

Ephesians Series – Autumn 2020 Including Life Group Leaders Brief

Taken from the book **Ephesians: How Jesus creates a New People in a New World** by Brad Wilson

‘How Jesus creates a new people in a new world’

A major series preaching through this book, with each message formed of three parts:

- Head – Renewal of our minds by the knowledge of God
- Heart – Restoration of our souls by the application of this truth
- Hands – Transformation of our lives through the power of the Holy Spirit

There are eight parts (weeks) each has a reading(s) a brief synopsis and some suggested questions.

Please note that the first three parts all have two sections, the remaining parts one section each.

Suggested questions for life groups have been **highlighted**.

Part 4 - A church transformed by Christ (4:1-16)

Head

The gospel not only gives salvation and hope for the future, the power of the resurrection of Jesus is coursing through our hearts, minds and life, through the Holy Spirit.

Up to this point in Ephesians Paul has been proclaiming the work of God in Jesus, the mystery of God’s infinite love put directly in our souls, later he will go on to share the “rules for Christian living”.

The Holy Spirit comes alongside us and invites us on a journey of a lifetime, living the abundant lives we were made for...

We need to understand the life we have received, the position we are in as children of God (1John 3:1).

We need to understand our heavenly calling: into relationship with God, able to approach the Holy perfect God without fear, fully redeemed. Compare with the Old Testament priest going into the holy of holies. We can call God, Abba Father (Romans 8:15).

God has given His individuals in His church gifts to ensure the church is built up, reaches unity, and becomes mature.

How do we ensure the characteristics of our relationships are in keeping with the above?

How should we deal with conflict? See also Philippians 2:3-4.

How do we strive to “keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace”? How do we do this when we disagree?

Heart

Often, we see the bible as giving us truths to believe or rules to obey, but here Paul is clearly saying there is a life to be lived in community, where every part of life is filled with the singular love of God to us and in us.

He is talking not about rules but about personal transformation.

Our reactions and interactions should have a new character.

Our behaviour must reflect our calling.

Our affections are changed by our calling.

How do we address areas in our lives when we don't see transformed reactions and interactions?

To change requires discipline, ongoing discipline and commitment or we tend to go back to our default position.

2 Corinthians 5:17, Galatians 2:20, Galatians 6:15, Romans 12:2.

What is our response?

Is there a distance between what we read and what we believe?

Do our actions reflect what we believe?

As the Holy Spirit leads us in this abundant life, we begin to understand and mature so we are not tossed to and fro... (v14)

Do we still feel our lives are chaotic and led by our ungodly nature? How should this be corrected?

Hands

The nature of our interactions are listed by Paul as:

- be completely humble
- gentle
- patient
- bearing with one another in love
- keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace

cf with the fruit of the Spirit in Galatians 5:22-23.

We need to understand the oneness in Christ v4-5

Paul is here encouraging us to walk worthy of the gospel, what does this mean to you?

How often do we encourage others?

How can we allow the Holy Spirit to be our constant guide in all aspects of our life?