

# UNITY AS A TEAM

## SPIRITUAL BATTLE “BE READY”

- 1** EPHESIANS 1
- 2** EPHESIANS 2
- 3** EPHESIANS 3-4
- 4** EPHESIANS 5
- 5** EPHESIANS 6



# UNITY AS A TEAM

## Ephesians 1

---

Read Ephesians 1:4-14

It is all about God. He chose us: John 15:16, Luke 19:10

Predestined: what God did and does for his children. He predestined us to be conformed to the image of his son, he ordains us for his purpose and to be blameless and holy

Vs 7 He redeemed us: redeem is to purchase/to set free by paying a price for. Like a slave that is bought and then released to be a free man

Vs7 He forgave us. To carry away our sin, Israel placed their sin on a donkey and let it go, it was gone away. Audio A “my sins are forgotten, their on the bottom of the ocean floor”

Vs 8-10 He revealed God’s will to us. The mystery is not like unknown but sacred secrets once hidden but now revealed to God’s people, Christ

Vs 11-12 He made us an inheritance gave us an inheritance valuable and we can pass on the inheritance to others, introduce them to Jesus

Vs 13 He sealed us. Like a king would make a wax seal on a letter to authenticate it and stating that it belonged to him. The state does the same thing with a stamp like a notary uses it authenticates and declares that the state recognizes this as real/true.

Vs 14 He guarantees, he puts a deposit on us like we would on a house that he is coming back to get us. We are HIS. He will finish the work he began. It is like giving an engagement ring to someone, you declare they belong to you and they are not available to anyone else now.

Pray the prayer of Paul; that we will know God, know his calling, know his power and that he will fill us from top to bottom with His riches.

# UNITY AS A TEAM

## Ephesians 2

---

Read Ephesians 2

This entire chapter talks about our position in Christ. We were dead, now we are alive in Christ. He (Jesus) has raised us up and seated us in the heavenly realms, we have been saved, we are His workmanship. What does all that mean?

It means we had no means to do anything for ourselves, we were dead, not sick, not near death; we were dead. The work that followed our death is God's work. God's work was done "because of His great love for us". He resurrected us and then placed us spiritually in the heavenly realms with him, which is why this time on earths suffering is for a little while. We are already in heaven with our Lord.

"We are his workmanship" this means we are his creation, his *poem* is the word for workmanship in the Greek. He is writing us, creating us to be more like his son every day.

Verse 9 says we were created in him to do good works. We *will* do good works that he prepared for us to do if we are obedient to the Lord. God has a plan for u s. That is such an awesome thought; he has a plan for me and a plan for you to do. This is after he has raised us back to life. We were dead, he raised us and now we have work to do. Jeremiah 29:11 "For I know the plans I have for you, "declares the LORD"...He has plans for us, think about that. Pray and see what plans he is telling you to do, where you are to go, who you are to speak to today.

Now he speaks specifically to the Gentiles. We are made one with the Jews. He gave us oneness of spirit, oneness of salvation, oneness of worship. Verse 19 says we are not second class citizens. We are part of the chosen family line now as Christians we are brothers and sisters in the family of God, along with Jews, Gentiles, men, women, white, black, we are one. "In him the whole building is joined together"...the temple of God, God's church...it is us. Wow!

# UNITY AS A TEAM

## Ephesians 3

---

Read Ephesians 3

Chapter 3 is a continuation of chapter 2 we are made one in Christ, Jews and Gentiles. We are equal heirs with the Jews to the throne and the salvation of Christ.

Paul talks about his mission, or work given to him by the Holy Spirit, which was to preach to the Gentiles. He was given a work to do. Paul knew that he did not deserve to be given anything, he had been a murderer of Christians, but God chose him (Acts chapter 9) to do this work for the Gentiles.

The mystery he talks about is the fact that Jews and Gentiles are joint heirs of the salvation of Jesus. We can all know Christ; it was not only for the Jews, which was the original thought of the Jews. But this was just man's thoughts; God always intended the way to him through Jesus for salvation to be for all people. God did not get confused or change his mind he loves all people, the gospel is for everyone. Verse 12 says we can go to God "fearlessly" because Jesus paid the price and we are his children, he is our father and we can go to him directly in prayer.

In verses 14 to the end of the chapter Paul prays for believers. There are four parts or request that Paul makes on our behalf. Paul prays that God will give you "mighty inner strength" (LAB) That God will give power to the inner man, the spiritual man inside of us that is where God dwells. The inner man will grow stronger and we have a part in feeding the inner man with prayer, study of the scriptures and the giving up of our wills to

God's will, confessing our sin or keeping clean and living in obedience.

