

WEEK 4 & 5 – EPHESIANS & PHILEMON - CHRISTIAN LIVING

Reading: Ephesians 4:1-6:24; Philemon

Big Idea: *Perhaps nowhere in the New Testament is the distinction between law and grace so beautifully portrayed. Both Roman law and the Mosaic Law of the Old Testament gave Philemon the right to punish a runaway slave who was considered property. But the covenant of grace through the Lord Jesus allowed both master and slave to fellowship in love on an equal basis in the body of Christ (gotquestions.org/Book-of-Philemon).*

Memory Verse: Philemon 6, "I pray that you may be active in sharing your faith, so that you will have a full understanding of every good thing we have in Christ."

Monday, Sept 21 | Ephesians 4:1-16 *Unity in the Body of Christ*
What responsibilities do you have as a member of a local church?

Tuesday, Sept 22 | Ephesians 4:17-32 *The New Life*
How does Paul explain the process of personal change? Does it happen by "trying harder" or by becoming a new creation?

Wednesday, Sept 23 | Ephesians 5:1-21 *Imitate God*
What does it mean to expose the works of darkness (v. 11)? How might we do this today? How does the Holy Spirit provide wisdom and boldness for this task?

Thursday, Sept 24 | Ephesians 5:22-6:9 *Christ Honoring Relationships*
How does the illustration of marriage as a picture of Christ and the church give purpose and hope for marriage?

Friday, Sept 25 | Ephesians 6:10-24 *Spiritual Warfare*
How is "standing" significant in literal warfare? What does Paul's frequent use of "stand" signify in spiritual warfare?

Weekend Catch-Up & Reflection (Sept 26-27)
Take time to re-read your favorite passage from this week. Ask God to help you put on the armor of God to stand against the schemes of the devil.

Monday, Sept 28 | Philemon 1-7 *Philemon's Love and Faith*
Why is prayer the appropriate starting point for any major decision or conversation? What role has prayer played in your decision making and reconciliation efforts?

Tuesday, Sept 29 | Philemon 8-16 *Paul's Appeal*
Why is love the commanding ethic for the Christian? What other passages reinforce the love Paul asks for from Philemon (v. 9)?

Wednesday, Sept 30 | Philemon 17-25 *Liberty in the Gospel*
How does Christ provide satisfaction for our debt? To whom does he pay the debt?

SHADY GROVE BAPTIST CHURCH Prison Epistles - September 2026



Dive deeper with these resources:

1. Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians & Philemon for Everyone by NT Wright
2. <https://www.thegospelcoalition.org/course/pauls-prison-epistles>

WEEK ONE – PHILIPPIANS

Reading: Philippians 1:1-4:23

Big Idea: *Philippians can be "Resources Through Suffering." The book is about Christ in our life, Christ in our mind, Christ as our goal, Christ as our strength, and joy through suffering (gotquestions.org/Book-of-Philippians).*

Memory Verse: Philippians 1:21: "For to me, to live is Christ, and to die is gain."

Monday, Aug 31 | Philippians 1:1-30 *To Live Is Christ*
Do you allow your trials to cause you to pout or to pray? What trials can you take before God in prayer now?

Tuesday, Sept 1 | Philippians 2:1-18 *The Humility of Christ*
Stop and read Isaiah 53, and marvel at the humility of Christ and at His atoning work.

Wednesday, Sept 2 | Philippians 2:19-30 *Faithful Brothers in Christ*
What made Timothy a great friend to Paul? Do you have friends like that? Are you a friend like that?

Thursday, Sept 3 | Philippians 3:1-4:1 *Pressing on Towards the Goal*
Paul was a "one-thing" guy (v. 13-14). What would people who know you well say is your "one thing"?

Friday, Sept 4 | Philippians 4:2-23 *Joy in Christian Fellowship*
Why is division in the body of Christ so dangerous? How might you encourage unity rather than division?

Weekend Catch-Up & Reflection (Sept 5 & 6)
Take time to re-read your favorite passage from this week. Ask God to give you joy and strength in every circumstance.

WEEK TWO - COLOSSIANS: THE SUFFICIENCY OF CHRIST

Reading: Colossians 1:1-4:18

Big Idea: *The Book of Colossians contains doctrinal instruction about the deity of Christ and false philosophies (1:15-2:23), as well as practical exhortations regarding Christian conduct, including friends and speech (3:1-4:18).* (gotquestions.org/Book-of-Colossians)

Memory Verse: Colossians 3:12-13, *"Therefore, as God's chosen people, holy and dearly loved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience. Bear with each other and forgive whatever grievances you may have against one another. Forgive as the Lord forgave you."*

Monday, Sept 7 | Colossians 1:1-14 *Encouragement in the Church*

What does Paul's prayer teach us about how we should pray for others? How does Paul show us the importance of being members of God's family in this passage?

Tuesday, Sept 8 | Colossians 1:15-23 *The Preeminence of Christ*

What does Paul tell us about Jesus in this passage that makes him worthy of our worship?

Wednesday, Sept 9 | Colossians 1:24-2:23 *False Teachers & the Truth*

How do worldly philosophies take us away from Christ? What is Paul's antidote to such false teaching?

Thursday, Sept 10 | Colossians 3:1-4:1 *Seek the Things That Are Above*

How should being raised with Christ redirect your life's pursuits? How does this passage call us to renew our minds?

Friday, Sept 11 | Colossians 4:2-18 *The Beauty of the Body of Christ*

In what ways have you been tempted to be a bystander when it comes to engaging the world with the gospel?

Weekend Catch-Up & Reflection (Sept 12 & 13)

Take time to re-read your favorite passage from this week. Ask the Lord to make you aware of false teaching that might hinder you from seeking the things that are above.

WEEK THREE – EPHESIANS - THE WORK OF GOD IN CHRIST

Reading: Ephesians 1:1-3:21

Big Idea: As followers of Christ, we must fully understand who God declares us to be. We must become grounded in the knowledge of God's accomplishment for all humanity. The first three chapters focus on God's work in salvation through Christ (gotquestions.org/Book-of-Ephesians)

Memory Verse: Ephesians 2:8-10, *"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."*

Monday, Sept 14 | Ephesians 1:1-14 *Spiritual Blessings In Christ*

What does this passage say about worship? How does it move you to praise God?

Tuesday, Sept 15 | Ephesians 1:15-23 *Praying the Power of God*

What kinds of requests are brought up at your prayer meetings? How are Paul's petitions for the believers in Ephesus different?

Wednesday, Sept 16 | Ephesians 2:1-10 *By Grace Through Faith*

What was the consequence of our pre-Christian status? Why are the words "But God" so sweet? Why did God make us alive?

Thursday, Sept 17 | Ephesians 2:11-22 *One In Christ*

Which of the three illustrations of the church in 2:19-22—citizens, family, or stones—made the biggest impact on you? Explain why.

Friday, Sept 18 | Ephesians 2:1-21 *God Can Do Far More Abundantly*

Why is it right to say the riches of Christ are "incalculable" or unsearchable?

Weekend Catch-Up & Reflection (Aug 22 – Aug 23)

Take time to re-read your favorite passage from this week. Spend time in solitude and silence, pondering the power and grace of God in the Gospel.