
a *Grace Notes* course

Ephesians

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Grace Notes

Lesson 6

Ephesians 2:8-14

Faith

Circumcision

Peace

Grace Notes

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Ephesians

Lesson 6: Ephesians 2:8-14

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Instructions for Completing the Lessons

Begin each study session with prayer. It is the Holy Spirit who makes spiritual things discernable to Christians, so it is essential to be in fellowship with the Lord during Bible study.

Read the whole book of Ephesians often. It is a short book, and reading it many times will help you understand the story much better.

Instructions

1. Read the introduction to the study of Ephesians
 2. Study the Ephesians passage for this lesson, by reading the verses and studying the notes. Be sure to read any other Bible passages that are called out in the notes.
 3. **Review** all of the notes in the Ephesians lesson.
 4. Go to the Quiz page and follow the instructions to complete all the questions on the quiz. The quiz is "open book". You may refer to all the notes and to the Bible when you take the test. But you should not get help from another person.
 5. When you have completed the Quiz, be sure to *SAVE* your file. If your quiz file is lost, and that can happen at *Grace Notes* as well, you will want to be able to reproduce your work.
 6. To send the Quiz back to *Grace Notes*, follow the instructions on the Quiz page.
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Ephesians 2:8

For by grace are you saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God,

**for by grace
are you saved**

Victory begins here. Union with Christ guarantees that Christians are winners, permanently. We can stay in the winner's bracket because grace provided everything for us.

through faith

The means of entering God's plan is a non-meritorious system of thinking.

Topic: FAITH

and that not of yourselves, it is a gift of God.

Ephesians 2:9

Not of works, lest any man should boast.

not of works: not of human good.

Human works are dead to God because they come from the Sin Nature. Isa. 64:6.

It is essential for a Christian to begin "thinking Grace" as quickly as possible.

Heb. 6:1, "Therefore leaving the elementary teaching about the Christ, let us press on to maturity, not laying again a foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God,"

lest anyone should boast, (kakaomai), "to boast". Human good promotes boasting and pride. Grace is the opposite of boasting and pride. Grace promotes humility, growth, and divine good.

Ephesians 2:10

For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God has before ordained that we should walk in them.

for we are - (eimi), verb of absolute condition.

His workmanship: (poeima), "a product that is the result of labor; workmanship".

Therefore, "We are continually the result of His work."

created in Christ Jesus for good works: (ktidzw), with several meanings.

1. "To reduce from a state of disorder, to produce order out of chaos."
2. "To call into being", i.e., the new birth means we are called into God's family.
3. "To invest with a spiritual frame", 2 Cor. 5:17, new creatures, created in Christ Jesus.

which God has before ordained that we should walk in them

See also notes on Eph. 2:2,3.

There are three spheres to the believer's walk:

Walking in Faith Rest: we walk by faith, not by sight

2 Cor. 5:7

Walking in the Spirit

Gal. 5:16-18, "But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh.

For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please.

But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the Law."

Walking by Learning Doctrine

3 John 1:3,4, "For I was very glad when brethren came and bore witness to your truth, {that is,} how you are walking in truth.

I have no greater joy than this, to hear of my children walking in the truth."

Ephesians 2:11

Wherefore remember that you, being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands -

The Gentiles are being asked to recall a situation which previously existed, that they were totally alienated from God and were held in total disdain by the Jews who were God's chosen people.

The Christian life was a great change of situation for Gentiles, and it required them to remember their former alienation from the things of God.

Ephesians Lesson 6

There was a Legal Barrier; the Jews held up the Law of Moses to Gentiles as a basis for spirituality.

There was a Moral Barrier; the Jews were highly moral (on paper), while the Gentiles had no moral code (by Jewish standards) and were regarded as lascivious.

And there was a Ceremonial Barrier: circumcision, a false barrier which had nothing to do with the inner life. There was a great haughtiness toward those who did not have "the mark." Read Romans 2 regarding the differences between legalistic circumcision and the "circumcision of the heart".

The Gentiles in local churches were being victimized by the false standards of the Jews, especially regarding ritual circumcision. The Jews were often superficial and unspiritual, speaking disparagingly of Gentiles as pagans, heathen, instead of thinking of them as people to share Christ with.

But the Greeks and Romans, themselves, were just as guilty of racism. The Greeks despised those who live outside their city-states, even other Greeks. They called them pagans (**ethnoi**).

Clashes were inevitable. There was tremendous antagonism.

