

The Epistle to the Ephesians

Student Manual

Studies 1 - 10

Stephen Nemeth Lectures

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TABLE OF CONTENTS

Study	Title	Page
1	Spiritual Blessings In Christ	1
2	God's Picture of the Natural Man	9
3	Made Nigh By The Blood Of Christ	18
4	Seven Truths About The Church	26
5	Walking Worthily!	33
6	Gifts From The Ascended Lord	41
7	Spiritual Intoxication!	50
8	The Christian's Relationships	59
9	Our Enemy And Our Warfare	65
10	Praying Always With All Prayer	77

Stephen Nemeth Lectures

SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS IN CHRIST

STUDY 1

Scripture Portion : Ephesians 1:1-14

The apostle Paul spent three years in Ephesus - **Acts 29, and 20:17-38**. As a result of his ministry, a church was established in the city. Ten years later, from his prison in Rome, he wrote this epistle and sent it by Tychicus to the Christians there.

Ephesians is a thrilling book because it tells us how we (or anyone) can become a Christian and how God wants us to live the Christian life.

Chapters 1-3 tell us of our **Wealth** in Christ.

Chapters 4-6 tell us of our **Walk** in Christ.

The **key verse** to the first three chapters is -

Ephesians 1:3 -

This introduces the theme of this first study. In the Person of the Lord Jesus Christ, God has made over to the believer, His whole estate of spiritual wealth. Without Christ, and apart from Him, we have nothing, we are nothing and we can do nothing.

John 15:5 -

As believers, God says to us -

Luke 15:31 -

How rich we are - yet how few of us realize our true wealth and ***possess our possessions!***

Obadiah 17 -

God has made His Son the repository of all spiritual blessing.

The moment we receive Him as Saviour and Lord, all the blessings which are in Him become ours. What are these blessings which are ours in Christ and which we need to appropriate and enjoy?

Ephesians 1:4-14 mentions seven blessings that are ours.

1. WE HAVE BEEN CHOSEN IN CHRIST BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD.

Ephesians 1:4 -

This is the great truth of **Election**. How wonderful that God should select us to be His very own! Notice when he chose us and why He chose us.

Compare -

John 15:16 -

1 Peter 1:15-16 -

What a marvel of sovereign grace is this! Our salvation was certainly no after-thought in the mind of God.

The whole plan was conceived in eternity past. Believer, do you ever wonder whether, after all, you will be saved?

Read and rest upon -

Ephesians 1:4 -

Cast away your doubts forever.

John 6:37-39 -

2. WE HAVE BEEN PREDESTINATED UNTO THE ADOPTION OF CHILDREN.

Ephesians 1:4-5 - *According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be*

This word *predestinate* means *to mark out beforehand*. In eternity, God not only chose us but He planned what He would do with us.

Election looks backward and tells us we were chosen, **verse 4**.

Predestination looks forward and tells us why we were chosen, **verse 5**.

God's purpose in choosing us is that we should be brought into His family and given the full status and privileges of sonship. Think of it - we who were lost and enemies have been chosen to be sons, members of the Royal Family of Heaven!

Compare -

1 John 3:1-3 -

Romans 8:18-19 -

Romans 8:23 -

3. WE HAVE BEEN ACCEPTED IN THE BELOVED.

Ephesians 1:6 -

This means that, whereas God could never accept us in our sinful, unregenerate condition, yet once we trust Christ as our Saviour, He does accept us in Him.

Compare -

Isaiah 64:6 -

Ephesians 1:6 -

This should banish all my doubts. If I look at my sinful self, I doubt at once. But, if I look *off unto Jesus* -

Hebrews 12:2 -

in whom I am *accepted*, my doubts vanish because God has accepted the perfect life and the finished work of His Son. It is in Him that I find my acceptance.

4. WE HAVE BEEN REDEEMED AND ALL OUR SINS HAVE BEEN FORGIVEN.

Ephesians 1:7 -

To redeem is to buy back, to release by ransom.

1 Peter 1:18-19 -

We were *sold under sin* -

Romans 7:14 -

We have been *bought with a price* -

1 Corinthians 6:20 -

Not only this, we have been *forgiven* -

Isaiah 44:22-23 -

Psalm 103:12 -

Luke 7:47 -

God has not only made us His own, but He has made us fit to live with Him for ever. How has He done this? *By His blood*. That is, by the sacrifice and atoning work of the Lord Jesus.

Compare -

Matthew 20:28 -

2 Corinthians 5:21 -

Hebrews 9:12 -

1 Peter 1:18 -

1 Peter 2:24 -

Revelation 1:5-6 -

5. WE HAVE BEEN INITIATED INTO THE DIVINE MYSTERY.

Ephesians 1:8-10 -

The word *mystery* refers to truth which was once undisclosed but which God has now revealed. The particular *disclosure* referred to in **verse 10** is that everything is moving towards the glorious consummation of all things when -

Philippians 2:10-11 -

will be a reality.

Where has God made known unto us the mystery of His will, **verse 9**?

In His Word, which is *the more sure word of prophecy*.

2 Peter 1:19 -

There we have God's glorious plan for the future, until time is no more and the saved are with Him for all eternity.

6. WE HAVE OBTAINED AN INHERITANCE.

Ephesians 1:11 -

In Christ we have everything we need for time and for eternity. Compare -

1 Peter 1:4 -

Romans 8:17 -

Romans 8:32 -

1 Corinthians 3:21-23 -

2 Timothy 2:12 -

Revelation 5:10 -

Inheritance speaks of riches, wealth, possession - and how rich we are in Him!

Ephesians 1:14 -

We already have the earnest, or the guarantee, of our inheritance.

The Holy Spirit within us is the pledge that one day we shall enter into all that which already belongs to us in Christ.

Compare -

Ephesians 4:30 -

John 14:16-17

7. WE HAVE BEEN SEALED WITH THE HOLY SPIRIT OF PROMISE.

Ephesians 1:13-14 -

This divine sealing denotes ownership and security. We belong to Him. We shall always belong to Him! We have been sealed *unto the journey's end*.

Ephesians 4:30 -

These spiritual blessings belong to every Christian. They are only ours -

if we are *in Christ* -

Ephesians 1:3 -

if, having heard the gospel -

Ephesians 1:13a -

if we have believed -

Ephesians 1:13b -

NOTES

GOD'S PICTURE OF THE NATURAL MAN

STUDY 2

Scripture Portion: Ephesians 2:1-12

2 Timothy 3:16 -

The Bible, God's inspired Word, is a picture book, a kind of family album of the human race. The pictures in God's album are true to life. They are not touched-up. Therefore, they are sometimes very uncomplimentary.

By *the natural man* we mean the man who is not a Christian, who has never been born again and who is described in -

Ephesians 2:3 -

by the words *by nature*.....

