Jesus does light up every corner of our lives!

Then Chapter 6... once you choose to turn your back on the darkness and walk in the light, the devil doesn't take it lying down. You become a target for his attacks.

He has *tricks* or “wiles.” He tries to pull you down.

This is why you've got to buckle on the whole armor of God. Don't leave it hanging in the closet - *put it on!*

God has equipment for your protection, and you need to strap it on! The **armor**, *your protective gear* - but also your **arsenal**, *your weapons*, the Bible and prayer. So Chapter 6, “**Get On Your Knees And Fight Like A Man.**”

Now, that’s Ephesians broken down **in halves**, and **in thirds**, and **in sixes**... For the last 28 weeks we’ve been breaking it down verse by verse - all *155 verses*. And this AM, I want to read through this book one more time.

When this scroll was first unrolled, I’m sure the Church in Ephesus heard the letter from beginning to end. They were hit by the force of Paul’s thoughts in one thrust - in one sitting - not once a week over a period of months.

You can focus on part-and-parcel, and lose sight of the whole - *miss the forest for the trees, as they say*... I want to avoid that by rolling through Ephesians one last time.

This AM I’m going to show-off my confidence in God’s Word. **I’m just going to read this book!** I’ll insert a few comments here and there. But I’m trusting that you’ll leave today impressed with the power of your Bible.

Despite what we assume, it really doesn’t need much help! Pay attention and this brief letter change your life!

Ephesians 1:1, “**Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.**” Here’s the *author*, the *recipients*, and the *greeting*. But notice the two-fold address... “*in Ephesus, and in Christ Jesus*...”

Every believer lives simultaneously in two locations. Physically we’re in ATL, but spiritually we’re “**in Christ.**”

A spiritual world butts up against the physical. And we choose. We live bound to our circumstances - or by faith we look beyond the physical, and live in the joy of Jesus!

And *in Christ* we've got it all! We're loaded down with blessings! Verse 3, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ..."

God takes all His treasures and puts it in one place. "X" marks the spot! They're found at the cross of Christ!

Next Paul lists our blessings... "Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love, having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will, to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved. In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself, that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth - in Him. In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

In Him" (Notice all the times Paul uses this phrase "*in Him*" or "*in whom*" or "*in Christ*" - 13 times in 14 verses.)

“In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.” In the original language there’s no period from verses 3 to 14. Paul reels off 273 words without catching his breath. *He’s so excited over his blessings!*

In Christ... we’re chosen, holy, blameless, adopted, accepted, redeemed, forgiven, sealed, and guaranteed.

God's Spirit is our *"guarantee"* - a downpayment - a foretaste of Heaven... All God's blessings are *in Christ*.

And since we have such blessings, don't let a single one get wasted. Paul prays in verse 15, “Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers: that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, the eyes of your understanding being enlightened...” Paul prays for insight. *Eyes for the mind*, so we can apply practically what we know theoretically...

And here's his three requests... “That you may know what is the hope of His calling... Do you realize **you're somebody** in Christ? We need no other status symbols.

And “what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints...” God hasn't just given us an inheritance - *we're His inheritance*. God sees us as **His treasure!**

“And what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe...” That the same power that raised Jesus from the dead is now available to us!... We should all

pray that the Holy Spirit will help us grasp just how much God *values, loves, and equips* each of us!

He's given us power "according to the working of His mighty power which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.

And (God) put all things under (Jesus') feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all."

Chapter 2 is *a rags to riches story*... From *sinner to saint* - from *death to life* - from *rebel to relative*...

In fact, this is your story! "And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins, in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience, among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others."

Spiritually speaking you were as dead as doorknob.

"But God, who is rich in mercy (aren't you glad God is rich in what we need most), because of His great love with which He loved us, even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved)..." The OKJ uses the phrase "*quicken*ed us." God jump started our spiritual batteries.

His Spirit generated new life - His nature is in us.

“And raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.”