But everyone comes into life with a mass of prejudices. The problem is only cured by having one's viewpoint changed by the Word of God.

Unity is one of the objects of Grace. By Grace, people can have a high regard for each other and work together productively, regardless of race or background.

READ Eph. 4:11-16

The apostle Paul did not condemn circumcision. It was, after all, a God-given sign of the covenant. But the outward sign was not matched by inward faith and obedience. Thus it was worthless, a "work of the flesh."

There are great lessons here for Christians today. We are highly prejudiced against other people, especially those who don't think the way we do or act the way we do. "Stronger" brethren despise "weaker" brethren. But the teaching of Romans 14 is vital here. We are all "weaker" brethren in our

personal areas of weakness. And we all have "strengths". But it is self-righteous and unloving to despise others' weaknesses as if we ourselves have no areas of weakness.

1 Cor. 7:17-24, "Only, as the Lord has assigned to each one, as God has called each, in this manner let him walk. And thus I direct in all the churches.

Was any man called already circumcised? Let him not become uncircumcised. Has anyone been called in uncircumcision? Let him not be circumcised.

Circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, but what matters is the keeping of the commandments of God.

Let each man remain in that condition in which he was called.

Were you called while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that.

For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord's freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ's slave.

You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men.

Brethren, let each man remain with God in that condition in which he was called."

Gal. 5:6, For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but faith working through love.

Gal. 6:12-18, Those who desire to make a good showing in the flesh try to compel you to be circumcised, simply that they may not be persecuted for the cross of Christ.

For those who are circumcised do not even keep the Law themselves, but they desire to have you circumcised, that they may boast in your flesh.

But may it never be that I should boast, except in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ, through which the world has been crucified to me, and I to the world.

For neither is circumcision anything, nor uncircumcision, but a new creation.

And those who will walk by this rule, peace and mercy {be} upon them, and upon the Israel of God.

From now on let no one cause trouble for me, for I bear on my body the brand-marks of Jesus.

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit, brethren. Amen.

Ephesians 2:12

That at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world.

that you were at that time: (ekeino choris).

(**ekeino**) is a demonstrative pronoun used to refer to a thing previously mentioned. This is speaking of the time when the Gentiles were unsaved, outside of the Plan of God.

(**choris**) means "parted from" or "apart from". From (**choridzw**), "to separate; to disunite".

excluded from: nom. pl. masc. perf. pass. part. of (**apallotriow**), "to be alienated from; to be a stranger to; alien"

the commonwealth: (politeia): "citizenship; a community; the state of being a citizen"

The English word "commonwealth" is made up of "common" and "weal" ("good"), referring to citizens united in a community for the common good. The American states of Kentucky, Massachusetts, Pennsylvania, and Virginia are officially known as Commonwealths.

of Israel: Gentiles were not citizens of Israel. They were, in fact ...

strangers: (zenoi): "foreigners; barbarians"

to the covenants: God's promises to Abraham, Moses, David.

Almost all Gentiles were unaware of the promises of God to Israel. So they had no way of knowing the teachings or the prophecies of the Old Testament, except in cases where Jews were faithful in communicating truth to Gentiles.

having no hope: (elpis). Having no basis for confidence.

and without God in the world.

This passage is one of the most dire and gloomy in Scripture in describing the plight of a person without Christ. The hopelessness and despair that unbelievers feel, when they think of the afterlife or the future, can be crushing. Thank God for the great hope and confidence which is available in Christ, as expressed in the remainder of this chapter.

Ephesians 2:13

But now, you who were sometimes afar off, are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

But now you who formerly were far off

This is a reference to Gentiles who are now saved by Grace. It is speaking of a time in the past when Gentiles had been on the wrong side of the Barrier between God and man, but now because of the Father's provision of a Savior, the barrier has been removed.

have been brought near: aorist passive indicative of (**ginomai**), "to be brought near."

This means to be somewhere you have not been before. The passive voice of the verb indicates that God is the one who brings a person near to Himself.

"Far off" and "near" are in contrast. The new believer has seen the Barrier removed, so he is now able to approach God without fear.

by the blood of Christ - a representative analogy set up in the Old Testament.

Jesus Christ removed the barrier between man and God; and he broke down the wall separating Jews and Gentiles. It was the blood of Christ that was the ransom price for redemption, Eph. 1:7.

The Jews were monotheistic, moral, and had a worship centered in legalism. The Gentiles were polytheistic, immoral, and had a worship centered in immorality. Both were brought into union with Christ at salvation. There is now no distinction.

