

Ephesians—Series Overview

God's Glory in His Church

The book of Ephesians was written to show the glory of Christ at work in winning and perfecting the Church as His bride. It exhorts Christians to walk in the newness of life He has won for us according to the Father's kind intention in adopting us. It shows us who we are—the dead raised to life and made fellow citizens with all the saints. Based on who we already are, it invites us to walk in a manner worthy of our calling.

APPLYING GOD'S WORD

Please ask the Holy Spirit to guide you:

How do we live in resurrection power?

What is usually holding you (us) back from applying these truths?

Talk and pray with someone else at FCCW about your own struggles to apply these truths.

Encourage one another with the truth.

Pray for one another.

Help keep one another accountable for living these things out daily.

Pray for FCCW to walk in these truths together.

Ezra-Nehemiah—Series Overview

A Community Restored for Worship

The book of Ezra-Nehemiah was written to encourage God's people returning after exile to believe the covenant promises and restore the temple in Jerusalem. God's people were being restored in the place of promise as a worshipping community. The restoration of purpose was far greater than their real estate. The place always has to do with what God promised would happen there.

Sermon Notes and Daily Devotional
First Congregational Church of Woodstock

Pastor Doug Warren
September 30, 2018

Morning Service

Ephesians 2:1-10

The Dead Raised in Christ to Do Good Works

1. From Where Have We Come (1-3)?
2. Where Are We Going Together (4-7)?
3. How Do We Get There from Here (8-10)?

An essential part of knowing who you are is knowing from where you've come. God tells us that we were not just in the hospital, but in the morgue. The resurrection power of Jesus raises us to new life in Him by faith and transforms us to be able to do the good works He has prepared us to do together in Him.

Evening Service

Ezra 6:1-22

God's People and World Powers

1. God Mandates Our Celebration.
2. Future Celebration Crashing into Our Present.
3. So Great a Celebration We Won't Be Able to Resist!

God has ordained His praise. He is the king who not only deserves our joyful celebration of His goodness, but has also provided it in Christ's work for us. We have reason to celebrate and as we look at His Word and see His people celebrating Him with the dedication of His temple we may begin to experience that joy being rekindled.

Taking Gathered Worship Home

Jesus has raised us from the dead not so that we could walk like zombies, but so that we might walk in the good works the Father has prepared for us to do. This resurrection life that will be completely revealed in the coming ages is available to us now. We need to diligently pursue these things by faith, together in community, by the power of His Spirit at work within us.

Please use the devotional material below each day this week to meet with Jesus. Ask the Lord to teach us His ways that we may walk in them to accomplish His purposes.

Sunday AM

READ today's passage: **Ephesians 2:1-10**. Why is it so difficult to face the truth of our desperation without Christ? How do we tend to deny it? How does the gospel actually make it liberating to face this truth? DISCUSS your experience with God's people in the worship service today. PRAY for God to convince us that nothing compares to the promise we have in Christ. Ask Him to empower us to extend His grace throughout the world.

Sunday PM

READ today's passage: **Ezra 6:1-22**. What did God do through Darius? Who were the people to praise? PRAISE God for His loving care for us. REPENT of ways we give His glory to others.

Monday

READ **Ephesians 2:1-5; Colossians 2:13-15**. How much did we contribute to our spiritual birth? Why is this good news? REJOICE for God has given us life. PRAY for your neighbors, peers, friends & family asking God to save them. EXTEND His grace to someone you know today. Lovingly, thoughtfully express to them in word and deed the grace Christ has lavished upon you.

Tuesday

READ **Ephesians 2:1-5; Psalm 72**. What three things influenced our walk when we were spiritually dead? What were we by nature? MEDITATE on this reality—it is by grace you have been saved! PRAY, “Father God, thank you for making us Yours. Jesus, we →

praise Your name and renew our love for You. Holy Spirit, enable us to keep this pledge and so honor the Father and Son by Your work through us.”

Wednesday

READ **Ephesians 2:6-10**. DISCUSS For what have we been raised? Where are we seated? How does this square with our experience? Which is true? Meditate on the kindness of God to us in Christ Jesus. REJOICE if you have been adopted through Christ's sacrifice. PRAY, “Lord, thank You for adopting me. Help me to live as befits Your children.”

Thursday

READ **Ephesians 2:6-10**. DISCUSS What has God given us? For what purpose? What are we supposed to do with this gift? How? PRAY, “Heavenly Father, thank You for all Your promises. Thank You for the fulfillment of all of them in Christ. Help us to see them more clearly and to believe in You rather than ourselves or the lies of this world. Strengthen our faith and allow us to know Your faithfulness. Show us how Christ has come so that we may repent from our sin and turn to You. Reveal the depths of Your love for us. Strip away any other comfort that distracts us from loving You above all else we pray.”

Friday

READ **Colossians 3:1-4**. DISCUSS What are we to do now that we are raised in Christ? Why? How does that relate to where we are going? REJOICE for Christ has died ‘once for all’ obtaining for us eternal life! PRAY for your neighbors who are deceived and unable to even see their own sin for what it really is. Pray for their repentance. Thank God for them.

Saturday

READ tomorrow's sermon passage **Ephesians 2:11-22**. PREPARE today for the gathered worship service tomorrow. PRAY for God's glory to be more and more manifested in Woodstock and surrounding communities. Pray that He will use us to extend His grace as we celebrate it together.