Paul prays that God will “feel at home in your heart”, verse 17. That is what the word “dwell” means, to settle down to be at home to feel comfortable there. In Genesis chapter 17 God came down and had a meal with Abraham, he felt comfortable to eat with him and then in Genesis 18-19 we see that he did not feel comfortable to stay with Lot. That is the difference in God feeling at home in our hearts. Are there things that should not be there, confess and give them to God, get them out?

Paul prays for us that our “roots go down deep”. The roots going deep will prevent us from being unstable. If a tree has shallow roots, it is easily swayed in a wind and can even be uprooted. Another term that is an architectural term is grounded. The building must be grounded or the foundation sure for the building to stand (Matt. 7:24-29).

Paul prays that we will know, comprehend the love of God. The word comprehend comes from the word in Latin, prehendere which means to grasp or to take hold of something. Paul prays that we will take hold of the love of God. That we will fully know and understand it, that we will walk in it, know it like we would walk in and know our own houses. You can walk in your house with the lights off and not bump into anything, an intimate knowledge of the love of God not just head knowledge.

Paul prays for us to be “filled to the measure of all the fullness of God”, verse 19. This means completely filled all the way up from top to bottom, complete. Positionally we are complete in Christ but we have to grasp and walk in this daily.

Paul in the last verses just breaks forth in praise to God for all he is and all he does for us, all, abundantly, above all,

exceedingly abundantly above all. He “does more than we could ask or imagine” praise God and may he do it for His glory.

## Ephesians 4:1-6

---

Unity of a body is achieved via letting Christ live in us and through us. The Word gives us things to do to maintain unity.

Be **humble**-humbleness is thinking of other more highly than you think of yourself, always having another's well being over your own, being last instead of first. It is a sign of a leader.

**Gentle**-like a mother caring for a child. Be gentle to each other and see each other as God sees us. When your child or toddler cries, you don't smack them and say don't cry. You see what the need is. We need to do the same to and for each other on the team. You go beyond the obvious and see the hurt, joy, pain that is there.

**Patient**-maybe you have to ask 3 times to know something, or maybe someone has to tell you 3 times. We are a team working for the Lord. If you have to tell me 10 times or I have to show you 10 times it is ok. Jesus had to tell the disciples many times, "haven't I told you and you still don't understand". And the disciples changed the world and the church because they finally got it.

**Bearing with each other in love**-Keep on loving, keep on praying and asking God to let you love them because not everyone is going to be your favorite. However, we have to love each other in Christ. He placed a team together on purpose, it is not a mistake. Maybe they need to love you or you need to love them because we can't go out **there** and share Christ if we can't love each other in the team.

Keep the **unity** of the Spirit-in Jesus Christ we all have the one Spirit, the Spirit of Christ. If we are all tuned to a piano, which is Jesus or the Holy Spirit we are all tuned to each other.

**Peace**-Freedom from disturbance, calmness. You can make a situation better or you can make a situation worse by how you react. If there is upheaval or confusion, chaos in any situation, clinic, group at any time,

stop and pray. God is not a God of confusion so it is our enemy attacking and we need to stop and give it to God.

**Grace**-an undeserved favor or gift, the undeserved forgiveness, kindness and mercy God gave to each of us who knows him. Can we do any less for the others that Jesus Christ died to save? When in doubt...give grace. If someone hurts you, give grace. If someone offends you, give grace. If someone forgets you, leave you out, give grace. God gave you grace when you hated him, he died for you.

Now I know that this is not a pass or fail, God is working in each of us and we are in different places all the time. There are days I can give grace easily, be patient more easily but on those days, you may not be there. We are a team, like a marriage, God has us together and we will forgive and go on and you will give when I can't and I will give when you can't.

#### **Ephesians 4: 25-32      completes the task of unity**

---

**Speak truthfully**-don't lie. Don't even stretch the truth, tell a white lie, whatever you want to call it, it is a lie. We have to build a team where we can trust each other. "We are all members of one body."

**Anger**-get it out in the open, don't let things fester and get infected. Talk to each other and get the problem to the surface. The Word says "don't let the devil have a foothold".

**Unwholesome talk**-let your words and actions build up not tear down or even pull at the cord of unity. "Don't let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouth". If you have to say it, say it to God.

Don't grieve the Holy Spirit. How do we grieve the Holy Spirit by not having unity and love for each other? Does that mean we will always agree? No but when we disagree we still love, respect, honor each other and we don't set about our gossip sessions to talk against another. We love them like we love ourselves and like we know God loves us, no matter what we do, he loves us...unconditional love.



Verse 32 says” Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you.” Can it be any more plainly said??

# UNITY AS A TEAM

## Ephesians 5:1-17

---

Read the scripture

The word *imitate* means to mimic. When you think of a child that copies his dad mowing the lawn, or her mother putting on makeup or lipstick that is what God desires for us to do with him as the parent. He desires us to mimic him and how do we do that? We look at Jesus and how he lived on the earth.

