

Living Fearlessly
Study 15 – Ephesians – Living In Christ and the World
Ephesians 6:18-24

Message Mate

- Followers of Jesus are called to be strong and stand firm in the midst of spiritual battles, and to do this, we need to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit and pray in the Spirit on all occasions. Praying in the Spirit means praying as the Lord leads you and discerning what is happening in the spirit realm. You need to be alert, asking God for wisdom in those situations. Praying in the Spirit includes discerning what you ask for in prayer such as for the attacks to stop, or to be removed from the situation or to receive wisdom, faith, discernment, strategy and fearlessness in the battle. Praying for all the saints includes praying for our church, for other churches in our city and nation, and praying for Christians across the world who need prayer support.
- The Apostle Paul wrote Ephesians while in prison, and he asked for prayer for himself. He did not ask for the trials to stop, or that he be removed from prison, but that he would know what to say and how to be fearless so that he could share the gospel of Jesus with those around him. Paul saw himself as an ambassador of Jesus, not with gold chains of honour and status, but prison chains that gave him a unique opportunity to represent Jesus where he was. Paul may have been in a physical prison, but he did not let that imprison his mind or his spirit.
- The letter to Ephesians was delivered and explained by Paul's good friend Tychicus, who knew Paul's situation well and so could explain the letter to those hearing it. He could then bring news from the recipients back to Paul.
- Ephesians is completed with a blessing of peace, grace, faith and love. These same themes are introduced in Chapter 1, have been explained and expanded on through the letter, and are now used as a summary and final blessing. Ephesians has revealed that Jesus Christ is exalted and seated at the right hand of God, and those who have put their faith in Jesus Christ are also raised up with Christ and seated us with Him. We have received the Holy Spirit as a seal guaranteeing our inheritance in the Kingdom of God, giving us wisdom and revelation to know God better and giving us resurrection power to live like Christ. We are to be continually filled with the Holy Spirit. We are now united as one people, brothers and sisters in Christ across ethnic, gender and social divides. And we have learnt how we should live in the world to be a witness to the world. We are to be people of truth who have put off our old way of living in the world, and now living in a new way, in Christ. This means ceasing ungodly anger, sexual sins, greed and inappropriate language. We are now called to live as people who are kind, compassionate and forgiving each other. We are to submit to one another, to have godly marriages, godly families and a godly attitude towards work. We are to be strong and stand firm putting on the spiritual armour or character traits of God and be people of prayer. Ephesians shows that you are rooted and established in the love of Christ, so that you can love one another, speak the truth in love and build up the church in love. You are called to be living in Christ and the World.

Some Questions to Consider

1. Reflecting on the story of Desmond Doss, when have you had to stand firm in your convictions despite facing pressure, misunderstanding, or opposition from those around you?
2. Read Ephesians 6:18 and note the emphasis on the word “all” (all occasions, all kinds of prayers, always keep on praying, all the Lord's people). What does it practically look like to move from treating prayer as a specific segment of our day to making it a continuous lifestyle?
3. Three ways that we typically react and pray during a difficult trial include: asking for the attack to stop, asking to be removed from the situation, or asking for wisdom and fearlessness to prevail in that situation. Is one of these your default response, and why?
4. Consider Paul’s perspective as an ambassador in chains (Ephesians 6:19-20). Instead of praying for release from prison, he prayed for the right words to say and to speak fearlessly. How does this challenge the way you view your current (or previous) hardships or limitations?
5. Paul relied on Tychicus to deliver his letter, contextualise his situation, and bring encouragement to the Ephesians. Who is a "Tychicus" in your life that encourages you in your faith, and how can you be that kind of friend to someone else this week?
6. The final blessing summarizes the major themes of Ephesians: peace, grace, faith, and an undying, immortal love. Which of these four themes do you most need to rest in and experience today?
7. As we wrap up this series on Ephesians, what is one key theme or point that has challenged you from this series? How have you grown in Christ and how to live in the world?

Pray –

Pray using Ephesians 6:23,24 as a basis for a blessing.

²³ Peace to the brothers and sisters, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.

Praying for all the saints includes praying for our home church, Rangeville Community Church. Please pray for God’s blessings, provision and protection for our church.