Here's what we'll do in heaven... For ages to come we'll be shown the riches of God's kindness in Christ.

And what's responsible for this dramatic turn around *from our rags to God's riches?* “For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

Grace is “love that's on the house!” We've done nothing to earn God's favor. It's a gift we receive by faith.

That's why there'll be no bragging in heaven!

“For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.” “Our good works don't make us fit for God, but God does make us fit to do good works.”

God works in us in order to work through us.

“Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh - who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands - that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”

We were like a stray dog - living on the scraps of this world - but *in Christ*, God took us in. He domesticated us in Christ. We've been taught how to live in God's house.

“For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation, having abolished in His flesh the enmity, that is, the law of commandments contained in ordinances...” In the OT the Law of Moses divided the world into Gentile and Jew. But Jesus fulfilled the Law and removed the divider.

“So as to create in Himself one new man from the two, thus making peace, and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity.” For centuries the Law of Moses determined who was on God's team. But now a new line of demarcation has been drawn - *the cross of Christ*. Today, God's people are those who are *in Christ*.

Rather than Jew and Gentile - we're now **a third race**.

“And (Jesus) came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near. For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father.”

Before Christ, access to God was limited to a Jewish priest. Now *in Christ*, every believer is his own priest.

“Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.” In the OT God's Spirit dwelt in a rock Temple in Jerusalem.

Today, His Spirit dwells in people - in us, His Church.

Chapter 3, “For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles - if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you, how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already, by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ), which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets: that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel, of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power.” Everybody loves a mystery... *including God*. Salvation was once a secret.

God’s plan to unify Jew and Gentile *in Christ* remained a mystery. But Paul was given the glorious privilege *of popping the cork - of letting the cat out of the bag...*

Verse 8, “To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ; to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God (wisdom too deep to be figured out by man) might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places, according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him.” God’s plan, *His Church*, surprised even angels.

God has no counselors or confidants. He does as He pleases. He alone is privy to His plans. Yet our inability to know *His ways shouldn't shake our trust in His love.*

We have a bold confidence through faith in Christ!

“Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.” Recall, Paul was in prison for sharing the secret. And he’s praying too...

“For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named, that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man...” Often we fuss over the health and happiness of the outer man, but Paul is concerned with the state of our inner man.

He prays, “That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height - to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge...” Only through experience can I know what passes knowledge.

I might not understand scientifically why chemicals in ice cream create such pleasure against my taste buds, *but who cares!* I enjoy ice cream not by understanding it, but by tasting it. And the same is true with God’s love...

Paul continues to pray, “That you may be filled with all the fullness of God.” Ask God to fill you to overflowing...

“Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, to Him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”

Chapter 4 teaches us that membership in God's family not only carries with it privileges, but responsibilities.

Paul writes, "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called, with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love, endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." Obviously, *a lofty calling requires a lowly walk.*

We can't create "the unity of the Spirit" - it's God's gift to His Church. But we can upset His unity with our pride and selfishness. Thus, we need to *preserve* that unity.

For "There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

"But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift." We're all one in Christ, but each individual has differing gifts from the Holy Spirit.

Therefore He says: "When He ascended on high, He led captivity captive, and gave gifts to men." (Now this, "He ascended" - what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) After Jesus was crucified - He descended to Hades - *down, down down* - like a swimmer touching the bottom of the pool.

He went to "*the lower parts of the Earth*" - to the abode of the dead - as the confirmation of God's OT promises.

Then He pushed off the floor and soared upward toward heaven. As He did, He gave gifts to His Church.

“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ...”

And this is the purpose of the Church - not necessarily to save sinners, but to strengthen and equip saints. To build us up so you can go and minister in Jesus' name.

And we need to grow “till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...” *“Till we all come” - we all have room to grow.*

None of us has perfect theology. *If Christ-likeness is the goal* - that means we all need to mature in our faith.

“That we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting, but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head - Christ - from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.” As we grow in Christ we grow together... Everyone does their share!