God said of Jesus, “here is my beloved son”; does he say that of you and me?

There are three admonitions for us to follow and to look at. We are to walk in love, in light and in truth or wisdom.

Walking in love is probably the easiest to see and maybe the hardest to do.

1John 4:7-12 says love comes from God; we are born of God and know God. God loved first and he sent a precious gift to show us how much, his son. His son was sent to die as an atoning sacrifice for us, we who didn't even care about or love him. If we love each other God lives in us.

John 13:34-35 says we are to love each other as God loved us. If we do this, all men will know that we are Christ's disciples.

Romans 13:8 the only debt we have or should have is to love each other.

How do you walk in love daily? Do you walk in love daily?

We are to walk as children of light. We are children of our Father, God is light, we are to walk in the light and have **nothing** to do with the darkness.

Ephesians 5:3-4 says we are saints, set apart ones; we do not belong to this world.

1John 1:5-7 It basically says, as a Christian you cannot walk in darkness and be apart of God. If we have the blood of Jesus in our veins, we

cannot still stay in the darkness. We are children of light. It will happen whether you try or not to show the light. If you are a Christian, Jesus light will shine in and through you to others. But put it up high, don't try to hide it. Let it be in the place of prominence in your life, your world, your home, your job.

See Matthew 5:16 others will glorify God because of your light. We are to reveal God's light to others.

"To walk as children of light means to live before the eyes of God, not hiding anything." It is all out in the open for God to see, for others to see and for our families to see. Are we perfect? No yet we attain to be and we allow Him to continue working in us to make us so. Colossians 1:13 "For He has rescued us from the dominion of darkness and brought us into the kingdom of the son He loves" We don't have to be in darkness anymore, ever!

We are to walk in wisdom or truth. "See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise" Ephesians 5:15 (NKJ) "Be very careful, then how you live—not as unwise but as wise." (NIV) The word circumspect means to be "looking around" all around, 360 degrees all the time. Walk with precision and accuracy, with exactness. We cannot live the Christian life by chance. We must make wise decisions; we must make wise choices and seek God always.

See James 1:5 "If any of you lacks wisdom, he should ask God, who gives generously to all without finding fault and it will be given to him".

How do you walk in wisdom or truth daily? Do you plan and know ahead of time how will act or react to a situation? You may say, how can you do that if you haven't been in the situation? I say you can. You know that you can give that over to God before the situation is in place because you are circumspect and see it coming before it gets to you. You are prepared to face a circumstance before it rears its head. That is walking in wisdom/truth.

So as we prepare to go to Haiti, ask yourself how or if you walk as a child of light, a child of love and a child of wisdom. If you say, no I don't walk in those or that, then I ask you to seek and ask God to show you how you can. Search the scripture and if you need help from a person, as a team member you respect to help you in it and pray for you. I am praying for each of you.

## Ephesians 5:22-6:9

---

This entire section of the Word has to do with the authority God has in place for us as we live on this earth. He has put in place a hierarchy of power that is here to provide harmony in our homes and in our lives.

We are all under an authority beginning with God. He says, “There is no authority except that which God has established. The authorities that exist have been established by God. Consequently, he who rebels against the authority is rebelling against what God has instituted...”  
Romans 13:1a-2a

There are times on this team that you will be an authority and you will be under authority, we are always under God’s authority and we desire to do what he tells us to do. We as leadership will always seek God’s will and do what we hear him say. There may be times you are told to do something you might not feel the happiest about doing but submit under the authority of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 6:7 “Serve wholeheartedly as if you are serving the Lord, not men...” We will seek to do that each and every one of us on this trip and as a team. Pray for each other. Submission is not easy for a lot of us to do and yet it is what God expects us to do all the time.



# UNITY AS A TEAM

## Ephesians 6:10-20

---

The armor of God is a very wonderful word picture of what we need to do every day of our lives. It is encouragement to us to be able to stand against whatever we may face in our lives. It is an enlightenment of the spiritual warfare that we sometimes forget is there.

Paul describes the enemy in verses 10-12. Our enemy is the devil. "Our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms."

Who is this devil, he is called the accuser, the liar, adversary, he is a murderer and he is compared to a lion waiting to devour, an angel of light and the god of this age. Look at Revelation 12:7-11, Matthew 4:3, John 8:44, 1 Peter 5:8, Gen 3:1, 2Corinthians 11:13-15 and 2 Corinthians 4:4.

In Isaiah 14:12-15 it talks about the son of the morning and he was cast down from heaven. We know he was a created being, an angel who wanted to be God and his pride cast him out of heaven

He, Satan also has helpers, minions. In Revelation 12:4 it is suggested that Satan took a third of the angels with him when he was swept out of heaven. In Daniel 10-13-20 Daniel writes about the spiritual battle against God's angels and Satan's angels. It is a reality that there is spiritual warfare. But our battle is not against other people but against God's enemy. The devil opposes God's work and he will do that through any means he can, people, situations, our own attitudes and thoughts. We *wrestle* against these things; it is a fight, hand-to-hand combat.

