

Sermon Title: Paul's Letter to the Ephesians

Last weekend we got to experience "Family Weekend" at BG.

- It was nice to feel like a part of the family.
- Why do we in the Church focus on the things that divide us instead of unite us?

That question comes from the message of the Book of Ephesians:

- This book is all about Jesus Christ
- It's different from our last 2 letters which were about correcting bad theology or behavior.

Do you know what we have in Christ? **Here's a video to explain**

The letter is almost structured like a sermon, the first half talking about what God has done for us, and then the second half telling us how we need to respond in Christ.

Chapter 1: it begins with a beautiful Jewish style poem praising God for what he has done through Jesus Christ.

- From the beginning of the world God's purpose has been to choose and bless a covenant family.
- That started with Abraham, but now is open to anyone through Christ.
- Not only are we adopted into God's family, we are granted forgiveness for all of our sins, past, present, and future, and we find no condemnation, but instead we receive God's grace.
- **Ephesians 1:9-11**
- Chapter 1 ends with Paul praying that we would not just know the gospel, but experience it and all of its power.

Chapter 2: Paul expands more on two of the major themes of chapter 1, God's grace, and this new adopted family of God.

- He contrasts our old life with our new life in Christ.
- **Ephesians 2:8-10**
- Chapter 2 ends with a beautiful description of the church, now unified in Christ, living together in peace because of Christ fulfilling the law and breaking down the barrier of hostility between Jew and Gentile.

Chapter 3: Paul thanks God for the role he had in bringing the Gentiles into the family of God.

- He says this people don't lost heart when they hear he is in prison.
- **Ephesians 3:17b-19a**

Chapter 4: Paul is challenging the church in Ephesus to respond to God's Word with actions.

- Paul again stresses unity, but by bringing up the body of Christ metaphor he is saying we don't need uniformity.
- In Christ, we are a new creation, and the church as a whole is a new humanity, therefore, we need to think and act differently than we used to before we were a Christian.

Take off the old...	Put on the new...
Lie	Tell the Truth
Anger	Cultivate Peace
Theft	Generosity
Gossip	Encourage
Revenge	Forgiveness
Impurity	Self-control
Drunkenness	God's Spirit

Chapter 5: A guide for how we are to live our lives

- **Ephesians 5:18-21**
- Sing, be thankful, and elevate others above yourself
- Then Paul gives examples in marriage, parent/child, and master/slave relationships.

Chapter 6: Reminder that our fight is not with this world, but with the evil forces at work all around us.

- We cannot stand on our own against these forces, so we must put on the armor of God.
- **Ephesians 6:14-17**

Challenges:

1. Take some time this week and think about if you are unified with all believers all over the world?
2. Take off your old clothes of your old self, and put on the new clothes of the Holy Spirit in one area of your life.
3. Take some time to re-read the Armor of God passage again in Chapter 6: 10-24, and identify which piece of armor you don't wear on a regular basis.

Please know, that being in Christ, being a part of God's family and our BRC family is well worth any time and effort you put into it.

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Scripture passages to go up on the Screen:

Ephesians 1:9-11 - ⁹ God has now revealed to us his mysterious will regarding Christ—which is to fulfill his own good plan. ¹⁰ And this is the plan: At the right time he will bring everything together under the authority of Christ—everything in heaven and on earth. ¹¹ Furthermore, because we are united with Christ, we have received an inheritance from God for he chose us in advance, and he makes everything work out according to his plan.

Ephesians 2:8-10 – “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.”

Ephesians 3:17b-19a – “And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge”

Ephesians 5:18b-21 - : 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.”

Ephesians 6:14-17 – “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,”