

STUDY GUIDE 17
Ephesians 6:1-9

Review your memory verses: Ephesians 1:3, 2:8-9, 3:20-21, 4:32. Write down the two that you are having the most difficulty with.

Read Ephesians 6:1-9 two times. ___ ___

Read again verses 1-4.

1. To whom are the instructions in verses 1-3 directed? According to verse 1, what are children to do, and why?

When does obeying parents become difficult?

What can we learn about this subject from Luke 2:49-52?

15. What do you think it means that there is no partiality (or favoritism) with God?
16. Contrast that with some ways that we tend to be partial with those we live and work with. You might want to read James 2:1-13 to start your thinking, but also consider other ways we can struggle with partiality.

Have you ever personally been the object of partiality or favoritism – either to your advantage or to your detriment? If so, explain how that experience made you feel.

17. List one thing from this study that challenged or encouraged you, and which you hope to focus on this week.

Thoughts in the Margins – Study Guide 17

- I. There is an interesting distinction in Paul's choice of wording in Ephesians 6:1 (*Children obey your parents...*) when we compare it to his instructions in Ephesians 5:21 (*and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ*), 5:22 (*Wives, be subject to you own husbands...*), and 5:24 (*But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives....*). *Obey* is translated from *hypakouo*, Strongs G5219. Its two root words are *hypo* meaning *under*, and *akouo* meaning *to listen*. *Be subject* is *hypotasso* Strong's G5293. It shares *hypo* [*under*] as a root word, and its other root is *tasso*, meaning *to place in order, appoint or arrange*.
Hypakouo [obey] is never used of people of equal stature. *Hypotasso* [*be subject*] describes submission between equals.
- II. Paul was writing in the time of *patria potestas*; it was the law of Roman Empire. *Patria potestas* gave fathers complete control over their children for life. In its earliest form, the law gave fathers the option of rejecting a newborn child; the baby might then be abandoned or sold to a slave trader or a brothel. Every adult son's property legally belonged to the father. A Gentile father chose the family's deity. In Luke 12:51-53, Jesus said, "Do you suppose that I came to grant peace on earth? I tell you, no, but rather division; for from now on five *members* in one household will be divided, three against two and two against three. They will be divided, father against son and son against father, mother against daughter and daughter against mother, mother-in-law against daughter-in-law and daughter-in-law against mother-in-law." How did Paul's instructions in Ephesians 6:1-4 offer some freedom in families from *patria potestas*?

☞ Mary Ann Porter

Additional Scripture for Study Guide 17

☐ Luke 2:49-52

⁴⁹ And He said to them, "Why is it that you were looking for Me? Did you not know that I had to be in My Father's house?" ⁵⁰ But they did not understand the statement which He had made to them. ⁵¹ And He went down with them and came to Nazareth, and He continued in subjection to them; and His mother treasured all *these* things in her heart. ⁵² And Jesus kept increasing in wisdom and stature, and in favor with God and men.

☐ Exodus 20:12

¹² "Honor your father and your mother, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you.

☐ Deuteronomy 5:16

¹⁶ "Honor your father and your mother, as the LORD your God has commanded you, that your days may be prolonged and that it may go well with you on the land which the LORD your God gives you.

☐ **Colossians 3:21**

²¹ Fathers, do not exasperate your children, so that they will not lose heart.

☐ **Deuteronomy 6:4-9**

⁴“Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one! ⁵ You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might. ⁶ These words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart. ⁷ You shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up. ⁸ You shall bind them as a sign on your hand and they shall be as frontals on your forehead. ⁹ You shall write them on the doorposts of your house and on your gates.

☐ **James 2:1-13**

My brethren, do not hold your faith in our glorious Lord Jesus Christ with *an attitude of* personal favoritism. ² For if a man comes into your assembly with a gold ring and dressed in fine clothes, and there also comes in a poor man in dirty clothes, ³ and you pay special attention to the one who is wearing the fine clothes, and say, “You sit here in a good place,” and you say to the poor man, “You stand over there, or sit down by my footstool,” ⁴ have you not made distinctions among yourselves, and become judges with evil motives? ⁵ Listen, my beloved brethren: did not God choose the poor of this world *to be* rich in faith and heirs of the kingdom which He promised to those who love Him? ⁶ But you have dishonored the poor man. Is it not the rich who oppress you and personally drag you into court? ⁷ Do they not blaspheme the fair name by which you have been called?