Compare -

1 Corinthians 2:14 -

In this study we are to look at God's photograph of fallen humanity, of every man and woman who is not a Christian, and of ourselves, apart from the grace of God and the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit.

But, before looking at God's life-sized portrait of ourselves in **Ephesians, chapter 2**, notice the following pictures of the *natural man* in -

Genesis 6:5 -

Psalm 14:2-3 -

Isaiah 1:5-6 -

Isaiah 64:6 -

Jeremiah 17:9 -

Matthew 15:18-20 -

Also read **Romans 1:21-32.**

When we turn to **Ephesians 2:1-12**, we see what we were like before we were saved and what we are like now, apart from the Lord Jesus.

1. THE NATURAL MAN IS DEAD IN TRESPASSES AND SINS.

Ephesians 2:1 -

Compare -

Genesis 3:15-17 -

Romans 5:12 -

John 5:24 -

John 5:40 -

1 John 3:14 -

1 John 5:11-12 -

Compare -

Ephesians 4:18 -

Physical death is the separation of the body from the soul. Spiritual death is the separation of the soul from God. By nature, we are all spiritually dead.

2. THE NATURAL MAN WALKS ACCORDING TO THE

COURSE OF THIS WORLD.

Ephesians 2:2 -

That is, his conduct is according to the trend of the age in which he lives. The unregenerate person lives according to the standards of this world with regard, for example, to his attitude towards sin, pleasures, dress, desires.

Compare -

Matthew 7:13-14 -

Psalms 1:1-6 -

3. THE NATURAL MAN WALKS -

Ephesians 2:2 -

In other words, by nature he is controlled by Satan. Our first parents listened to the lie of Satan. When they yielded to him, they became dominated by him.

Read **Genesis 3:1-13.**

We are likewise under the control of the enemy of our souls.

Satan is a real person whose domain is in the air. He is tremendously active.

1 John 5:19 -

4. THE NATURAL MAN IS A CHILD OF DISOBEDIENCE.

Ephesians 2:2 -

Our first parents disobeyed God and we have inherited their fallen nature. Consequently our natural tendency is to disobey the Lord.

Psalm 51:5 -

The word *shapen* tells us that, by nature, our tendency is to commit sin.

5. THE NATURAL MAN WALKS -

Ephesians 2:3 -

The word *lust* does not, of necessity, refer to that which is revolting and impure, but to that which we naturally desire. Because we are spiritually dead and controlled by Satan, our desires are fleshly, perverted, often sensual. Notice the word *flesh* in **verse 3**. Read -

John 3:6 -

Romans 7:18 -

Romans 8:8 -

6. THE NATURAL MAN IS A CHILD OF WRATH.

Ephesians 2:3 -

This means that, by nature, men and women are condemned and are under the sentence of death. Read the following references and notice how forcibly this truth is brought out.

John 3:18-19 -

John 3:36 -

Romans 1:18-20 -

How solemn this is! Everyone who is not a Christian is condemned already and is under the wrath of God.

7. THE NATURAL MAN IS WITHOUT CHRIST.

Ephesians 2:12 -

See what the Lord Jesus said in -

John 14:6 -

What a solemn thing it is to be *without Christ*! Millions around the world today are without Christ, the only Saviour of men.

Acts 4:12 -

1 Timothy 2:5-6 -

8. THE NATURAL MAN IS AN ALIEN.

Ephesians 2:12 -

To be unregenerate is to be a poor wandering outcast, a spiritually displaced person. It is to have no country, no Heavenly Home.

John 14:1-3 -

This is the position of everyone who is not a Christian.

9. THE NATURAL MAN IS A STRANGER.

Ephesians 2:12 -

A stranger has no claim whatsoever upon God. Only those who are related to God through faith

in Christ Jesus who are, therefore, members of His family, have any claim on Him at all.
Compare -

Matthew 22:11-13 -

Luke 13:25-26 -

10. THE NATURAL MAN IS WITHOUT HOPE.

Ephesians 2:12 -

He is helpless and, apart from Christ, his state is hopeless. Sometimes a doctor has to tell his patient that his case is hopeless - physically hopeless. But God tells us that, apart from Christ, our condition is spiritually hopeless.

John 8:21 -

John 8:24 -

11. THE NATURAL MAN IS WITHOUT GOD.

Ephesians 2:12 -

He is a Godless man, like the rich farmer of whom we read in -

Luke 12:16-21 -

Compare -

Luke 12:24 -

where we read of the ravens who had no barns but they had God, and -

Luke 12:18 -

where we read of the farmer who had barns but who had no God.

12. THE NATURAL MAN IS AN ENEMY OF GOD.

Ephesians 2:15-16 -

By nature we hate God.

Psalm 14:1 -

which literally reads *No God for me!*

Here, then, is God's picture of the Natural Man. According to God's estimate, man, by nature, is lost, helpless, completely ruined by sin, under the domination of Satan, and is, therefore, in need of a Saviour and of the regenerating work of the Holy Spirit.

How very wonderful it is that, in spite of all that we are by nature, God loves us and wants us. Read and revel in the glorious truth of -

Ephesians 2:4-7 -

NOTES

NOTES

MADE NIGH BY THE BLOOD OF CHRIST

STUDY 3

Scripture Portion: Ephesians 2:13-22

We are given God's terrible but true description of fallen humanity in -

Ephesians 2:1-3 -

Ephesians 2:12 -

Apart from Christ we are -

(1) **deceived by the world.**

Ephesians 2:2 -

(2) **dominated by Satan -**

Ephesians 2:2 -

(3) **degenerate in our living -**

Ephesians 2:3 -

(4) **and doomed to punishment -**

Ephesians 2:3 -

Left to ourselves we are utterly lost, helpless and hopeless. The world does not accept this description, but God declares it.

Romans 3:10-18 -

What is God's attitude towards fallen humanity? We certainly have no claim on God and our completely bankrupt, destitute and disobedient state would justify Him in having nothing more to do with us. What is His attitude towards us?

Notice in **Ephesians 2** that there are two wonderful *but*s which reveal to us the amazing love of God in Christ Jesus.

The first of these is in -

Ephesians 2:4 -

The second is in -

Ephesians 2:13 -

The Lord Jesus, by His death on Calvary's cross, has brought us back into full fellowship with God. All that was lost by sin and the Fall has been regained and fully restored. We (who believe) have been *made nigh*.....

What exactly does this mean? It means at least seven wonderful things.

1. WE HAVE BEEN BORN AGAIN AND HAVE RECEIVED ETERNAL LIFE.

Ephesians 2:1 -

Ephesians 2:5 -

We who were spiritually dead because of sin, have been quickened, or made alive, by the miracle of the new birth.

John 3:3 -

John 3:5 -

The moment we believed on Christ and received Him as our Saviour -

John 1:12 -

we were born of God.

