

A Daily Devotional Study Guide



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The Epistle to the EPHESIANS



WEEK 3

“Called by Christ”

Study: Ephesians 3:1-3

Reading: Acts 21:27-36, Ephesians 3

Memory: Romans 8:24

I used to deliver newspapers, and would occasionally have to get a substitute carrier for when I went on vacation. I had gone on vacation for a couple of days and was supposed to be back on Sunday to do the route. The problem was that while I was traveling back from vacation, I got stuck in a snowstorm. I was not able to make it back to deliver the Sunday paper. Sunday's were by far the hardest days to deliver papers because of the comic and advertisements sections that needed to be added to the paper. I called my substitute and he hesitantly agreed to deliver the Sunday paper. When I arrived home, I had several customers contact me asking me where there paper was. I then received a call from my sub letting me know that he had gotten stuck in a ditch and overheated his car attempting to get out. He didn't deliver most of the papers.

Today, we are going to see how we are called to accomplish God's work, but when we allow sin into our lives we become like my substitute and get stuck and fail to accomplish God's desire for our lives.

What Does the Bible Say?

Acts 21 described how a prophet named Agabus revealed to Paul that if he went to Jerusalem he would be bound and delivered over to the Gentiles. The people who heard this warned Paul not to travel to Jerusalem, but he knew that was what the Holy Spirit wanted. When he went to the temple, the Jews who hated him accused him of taking a Gentile into the temple area. They stirred up a crowd and dragged Paul out of the temple area planning to kill him. The Roman soldiers stepped in and arrested Paul to save him from being killed and eventually took him to Caesarea where he spent over two years before he appealed to have his case heard by Caesar. He spent many of his final years in prison. It was while in prison that he wrote this letter to the Ephesian church.

If the first two chapters of Ephesians, Paul described how wonderful it was to be a follower of Jesus Christ and the great benefits that believers have. He made it clear that He was being held as a prisoner because of the Gospel, but He wasn't a prisoner because of the Romans or the Jews. He was a prisoner of Jesus Christ (vs 1).

Paul understood that it was God's plan for him to be a steward of the Gospel and that God's plan for him was to share the Gospel with the Gentiles. Stewardship primarily referred to the management of a household, business, or other concern on behalf of someone else. Paul in his life was only concerned about doing God's business. He was willing to carry out God's plan with great joy and fervor, even if it meant time in jail or even the loss of his life. Paul describe the Gospel as a "mystery" that had been revealed. The Old Testament described how the Messiah would come and die for the sins of men, but much of the prophecy wasn't clear until Jesus came and fulfilled it. The mystery of this was revealed through Jesus though many Jews didn't solve the mystery. Paul himself did not understand until he was on the road to Damascus and Jesus Christ revealed Himself to Paul (vs 2-3).

How Does this Apply to Me?

God has called you to serve Him in a specific way. You are a steward of God and have been given a task by Him to accomplish today. Your stewardship will often change throughout different stages of your life, but God gives you specific roles He wants you to accomplish. Many believers don't know what their role is and don't take thime to ask and seek for an answer. I believe one of the secrets to the great joy that Paul experienced in life, even in the midst of great trials, came from the knowledge that He was carrying out the plan of God for His life. When you know what God desires of you and you are doing what He has planned, you will find your deepest joy and fulfillment.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Ask God to daily show you what He wants you to do.*
- * *Commit your whole life to serve Him in any way He desires.*

Thought for the day

What reason do you think Paul was referring to (vs 1)?

****He could have been referring to what he had just written about or he could have been referring to what he was about to write. He had just finished talking about the great salvation that took men from enemies of Christ to children of God and he was about to write about how Gentiles are fellow heirs with Him as children of God.*

How did Paul describe his situation (vs 1)?

Why did he say he was a prisoner on “behalf of the Gentiles” (vs 1)?

What do you think Paul meant by stating he was a “prisoner of Jesus Christ” (vs 1)?

