

A Reader's Guide to Discipleship©: Readings in the New Testament

2009

The sufficiency of the scriptures for all things pertaining to life and godliness
(II Tim 3:16)

Ephesians: Walking in Christ on the foundation of grace to build God's kingdom

I. God has established a new spiritual foundation for effectiveness 1:3-3:21

- A. In Christ, the full blessing (divine enablement) of God is available to all 1:3-14
 - 1. the blessing in Christ is comprehensive 1:3
 - 2. we are chosen individually for this blessing 1:4-6
 - 3. God has paid for us to receive this blessing 1:7-10
 - 4. the blessing is the outworking of God's promise to give an inheritance to those He purchased 1:11-14
- B. This blessing provides the hope, confidence, and power needed to be His body (the expression of His Being on earth) 1:15-23
 - 1. it is only lies that stand in our way 1:15-18
 - 2. it is God who reveals these truths so that we may be vessels of His glory (gives us value for eternity) 1:18
 - 3. the resurrection power of God assures us of our effectiveness 1:19-23
- C. These blessings also define a new spiritual order and new direction for our lives. 2:1-2:10
 - 1. the walking dead made alive 2:1-3
 - 2. now saved through faith to be workers for good. 2:4-10
- D. God has removed the barriers to expansion of his spiritual kingdom 2:14-3:21
 - 1. we are at peace with God (equal access to God) 2:14-18
 - 2. coequal citizenship in the household of God (being built into the habitation of God, the place where God dwells and works) 2:19-22
 - 2. Paul sees the gospel ministry opening the door to all men because of God's grace 3:1-21
 - confident in the apostolic message 3:1-7
 - confident in God's eternal purpose to draw all men to himself through faith 3:8-13
 - confident in God's power to do anything necessary and far above what we can imagine to accomplish this purpose 3:14-21

II. This foundation establishes a new pattern for effective living 4:1-6:9

- A. We must practice unity to be effective in our diversity
 - 1. practice humility 4:1-6
 - 2. express diversity with a common purpose for the good of all 4:7-16
- B. We must reject cultural norms when they conflict with the truth that is in Jesus
 - 1. avoid old ways of thinking 4:17-24
 - 2. avoid old ways of relating 4:25-32

- C. We are now able to follow God himself
 - 1. by walking in sacrificial love 5:1-7
 - 2. by walking in the light of the truth publically and privately 5:8-10
 - 3. by exposing the darkness through deeds that shed light 5:11-14
 - 4. by filling ourselves with truth instead of foolishness 5:15-21
 - 3. by representing Christ in our marriages and homes 5:22-6:9

III. But we must hold the higher ground against evil 6:10-20

- A. Rely on the strength of the Lord 6:10
- B. Recognize the seriousness of the spiritual battle 6:11-12
- C. Take up the armour of God to be able to stand your ground 6:13-20