Ephesians 2:14

For he is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of partition between us.

for he himself is our peace: this is peace in the sense of reconciliation; the removal of the barrier reconciles man to God. "He keeps on being our peace."

It is the individual to whom God gives peace, not a group. God has no plans to bring about happiness or peace by changing people's social status or organizational affiliation through salvation. The Lord's plan is to give every believer happiness, joy, peace, all the fruits of the Spirit and blessing of Christian living, in the present situation.

The Peace of God is a relaxed mental attitude which does not depend on people or circumstances to maintain it.

Topic: PEACE

who made both groups into one and has broken down the barrier of the dividing wall.

The temple of the Jews had an outer court for Gentiles and an inner court for Jews. A Gentile could be killed for going any further inside than he was supposed to.

But now there is no basis for discrimination; every believer is "in Christ." While no human beings are born equal in any sense of the word, all Christians are "born again" and equal in the sense of spiritual birth.

The Christian Jew has no right to say "keep out" to the Christian Gentile.

Faith

Belief and Believing

One of the most important considerations in the Christian way of life is the subject of the believer's faith. Several questions are always paramount in a person's thinking about faith, such as:

What is faith?

How does a person exercise faith?

How can we have stronger faith?

You will occasionally hear a person say something like this, "I don't believe anything that I can't see or feel." Or, "You really can't prove that there is a God, or that Jesus was what He claimed to be; and I'm not going to believe anything that I don't know is true!"

When a person says that he refuses to believe anything that is not proved, he ignores the fact that everyone believes unproved facts every day. If people were not willing to place their confidence in unproved facts, the whole world would grind to a halt -- no one would be able to move.

In practice, a person employs the mental process of faith dozens of times every day, just to carry out life's routines. Faith is a Standard Operating Procedure of human life. The discussion in this essay will show that God has made faith an integral part of human existence so that anyone in the world can have salvation and can experience Christian growth with all of its benefits and blessings.

Because Bible study is, in part, a study of past events and of ancient writings, the first section of this paper is a discussion of the uses of faith in the study of history. The intention of the whole paper is, (1) to give a Christian added confidence in the use of faith, and (2) to provide a fairly thorough treatment of what the Bible says about the subject. Some of the ideas herein can be used effectively in witnessing to skeptics or to those whose ideas are hazy about salvation by faith.

The second section shows how faith is used in learning Bible truth, and it includes a comparison between the three systems of learning, empiricism, rationalism, and faith.

The third section deals with what the Bible says about how Christian faith is developed and strengthened.

The fourth section contains an etymological study from the original Greek and Hebrew words used in the Bible which are translated as "faith" or as some equivalent.

We shall see that as a mental activity Christian faith is no different from everyday faith. The

unbeliever can use ordinary faith, the willingness to believe something, to accept the Gospel message and obtain salvation. The believer can use faith to acquire knowledge of Bible doctrine and to make application of those principles in his daily walk with the Lord.

Faith and the Study of History

A person who studies the past, and who writes about it, is continually involved with the concept of faith. First, he must decide which of his sources are reliable enough to be believed, for only with credible sources can the historian have any chance of reconstructing accurately an event or social situation.

Then, the historian must express his thoughts in writing in a manner calculated not only to inform his readers but also to encourage their belief, their faith, in the propositions he sets forth. A careful student of history will have faith only in historians who meet his standards for honesty.

The Common Historical Bias

But there are many historians, and other people, of course, whose opinions about historical facts are colored by their religious and anti-Biblical prejudices. Many people have adopted a viewpoint which makes it impossible to view historical data objectively, especially data which deals with Biblical events and issues. This false viewpoint, a set of biased presuppositions, includes the following conclusions:

- There is no personal God.
- Therefore, there is no supernatural and miracles are not possible.
- We live in a closed system, the earth with its human race, into which no outside force can intrude, nor over which any God has control.

A skeptic holding these views approaches the study of the Bible "knowing", for example, that Christ did not rise from the dead, because these things just cannot be. These conclusions themselves, however, amount to an exercise of strong faith, albeit in the wrong direction. Instead of beginning his study with the recorded historical data and an open mind, this individual precludes

a balanced approach by a sort of metaphysical speculation.

Valid Historical Methods

All arguments and systems begin with presuppositions (even the Christian system). This does not mean that all presuppositions that one might adopt are equally desirable. In considering any important idea, it is better to begin with presuppositions of method, which will yield truth, rather than with presuppositions of substantive content, which assume a body of truth already.