Why do you think this attitude was vital for Paul’s ministry success?

What had God given to Paul (vs 2)?

Why do you think he used the term “stewardship” (vs 2)?

What do you think God has made you a steward of?

Why did Paul say God gave him this stewardship (vs 2)?

Why do you think Paul used the term “mystery” to describe the Gospel (vs 3)?

How had God revealed the mystery to Paul (vs 3)?

What has God revealed to you about His plan of salvation?

What has God revealed to you about His plan for your life?

What is God’s purpose for your life this week?

“The Mystery Is Solved”

Study: Ephesians 3:4-7

Reading: 1 Timothy 4:6-16, 2 Timothy 3:10-17,

Memory: Romans 8:24

One of the great joys I have in life is taking people on hikes. I love to hear them “ooh” and “ahh” over the natural beauty in the area where I live. There are times where I find myself getting so used to beaches, water and beautiful bluff overlooks that I forget to take the time to soak in the beauty of it all. When I take others to these places and hear their amazement at the wonder of it all, I am reminded of the privilege I have of living in the area where I do.

Today, we are going to see how it is easy to let the Gospel and the message of Jesus Christ become too common to us. We forget how special it is and take it for granted. We will be reminded of the importance of being in continual awe of our great salvation.

What Does the Bible Say?

Paul continued to place a focus on the “mystery” of Christ. This may seem to be somewhat of a foreign concept to you because most people that have grown up in the American culture have heard about Jesus Christ and His work on the cross. In those days, the message of Jesus Christ was brand new. The letter to the Ephesians was most likely written less than 30 years after the death of Christ and Ephesus was a long way from Jerusalem. Though there was a connection between places because of the Roman Empire and the Greek language, they were not nearly as connected in that society as we are today. The Jews in Ephesus would have known many of the Old Testament passages about the Messiah, but many of these references were veiled and could not be completely understood until it happened. Once the first advent of Christ happened, things started to be more clear to the apostles. God had also given special revelation of Himself to Paul and revealed the solution to the great mystery of the Messiah that the Old Testament constantly speaks about. This mystery had been given by the prophets but was being revealed through the apostles and through Paul. There were also New Testament

prophets that were given the ability to help the church understand the incredible mystery of Christ and the salvation that He offers (vs 4-5).

Part of this great mystery is that salvation is not just for the Jews, but also for the Gentiles. This is something that we don't think about much today, but in that culture it was a very important understanding. The Jews often had a hard time accepting that salvation was open to the Gentiles and the early church even argued about this. They were God's chosen people and had a very difficult time accepting the fact that Jesus Christ opened the way for Gentiles to become God's children. The Gentiles on the other hand worshiped multiple deities. Gods were often thought to be regional or associated with a particular people group. The fact that the Hebrew God was the God of the whole world was a new concept for them to grasp. Through Jesus Christ, both Jews and Gentiles could be made heirs of the same promise. They were not separate, but were all believers in Christ (vs 6).

Paul humbly approached his role as a minister of this mystery. He realized that what He was called to do was a great gift given by God that He did not deserve. Yet, it was God who chose Him. This same God was the One who would give Him the power He needed to share the truth and spread this Good News to many (vs 7).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you realize how privileged you are to know about Christ? The message delivered to the Gentiles was such a foreign concept to them and the message of Jesus to the Jews caused great conflict for many. Most likely for you, the message of Jesus was something that was a little more common. If you grew up in church it was simply part of general knowledge. The familiarity should be a great blessing, but sometimes it is not. It is often easy to take the great message of the Gospel for granted and forget how important and special the message is. Paul spent a great deal of time in chapters 1 and 2 talking about the wonderful riches of salvation. It is easy to let this great message become common place in your life and to forget how special and great it really is.

Thought for the day

What did Paul want them to see about his insight (vs 4)?

Why do you think Paul uses the word "mystery" (vs 4)?

How have you been given insight into this mystery?