John 1:13 -

Having received the Lord Jesus Christ we became possessors of eternal life.

1 John 5:11-12 -

We have become partakers of the divine nature.

2 Peter 1:4 -

2. WE HAVE BEEN RAISED TO SIT IN HEAVENLY PLACES IN CHRIST.

Ephesians 2:6 -

And what does this mean? It does not mean that we are seated with Christ in heavenly places. The verse does not say that. We are seated in heavenly places *in Christ Jesus*.

This means that, through faith, we are united to and with Christ who has been raised and exalted to the highest heights in glory.

We who were down in the lowest depths have been raised up to the highest heights in Christ!

This is our new position through grace. We are now *citizens of Heaven*.

Philippians 3:20 -

2. WE HAVE BEEN SAVED BY HIS GRACE.

What a great word is this word *saved*! It includes all the blessings which become ours through faith in Christ. Notice in -

Ephesians 2:8-10 -

- a. salvation is a present possession*
- b. salvation is altogether by grace*
- c. salvation is a gift received by faith alone*
- d. salvation is unto good works*

4. WE HAVE BEEN RECONCILED AND ARE NOW AT PEACE WITH GOD.

Ephesians 2:14-17 -

We, who were enemies, have been reconciled to God through the blood-shedding of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is blessedly true that through Christ all racial and social barriers have been broken down.

But the greatest barrier of all is that which existed between ourselves and God has been completely swept away in the Person and through the finished work of the Lord Jesus.

Meditate upon the words in -

Ephesians 2:14 -

and compare with -

Romans 5:1 -

5. WE HAVE BEEN BROUGHT INTO A NEW

RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

Ephesians 2:18 -

Each word in this verse is worth pondering.

.....*through Him* refers to our Lord Jesus Christ.

.....*both* means Jew and Gentile.

.....*access* means an entrance and a welcome.

.....*one Spirit* refers to the Holy Spirit.

Now notice the important ending to the verse -

.....*unto the Father*

The moment we are *made nigh*, we know God not only as the holy and just God and the powerful Creator, but as our gracious, loving heavenly Father.

6. WE HAVE BEEN MADE MEMBERS OF THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD.

Ephesians 2:19 -

The *household of God* is the Church. How do we become members of the Church? By the baptism of the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:13 -

The Lord Jesus is the foundation of the Church.

1 Corinthians 3:11 -

Paul tells us here that the apostles and the New Testament prophets are foundation members, for it was through their ministry that the Church became *fitly framed together* and started to grow *unto an holy temple in the Lord*.

Ephesians 2:21 -

7. WE HAVE BEEN MADE FIT DWELLING PLACES FOR GOD.

Ephesians 2:22 -

The Church is God's holy temple, built by the Holy Spirit. Believers are living stones by which the temple has been built through the years. Soon God's temple will be complete. Then will end the day of grace and we shall be raptured into His presence to be forever with the Lord.

1 Thessalonians 4:15-17 -

But notice that the Church is -

Ephesians 2:22 -

This is true of each individual member.

1 Corinthians 6:19 -

*By nature and by practice far - How very far from God!
Yet now by grace brought nigh to Him, Through faith in Jesus' blood.*

*So nigh, so very nigh to God, I cannot nearer be For in the Person of His
Son I am as near as He.*

*So dear, so very dear to God, More dear I cannot be. The love
wherewith He loves the Son - Such is His love to me!*

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NOTES

SEVEN TRUTHS ABOUT THE CHURCH

STUDY 4

Scripture Portion: Ephesians 3:1-12

In these verses we are told seven truths about the Church. It is very important for us to understand these.

1. THE MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH.

The word *mystery* occurs in -

Ephesians 3:3-4 -

Ephesians 3:9 -

It does not mean that which is obscure or unintelligible. It means a divine secret which is known only to those to whom it is revealed. Note **verse 3** and compare -

1 Corinthians 2:7-12 -

The special revelation of the truth of the Church was first made to Paul. But he would not have understood the dispensational significance of the *mystery* of the Church apart from the revelation given to him by God.

Likewise, we cannot understand the significance of the *mystery* without the help and illumination of the Holy Spirit.

For further study read -

Romans 11:25 -

1 Corinthians 15:51 -

Ephesians 3:3-4 -

Ephesians 6:19 -

1 Timothy 3:9 -

1 Timothy 3:16 -

2 Thessalonians 2:7 -

2. THE MEANING OF THE CHURCH.

What do we mean when we speak of the Church? What does God mean?

We are not thinking about a church, that is, a building; we are thinking about *the* Church.

Ephesians 3:10 -

Ephesians 3:6 -

tells us what the Church is and how it is composed. The key word here is the word *Body*. The Church, then, is the Body of Christ

Compare -

Ephesians 4:12 -

Ephesians 4:15-16 -

Colossians 1:18 -

If the Church is the Body of Christ and He is the Head of the Body, who are the members of the Church and how do they become members?

3. THE MEMBERSHIP OF THE CHURCH.

Ephesians 3:6 -

tells us that the Church, which is the Body of Christ, is composed of Jews and Gentiles. This is the *mystery* - that Jew and Gentile were to be united in one body was an entirely new thing.

But, how is the *Body*, the Church, formed? It is formed *by the gospel* -

Ephesians 3:6 -

that is, by the preaching of the gospel. When the gospel is preached, the Holy Spirit convicts and converts, souls are born again - Jews and Gentiles - and are baptized into the Body of Christ.

1 Corinthians 12:13 -

This is what the Holy Spirit is doing today -

Acts 15:13-14 -

Only those who have been born again and washed in the precious blood of Christ are true members of the Church, which is His Body.

4. THE MISSION OF THE CHURCH.

What is the function of the Church in the world? It is a two-fold function as the following scriptures make clear.

Ephesians 3:8 -

Ephesians 3:10 -

The purpose and ministry of the Church in the world is that men may hear the gospel and, that to the angels and unseen hosts, may be made known the manifold wisdom of God.

Note the Church's message - *the unsearchable riches of Christ*, and *the manifold wisdom of God*- not merely ethics, morality, philosophy or politics!

The mission of the Church is not just to gather people together for *religious* purposes. It is not to compete with the world in worldly things, nor is it to convert the world. The mission of the Church is to evangelize the world.

Matthew 28:19 -

5. THE MINISTERS OF THE CHURCH.

Ephesians 3:7 -

tells us that Paul was a minister of the Church, therefore, of the gospel. But the word *minister* here is not used in any official sense. All true members of the Church are ministers of the Church and are responsible to take their share in proclaiming the gospel.

Notice how we become ministers -

If the question is asked, *How are ministers made?*, the answer is that God makes them!

Ephesians 4:11 -

6. THE MARKS OF THE CHURCH.

This portion of scripture tells us also some of the characteristics of those men and women, Jews and Gentiles, who are members of the Church.

What are they like, or what should they be like?