⁸ If, however, you are fulfilling the royal law according to the Scripture, “You shall love your neighbor as yourself,” you are doing well. ⁹ But if you show partiality, you are committing sin *and* are convicted by the law as transgressors. ¹⁰ For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles in one *point*, he has become guilty of all. ¹¹ For He who said, “Do not commit adultery,” also said, “Do not commit murder.” Now if you do not commit adultery, but do commit murder, you have become a transgressor of the law. ¹² So speak and so act as those who are to be judged by *the* law of liberty. ¹³ For judgment *will be* merciless to one who has shown no mercy; mercy triumphs over judgment.



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9. Referring to verses 14-17, write out the pieces of armor and that which Paul matches to each.

Example:

belt (girded loins-NASB) → truth

10. Choose any three of the above and say why you think Paul might have matched that piece of armor with that part of our spiritual life.

11. What kind of spiritual attack might each of the following protect us from:

belt of truth?

gospel of peace?

breastplate of righteousness? (When answering this question, think of this as the righteousness that we have because of Christ, not us doing righteous deeds.)

12. Looking at this section as a whole, what picture or illustration does Paul use to describe the Christian life? Is it a life of ease? What can we learn from that?

13. What do you think Paul means by the "flaming arrows/missiles of the evil one"? What might they be?

According to verses 16-17, what is our defense when those flaming arrows come our way?

14. What is our offensive weapon? How can we become proficient in using this weapon?

15. Jesus demonstrated the use of the "sword" in Luke 4:1-13. Read that passage and comment on Jesus' interaction with the devil.

16. Ephesians 6:18 tells us to pray at all times or on all occasions. What do you think this means?

What does Paul tell us to pray for in this verse?

Why do you think Paul tells us that we must "be on the alert"?

17. What can we learn about Paul from verses 19-20? How can that encourage us?

Read again verses 21-24.

18. According to verses 21-22, what is the means by which the recipients of this letter had their hearts comforted, or by which they were encouraged? What can we learn from that about comforting or encouraging others?

Despite the seriousness of this last section of Ephesians, Paul closes with two themes that we have seen throughout this letter – grace and peace. Though we are in the midst of a battle, we can still experience grace and peace, thanks to God.

☞ Laura Gamble

Thoughts in the Margins – Study Guide 18

- I. In Study Guide 4, item I., we learned about *positional truth* (the way that God views us, e.g. as possessing Christ's righteousness) and *conditional truth* (our current experience or condition, which may not correlate to our positional truth.) Look once more at Paul's instructions and description of the armor of God in Ephesians 6:10-17. What impact, if any, do these verses have on your conditional truth? (Does standing firm in the armor of God, in the midst of spiritual warfare, actualize our positional truth into our experience?)
- II. Has a closer look at Ephesians 6:10-17 changed your views about any struggles you are currently facing or future attacks from our enemy?

☞ Mary Ann Porter

Additional Scripture for Study Guide 18

☐ 1 Peter 5:8

⁸ Be of sober *spirit*, be on the alert. Your adversary, the devil, prowls around like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour.

☐ **2 Timothy 2:23-26**

²³ But refuse foolish and ignorant speculations, knowing that they produce quarrels. ²⁴ The Lord's bond-servant must not be quarrelsome, but be kind to all, able to teach, patient when wronged, ²⁵ with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, ²⁶ and they may come to their senses *and escape* from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.

☐ **Colossians 1:13-14**

¹³ For He rescued us from the domain of darkness, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, ¹⁴ in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins.

☐ **Luke 4:1-13**

Jesus, full of the Holy Spirit, returned from the Jordan and was led around by the Spirit in the wilderness ² for forty days, being tempted by the devil. And He ate nothing during those days, and when they had ended, He became hungry. ³ And the devil said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, tell this stone to become bread." ⁴ And Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'MAN SHALL NOT LIVE ON BREAD ALONE.'"

⁵ And he led Him up and showed Him all the kingdoms of the world in a moment of time. ⁶ And the devil said to Him, "I will give You all this domain and its glory; for it has been handed over to me, and I give it to whomever I wish. ⁷ Therefore if You worship before me, it shall all be Yours." ⁸ Jesus answered him, "It is written, 'YOU SHALL WORSHIP THE LORD YOUR GOD AND SERVE HIM ONLY.'"

⁹ And he led Him to Jerusalem and had Him stand on the pinnacle of the temple, and said to Him, "If You are the Son of God, throw Yourself down from here; ¹⁰ for it is written,

'HE WILL COMMAND HIS ANGELS CONCERNING YOU TO GUARD YOU,'

¹¹ and,

'ON *their* HANDS THEY WILL BEAR YOU UP,
SO THAT YOU WILL NOT STRIKE YOUR FOOT AGAINST A
STONE.'"

