

# Ephesians

## A Real Piece of Work

### Week Nine

Ready to tie it all together? We've already mentioned that the whole point of Bible Study is to Apply God's Word to our lives. Up until now, that's what we've been doing when we "SPECK" a passage. Now we're going to take a more detailed approach. **The Apply Stage** of the Inductive Process is where we ask the question, "How does it WORK?" That's really a two part question, in a sense. First, "How does it work in general?" and second, "How does it work for me?"

To answer the first half of the question, we can look for principles or **Timeless Truths** that have meaning for people across time and culture. Timeless Truths are not habits, action items, or goals. They are broader and more general, and will have meaning for everyone—regardless of where or when they live. Continuing the examples from last week, here are a couple of Timeless Truths based on specific passages:

- John 4:1-42 Jesus' followers must cross social boundaries to share the good news about Him.
- Philippians 2:1-5 God's people are unified when they humbly look out for each other's interests.

These are principles that are valid for people in New York, Moscow, or Johannesburg. They were appropriate for people in the First Century, the Middle Ages, and today.

How you can cross a social boundary to share the Gospel, or humbly work for the best interests of other people may look different from how a teenager in Moscow or a monk in the Middle Ages did. That is a difference in **Personal Application**, answering the second half of the Apply question, "How does it work...for ME?" Try to make personal applications that are **"SMART"**:

- Specific—not be abstract or vague, but practical and concrete.
- Measurable—action items that allow you to measure success or completion. Who will hold you accountable, and when?
- Attainable—goals that are realistic. Don't set yourself up for failure by being overly ambitious or idealistic.
- Relevant—flowing from the Timeless Truth. Do things that really matter!
- Time-Bound—goals that extend "for the rest of my life" can be overwhelming.

One caution: The decisions we make to line our lives up with the Truth we see in God's Word are called Personal Applications because they are just that—personal and individual—they do not necessarily work for all people. The life-change God desires in you is not necessarily what he wants for your best friend. Missing this point can lead us into legalism.



## Week Nine Homework

### Observe (What Do I SEE?)

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

#### **Ephesians 6:1-9 (NIV)**

Observations

<sup>1</sup>Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

<sup>2</sup>“Honor your father and mother”—which is the first commandment with a promise— <sup>3</sup>“that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.”

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

<sup>5</sup>Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ. <sup>6</sup>Obey them not only to win their favor when their eye is on you, but like slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from your heart. <sup>7</sup>Serve wholeheartedly, as if you were serving the Lord, not men, <sup>8</sup>because you

know that the Lord will reward everyone for whatever good he does, whether he is slave or free.

<sup>9</sup> 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.

“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 your Interpretation Tools to gain insight...we have introduced several tools (listed below) to help us answer any of your questions. Use any that would be helpful to you.

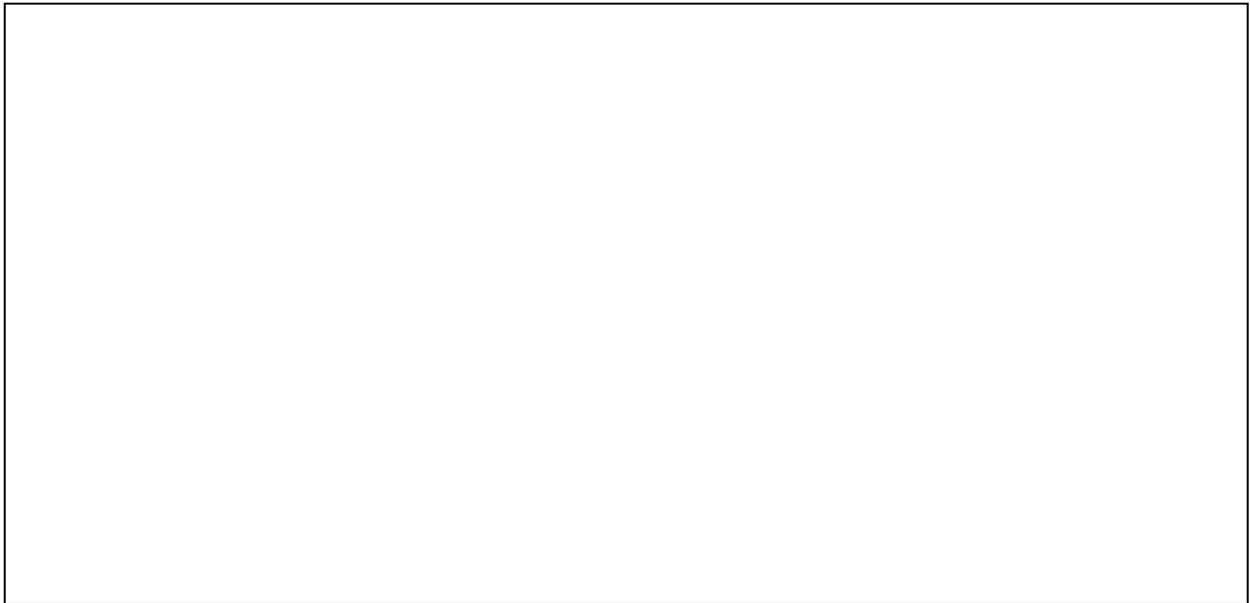
- Context
- Dictionary
- Alternate translations
- Cross references

Record what you find.

Sum It Up...in one sentence, answer the question, "What was that about?" Stick to what the passage meant to the writer and his original readers. Don't generalize the message at this time.

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

Write a Timeless Truth...identify a Principle based on this week's focus passage that applies to people in all times and cultures. (The SPECK acronym from past weeks may still be helpful to you.)



Write your Personal Application...what can you do about the Timeless Truth you wrote? Make it SMART.