Notice the following five marks which should characterize every member of the Body of Christ.

a. *Captivity*

Are we bond-slaves of the Lord Jesus?

Ephesians 3:1 -

b. *Fellowship*

The words *fellow heirs* and *partakers* remind us of that which we share in Christ.

Ephesians 3:6 -

c. *Humility*

Ephesians 3:8 -

d. *Testimony*

Ephesians 3:8 -

e. *Acceptance*

Ephesians 3:11-12 -

Underline the words *access*, *boldness*, *confidence* and *in Him*.

But who is sufficient for these things?

Can we fulfil this high calling in our own strength? No!

Note finally -

7. THE MIGHT OF THE CHURCH.

This is indicated in -

Ephesians 3:7 -

in the words, *the gift of the grace of God given unto me*, and also in the words, *by the effectual working of His power*.

There are those who think that, because the witness of the Church today is often weak and ineffective, and many Christians are half-hearted, the Church will decline until she fades away altogether!

But, the Church will never fail because the Lord Jesus Christ is her Founder, her Foundation, her Builder. He has guaranteed that no power on earth or in hell will prevail against His Church.

Matthew 16:13-18 -

1 Corinthians 3:11 -

NOTES

WALKING WORTHILY!

STUDY 5

Scripture Portions: Ephesians 4:1-3, 17-26

We now come to the second half of this letter.

Chapters 1-3 are Doctrinal. They emphasize our standing *in Christ*.

Chapters 4-6 are Practical. They emphasize our state down here in the world.

What we are in Christ must be related to what we are in the world. Doctrine must always issue in duty. Our creed must be seen in our conduct.

There are two dangers which we must always seek to avoid:

(1) **Teaching doctrine without relating it to duty.**

This will make for a mere intellectualism and a dead formalism.

(2) **Teaching duty which does not issue forth from doctrine.**

This will make for error, superficiality and spurious growth.

Notice how the apostle commences this second half of the epistle -

Ephesians 4:1 - *I therefore.....*

That is because of what has preceded in **chapters 1-3**.

Ephesians 4:1 - *.....beseech you that ye walk worthy.....*

For the first mark of a saved person is that his walk is different.

It used to be like -

Ephesians 2:2-3 -

Ephesians 4:17-19 -

But now - what a change has taken place!

1. THE CONSTRAINT OF A WORTHY WALK.

What is it that constrains us to walk worthily?

We are constrained by a tender, loving appeal, as indicated in -

Ephesians 4:1 -

Paul had led these Ephesians to Christ. Now, from the prison in which he languishes, he writes to his spiritual children and says -

Ephesians 4:1 -

That is, that your conduct corresponds with your high calling in Christ Jesus.

Behind this written appeal from Paul, we hear the voice of our loving Lord beseeching us to *walk worthily*. Are we going to respond to His appeal? Or are we going to walk unworthily? The choice is left with us.

He has loved us and given Himself for us.

Galatians 2:20 -

Does His love constrain us to do as He bids and to be well-pleasing unto Him?

2 Corinthians 4:14 -

2. THE CHARACTERISTICS OF A WORTHY WALK.

We read of Enoch -

Genesis 5:22-24 -

of Abraham -

Genesis 24:40 -

In the Old Testament we find scores of other references to *walking*.

In the New Testament we come across -

Romans 13:13 -

2 Corinthians 5:7 -

Galatians 5:16 -

Ephesians 5:15 -

Colossians 2:6 -

1 John 1:7 -

3rd John 3 -

All these references tell us the marks or characteristics of the Worthy Walk.

But if we confine ourselves to the verses in our portion, we see that -

a. A Worthy Walk is a HEAVENLY Walk

Ephesians 4:1 -

Our calling is a heavenly calling -

Hebrews 3:1 -

a high calling -

Philippians 3:14 -

and a holy calling -

2 Timothy 1:9 -

We are a heavenly people living upon the earth.

To walk worthily means just that - to live the heavenly life on earth!

b. A Worthy Walk is a HUMBLE Walk

Ephesians 4:2 -

The word *lowly* means to be selfless, utterly lacking in self-assertiveness.

Consider the word *meekness* -

Matthew 11:29 -

2 Corinthians 10:1 -

Galatians 6:1 -

Titus 3:2 -

James 1:21 -

1 Peter 3:4 -

The root meaning of the word is *a spirit that never takes offence* - that is, humility.

Therefore -

1 Peter 5:6 -

c. A Worthy Walk is a HELPFUL Walk

Ephesians 4:2 -

The word *longsuffering* means *to endure with an unruffled temper*. Yes, to do that instead of being intolerant, impatient and critical!

The word *forbearing* is explained in -

Colossians 3:13 -

It means *lovingly putting up with what we don't like in other people!* And, for all this, *love* is the motivating power as is made plain in -

Ephesians 5:2 -

d. A Worthy Walk is a HARD Walk

Ephesians 4:3 -

The word *endeavouring* means *to strive with great earnestness and unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace*.

God has wonderfully united all believers in the Body of Christ -

Ephesians 4:4-6 -

The Holy Spirit dwells within us to make that unity real. Our responsibility as members of the Body is to maintain that unity.

Romans 12:18 -

e. A Worthy Walk is a HOLY Walk

Ephesians 4:3 -

The word *Spirit* refers to the Holy Spirit who indwells us and who is very easily grieved.

Ephesians 4:30 -

and with whom we are to be constantly filled.

Ephesians 5:18 -

In **Ephesians 4:17-16** we are given five injunctions which must be obeyed if we are to behave ourselves *holily*.

1 Thessalonians 2:10 -

(1) *We are to WALK NOT.....*

Ephesians 4:17-19 -

(2) *We are to PUT OFF....*

Ephesians 4:22 -

(3) *We are to PUT ON.....*

Ephesians 4:24 -

(4) *We are to PUT AWAY.....*

Ephesians 4:25 -

(5) *We are to LET NOT.....*

Ephesians 4:26 -

3. THE CONSUMMATION of a Worthy Walk.

How long does this walk go on? Where and how does it end?

Ephesians 4:13 -

That will be Glory!

*Then the end: Thy Church completed,
All Thy chosen gathered in.
With their King in glory seated,
Satan bound, and banished sin.*

*Gone for ever parting, weeping,
Hunger, sorrow, death and pain;
Lo! Her watch Thy Church is keeping.
Come, Lord Jesus, come to reign.*

NOTES

GIFTS FROM THE ASCENDED LORD

STUDY 6

Scripture Portion: Ephesians 4:4-16

Ephesians 4:4-6 -

Emphasis is given here to those great fundamental facts of the Christian faith which are at once its unifying features. In -

Ephesians 4:7-16 -

the apostle writes of the diversity of gifts which characterize those who are members of Christ's Body, the Church. This is an intriguing theme.

