

Ephesians Devotional Guide – Part 1

Welcome to our study of Ephesians. The purpose of this guide is to encourage you to follow up each Sunday message with further study and application. This material can be used for individual study, as a family devotional or for a small group setting. You may divide the material so it can be utilized as a daily practice or cover it in entirety as one study.

Exercise #1

Prayerfully read through Ephesians 1:3-14 and make note of all the ways God has shown His goodness toward you. (If possible, also read a paraphrase like *The Message* or J.B. Phillips.) After you have done this, imitate the way Paul begins this letter by praising God. Spend time thanking God for His disposition toward you.

Exercise #2

As you wrestle with the doctrine of election from Ephesians 1, consider the quotes from John Stott. Consider what problem each statement addresses and find specifically how our passage supports each declaration from Mr. Stott.

The doctrine of election is an incentive to holiness, not an excuse for sin.

The doctrine of election is a stimulus to humility, not a ground for boasting.

Exercise #3

The entire Christian life can be seen in terms of adoption (our being sons and daughters of God). Consider the following passage and meditate on the privilege and responsibility of knowing God as our Father.

Matthew 6:9

Matthew 6:31-32

Matthew 7:9-11

Romans 8:15-17

Hebrews 10:5-11

I John 3:1-2

Exercise #4

Prayerfully meditate on (and perhaps discuss with others) the following questions from J.I. Packer:

Do I understand my adoption? Do I value it? Do I daily remind myself of my privileges as a child of God?

Do I daily dwell on the love of God to me?

Have I learned to hate the things that displease my Father? Am I sensitive to the evil things to which He is sensitive? Do I make a point of avoiding them, lest I grieve Him?

Do I love my Christian brothers and sisters with whom I live day by day in a way that I shall not be ashamed of when in heaven I think back over it?

Do I look forward daily to the great family occasion when the sons of God will finally gather in heaven before the throne of God, their Father and of the Lamb, their brother and their Lord? Have I felt the thrill of this hope?

Am I proud of my Father, and of His family, to which by His grace I belong?

Does the family likeness appear in me? If not, why not?

Exercise #5

We are to act so that God's will is done in heaven as it is on earth. In heaven God is always praised and so should it be here. Make it your practice this day and this week to walk in praise. Use Ephesians 1:3-14 to fill your mind and heart with praiseworthy thoughts. Consider memorizing some or all of the verses in this passage.