****It is easy to forget the limited knowledge they had of the Word of God. The New Testament had not been written and many of the Gentiles had never read the Old Testament. Their understanding was much more limited than our understanding today.*

What had not been known to other generations (vs 5)?

What do you think Paul meant by this?

Who was this mystery revealed to (vs 5)?

How was it revealed (vs 5)?

****Though the Holy Spirit is still powerfully working today, in those days, before they had the completed Scripture, it was extremely vital to have the Holy Spirit's revelation of the truth.*

What did Paul say the mystery was (vs 6)?

Why do you think he called this a mystery (vs 6)?

Why is this revealed mystery very important to understand (vs 6)?

Why do you think that the concept that Gentiles and Jews were fellow heirs was such an important concept (vs 6)?

What does the term "gospel" mean (vs 7)?

What responsibility was Paul given (vs 7)?

How was he given that responsibility (vs 7)?

“The Wisdom of God”

Study: Ephesians 3:8-10

Reading: Acts 9

Memory: Romans 8:24

When I first met my wife, it was love at first sight (for me anyway). She transferred to the college where I attended in January, and within three weeks of knowing her, I knew that she was the one that I wanted to marry. The problem was that she didn't know it yet. What made things more difficult for me was the fact that she already had a boyfriend. I took this as a challenge. I subtly worked my way into her life by constantly talking to her about her boyfriend. Within three months, she dumped him and shortly after that I began to talk about marriage. Being the dummy that I am though, I tried to rush things too fast, causing her to back off from a relationship. I finally realized my mistake and chose to back way off, hoping this would make her want me more. To my surprise, it worked.

Sometimes we think we are so wise and devise “great” plans. (Well, we think they are great.) Sometimes they work, but sometimes they don't. We can't predict the future so we do not know exactly how to plan. Today, we are going to look at our great God and how He has had things planned from the beginning of time.

What Does the Bible Say?

Paul begins verse 8 by describing how he was the least of the saints. The conversion of Paul had a great deal to do with this view of himself as a terrible sinner before a holy God. He had been a persecutor of Christians and had most likely caused the death of some of them. When God met Paul on the Damascus road, Paul saw God's splendor and His holiness. Throughout His writings, Paul takes many opportunities to express his great thankfulness for his salvation. Here he describes how the riches that Christ has to offer are unsearchable. He was greatly humbled that God would not only call him to be a follower, but that God would give him the great privilege of preaching to the Gentiles and declaring the great riches that God has to offer. In Matthew 13:44 Jesus

gave a short parable about a person who found a treasure in a field and sold all that he had to buy that field. Paul understood the treasure that He had in salvation and was willing to give his life completely to serve God (vs 8).

Once again Paul uses the term mystery in verse 9 as he described how one of his goals in life was to help shed light on the mystery of the Gospel. Since the beginning of time, God had a plan to bring salvation to His creation, but that plan was hidden in the Old Testament law and prophets. This plan came fully to light when Jesus came to be the light of the world. The message of salvation for the Gentiles had been made clear to all men through Jesus Christ and Paul wanted others to understand this plan (vs 9).

This plan was not just to be made known to Paul or a few select apostles, but was to be made known to the world through the church. God has called the church to be the light to the world. The Greek word for “church” is “ekklesia” which has the idea of people be called out of something for a purpose. God chose to use the church to display His wisdom and to help even the rulers and authorities of heaven (the angels both fallen and good) see the great redemptive power of God. It appears that one of the reasons that Paul says this is because the church unites people from all walks of life, specifically in the context, it unites the Gentiles and the Jews (vs 10).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you understand the power and importance of the church? God's plan from the beginning of time was to use the church to show His power. This power isn't through miracles, healings or some mystical working, but through a unity that can exist among people of all different faiths and backgrounds. If you look around your church, you will (or should) see people from all different walks of life that are united by one main thing - Jesus Christ. The great power of the Gospel should bring about unity among believers and that unity will display the power of God to the world. In Bible days, the fact that Jews and Gentiles would worship together was a display of the power of God.