We need also to refer to three other New Testament passages which deal with the subject of spiritual gifts.

Romans 12:3-8 -

1 Corinthians 12:4-11 -

(Indeed, 1 Corinthians, chapters 12, 13 and 14.)

1 Peter 4:10-11 -

*Let us confine our study to the teaching embodied in **Ephesians 4:4-16**. Notice the following.*

1. THE BESTOWER OF THE GIFTS.

This is brought out in -

Ephesians 4:7-8 -

Ephesians 4:11 -

We are told that Christ Himself bestows spiritual gifts upon the members of His Church. Especially notice -

Ephesians 4:8 -

which is a quotation from -

Psalms 68:18 -

The Lord Jesus went down into death, was raised and then ascended to Heaven. When He ascended, having conquered sin, death and hell, He *led a multitude of captives captive*. (These were the Old Testament saints who, up until the ascension, dwelt in Paradise.)

Then He received gifts from the Father in order that He might bestow these gifts upon the Church. But upon whom does He bestow these gifts?

2. THE RECIPIENTS OF THE GIFTS.

Are spiritual gifts only for a few members of the Body, the Church? Read -

Ephesians 4:7 -

Underline the words, *unto every one of us*. That refers to every true believer. Every Christian, without exception, has received some gift from the risen and exalted Lord.

Romans 12:4 -

We are told that we all have some *office*, also.

1 Corinthians 12:4-5 -

1 Peter 4:10 -

It is wrong for any Christian to say, *There's nothing I can do*, or, *My days of service are over now!*

But note this wonderful fact: every Christian is not only given *the gift of Christ* -

Ephesians 4:7 -

but also *grace according to the measure of the gift* -

Ephesians 4:7 -

You see, the nature of the gift determines the measure of grace that is supplied in order that we may exercise the gift. Grace is given to the preacher to preach, to the pray-er to pray, to the teacher to teach, to the helper to help, and so on.

1 Corinthians 12:18 -

But do all have the same gifts?

3. *THE DIVERSITY OF THE GIFTS.*

Ephesians 4:11 -

Here Paul mentions five special gifts which the Lord has bestowed upon His Church, or five kinds of men to whom are given these special gifts.

a. Apostles

b. Prophets

These were given for the purpose of laying the foundations of the Church as we are told in -

Ephesians 2:20 -

c. Evangelists

An evangelist's ministry is especially directed towards the unconverted.

2 Timothy 4:5 -

d. Pastors

This word means *shepherds*.

Compare -

John 21:15-17 -

Acts 20:28 -

This is a caring ministry for the sheep in Christ's fold.

e. Teachers

The work of the teacher is to instruct the Church in the things of God, to give milk to the babes

-

1 Peter 2:2 -

and meat to those who are more mature -

1 Corinthians 3:2 -

in order that there may be growth and stability.

In -

1 Corinthians 12:8-11 -

and also **1 Corinthians 12:14-25.**

We read of other gifts beside those mentioned above. Perhaps yours is mentioned there?

Study this whole portion carefully, then notice the little word *helps* in -

1 Corinthians 12:28 -

Each gift is important and necessary. What is your gift? What are the gifts for?

4. THE PURPOSE OF THE GIFTS.

Ephesians 4:12 -

Ephesians 4:14 -

We are told of a three-fold purpose that the Lord has in bestowing these gifts upon His Church.

a. To fit us for SERVICE.

Ephesians 4:12 -

Please omit the comma after the word *saints*. The meaning is this: The Lord has given evangelists, pastors, teachers, etc.....*to perfect the saints for the work of the ministry.*

The evangelists, pastors and teachers are not to do all the ministry. But their chief task is that of getting the saints to function actively as members of the Body.

b. To help us to GROW.

Ephesians 4:12 -

goes on to say, *for the edifying of the Body of Christ*. God does not want us to remain as babies spiritually.

1 Corinthians 3:1-3 -

He wants us to grow up.

2 Peter 3:18 -

Therefore, He has bestowed gifts upon the Church in order that the members may grow.

Ephesians 4:15 -

c. To protect us from HARM.

The enemy is always ready to deceive even the *elect*.

Matthew 24:24 -

in order that we may be protected against his *false prophets* -

Mark 13:22 -

and their *damnable heresies* -

2 Peter 2:1 -

The Lord has placed teachers in the Church so that we may be instructed in the truth and know how to detect the devil's deadly counterfeits and lies!

The ultimate purpose that the Lord has in bestowing gifts upon His Church is indicated in -

Ephesians 4:13 -

This verse also tells us about -

5. THE DURATION OF THE GIFTS.

How long will the gifts be needed in the Church? Only until -

Ephesians 4:13 -

When we are with Christ, who is the Head of the Body, the Church, then He will be *all in all*.

Ephesians 1:23 -

There will be no room for, or need of, gifts.

He will be ALL!

*Christ, from whom all blessings flow,
Perfecting the saints below,
Hear us, who Thy nature share,
Who Thy mystic Body are.*

*Join us, in one Spirit join,
Let us still receive of Thine;
Still for more on Thee we call,
Thou who fillest all in all.*

*Move and actuate, and guide;
Diverse gifts to each divide;
Placed according to Thy will,
Let us all our work fulfil.*

NOTES

NOTES

SPIRITUAL INTOXICATION!

STUDY 7

Scripture Portion: Ephesians 5:1-21

Ephesians 5:18 -

A contrast is made here between the person who is under the influence of alcohol and the person who is under the controlling influence of the Holy Spirit. We as Christians are not to be drunk with the wine that comes from any earthly vineyard but with the new wine of the Kingdom which comes from the heavenly vineyard, from Him who is the True Vine.

John 15:1 -

There is a purpose in setting these two commands in contrast. It was a pagan belief that God dwelt in the blood of the grape, so that in drinking wine man was drinking God into himself.

Drunkenness was therefore held to be a sacrament in which a man was supposed to be under the control of the god who filled him. Paul reminded the Christians at Ephesus of this pagan belief and then he pointed them to the true way of being God-possessed.

Concerning the Spirit-filled life, let us notice the following truths.

1. The Spirit-filled life is a command.

Ephesians 5:18 -

There are two commands, both of which require obedience. They are not optional. They are imperative.

2. The Spirit-filled life is a command to every Christian.

The experience of the Holy Spirit's fulness is not for a select company of believers, but for every born-again person.

Notice the word *all* in -

Acts 2:4 -

Acts 4:31 -

3. To be filled with the Spirit is more than being indwelt by the Spirit.

The Christians at Ephesus were *sealed* by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 1:13 -

Ephesians 4:30 -

Thus they were indwelt by the Holy Spirit, as is every Christian.

1 Corinthians 6:19 -

But, we may be indwelt and not filled by Him. We may possess Him without His possessing us.

4. To be filled with the Spirit is not a matter of excess, but of sanity.

The word *excess* means *riot*.