¹² And Jesus answered and said to him, "It is said, 'YOU SHALL NOT PUT THE LORD YOUR GOD TO THE TEST.'"

¹³ When the devil had finished every temptation, he left Him until an opportune time.

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e. Ephesians 6:10

2. Give a brief header or short sentence to describe each of the following sections of chapter 6:

a. Ephesians 6:1-3

b. Ephesians 6:4

c. Ephesians 6:5-8

d. Ephesians 6:9

e. Ephesians 6:10-17

f. Ephesians 6:18-20

- g. Ephesians 6:21-22

 - h. Ephesians 6:23-24
3. You likely noticed this, but Ephesians 6:1-9 continues the listing of interpersonal relationships that Paul began in chapter 5. In 5:21 Paul begins with a very general instruction that believers must voluntarily place themselves under the authority of each other in the fear of Christ; but then the relationships he cites are highly personal. Why was Paul's approach so compelling in his day and why does it continue to be in ours, in spite of some significant cultural changes?

In Ephesians 6:12, Paul gives four categories of struggles and by repeating the word, *against*, he emphasizes the uniqueness of each. Paul has indicated that with the full armor of God, the believer is able to stand firm against Satan's schemes and Paul has clarified that the fight is spiritual, not physical.

Believers struggle...	
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• against rulers	This refers to the top commanders in Satan's army of fallen angels.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• against powers	For a while, demonic forces are given some degree of authority to act. (1 John 5:19)
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• against world forces of this darkness	The world system actively opposed to God.
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.	This refers to battles in the spiritual realm, akin to what the prophet Daniel relays about the man in linen in Daniel 10:11-14, 20, 21.

Let's take a closer look at the armor of God:

HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH

To gird one's loins meant to tuck one's tunic into a belt which stowed the flowing garment out of the way and the wearer was ready for running or whatever the situation required. For gladiators, the belt was a foundational piece of equipment. Other pieces of armor attached to the belt, as did sustenance for the soldier.

4. How is God's truth foundational to standing firm? You may find it helpful to review what Paul says about *truth* in Ephesians 1:13-14.



HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

Roman soldiers' breastplates were usually made of iron (or low-carbon steel.) Breastplates protected the soldier's heart and other vital internal organs. First century Jews and Romans believed that the internal organs were responsible for emotions.

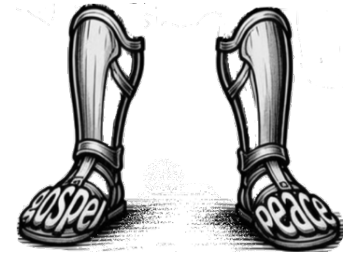
5. How does Jesus' righteousness (imparted to believers) protect us in spiritual battles? (You may find it helpful to review Ephesians 1 which focuses on our spiritual possession in Christ, and Ephesians 2 highlighting our spiritual position in Christ.)



having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE

Roman soldiers' sandals had nails in the soles of their sandals for improved traction and firm footing.

6. The gospel, when we receive and believe it, removes the enmity that existed between us and God. (See Romans 5:1-2.) When you consider the enemy's methods of attack, why is it important to be surefooted with respect to the gospel?



taking up the shield of faith

Soldiers carried shields because they expected their enemies to attack them. Roman shields were quite large – able to protect the entire soldier. The shields were usually made of wood and then covered in leather. Soldiers would soak their shields in water to protect themselves against flaming arrows shot by their enemies. Not only did this safeguard the man, it quenched the arrow's fire and prevented it from spreading.

7. How does faith protect like a shield? (Consider what characteristics are needed for effectiveness.)



And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION

Roman helmets were designed to protect the wearer's head, face, and neck, while permitting him to see and hear without obstruction. Romans understood the brain to be the seat of intelligence.

8. Why should you be mindful of your salvation and how does that help you in spiritual warfare? (Commentators usually look at salvation in this instance as either solid security in one's salvation from death or as salvation in the sense of ongoing sanctification (being saved from sin's power.)



and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

The word for sword here (*machaira*) is a short two-edged sword about 24 inches in length. Clearly this weapon is intended for close-quarters combat. Wielding this weapon well required training and practice. The sword could be used both offensively and defensively.

