

# **Ephesians**

## *A Real Piece of Work*

Week Four

*How were those conversations with God last week? Communication can be tricky. We all communicate, all the time. And yet misunderstandings are common. Have you ever been talking to someone, asked them a question and got the answer, “I just TOLD you!” or, less harsh, “I was just about to tell you!” Or, maybe you’ve had a misunderstanding with someone because you were quoted out of context. “That IS what I said, but you had to hear the whole conversation. What I meant was...”*

*We see the same thing in Bible Study. If we look at a phrase or a sentence out of context we are likely to be confused by what we see. Or worse, we may jump to a conclusion about what it means without pausing to ask questions. That’s why last week we focused on simply recognizing words or phrases that are unclear when we see them. We want to build the habit of asking questions instead of assuming WE KNOW the answers.*

*This week we begin adding tools for answering the question, “What Does It MEAN?” In Inductive Bible Study we call this **the Interpret Stage**. The first tool we’ll focus on is **Context**. Often, the questions we have about some detail of a passage we’re studying are answered elsewhere in the book (in this case, Ephesians). For that reason, we had you start this study by reading the whole book straight through—to give you a frame of reference for all the focus passages. This week, we’ll have you re-read it, looking for answers to your questions. It won’t take long and I think you’ll be surprised at how many answers you find with this tool alone!*



## Week Four Homework

### Observe (What Do I SEE?)

Pray...Read...Mark up the passage...List 1-2 observations per verse.

#### **Ephesians 3:1-21 (NIV)**

<sup>1</sup>For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles—

<sup>2</sup>Surely you have heard about the administration of God's grace that was given to me for you, <sup>3</sup>that is, the mystery made known to me by revelation, as I have already written briefly. <sup>4</sup>In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, <sup>5</sup>which was not made known to men in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God's holy apostles and prophets. <sup>6</sup>This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.

<sup>7</sup>I became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God's grace given me through the working of his power.

<sup>8</sup>Although I am less than the least of all God's people, this grace was given me: to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, <sup>9</sup>and to make plain to everyone the administration of this mystery, which for ages past was kept hidden in God, who created all things. <sup>10</sup>His intent was that now, through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms,

Observations

<sup>11</sup> according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. <sup>12</sup> In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence. <sup>13</sup> I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory.

<sup>14</sup> For this reason I kneel before the Father, <sup>15</sup> from whom his whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name. <sup>16</sup> I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, <sup>17</sup> so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, <sup>18</sup> may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, <sup>19</sup> and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

<sup>20</sup> Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, <sup>21</sup> to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

"Lump and Label"...Go back over the passage and look for 2-4 "lumps" of content that together express one idea. Give each "lump" a "label." Try to make your labels as brief as possible.

<i>Lump (verses)</i>	<i>Label</i>

List any questions you have about this passage.

### ***Interpret (What Does it MEAN?)***

Use Context to gain insight...Re-read the whole book of Colossians (it's less than four pages and it will go quick the second time). As you read look for things that explain the focus passage or answer any of your questions. Record what you find.

### ***Apply (How Does it WORK?)***

Make it practical. Now that you have spent some time looking in detail at God's Word, don't stop! Ask yourself, "How does this work...in general...and for ME?" You may find it helpful to look for...

- S**—a SIN to avoid
- P**—a PROMISE to claim
- E**—an EXAMPLE to follow
- C**—a COMMAND to obey
- K**—KNOWLEDGE of God to believe