How do we fight? God gives us weapons that we use to fight the battle. God has provided the *whole armor*. We are to put on the whole armor so that no areas are exposed or unguarded because those are the areas the evil one wants to attack, the unguarded areas. We know that Christ has already won the battle against Satan and that the weapons are available to put on so we do put on the armor knowing that with Jesus for us, who can be against us, Romans 8:31

The armor he provides is so wonderful when you look at each piece of it one by one.

The belt or the girdle of truth is what holds all the other weapons in place. The truth should be who we are, people of integrity and honesty. Once a lie or a practice of lying gets into our lives we open a door for the evil one to enter. Satan is called the father of lies, our father is truth.

The breastplate of righteousness is what covers the most important organs of the body. A breastplate was made of metal or chains and covered from neck to waist in front and back of the warrior. Our righteousness if due to Jesus, it is nothing that we have done. It is this righteousness in Christ that assures of salvation. We are righteous at the time we accept Christ as our personal savior but if we do not live a life that reflects that righteousness we are open for attack, the vital organs are open to penetration.

The shoes of the Gospel are not just sandals but the sandals of Jesus day the warrior had nails in the soles of his shoes the make his stance stable. He was not easily moved because the nails went into the earth and stabilized his stand. We can stand firm because of the Gospel. And shoes assist you to walk so that you can carry the message of the Gospel or the Good News of Jesus. We are to be ambassadors where ever we go.

The shield of faith was large, 4 feet long and 2 feet wide, it was made of wood and covered in leather to protect the warrior when it was before him, but the really awesome picture is that the shields if put together side by side made the army so tight that the enemy could not get through. The faith is not saving faith he talks of but rather living faith, living by faith in the promises of the Word of God. It protects us from the fiery darts of the evil one.

The helmet of salvation is the protection our minds where Satan likes to attack us most of all. He uses your thoughts and your ideas to try to control or side-track us and the helmet is our protection. If we allow God to control our thoughts and we “take captive every thought to make it

obedient to Christ.” (2 Corinthians 10:5 b) we can avoid the defeat that affected Eve and David and others in the Bible.

The sword of the spirit which is the Word of God, it is an offensive weapon that God provides. The sword was used for close fighting; they actually had a small saber and a larger sword for fighting in hand-to-hand combat.

When Jesus was tempted by Satan he used The Word to protect and combat him. Jesus defeated Satan with the Word, and we can to, it will help us to know the lies Satan tries to tell us and to reject his temptations. We need to know the Word of God, we need to study, memorize and read it, to ingest it daily like we do our breakfast. The Bible says, “The Word of God is living and active. Sharper than any double-edged sword, it penetrates even to dividing soul and spirit, joints and marrow; it judges the thought and attitudes of the heart.” Hebrews 4:12

As you can see the whole armor is provided by God. It is essentially Jesus himself. Jesus said he was the truth, the Word, our righteousness, our salvation, our faith is provided by him, he is the Gospel or good news. We just need to wake up every day and “put on” Jesus.

Ephesians 6:18-20 tell us how we actually can use all the armor, not in our own strength but in the strength that comes from our Lord, prayer gives us that power. “Pray with all kinds of prayers”.. You can use the ACTS method or any other way to pray that you like but prayer is not one sided, it is not asking for things only. If you don’t know the ACTS method; it is A is for acknowledge who God is, i.e. God is love, God is light when you acknowledge him for who he is, He is God. C is for confession, confess our sins to him and he will forgive them. T is for thanksgiving and we here in this country have a lot to thank him for. S is for supplication, which is praying for others and we need to do that for this team and others on our prayer list daily.

We are to pray in the spirit or according the Holy Spirit’s will/Jesus’ will, Romans 8:26-27. We need to pray always, “on all occasions”. 1 Thessalonians 5:17 always be in communication with God. Always have the presence of God with you, He is always there, a breath away, a whisper away.



Pray on the alert, do not fall asleep. The Bible has many places where it repeats the phrase, watch and pray. Nehemiah 4:9, Mark 13:33, Mark 14:38, Mark 14:29-31 we are expected to be alert and keep on praying. Persevere, stay with it, don't quit. When you look at Acts you will see multiple examples of this perseverance.

Paul asked for prayer for himself that he would be the witness that God wanted him to be so that he could share the gospel fearlessly and we need to pray that for each other. If we get an opportunity to share Christ we need to be ready to do that.

Spiritual warfare is a reality. We have the power through Christ and the weapons of his given to us to fight the battle. Praise God!