



UPSTATE GROUP GUIDE

Ephesians

March 30-April 5

Ephesians 1:15-23

Things to Know

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Gospel Connections and Conversations

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Studying God's Word *In Community*

Reminder: The goal of group time is not to re-preach the sermon, but to understand and apply God's Word together.

Sermon Recap

In Ephesians 1:15–23, Paul prays that believers wouldn't just know about God but would truly know Him—deeply, personally, and transformationally. He asks God to open the eyes of our hearts so we can grasp the hope we've been given, the riches of God's inheritance in us, and the immeasurable resurrection power already at work in our lives. When we truly know God, everything else in life is reframed—our fears,

our identity, and our purpose come into clarity. This week, our next step is simple but profound: ask God to help you know Him more, place your hope fully in Him, and live in the power He's already given you.

Our Prayer is that God Would Open Our Eyes to See:

Hope

Biblical hope is confidence, not uncertainty- are future is secure based on God's calling on our lives in Christ. Our hope in Christ for future resurrection gives us motivation to obey, endurance through trials, and joy day to day.

Value

In Christ, we receive an inheritance of immense value, but we also are a part of God's inheritance ourselves. God not only gives you something of priceless value, you are of priceless value- we are His own.

Power

The same power that raised Jesus Christ from the dead lives and works within the believer. We do not have weak optimism as we face the trials of this life, but resurrection power rooted in the supremacy of Jesus. If you are in Christ, you are not alone, you are not stuck in sin, and you are not helpless in the fight. In our weakness, we have the greatest and highest power.

Discussion Questions

1. What does this prayer reveal about what Paul believes we need most as Christians?
2. What are some ways we unintentionally replace knowing God with just knowing about Him?
3. How is Paul's prayer different from the way you often pray for yourself or others?
4. How have you personally experienced growth in your knowledge of God over time?
5. What is one truth you *know* in your head but struggle to fully believe in your heart?
6. How would your daily life look different if you were more anchored in eternal hope?

Read

Read Ephesians 1:15-23 and make observations about the text.

- What is God teaching us in the passage?
- What does this reveal about who God is, what God has done, and how I should respond?

- Which part of the text was most meaningful to you and why?
 - What do you need help understanding about this passage?
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Scripture

Ephesians 1:15-23

For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, ¹⁶I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, ¹⁷that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, ¹⁸having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might ²⁰that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²²And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, ²³which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

[The Holy Bible, English Standard Version](#). ESV® Text Edition: 2016. Copyright © 2001 by Crossway Bibles, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers.
Ephesians 1:15-23.

Living on Mission In Community

Spiritual growth happens not when we do more things, but when we realize more and more what has already been given to us in Christ. Think what could happen if we were a church who not only prayed this prayer, but believed God will do exactly what we ask. Imagine the depth of our walk with Christ, the impact it would have on Upstate of South Carolina.

Here's a Couple of Questions for Spiritual Inventory, Conversation, and Reflection:

- Am I actively praying this prayer for myself and others? Do I long to see other people grow into who they are in Christ and what they have received in Christ?
- Take some time to pray this prayer over your group, our church, and the Upstate.

How is God leading me to respond to His Word this week?

Optional Breakout Questions

Consider making time at the end of the group to break out into groups of 2-4 (keep them gender specific). Have them answer these three questions about their weeks:

1. How did you feed yourself?
 - *(What have you been doing to feed your spiritual life, and how is it going?)*
 2. How did you feed others?
 - *(How did you share the gospel or gospel truth with someone this week?)*
 3. How did you feed your flesh?
 - *(What sins did you struggle with this week? How can your friends hold you accountable?)*
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Leader Resources - March 30-April 5

Small Group Curriculum - Ephesians 1:15-23

1. Session Overview

In Ephesians 1:15–23, Paul invites us into one of the most powerful prayers in Scripture—not a prayer for changed circumstances, but for changed vision. He prays that believers would truly see—that the eyes of their hearts would be opened to grasp the hope they have in Christ, the value they hold as God’s people, and the power available to them through the resurrection of Jesus.

2. Opening

Prayer:

“Lord, give us eyes to see and hearts to understand the hope we have in Christ, the immense value of the inheritance in the saints, and the immeasurable power within us. In Jesus name, Amen. ”

Icebreaker question:

Break into groups of 2–3.

Ask:

What’s something you used to misunderstand or see completely wrong, but now see clearly?

3. Scripture Reading

Have someone read Ephesians 1:1-2 out loud.

4. Teaching Points (Systematic Walkthrough)

1. Our Greatest Need is Knowing God

Paul could have prayed for anything in this opening section of his letter, but he prays for the greatest thing the Christians in Ephesus needed: to know God. Paul doesn’t pray for comfort, success, or ease; he prays for the Spirit of wisdom and revelation- ultimately that the believers would know through the Holy Spirit who they already are and what they already possess. Our greatest need is not something new, but simply to know God deeper.

2. You Can Be Spiritually Alive but Functionally Blind

Salvation doesn't eliminate the need for ongoing spiritual illumination and understanding. It is possible to sit in the pews, be an active church member, even wanting to be a better Christian and still live in a way that is void of eternal realities. Only when we encounter God can we truly live with our eyes wide open. What we need is for our people to pray boldly this prayer, longing to live and see these truths in their everyday life.

3. Clarity Changes Everything

When we realize the hope, the value, and the power given by faith in the risen Christ, our lives will never be the same. Our individual walks with Christ gain depth, our witness becomes more effective, and God's Kingdom advances.

5. Discussion Questions

1. How often do your prayers focus on circumstances vs. spiritual growth?
2. What's the difference between trying harder and relying on God's power?
3. What does it look like to "see with the eyes of your heart" at work, school, or home?
4. How does it change your perspective to think that God sees His people as His inheritance?
5. What does it mean that Jesus is seated above all rule, authority, and power?

Prayer:

"Lord, we lift our eyes to you. Because of who you are and what you have done, we are forever changed. Our hope, our worth, our joy, and our strength is in you. We are anchored in you. We ask that you would open our eyes to encounter you. In Jesus name, Amen."

7. Memory Verse

"I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him."
Ephesians 1:16-17

8. Leader Notes

- Create a space of vulnerability.
- Emphasize that Christianity is not just behavior modification—it's spiritual awakening
- Keep pointing back to what God has already done, not just what we should do