Suggestions for Prayer

* *Ask God to help you promote love and unity.*

What did Paul say had been given to him (vs 7-8)?

How did Paul described himself (vs 8)?

Why did he describe himself this way (v 8)?

What did Paul understand about grace (vs 8)?

What had Paul been given the responsibility to do (vs 8)?

What descriptive language did Paul use when talking about the Gospel (vs 8)?

Why do you think he viewed it this way?

What had God brought to light (vs 9)?

Why does Paul describe the Gospel as a mystery (vs 9)?

Why do you think Paul mentioned that God was the “Creator” (vs 9)?

****The emphasis that Paul is placing here appears to be a focus on the great plan of God. The plan of salvation was being set up from the beginning of time and was fulfilled at the exact right time through Jesus Christ.*

What is the church (vs 10)?

What did God choose to show through the church (vs 10)?

Why do you think Paul talked about the “authorities in heavenly places” (vs 10)?

****Other Scripture passages refer to this as well, describing how the church is an example to the angels of the power of God.*

Why is unity in the church an example of the power of God (vs 10)?

“Suffering for Your Glory”

Study: Ephesians 3:11-13

Reading: Romans 8:26-39

Memory: Romans 8:24

Many of the years that I substitute taught in the local public high school, I also was a coach of one of the soccer teams. One of the best parts of this combination was the fact that as a coach, I was given a key to the building. There were many times when I was teaching that I would go home for lunch or during my free hour since I live next door to the high school. When I would arrive back to school, I wouldn't have to wait to be buzzed in, but could unlock the door with my key. This was especially nice on very cold days because it meant that I wouldn't have to stand outside and wait for the door to be unlocked for me.

Today, we are going to see how we have access to the throne of God. Jesus Christ is our key which allows us to have direct access to God. This should cause great thankfulness and encourage your heart each day knowing that God chose to give you His key.

What Does the Bible Say?

Paul talked about God having an eternal purpose for all things. God in His great wisdom had designed a master plan for the earth before He even created it. The wisdom of God's plan was displayed in the work of salvation that Jesus accomplished on the cross. The cross was not God's only plan for this world. He has plans for each of His children. God does not just act randomly based on His feelings or immediate desires as men often do, but has had a plan since the beginning of time and continues to work out that plan with extreme precision (vs 11).

Part of that plan was to give you access to Him. Our sin separates us from God and limits the ability we have to access Him. Yet, through the work of Jesus Christ, we have the ability to access the King of the universe anytime we want. That access does not have to come with fear and trembling, but should be approached with boldness and confidence, knowing that He wants us to come to Him and that we have every right to

approach Him because of the blood of Jesus Christ (vs 12).

In response to the fact that we can boldly access God, Paul challenged the Ephesians not to “lose heart.” If you remember, Paul was writing this letter while under arrest. This meant that Paul would have been facing some suffering and difficult time, but he wanted the Ephesian believers to know that they didn’t need get discouraged or even feel sorry for him. They could boldly go to the Lord and talk to Him about what Paul was going through. They could have a trust in the master plan of God and though it might not have been what they would have chosen, they could know that God was in control. Paul declared that He was suffering for their glory. This most likely was a reference to the fact that Paul was suffering in prison because he had chosen to minister to the Gentiles. Because of his choice to fulfill the plan of God on His life and minister to the Gentiles, he was arrested by the Jews before the Romans spared him. Paul didn’t mind the fact that He was suffering when He looked at the eternal purpose of why He was going through difficult times (vs 13).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Do you confidently and boldly access the throne of God? Paul made it very clear in the book of Ephesians that it was not the goodness of a person that gave them access to God, but rather the work of Jesus Christ. Because of what Jesus did, you can go to God and pour out your heart and you can know that He will hear and receive all that you have to say. This means that you should not live a discouraged life. You can trust that God has a plan for you and that if you are unsure about things in that plan, you can go to Him and talk with Him boldly. This was all made possible through Jesus. Jesus makes life worth living even when things may not go the way you want. Like Paul, you should realize that God is always at work, carrying out His master plan for your life knowing that He is working all things out for you good.

