

Bibelfokus 9-14 July 2013 – Studies Outline

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Theme: The Letter to the Ephesians

Structure: Eight 60 minute addresses (given in English, translated into Norwegian)

Wednesday 10 July

(1) Ephesians #1: Introduction

- Importance of context
- Churches can change
- Themes: Christ, the Church, Christian living

Discussion questions:

1. How many years ago did your local church (congregation) come into existence? How did this happen?
2. Has your congregation experienced some crisis/changing moments in its history? What good or bad effects did these changes bring about?
3. About 45 years after it begun, the church at Ephesus was (a) active, (b) doctrinally sound but (c) had lost her first love. How can one tell if a congregation has lost its first love?
4. Compared to the church at Ephesus, how does your local church compare on (a), (b) and (c)?

(2) Ephesians #2: Overview

- Doctrine and living go together
- What is new? God's plans with Christ and the Church
- How to pray for self and others

Discussion questions:

1. What can we learn from the fact that Paul spends half his letter to the Ephesians reflecting on doctrinal matters?
2. Enoch, Abraham and David loved God and enjoyed a close walk with God. What do we Christians now know about God that they never knew? In what way is this knowledge useful to us?
3. What ideas can you extract from Paul's two prayers to help you better pray for other people?

Thursday 11 July

(3) Ephesians #3: You and the Body of Christ

4:1-16

- The Holy Spirit
- Unity of the Church – seeing and keeping it
- Growth of the Church – using our gifts

Discussion questions:

1. **Holy Spirit:** Read Ephesians 2:22. We Christians are being built up together to be a dwelling “in which God lives by His Spirit”. Do you feel comfortable with the idea that the Holy Spirit dwells in the Church? Can we notice His presence? Would we miss Him if He left? (how would you notice His absence?)
2. **Unity:** In what ways can we live and promote the “unity of the Spirit” where you live today? If you were to “make every effort to keep the unity” what could you do?
3. **Build up the body:** What gifts do you think God has given you? Why do you think they are your gifts? Do you “do your part”? (4:16).

(4) ‘Male and female he created them’ (Gen 1:27)

- About Masculinity and Femininity

Discussion questions:

1. Do you agree with the ‘head-helper’ marriage model? If yes, how is this model expressed in your family?
2. What do you think God expects only from Christian men? How can women help men fulfil their ‘man’ calling?
3. What do you think God expects only from Christian women? How can men help women fulfil their ‘woman’ calling?

Friday 12 July

(5) Forgiveness #1 - Receiving it - Eph 1:7

Discussion questions:

1. Try to explain in your own words the difference between Legal and Fatherly forgiveness. Why is this difference important?
2. Why is asking for forgiveness sometimes so difficult? Have you ever done so? Perhaps you could briefly tell your story. How did you feel before and after asking for forgiveness?

(6) Forgiveness #2 - Giving it - Eph 4:32

Discussion questions:

1. What one or two points grabbed your attention during this study?
2. Have you ever chosen to forgive someone who has sinned against you? How does your experience compare with the story of a boy with glass in his arm? Could you carefully share a little bit of your story with the others in your group?
3. What advice would you give someone who is offended and does not want to forgive the person who has sinned against him/her?

Saturday 13 July

(7) Ephesians #4: You and your Private and Social life

4:17-6:9

- Don't grieve the Holy Spirit
- Put off and put on
- Be filled with the Holy Spirit
- Submit and be a blessing

Discussion questions:

1. What happens to a Christian who does not work at 'putting off the old self' and 'putting on the new self'?
2. How do you know if you have grieved the Holy Spirit?
3. Where is it most difficult to live our Christian life? At home? With partner? With parents? At school? At work? At church? ... why?
4. How can 'being filled with the Holy Spirit' help?

(8) Ephesians #5: You and the Spiritual World

- Know the warzone – awareness 'be alert'
- Know your enemy – his strategy
- Know your king – in victory
- Know your weapons – and use them

Discussion questions:

1. Does your world view include the existence and possible actions by angels and demons? Why yes/no?
2. The enemies of the Christian are: world, flesh, Devil (demons). In your experience, which of these three is the worst?
3. We have been given an armour and weapons in order to defend ourselves against the 'spiritual forces of evil'. Can you share an experience where you have made use of some of these weapons?