



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

Greetings Athelstonians!

We are in Week 6 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 video link is a first of a series of conversations about the concept of headship. You might find this helpful to reflect on as you read through Ephesians 5:22-33.

<https://youtu.be/u73fldPXPHo?t=59>

Blessings,

Rev Linda Driver

August 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)*

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.



P for PRAYER: *(LET ME)*

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.

[illegible]

New International Version

17 Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the Lord's will is.

So watch your step. Use your head. Make the most of every chance you get. These are desperate times!

The Inclusive Bible

¹⁵ Keep careful watch over your conduct. Don't act like fools, but like wise and thoughtful people. ¹⁶ Make the most of your time, for these are evil days. ¹⁷ Don't continue in ignorance, but try to discern the will of God.

Ephesians 5:15-17

Scripture

Observation

Application

Prayer

Day 2

Ephesians 5:18-20



New International Version

¹⁸ Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, ²⁰ always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The Message

¹⁸⁻²⁰ Don't drink too much wine. That cheapens your life. Drink the Spirit of God, huge drafts of him. Sing hymns instead of drinking songs! Sing songs from your heart to Christ. Sing praises over everything, any excuse for a song to God the Father in the name of our Master, Jesus Christ.

The Inclusive Bible

¹⁸ Avoid getting drunk on wine – that is debauchery! Instead be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ meditating on psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making music to God in your hearts. ²⁰ Always give thanks to Abba God for everything, in the name of Jesus our Messiah.

Ephesians 5:18-20

Scripture

Observation

Application

Prayer

Day 3

Ephesians 5:21

New International Version

²¹ Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.

The Message

²¹ Out of respect for Christ,
be courteously reverent to
one another.

The Inclusive Bible

²¹ Defer to one another out of reverence for Christ.



Ephesians 5:21

Scripture

Observation

Application

Prayer

Day 4

Ephesians 5:22-33

New International Version

²² Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. ²⁴ Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her ²⁶ to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, ²⁷ and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. ²⁸ In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹ After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— ³⁰ for we are members of his body. ³¹ “For this reason a man will leave his father and mother and be united to his wife, and the two will become one flesh.” ³² This is a profound mystery—but I am talking about Christ and the church. ³³ However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband.

The Message

²²⁻²⁴ Wives, understand and support your husbands in ways that show your support for Christ. The husband provides leadership to his wife the way Christ does to his church, not by domineering but by cherishing. So just as the church submits to Christ as he exercises such leadership, wives should likewise submit to their husbands.

²⁵⁻²⁸ Husbands, go all out in your love for your wives, exactly as Christ did for the church—a love marked by giving, not getting. Christ’s love makes the church whole. His words evoke her beauty. Everything he does and says is designed to bring the best out of her, dressing her in dazzling white silk, radiant with holiness. And that is how husbands ought to love their wives. They’re really doing themselves a favor—since they’re already “one” in marriage.

²⁹⁻³³ No one abuses his own body, does he? No, he feeds and pampers it. That’s how Christ treats us, the church, since we are part of his body. And this is why a man leaves father and mother and cherishes his wife. No longer two, they become “one flesh.” This is a huge mystery, and I don’t pretend to understand it all. What is clearest to me is the way Christ treats the church. And this provides a good picture of how each husband is to treat his wife, loving himself in loving her, and how each wife is to honor her husband.



The Inclusive Bible

²² Those of you who are in committed relationships should yield to each other as if to Christ, ²³ because you are inseparable from each other, just as Christ is inseparable from the body - the church - as well as being its Saviour. ²⁴ As the church yields to Christ, so you should yield to your partner in everything.

²⁵ Love one another as Christ loved the church. He gave himself up for it ²⁶ to make it holy, purifying it by washing it with the Gospel’s message, ²⁷ so that Christ might have a glorious church, holy and immaculate, without mark or blemish or anything of that sort. ²⁸ Love one another as you love your own bodies. Those who love their partners love themselves. ²⁹ No one ever hates one’s own flesh; one nourishes it and takes care of it as Christ cares for the church – ³⁰ for we are members of Christ’s body.

³¹ “This is why one person leaves home and clings to another, and the two become one flesh.”

³² This is a great foreshadowing; I mean, it refers to Christ and the church. ³³ In any case, each of you should love your partner as yourself, with each showing respect for the other.

Ephesians 5:22-33

Scripture

Observation

Application

Prayer

Day 5

Ephesians 6:1-4



New International Version

6 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² “Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise— ³ “so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”

⁴ Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord.

The Message

6 ¹⁻³ Children, do what your parents tell you. This is only right. “Honor your father and mother” is the first commandment that has a promise attached to it, namely, “so you will live well and have a long life.”

4 Fathers, don't frustrate your children with no-win scenarios. Take them by the hand and lead them in the way of the Master.

The Inclusive Bible

6 ¹ Children, obey your parents in Christ, for that is right. ² “Honor your mother and your father” is the first commandment to carry a promise with it: ³ “that it may go well with you, and that you may have long life on earth.” ⁴ Mothers and fathers, don’t anger your children. Bring them up with the training and instruction befitting Christ.

Ephesians 6:1-4

Scripture

Observation

Application

Prayer

Ephesians 6:5-9



New International Version

⁵ Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. ⁶ Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. ⁷ Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not people, ⁸ because you know that the Lord will reward each one for whatever good they do, whether they are slave or free.

⁹ And masters, treat your slaves in the same way. Do not threaten them, since you know that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no favoritism with him.

The Message

5-8 Servants, respectfully obey your earthly masters but always with an eye to obeying the real master, Christ. Don't just do what you have to do to get by, but work heartily, as Christ's servants doing what God wants you to do. And work with a smile on your face, always keeping in mind that no matter who happens to be giving the orders, you're really serving God. Good work will get you good pay from the Master, regardless of whether you are slave or free.

⁹ Masters, it's the same with you. No abuse, please, and no threats. You and your servants are both under the same Master in heaven. He makes no distinction between you and them.

The Inclusive Bible

⁵ Workers, work diligently and support one another with the respect and sincere loyalty that you owe to Christ. ⁶ Don't render service just for appearance's sake, or only to please others, but do God's will with your whole heart as Christ's own workers. ⁷ Give your service willingly, doing it for Christ rather than for mortals. ⁸ You know that everyone, whether on the bottom rung or on the top, will be repaid by God for whatever they do. ⁹ When you are in a position of authority, act responsibly toward those in your charge. Stop threatening them. Remember that we all have a greater Authority over us in heaven who plays no favourites.

Ephesians 6:5-9

Scripture

Observation

Application

Prayer

Day 7

Sabbath Day of Rest