Thought for the day

What was done according to God’s eternal purpose (vs 11)?

How was this eternal plan carried out through Jesus (vs 11)?

Why do you think Paul emphasized the fact that God had an eternal plan?

Why is it comforting to know that God has an eternal plan?

What have you been given through Jesus (vs 12)?

Why do you think Paul talked about “boldness” and “confidence” (vs 12)?

Why is it so important to realize that you can go to God with boldness and confidence?

What did Paul not want them to do (vs 13)?

Why not?

Describe a time in your life when you have become discouraged because of something that happened to you or someone you love.

How did knowing the you had the ability to access the throne of God with confidence changed your attitude about the situation?

Why did Paul say his suffering was for their glory (vs 13)?

What can you learn about suffering from Paul?

Describe a time of suffering in your life. How did you see God work in and through that time?

“A Growing Life”

Study: Ephesians 3:14-17

Reading: Psalms 1, Jeremiah 17:5-8

Memory: Romans 8:24

If you ever go canoeing down a river, take some time out from paddling and just look around at the trees along the river. One thing that amazes me most about trees are the complex root systems. You will see many trees along the river with roots that are exposed because the water has washed the soil away. There are times when I am amazed at how these trees are still alive. The reason that they have not died and are still growing is because of the deep root system. The roots that are still in the soil are deep in the ground and give the tree stability and life. The deeper they grow, the stronger the tree will be.

As Christians, we can be compared to these trees. When we first accept Christ, we are like a little seedling coming up out of the ground. If we never deepen our roots in the knowledge of God and His Word, we will not grow. Any little problem or difficulty can hurt us spiritually, and may eventually lead to spiritual deadness. To be a vibrant and growing Christian and to develop a deep root system, we need to spend much time and effort in knowing God.

What Does the Bible Say?

This passage is the second prayer that Paul prays in Ephesians. If you remember back in chapter one, Paul prayed that believers would grow in wisdom and their understanding of who God was and what they had in Jesus Christ. Notice again what the theme of his prayer is. He prays that Christians will have a deeper understanding of Christ. That is the root of a true Christian life, a deeper knowledge and love for God. Just as he did in chapter 1, Paul started out this prayer by saying “for this reason.” It appears the reason is what he had just talked about. Paul had related how we can confidently go to God and that we can trust God through our suffering. Paul said he bowed his knees to God on their behalf desiring that they understand God’s eternal purpose for his suffering (vs 14).

Paul began his prayer by describing how God was the Father of all

those who have believed. Approaching God as a Father has much greater intimacy than approaching Him as a general deity. Great emphasis had been placed in the letter on the fact that God was their loving Father. God also has incredible resources of power that can give us strength on the inside. Though we often view strength as an external trait, the strength of the spirit is far more important. Many times we as Christians tend to limit God. We don’t really believe He can do all that He says He will do. Paul made it clear that God will strengthen us according to His great riches. The Holy Spirit is the tool that God uses to empower us. The Holy Spirit does not live in us just to give us physical power, but His main purpose is to give us spiritual strength and understanding (vs 15-16).

God also wants the Holy Spirit to be at home in our hearts. The Holy Spirit should not be crowded out by our selfish desires, but He should dwell in a heart that has a deep faith in God and a love for Him. “Being rooted and grounded” refers to a growing tree. The deeper we understand the love of Christ, the stronger we will be. The stronger we are, the more we will be able to resist the devil and the temptations of the world. We need to be growing constantly (vs 17).

How Does this Apply to Me?

