

Ephesians



Week Four

### **Athelstone Uniting Church**

We have a heart for connecting: with God, our community, our world and each other.

Greetings Athelstonians!

We are in Week 4 of slowly reading through Paul's letter to the churches in Ephesus (July 11- August 28).

In this resource you will find brief daily readings and space to journal, using the SOAP method.

You might choose to engage with the readings daily or a few times a week. Feel free to adapt this resource as much as you like.

For your information, the following videos provide an introduction to Ephesians:

Bibledex: https://youtu.be/I7QE5I3XbF8

BibleProject: https://youtu.be/Y71r-T98E2Q

The Bible Effect: https://youtu.be/6FfIE2jS7-k

Rick Steve: https://youtu.be/mvPCtrZ1K00

Blessings,

**Rev Linda Driver** July 2021

# **Reading Your Bible with SOAP!**

SOAP is a helpful way to read and reflect on a Bible passage

### **S for SCRIPTURE:** (TELL ME)

Take your time reading today's scripture in the 3 translations provided. Allow God to speak to you. Next, look for a verse that particularly spoke to you. Write it down. Feel free to make it a work of art.

### **O for OBSERVATION:** (SHOW ME)

What is God saying to you in this scripture? Ask the Holy Spirit to teach you and reveal Jesus to you. Be curious!



If you want to go deeper, research the passage further. Look up meanings in the original Greek or Hebrew. Consider who the author is addressing and the cultural context at the time it was written. Bible Hub has some helpful tools for this: https://biblehub.com/

Write the scripture in your own words.



### **A for APPLICATION:** (HELP ME)

**P for PRAYER:** (LET ME)

How does the scripture apply to your life right now? Perhaps it is instruction, encouragement, revelation, or correction. Write down how it applies to you today.

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This can be as simple as asking God to help you use this scripture, or it may be a greater insight on what God may be revealing to you. Remember, prayer is a two way conversation, so be sure to listen to what God has to say! Spend some time in silent contemplation. Write down the words that come.

Week 4 – Day 1

### Ephesians 4:1-3

## New International Version

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. <sup>2</sup> Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. <sup>3</sup> Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

#### The Message

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<sup>1-3</sup> In light of all this, here's what I want you to do. While I'm locked up here, a prisoner for the Master, I want you to get out there and walk—better yet, run! on the road God called you to travel. I don't want any of you sitting around on your hands. I don't want anyone strolling off, down some path that goes nowhere. And mark that you do this with humility and discipline-not in fits and starts, but steadily, pouring yourselves out for each other in acts of love, alert at noticing differences and quick at mending fences.

#### **The Inclusive Bible**

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I plead with you, then, in the name of our Redeemer, to lead a life worthy of your calling. <sup>2</sup> Treat one another charitably, in complete selflessness, gentleness and patience. <sup>3</sup> Do all you can to preserve the unity of the Spirit through the peace that binds you together.

Ephesians 4:1-3





Application



Day 2

## Ephesians 4:4-6

# New International Version

<sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

#### The Message

<sup>4-6</sup> You were all called to travel on the same road and in the same direction, so stay together, both outwardly and inwardly. You have one Master, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who rules over all, works through all, and is present in all. Everything you are and think and do is permeated with Oneness.



#### **The Inclusive Bible**

<sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit – just as you were called into one hope when you were called. <sup>5</sup> There is one Saviour, one faith, one baptism, <sup>6</sup> one God and Creator of all, who is over all, who works through all and is within all.

Ephesians 4:4-6





Application



Day 3

## Ephesians 4:7-10

# New International Version

<sup>7</sup> But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned it. <sup>8</sup> This is why it says:

- "When he ascended on high, he took many captives and gave gifts to his
- people."

<sup>9</sup> (What does "he ascended" mean except that he also descended to the lower, earthly regions]? <sup>10</sup> He who descended is the very one who ascended higher than all the heavens, in order to fill the whole universe.)

#### The Message

But that doesn't mean you should all look and speak and act the same. Out of the generosity of Christ, each of us is given his own gift. The text for this is,

He climbed the high mountain, He captured the enemy and seized the plunder, He handed it all out in gifts to the people.

Is it not true that the One who climbed up also climbed down, down to the valley of earth? And the One who climbed down is the One who climbed back up, up to highest heaven. He handed out gifts above and below, filled heaven with his gifts, filled earth with his gifts.



#### The Inclusive Bible

<sup>7</sup> Each of us has received
God's grace in the measure
in which Christ has bestowed
it. <sup>8</sup> Thus you find scripture
saying,

"You ascended on high, leading captives in your train, and giving gifts to people."