The most spiritually sane people in the world are those who are filled with God's Spirit. The Lord Jesus is our example.

5. The Spirit-filled life is to be the normal experience of God's children.

Ephesians 5:18 -

means*be ye habitually being filled*..... God's plan for every one of His children is that they may be filled with the Holy Spirit so that they may live lives that are glorifying to Him in all their relationships -

a. Personal -

Ephesians 5:15-21 -

b. Domestic -

Ephesians 5:22-33 -

c. Business -

Ephesians 6:5-9 -

6. Being filled with the Spirit is not our getting more of Him; it is His getting more of us.

The Holy Spirit is a Person. To be filled with Him means to allow Him to take full possession of our personalities.

7. The Spirit-filled life is marked by certain definite and easily discernible characteristics.

Just as a drunken man can easily be recognized, so can a Spirit-filled Christian be recognized. The same characteristics are true of both. What are they?

Look up those that are mentioned in -

Ephesians 5:14-21 -

Then consider the following.

1. A DRUNKARD IS POSSESSED BY AN IMMENSE SENSE OF WELL-BEING.

The Greeks have a word for it *euphoria*, which means *an immense sense of well-being*. The first Christians were accused of being drunk.

Acts 2:15 -

The early disciples were noted for their intense joy.

Acts 13:52 -

2. A DRUNKARD IS RECOGNIZED BY HIS FACE.

So is a Spirit-filled Christian! Many of our faces are shadowed instead of shining! There should be a radiance about us, as there was -

with Moses -

Exodus 34:29 -

with Stephen -

Acts 6:15 -

with the Lord Jesus -

Luke 9:29 -

Read -

Psalm 34:5 -

Psalm 90:17 -

and compare Psalm 40:3 with Ephesians 5:19, 20 -

Psalm 40:3 -

Ephesians 5:19, 20 -

3. A DRUNKARD HAS A CHARACTERISTIC SAVOR ABOUT HIM.

So does a Christian! You can smell a drunkard! Now look at -

Ephesians 5:2 -

Our Lord Jesus Christ was as holy incense before the Father and before the world. Christians, by being filled with His Spirit are to be, and may be, the same. The Spirit-filled life is God's provision for making our lives beautiful, graceful and gentle.

4. A DRUNKARD CAN BE DETECTED BY THE WAY HE WALKS.

So can a Spirit-filled Christian! Our walk is our manner of life.

According to -

Ephesians 5:15 -

a drunkard's walk is careless, whereas the walk of the Spirit-filled man is very circumspect - that is, disciplined and consistent.

A drunkard cannot walk straight, but the Spirit-filled Christian is enabled to live before God and the world in a way that is upright and honest in every respect.

5. A DRUNKARD IS BETRAYED BY THE WAY HE SPEAKS.

So is a Spirit-filled Christian! Many a drunkard has a stammering tongue. Often his speech is impure and foul. A Spirit-filled Christian will be very careful in the words he uses and in the

matters of which he speaks.

Of course, a Spirit-filled Christian will be a testifying Christian.

Acts 4:20 -

6. A DRUNKARD IS NOT RESPONSIBLE FOR HIS ACTIONS.

Nor is a Christian! A drunkard does many foolish things because he cannot help it.

A Christian, if he is filled with the Holy Spirit, will produce from his life -

fruit which is supernatural -

Galatians 5:22-23 -

and works which are, humanly speaking, impossible.

See what Peter said in -

Acts 3:12 -

7. A DRUNKARD IS KNOWN BY THE COMPANY HE KEEPS.

So it a Spirit-filled Christian! A drunkard will make his way quickly to the bar. The Spirit-filled Christian will seek the fellowship of God's people.

Acts 4:23 -

How can we become Spirit-filled - possessed and controlled by the Holy Spirit?

Think of the drunkard again. How does he become a drunkard? By drinking, and drinking, and

drinking again.

This drinking for us involves three things.

a. A Real Thirst

Isaiah 44:3 -

Matthew 5:6 -

John 7:37-39 -

b. A Great Capacity

Psalm 81:10 -

c. A Simple Faith

Luke 11:13 -

1 John 5:14-15 -

NOTES

NOTES

THE CHRISTIAN'S RELATIONSHIPS

STUDY 8

Scripture Portion: Ephesians 5:22-33; 6:1-19

The importance of this subject is seen by the fact that the Holy Spirit has devoted such a large proportion of this epistle to the relationships which should exist between Christian husbands and wives, parents and children, and masters and servants.

(1) *There is nothing more beautiful on earth than a Christian home.*

In this portion of scripture, we have an inspired picture of what God intends a Christian home to be and of what it is possible for it to be with His enabling.

(2) *The Christian life must be lived effectively first and foremost in the home.*

We are to carry our Christian experience into every relationship of life - personal, social, business, professional, recreational, etc. But first it must operate in the domestic sphere.

Compare -

Mark 5:19 -

Luke 8:39 -

Our lives must tell and our lips must tell first in the home.

1 Timothy 5:4 -

Titus 2:5 -

(3) *The hardest place to live a really consistent life is in the home.*

This is because it is here that we most easily cast off restraint and, unless we have learned God's way of victory and God's plan for harmonious living, there is bound to be discord and friction.

(4) *The greatest testimony we can offer to the world is a happy, harmonious and peaceful Christian home.*

In the home, Christianity is seen in action.

2 Kings 4:8-10 -

(5) *God has made provision for every one of His children to live a consistent Christian life in the home.*

That provision is the infilling of the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 5:18 -

God's ideal for a home is only possible of attainment by the infilling of the Holy Spirit. How, then, should believers deport themselves in the exacting relationships of domestic life? The answer is in -

Ephesians 5:21 -

In other words, the secret of a happy and a harmonious home is mutual submission; not proud resistance; not striving to stand up for one's rights, but a loving consideration of the other person; a mutual respect and loyalty; a Christ-like spirit.

Consider in detail the relationships mentioned.

1. WIVES, BE SUBJECT UNTO YOUR HUSBANDS.

Ephesians 5:22-24 -

Ephesians 5:33 -

These are not man's ideas. They are God's instructions. Wives are to submit themselves unto their husbands *as unto the Lord.....in every thing.*

The Lord is the Head of the Body, the Church, and thus He cares for the Church, provides for it and protects it. The husband is to do this for his wife. Thus the wife is to submit herself to him as her head.

It is not a question of the superiority of the husband and the inferiority of the wife, but of the respective positions that God, in His sovereign wisdom, has assigned to each. From creation this has been God's order.

Genesis 2:21-23 -

If the order is reversed there will always be trouble.

2. HUSBANDS, LOVE YOUR WIVES.

Ephesians 5:25-33 -

The husband is to love his wife *even as Christ also loved the Church, and gave Himself for it*. That is, with a love that is unselfish and sacrificial. How often there is lack of thoughtful consideration and of understanding on the part of the husband. How frequently this causes unhappiness in the home!