Are you a growing Christian? What in your life would indicate that you are establishing deeper spiritual roots? What are things that you can do that will help you become stronger? God wants you to grow in Him and has given you the Holy Spirit to assist you. He is there waiting for you to allow Him to help you grow. You need to make up your mind that you want to be a growing Christian. The Holy Spirit will help you establish roots and grow in Christ, but you also have to choose to allow Him to work in you and He does much of that work through the Word of God.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * Ask God to give you a stronger desire to grow in Christ.
- * Thank God that He gives you the Holy Spirit to assist you.

Thought for the day

What reason was Paul referring to in verse 14?

What do you think Paul meant by saying he bowed his knees (vs 14)?

****When a person would approach a ruler, they would often bow their knees as a sign of humility and respect. This does not mean that you have to bow your knees when you pray, but it does picture the great importance of humbling yourself before God.*

What did Paul state about family (vs 15)?

What do you think he meant by this?

****It appears that Paul is describing how those who believe in God are part of God's family.*

Why do you think Paul mentioned the riches of God's glory (vs 16)?

Why did Paul want them to be strengthened (vs 16)?

Where would the strength come from (vs 16)?

Why is it so important to get strength from the Holy Spirit?

Why is inner strength much more important than outer strength (vs 16)?

What does it mean to have Christ dwell in your heart (vs 17)?

Why is faith so important to this?

What does it mean to be rooted and grounded (vs 17)?

Why is being grounded in love so important (vs 17)?

****Love is a central theme of the Gospel. When you understand the great love of God for you. It will be a great motivator to love Him.*

Why do you think many people fail to serve God out of love?

“Underestimated Power”

Study: Ephesians 3:18-21

Reading: Psalms 103:8-18, Philippians 2:5-12

Memory: Romans 8:24

On February 11, 1990, an undefeated Mike Tyson stepped into the boxing ring as the undisputed Heavyweight Champion of the World. The fight was held in Tokyo, Japan in front of a relatively small audience. His opponent was an unknown who called himself “Buster” Douglas. The odds for Tyson winning the fight were 42 to 1. Everyone had been predicting a first or second round knock-out. The problem was, when “Iron Mike” stepped into the ring, he should have been called “Flabby Mike.” Tyson was 20 pounds overweight and had not trained extremely hard for the fight. He made the cardinal mistake that is made over and over again in athletics. He had underestimated and was unprepared for his opponent. Buster Douglas defeated Mike Tyson with a 10th round knock-out to strip “Iron Mike” of the Heavyweight Championship.

Many times, as Christians, we underestimate the power of God. No, He is not our opponent, but we still lose out spiritually because we do not see His greatness. We underestimate His strength to beat the power of sin in our lives. He will win every time if we let Him.

What Does the Bible Say?

One of Paul's desires was that the believers understand and know the love of God. The love that God has for us can never be fully understood because it is so magnificent. The four terms used to describe God's love in verse 18 show us the greatness of His love. God's love is higher, deeper, wider, and longer than any other love. Basically, Paul is telling us that God's love can not be measured because it is so great. This would have been very important for the Ephesian believers to understand because they were surrounded by deities, but those deities weren't loving gods. In general, their gods were angry gods who had to be appeased. Paul wanted them to understand that the God they worshiped was completely different. He emphasized that point in verse 19 by declaring that God's love is

greater than we could ever understand. We as humans always try to explain things away in an attempt to understand everything, but the love of God is beyond comprehension. The result of knowing more about the love of God, will be a great fullness in our lives. The end of verse 19 tells us that God wants to fill us with His great spiritual riches. Scripture often pictures life with God as a full life. Explaining this is sometimes difficult, but can be understood a little bit when we think of the idea of an empty life. Many people pursue after the things of this world that bring temporary pleasure, but after a while, those things fail to thrill and bring much pleasure. They don't bring the fullness of joy (vs 18-19).

Paul closes the prayer by praising God for being a greater God than we give Him credit for. God is able to do way more than we ask Him for and more than we could ever think about asking Him for. The church should look to God and give great praise and glory to His name. Throughout generations God has and continues to work in and through His Church. The Church is God's chosen tool to exalt Him and bring glory to His name (vs 20-21).