9. Paul uses the word *rhema* (Strong's G4487) here for *word*, and not *logos*. *Rhema* denotes a spoken saying or statement. (*Logos* usually refers to the complete, inspired Word of God and to Jesus, the living Word.) A *rhema* is a precise, situation-specific utterance. What does the sword of the Spirit look like in action and what is the Spirit's role?



Thoughts in the Margins – Study Guide 19

- I. Share some ways you identify spiritual warfare.
- II. Do you have any favorite *rhema* that you quote when you are experiencing spiritual attacks?

✞ Mary Ann Porter

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Additional Scripture for Study Guide 19

☐ 1 John 5:19

¹⁹ We know that we are of God, and that the whole world lies in *the power of* the evil one.

☐ Daniel 10:11-14, 20, 21

¹¹ He said to me, “O Daniel, man of high esteem, understand the words that I am about to tell you and stand upright, for I have now been sent to you.” And when he had spoken this word to me, I stood up trembling. ¹² Then he said to me, “Do not be afraid, Daniel, for from the first day that you set your heart on understanding *this* and on humbling yourself before your God, your words were heard, and I have come in response to your words. ¹³ But the prince of the kingdom of Persia was withstanding me for twenty-one days; then behold, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me, for I had been left there with the kings of Persia. ¹⁴ Now I have come to give you an understanding of what will happen to your people in the latter days, for the vision pertains to the days yet *future*.”

²⁰ Then he said, “Do you understand why I came to you? But I shall now return to fight against the prince of Persia; so I am going forth, and behold, the prince of Greece is about to come. ²¹ However, I will tell you what is inscribed in the writing of truth. Yet there is no one who stands firmly with me against these *forces* except Michael your prince.

☐ Romans 5:1-2

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, ² through whom also we have obtained our introduction by faith into this grace in which we stand; and we exult in hope of the glory of God.

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STUDY GUIDE 20

Ephesians Wrap Up

We have now finished our study of the book of Ephesians – a letter that Paul wrote while imprisoned in Rome. We have taken a good hard look at each individual section in this letter, but it is always good to go back and see the overarching, main purpose of a letter. So let's do that.

1. Find a quiet place, and sit down and read through the entire book of Ephesians in one sitting. This will take about 20 minutes.
2. Review your memory verses by writing them out on a separate piece of paper: Ephesians 1:3, 2:8-9, 3:20-21, 4:32 and 6:10.

If you can do them all – one from each chapter, then even without your Bible you can give a good summary of the book of Ephesians. Write down the two memory verses that have been most meaningful to you, and tell why. Also, if you can, give an example of how one of these memory verses has helped you.

As you think through the following questions, it might be helpful to you if you gather up the past Ephesians lessons that you have done. As you look through the book of Ephesians and through the past lessons:

3. What has particularly encouraged you from this book?

4. What new idea or understanding has been brought to your attention?

5. What caution from this book has struck you, or has stayed with you?

6. What did you learn about relationships with other people?

Thoughts in the Margins – Study Guide 20

- I. Now that you've studied the Ephesians in its entirety, enjoy this summary of the symmetry that Paul (via the Holy Spirit!) used to structure this book. (Source: PreceptAustin.com)

SYMMETRY OF EPHESIANS	
CHAPTERS 1- 3	CHAPTERS 4 - 6
The Root	The Fruit
Spiritual Wealth	Spiritual Walk
Christian Privilege	Christian Conduct
The Position of the Believer	The Practice of the Believer
God Sees Us in Christ	World Sees Christ in Us
Privilege	Practice
Doctrine	Duty
Doctrinal	Practical
Revelation	Responsibility
Christian Blessings	Christian Behavior
Belief	Behavior
Privileges of the Believer	Responsibilities of the Believer
Our Heritage In Christ	Our Life In Christ
Know your Resources (Riches) in Christ	Live by faith in the light of your Resources (Riches) in Christ
The Finished Work of Christ	The Faithful Walk of the Christian
Work of Christ In Us	Work of Christ Through Us
We in Christ	Christ in Us
Word of God	Walk of the Christian
Heavenly Standing	Earthly Walk
Who You Are In Christ	Whose You Are In Christ
Identity	Responsibility
Position of the Believer	Practice of the Believer
Theology	Ethics

- II. Paul ends his letter to the believers in Ephesus just as he began it – with grace and peace. That's how we will end our study of Ephesians as well, basking in the grace and peace of our Lord Jesus Christ. Thank you so very much for studying with us and my prayer is that the Spirit will bring to mind the rich and beautiful teachings in Ephesians as He continues to transform us from glory to glory!

✞ Mary Ann Porter

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