<sup>9</sup> "You ascended" – what does this mean but that Christ first descended into the lower regions of the earth? <sup>10</sup> The One who descended is the very One who ascended high above the heavens in order to fill the whole universe.

Ephesians 4:7-10





Application



Day 4

## Ephesians 4:11-13

# New International Version

<sup>11</sup> So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, <sup>12</sup> to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up <sup>13</sup> until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

#### The Message

He handed out gifts of apostle, prophet, evangelist, and pastor-teacher to train Christ's followers in skilled servant work, working within Christ's body, the church, until we're all moving rhythmically and easily with each other, efficient and graceful in response to God's Son, fully mature adults, fully developed within and without, fully alive like Christ.



#### The Inclusive Bible

<sup>11</sup> And to some, the gift they were given is that they should be apostles; to some, prophets; to some, evangelists; to some, pastors and teachers. <sup>12</sup> These gifts were given to equip fully the holy ones for the work of service, and to build up the body of Christ – <sup>13</sup> until we all attain unity in our faith and in our knowledge of the Only Begotten of God, until we become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Ephesians 4:11-13





Application



Day 5

## Ephesians 4:14-16

## New International Version

<sup>14</sup> Then we will no longer be infants, tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching and by the cunning and craftiness of people in their deceitful scheming.<sup>15</sup> Instead, speaking the truth in love, we will grow to become in every respect the mature body of him who is the head, that is, Christ. <sup>16</sup> From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.

#### The Message

<sup>14-16</sup> No prolonged infancies among us, please. We'll not tolerate babes in the woods, small children who are easy prey for predators. God wants us to grow up, to know the whole truth and tell it in love—like Christ in everything. We take our lead from Christ, who is the source of everything we do. He keeps us in step with each other. His very breath and blood flow through us, nourishing us so that we will grow up healthy in God, robust in love.



#### The Inclusive Bible

<sup>14</sup> Let then be children no longer, tossed here and there, carried about by every wind of doctrine, or by human trickery or crafty, deceitful schemes. <sup>15</sup> Rather, let us speak the truth in love, and grow to the full maturity of Christ, the head. <sup>16</sup> Through Christ, the whole body grows. With the proper functioning of each member, firmly joined together by each supporting ligament, the body builds itself up in love.

Ephesians 4:14-16





Application



Day 6

## Ephesians 4:17-24

## New International Version

<sup>17</sup> So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their thinking. <sup>18</sup> They are darkened in their understanding and separated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them due to the hardening of their hearts. <sup>19</sup> Having lost all sensitivity, they have given themselves over to sensuality so as to indulge in every kind of impurity, and they are full of greed.

<sup>20</sup> That, however, is not the way of life you learned <sup>21</sup> when you heard about Christ and were taught in him in accordance with the truth that is in Jesus. <sup>22</sup> You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires; <sup>23</sup> to be made new in the attitude of your minds; <sup>24</sup> and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

#### The Message

<sup>17-19</sup> And so I insist—and God backs me up on this—that there be no going along with the crowd, the emptyheaded, mindless crowd. They've refused for so long to deal with God that they've lost touch not only with God but with reality itself. They can't think straight anymore. Feeling no pain, they let themselves go in sexual obsession, addicted to every sort of perversion.

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<sup>20-24</sup> But that's no life for you. You learned Christ! My assumption is that you have paid careful attention to him, been well instructed in the truth precisely as we have it in Jesus. Since, then, we do not have the excuse of ignorance, everything—and I do mean everythingconnected with that old way of life has to go. It's rotten through and through. Get rid of it! And then take on an entirely new way of life—a God-fashioned life, a life renewed from the inside and working itself into your conduct as God accurately reproduces his character in you.

#### The Inclusive Bible

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<sup>17</sup> So I declare and testify together with Christ that you must stop living the kind of life the world lives. Their minds must are empty, <sup>18</sup> they have no understanding, they are alienated from the life of God – all because they have hardened their hearts. <sup>19</sup> They've dulled their sense of right or wrong, for they have abandoned themselves to sensuality in order to indulge in every form of licentiousness and greed.

<sup>20</sup> That is hardly the way you have learned from Christ, <sup>21</sup> unless you failed to hear properly, when you were taught what the truth is in Jesus.<sup>22</sup> You must give up your old way of life; you must put aside your old self, which is being corrupted by following illusory desires. <sup>23</sup> Your mind must be renewed by a spiritual revolution, <sup>24</sup> so that you can put on the new self that has been created in God's likeness, in the justice and holiness of the truth.

Ephesians 4:17-24





Application



Day 7

## Sabbath Day of Rest