How Does this Apply to Me?

How do you view God? Do you picture Him as just Someone who cares for others, or do you picture God as a God who loves you? Many times Christians tend to forget how much God really loves and cares for them. He has unlimited power and resources that He can use to help you in any situation. How have you called on God to help you in the past? How has He helped you? God is waiting for you to turn your life totally over to Him so that He can show you His great riches. No, His great riches are not financial wealth, but spiritual wealth. You can have great joy, peace, and tremendous satisfaction in your life if you allow God to have full control.

Suggestions for Prayer

- * *Ask God to take full control over your life.*
- * *Ask God to show you any areas of your life where you have doubted Him, and then ask for forgiveness.*
- * *Praise God for His great love.*

What did Paul pray the Ephesians would have the strength to do (vs 18)?

Why do you think he used the word "strength" (vs 18)?

What four terms did Paul use to describe the love of God (vs 18)? Why do you think he used these terms?

Why do you think Paul mentioned "all saints" (vs 18)?

How does the love of Christ go beyond all knowledge (v 19)?

If you can't fully know the love of Christ, should you even try? Explain your answer.

What will be the result of knowing the love of God (vs 19)?

What does it mean to live with fullness (vs 19)?

Describe a time in your life where you have felt empty and a time in your life where you have felt full.

What did Paul say God was able to do (vs 20)?

Why is it easy to limit God at times?

Why is it important to realize that God can do far more than you ask or think (vs 20)?

How is the power of God in you (vs 20)?

What does it mean that the glory of God is "in the church" (vs 21)?

How does the church and Christ Jesus go hand in hand (vs 21)?

How does the power of Christ extend to generations (vs 21)?

Why do you think Paul ended with such powerful praise (vs 21)?

Romans 8:1 There is therefore now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. 2 For the law of the Spirit of life has set you free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death. 3 For God has done what the law, weakened by the flesh, could not do. By sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh and for sin, he condemned sin in the flesh, 4 in order that the righteous requirement of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not according to the flesh but according to the Spirit. 5 For those who live according to the flesh set their minds on the things of the flesh, but those who live according to the Spirit set their minds on the things of the Spirit. 6 For to set the mind on the flesh is death, but to set the mind on the Spirit is life and peace. 7 For the mind that is set on the flesh is hostile to God, for it does not submit to God's law; indeed, it cannot. 8 Those who are in the flesh cannot please God. 9 You, however, are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if in fact the Spirit of God dwells in you. Anyone who does not have the Spirit of Christ does not belong to him. 10 But if Christ is in you, although the body is dead because of sin, the Spirit is life because of righteousness. 11 The Spirit of God, who raised Jesus from the dead, lives in you. And just as God raised Christ Jesus from the dead, he will give life to your mortal bodies by this same Spirit living within you. 12 So then, brothers, we are debtors, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh. 13 For if you live according to the flesh you will die, but if by the Spirit you put to death the deeds of the body, you will live. 14 For all who are led by the Spirit of God are sons of God. 15 For you did not receive the spirit of slavery to fall back into fear, but you have received the Spirit of adoption as sons, by whom we cry, "Abba! Father!" 16 The Spirit himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, In 17 and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ, provided we suffer with him in order that we may also be glorified with him. 18 Yet what we suffer now is nothing compared to the glory he will reveal to us later. 19 For the creation waits with eager longing for the revealing of the sons of God. 20 For the creation was subjected to futility, not willingly, but because of him who subjected it, in hope 21 that the creation itself will be set free from its bondage to corruption and obtain the freedom of the glory of the children of God. 22 For we know that the whole creation has been groaning together in the pains of childbirth until now. 23 And not only the creation, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies. 24 For in this hope we were saved. Now hope that is seen is not hope. For who hopes for what he sees?