A husband's love for his wife must operate in every phase of the matrimonial, domestic and social life, which includes the more intimate relationships as well as those that are observed by others.

3. CHILDREN, OBEY YOUR PARENTS.

Ephesians 6:1-3 -

These verses give us God's order for a Christian home. It is the only kind of home that He recognizes. What a need there is today for children to give heed to **verse 2!**

2 Timothy 3:1-3 -

Notice that disobedience to parents is one of the signs of the apostasy of *the last days*. In our Lord Jesus Christ we have the perfect example of obedience.

Luke 2:51 -

4. PARENTS, BRING YOUR CHILDREN UP FOR THE LORD.

Ephesians 6:4 -

Notice that this verse begins with a note of warning. *Don't incite your children to anger!*

Deuteronomy 6:6-9 -

What a sacred ministry is entrusted to those who have children to "bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord"!

Compare -

Proverbs 22:6 -

5. SERVANTS, BE OBEDIENT TO YOUR MASTERS.

Ephesians 6:5-6 -

In Ephesus there were slaves in most households. That is why the Holy Spirit has included this master-servant relationship here. What a high standard is expected from servants!

We are to work for our earthly master just as if he were our heavenly Master.

Ephesians 6:5 -

Ephesians 6:7 -

This means that we shall not watch the clock. We shall not be late, lazy or disloyal. And God will surely reward us.

Ephesians 6:8 -

6. MASTERS, CONSIDER THE WELFARE OF YOUR SERVANTS.

Ephesians 6:9 -

This means that employers are to give the same consideration as they expect and to which they are entitled from their employees. Here is food for thought for all employers!

These are God's rules for happy, holy and harmonious human relationships. They are only possible as we live in obedience to -

Ephesians 5:18 -

That is as wives and husbands, children and parents, servants and masters, seek to live their lives under the control of and in obedience to the Holy Spirit.

NOTES

OUR ENEMY AND OUR WARFARE

STUDY 9

Scripture Portion: Ephesians 6:10-19

In his Epistles, the apostle Paul speaks of the Christian life under a number of suggestive metaphors. For example, in this letter to the Ephesians his favourite designation of the Christian life is that it is a **WALK**.

Compare -

Ephesians 2:2 -

Ephesians 2:10 -

Ephesians 4:1 -

Ephesians 4:17 -

Ephesians 5:2 -

Ephesians 5:8 -

Ephesians 5:15 -

In **chapters 5 and 6**, the following persons are told how to walk.

Wives -

Ephesians 5:22-24 -

Husbands -

Ephesians 5:25-31 -

Children -

Ephesians 6:1-3 -

Fathers -

Ephesians 6:4 -

Servants -

Ephesians 6:5-8 -

and Masters -

Ephesians 6:9 -

But suddenly the apostle changes the metaphor. In -

Ephesians 6:10 -

he introduces us to something of the sterner side of the Christian life. He tells us that there is a fight to be fought; that we have a powerful enemy to face; and that we can only be *more than conquerors* -

Romans 8:37 -

as we *put on the whole armour of God*.

As Christians, we are -

saints -

Ephesians 1:1 -

children -

Ephesians 1:5 -

believers -

Ephesians 1:13 -

servants -

Ephesians 6:5 -

But, we are also soldiers -

Ephesians 6:11 -

Compare with -

2 Timothy 2:3-4 -

As soldiers, we are in a great conflict and have to fight.

1 Timothy 6:12 -

2 Timothy 4:7 -

We, as believers, are engaged in a **WARFARE**. In order that we may appreciate the necessity of putting on the whole armour of God if we are to be victorious soldiers in God's army, let us first consider the nature of the conflict, then the character of the enemy, and finally, the secret of victory.

1. THE NATURE OF THE CONFLICT.

a. It is a real warfare

It is a literal fight against a literal enemy. Notice the word *against* occurs six times in -

Ephesians 6:11-12 -

b. It is a conflict between real antagonists.

Who are they?

The Lord -

Ephesians 6:10 -

The devil -

Ephesians 6:11 -

The soldiers, or allies, of the Lord are *brethren* -

Ephesians 6:10 -

and *we* (i.e. the saints) -

Ephesians 6:12 -

The allies of Satan are mentioned in -

Ephesians 6:12 -

c. It is a fierce conflict

Ponder **verse 12** and see how deadly a fight it is!

d. It is a hand-to-hand conflict

It is as literal as any battle against *flesh and blood*, but it is ten thousand times more deadly (**verse 12**) for it is a conflict not with the human and visible, but with the superhuman and invisible.

Luke 12:4-5 -

This is not far-fetched or fanciful, but it is God's revealed truth.

Let us accept it, for only by so doing, shall we be fortified for the fray and spurred on to -

Ephesians 6:11 -

2. THE CHARACTER OF THE ENEMY.

a. He is a real person

The names given to Satan indicate personality. The actions attributed to him imply personality: deceiver, liar, murderer, accuser, tempter, prince, etc. Read the following.

Job 1:6 -

Isaiah 14:12 -

Matthew 4:10 -

Matthew 6:13 -

Matthew 9:34 -

Matthew 10:25 -

Matthew 25:41 -

Luke 4:12 -

John 8:44 -

John 12:31 -

2 Corinthians 2:11 -

1 Thessalonians 2:18 -

1 Thessalonians 3:5 -

2 Thessalonians 2:9-11 -

b. He occupies an exalted position

He is *the prince of the power of the air* -

Ephesians 2:2 -

indicating his control over evil spirits.

He is *the prince of this world* -

John 12:31 -

John 14:30 -

John 16:11 -

showing his domination in the lives of the *children of disobedience* -

Ephesians 2:2 -

He has a *kingdom* -

Matthew 12:26 -

He is *the god of this world* -

2 Corinthians 4:4 -

He counterfeits true Christianity -

1 Corinthians 10:20-21 -

2 Corinthians 11:14 -

1 Timothy 4:1 -

Revelation 2:9 -

c. He is very powerful

His power is subtle -

2 Corinthians 11:14 -

sinister -

Colossians 1:13 -

supernatural -

2 Thessalonians 2:9 -

and destructive -

Hebrews 2:14 -

Compare with -

Acts 26:18 -

3. THE SECRET OF VICTORY.

a. We must recognize our standing in Christ

Study -

Ephesians 6:10 -

Notice that we are only strong *in the Lord*.

There is no strength or ability to wage this warfare apart from the strength which is ours in Him.

We are to stand and withstand, not in our own strength, but in His.

Ephesians 6:11 -

Ephesians 6:13-14 -

b. We must accept our protection from Christ

This protection, provided by Him for our use, is *the whole armour of God*.

