

# First Love: A Deeper Understanding of Church From the Book of Ephesians

Northern Virginia Church of Christ Fall 2017

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<u>Date</u>	<u>Class</u>	<u>Memory Verse</u>
October 1	Ephesians 1: Restore Awe	Ephesians 1:18
<b>October 8</b>	<b>Ephesians 2: Get Grace</b>	<b>Ephesians 2:10</b>
October 15	Ephesians 3: Behold the Bride	Ephesians 3:10
October 22	Ephesians 4: The Battle for Unity	Ephesians 4:15
October 29	Ephesians 5: The Song of Life	Ephesians 6:18
November 5	Ephesians 6/Revelation 2: First Love	Test

*For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (Ephesians 2:10, NIV)*

## Devotional Thoughts from Ephesians 2

### **Ephesians 2:1-3 The Darkness of the World**

Drifting along... who controls the current?

- Ignorant of the enemy
  - Satan's motivation and intent
  - People's naiveté
- The Consequences of failing to choose God
  - Siding with Satan – as enemies of God
  - Sharing in Satan's punishment

*"Depart from me, you who are cursed, into the eternal fire prepared for the devil and his angels." (Matthew 25:41)*

*This world's river will destroy your life one day like a helpless raft floating over the precipice of a waterfall, crashing into pieces at the bottom. Your certain end is death – physical and spiritual. Meanwhile, Satan, like the crazy captain of an out of control ship, joyfully steers our raft into disaster. He'll do anything to incite rebellion against God. He sees the destination of this vessel; he recognizes the consequences. Do we?*  
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### **Ephesians 2:4-5 God is Rich in Mercy**

- The lavishness of God's mercy
- The attitude of the "Rich"
- Our new abundance of forgiveness

### **Ephesians 2:6-10 Seated at God's Table**

*Ephesians 1:20 "he seated Christ at his right hand in the heavenly realms"*

- God's power raised Christ from the dead and seat him in the heavenly realms
- Ephesians 2:6 "God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus"*

- In the same way, God's power raised us up and seated us at the same table

#### What does it mean to be at God's table?

*New clothes: clothed in Christ, blameless*

*New status: bathed with the forgiveness of sins*

*New position: seated at the table as one of the family*

*New power & intimacy: indwelt with his Holy Spirit*

*New future: shared inheritance with Jesus himself*  
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### **Ephesians 2:11-18 Unity from the Cross**

*“But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”*

*(Ephesians 2:13)*

- Defeated Satan by obediently surrendering his life as a sacrifice (Isaiah 53:12)
- Established a way to redeem us by dying as a sacrifice for our sins (2 Corinthians 5:21)
- Destroyed the temple curtain, the barrier that separated us from God (Matthew 27:51)
- Brought peace, reconciling us to God, defeating sin & death, & granting eternal life (Eph. 2:13,17-18)

### **Ephesians 2:19-22 The New Temple**

- The foundation is the apostles and prophets
- The structure aligns to the cornerstone – Jesus
- Each of us is a building block
- Most importantly, God chooses to dwell in the Temple

*Our role is not defined by our individual experience... No one is impressed with a single brick, but when that brick is part of a Cathedral, people marvel at what has been built. Even more impressive is a structure that is living, moving, and filled with God, proclaiming the good news of the kingdom to the world!*

*(First Love)*

### **Word Studies from Ephesians**

**Grace** (Strong’s 5485: χάρις or charis) – “favor, disposed to, inclined, favorable towards, leaning towards to share benefit.” Grace appears 11 times in Ephesians, including in the greeting and the closing verse! *Grace is best described as the Lord’s favor (1:2,6:24), valued beyond other treasures (1:6-7), given to us not because we deserve it (2:5-8), but as a gift (2:8,4:7) to be shared. We administer God’s grace (3:2) by preaching Christ (3:7-8).*

**Build, Building** (Strong’s 3619: οικοδομή or oikodomé) – “constructive criticism and instruction that equips a person up to be the suitable dwelling place of God, i.e. where the Lord is at home.” Many forms of this word are found in Ephesians (build, builds, built, and building). *God joins us together to make us a Temple that he would live in by his Spirit (2:21-22). We become God’s home and our work is to continue to equip/build up the body to be a place where God can live through us (4:12,16,29).*