“This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart; who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.” People without Christ are *empty-headed and hard-hearted* - and *cut-off* from God.

They live with blinders on. They're driven by their lust.

And this is NOT how we should live. Verse 20, "But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and be renewed in the spirit of your mind, and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness."

A Christian *puts off* and *puts on*. You stop acting and thinking like the **old you**, and you live out the **new you!** *How you see yourself determines how you live you life.*

And here's how a true Christian rolls... "Therefore, putting away lying, "Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor," for we are members of one another.

"Be angry, and do not sin": do not let the sun go down on your wrath, nor give place to the devil.

Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need. Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you."

Chapter 5, "Therefore be imitators of God as dear children." *And how?* "Walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God

for a sweet-smelling aroma.” The love of Jesus involves *giving* not *taking*. It’s a sacrificial love.

“But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints...” “*Fornication*” which is “sex outside of marriage” is often the polar opposite of love. It’s *taking* not *giving*.

This is why it shouldn’t go on among Christians!

“Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.” Notice, greed can turn a *thing* into an *idol*. When that thing, *whatever it is*, is more sought after than God, it’s idolatry.

Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. Therefore do not be partakers with them.”

For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth), finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.” Darkness is just the absence of light. Light drives out the dark. And this is how Christians attack the darkness - not by violence, or screaming, or bullying - *but by just shining God’s light!*

“For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes

manifest is light. Therefore He says: “Awake, you who sleep, arise from the dead, and Christ will give you light.” Sadly, our world sleeps in the dark, but worse is when the Church falls asleep in the light! *Let’s be awake!*

“See then that you walk circumspectly...” Make careful choices - take deliberate steps. Live “not as fools but as wise, redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”

“Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.” And here’s an aspect of God’s will...

Verse 18, “And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation” (or “wasteful”). Drunkenness is many things, but foremost it’s a *waste* - of time, money, energy, life.

“But be filled with the Spirit...” Alcohol *suppresses* our capacities, while the Holy Spirit *enhances* our capacities.

He brings joy! “Speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord, giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **submitting to one another in the fear of God.**”

Which is the context of what comes next. Paul is going to discuss how our *relationship with Christ* impacts the *other relationships* in our lives... *marriage, family, work.*

And it’s greatest effect is to create a mutual respect.

Wives don’t just submit to husbands, but husbands love their wives with a sacrificial love... Children don’t just obey their parents, but parents avoid provoking their kids... Employees should work hard for their bosses, but their boss should realize that he has a Boss in heaven!

“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.

So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

Paul quotes Genesis 2, “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.” This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.” *Wives need love and husbands need respect.* And God orders marriage accordingly.

Chapter 6, “Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise: “that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.” Generally, a person lives *longer and better* if he honors his parents.

“And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training (*the discipline*) and admonition (*the encouragement*) of the Lord.” Good parents use both warm hugs and wooden spoons...

“Bondservants (or employees), be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ; not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men, knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.”

“And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.” Every boss answers to *the Big Boss*. God cares about our business.

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places. 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.”

Life is not a playground, it's a battleground. But the foe we fight is *spiritual* not *visible*. We need *special gear*...

“Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth...” All God's armor hangs from a *belt of truth*. Our defense hinges on trust in God's *Word* and *promises*.

“Having put on the breastplate of righteousness, and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one. And take the helmet of salvation...” In this battle it’s vital to renew your mind - *to think God’s way*.

Spiritually speaking, **a mind is a terrible thing to waste!**

And then take up, “the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints...”

There are two offensive weapons we can use against the enemy - **the blade** and **the bomb** - the sword of the Spirit, the Bible - and the heavy artillery, or prayer.

And Paul asks that when the Ephesians pray, they pray “**for (him), that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.**”

“But that you also may know my affairs and how I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you; whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and that he may comfort your hearts.

Peace to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.”

I hope you've enjoyed our 30 weeks in Ephesians and **you'll carry it - not just in *hand* - but in *head* and *heart*.**