Ephesians 6:11 -

Ephesians 6:13 -

There are five pieces for defensive warfare, and one only for offensive warfare. There is no protection for the back because (to change the figure) -

Luke 9:62 -

Our part is to put on these pieces -

Ephesians 6:11 -

(1) The girdle of truth.

Ephesians 6:14 -

As the girdle encompassed the waist of the soldier, so truth must encompass our whole life.

Psalm 51:6 -

John 8:32 -

3 John 4 -

There must be no hypocrisy, unreality, insincerity or compromise.

(2) *The breastplate of righteousness*

Ephesians 6:14 -

This covers very vital organs. We must stand firm in Christ who is our righteousness. We must be righteous in our life (i.e. right).

(3) *The shoes of preparedness*

Ephesians 6:15 -

When tempted and tried, we are sustained by the experience of -

Philippians 4:7 -

Isaiah 26:3 -

(4) *The shield of faith*

Ephesians 6:16 -

Just as a shield can protect each part of the body, so faith must operate in respect to each part of our life.

(5) *The helmet of salvation*

Ephesians 6:17 -

An unprotected mind is a ready prey to Satan's deceptions, delusions and defilements.

(6) *The sword of the Spirit.*

Ephesians 6:17 -

Compare -

Matthew 4:4 -

Matthew 4:7 -

Matthew 4:10 -

It is written.....

Hebrews 4:12 -

b. We must maintain our communion with Christ.

Ephesians 6:18 -

This is essential for victory - *All prayer, at all seasons, with all perseverance.*

*Soldiers of Christ arise
And put your armour on.
Strong in the strength which God supplies
Through His eternal Son.
Strong in the Lord of Hosts
And in His mighty power,
Who in the strength of Jesus trusts
Is more than conqueror. (Charles Wesley)*

NOTES

NOTES

PRAYING ALWAYS WITH ALL PRAYER

STUDY 10

Scripture Portion: Ephesians 6:18-24

Paul was a man of prayer. Prayer was the secret of his life, of his amazing influence, of his suffering and endurance, of his burning passion for the souls of men. Consequently, he is the one man, apart from the Lord Jesus Himself, who is most qualified to instruct us in the holy art of praying.

In the verses before us there are seven vital truths about prayer.

1. PRAYER IS THE GREAT ESSENTIAL.

Paul speaks of the armour we are to put on, then he goes straight on without a break - *Praying at all times.....* It is tremendously important for a soldier to have on the right armour and to be equipped with a sword, but what is equally important is that the soldier should keep in constant communication with his Commander-in-Chief.

Hebrews 2:10 -

The Christian, while he is on the field of battle, is in direct touch with the throne of God. The prayer line of communication with our risen Lord must never be broken. Prayer is the great essential. It is certainly not option. **It is fundamental!**

Paul not only exhorts us to pray, but to pray always. This reminds us of -

1 Thessalonians 5:17 -

We are to seek to live in the very atmosphere and attitude of prayer. It is most important that we should have set times for prayer -

like Daniel who prayed three times a day -

Daniel 6:10 -

like David who prayed three times a day -

Psalm 55:17 -

He later told us that he prayed seven times a day -

Psalm 119:164 -

and like the Saviour who constantly withdrew into the place of prayer -

Luke 6:12 -

Then, we may pray at special times. For instance -

when in trouble -

Psalm. 55:16 -

when needing guidance -

James 1:5 -

when tempted -

Psalm. 69:1 -

when persecuted -

Psalm 7:1 -

when disturbing letters arrive -

Isaiah 37:14 -

when sickness threatens -

James 5:14 -

and whenever there is a need of any kind -

Philippians 4:6 -

2. WE MUST EMPLOY ALL KINDS OF PRAYER.

All prayer means with all manner of prayer. That suggests that prayer may consist of: adoration, praise, thanksgiving, petition, supplication or intercession.

Consider the following three kinds of prayer -

individual prayer -

Matthew 6:6 -

the prayer of agreement -

Matthew 18:19 -

and corporate prayer -

Acts 12:5 -

3. WE MUST KEEP ON PRAYING

We are to keep on praying -

Ephesians 6:18 -

Luke 18:1 -

Compare -

Luke 11:5-8 -

We need persistence -

1 Kings 18:43 -

The word *watching* indicates that there are perils in prayer - and so there are!

There is the peril of -

a. *Distraction*

How often other things crowd in and prevent us from praying!

b. *Disinclination*

This may be due to tiredness or to preoccupation with worldly things.

c. *Discouragement*

Perhaps we have prayed once, or even twice, then we have become impatient because the answer has not come!

d. *Despair*

The situation sometimes seems so impossible - even for God! So, instead of trusting Him, we are overwhelmed with a sense of frustration and even of futility of prayer.

e. *Defeat*

Yes, overwhelming defeat!

Judges 16:20 -

4. WE MUST PRAY FOR ALL SAINTS.

It is, of course, impossible to pray individually for all saints, yet in a general sense, and certainly in a systematic sense, we may do so. We may pray, for example, regularly and systematically for:

a. God's suffering saints.

b. God's sinning saints.

Do you ever pray for these? -

- for Christians who are tempted and overcome by the world, the flesh and the devil?

- for backsliders who have been tripped up by the wiles of the enemy?

c. God's shut-in saints.

So many who love the Lord are laid to one side by sickness, and such sickness has been permitted for the furtherance of the gospel.

Philippians 1:12 -

These afflicted ones need prayer that they may receive grace to testify to the power and sufficiency of Christ.

4. For the new converts.

Acts 9:17 -

e. For workers to be thrust forth.

Matthew 9:38 -

5. For the printing of Christian literature.

Psalms 43:3 -

Pray for open doors for the gospel -

1 Corinthians. 16:9 -

g. For Satan's power to be broken

Luke 13:12-16 -

6. WE MUST PRAY FOR WORKERS IN THE FOREFRONT OF THE BATTLE

Ephesians 6:19-20 -

The above scriptures teach us that those who are in prominent positions in Christian service are in special need of the prayers of God's people.

Acts 4:29 -

How should we pray for preachers, evangelists, teachers and leaders in God's harvest field? That they may have utterance, boldness and grace to preach the gospel.

7. ALL OUR PRAYING TO BE EFFECTIVE MUST BE IN THE SPIRIT.

Here is the secret of it all - *in the Spirit*.

Ephesians 6:18 -

Compare with -

Romans 8:26-27 -

It is gloriously true that, as William Cowper wrote, *Satan trembles when he sees the weakest saint upon his knees*.

Alfred Lord Tennyson was right when he wrote -

*More things are wrought by prayer
Than this world dreams of, wherefore, let thy voice
Rise like a fountain before Me night and day.
For what are men better than sheep and goats
That nourish a blind life within the brain,
If, knowing God, they lift not hands of prayer,
Both for themselves and those who call them friends?*

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