No study of the past has a right to assume a closed system of causation. Historical events are unique, and the test of their factual character can be the only acceptable documentary approach.

What does the historian do, then, when he experiences a surprise which runs counter to all his expectations, counter to his convictions, against even his culture's whole understanding of truth? Why, he must say that it is surely possible; because, for the critical historian, nothing is a priori impossible! It is not the objective of the historian to construct a history from preconceived notions and then to adjust it to his own liking. He must, rather, reproduce history from the best evidence, and let it speak for itself.

History, then, is knowledge of the past based on testimony. And the plausibility, the believability, of history depends on the trustworthiness of the witnesses, not upon the erudition of the historian.

History and Bible Study

Studying the Bible in the 20th Century involves a great deal of intense historical scholarship. One begins by placing some confidence, or faith, in early Christian witnesses and authorities. This confidence may very well be tentative at first; and one may test each hypothesis thoroughly before going deeper into study, certainly before going out on a limb by making dogmatic statements. At each decision point in study, faith must be exercised.

One does not have to prove beyond a shadow of doubt that Jesus Christ was Deity. What one does is weigh the evidence, evaluate the pros and cons. The results of careful study show that Christ *must*

be who and what He claims to be. In fact, many people have begun studying the claims of Christ, intending to refute the Bible statements, only to end up confirming what they had originally set out to disprove!

A criterion of absolute truth would wipe out all knowledge, because a person could never find a place to stand to begin his study. The Christian begins by accepting the proposition that the Bible is the Word of God. Then, as he learns each new doctrine, he makes decisions. First, he decides whether to believe the doctrine as he understands it. Then, he decides whether to apply the doctrine in his life through believing the teaching, by claiming the promise, or by obeying the commands given. As each new idea is tested and put into practice, it becomes part of the foundation for further learning and spiritual growth.

HOW THE BELIEVER USES FAITH

Faith Compared with Empiricism and Rationalism

The Biblical concept of faith is that it amounts to complete confidence in something for which there is no empirical or rational proof available. "Faith is the substance of things in which one has confidence, the evidence of things not seen." HEB. 11:6

A person is said to have faith in something if he has believed it without having had a physical demonstration of it or a logical explanation of the truth behind it. Saying this another way, a person who has believed something without having it proved to him has exercised faith. Faith is, therefore, distinguished from the two other methods of learning, empiricism and rationalism. Empiricism is a technical word which refers to the using of scientific methods to learn something or to prove something. The scientific method relies on the five senses for the proof of propositions. And each experiment produces either verification or refutation of the idea or point of view. A child who does not take his mother's word for the fact that the stove is hot may attempt empirical proof by touching the stove himself. He receives immediate experimental verification of the truth of his mother's statement.

The term rationalism is used to describe the method of arriving at proof through the logical method. This is proof by logical process of reason. In rationalism, logic produces documentation or refutation of a point of view. Both empiricism and rationalism are very useful in learning; but neither is equivalent to faith.

Faith Used in Learning

Faith can also be described as a method of perception, or learning, which accepts an established criterion as the basis of reality. It is very convenient, and necessary, to use faith in this way. If we were to demand rational or experimental proof of everything stated to us, we would never get anything done.

Suppose you were using a mathematics textbook which made the statement "The sum of the angles of a plane triangle is 180 degrees." Using faith, you could accept that statement as a true fact, and you could build your study of triangles using this fact, even though you had not seen a formal proof of its validity.

To insist upon proof of this statement, however, would mean that you would have to take a course in Geometry where the formal, logical proof of this statement is developed. But if you were a total skeptic (in the subject of triangles), you wouldn't even be able to begin the geometry course, because you would not be able to accept the statement, by faith, that "the shortest distance between two points on a plane is a straight line", one of the foundational axioms of plane geometry. You can see that faith is very useful, even indispensable, in every learning situation.

To this point in the study of faith, then, we have developed a partial understanding of what faith is and how it is used. Faith is:

- Complete confidence in something which is not subject to logical or experimental proof
- Acceptance of an established criterion as the basis of reality

The Christian's Faith in the Bible

The "established criterion" which the Christian accepts by faith is that the Bible is the Word of God. The Christian accepts the Bible as being

what it claims to be, the "mind of Christ". By adopting this presupposition, the believer has a basis from which to delve into the whole Bible with its hundreds of concepts vital to all aspects of human life.

The faith system of learning Bible truth is the only fair way for man to know and approach God. No one can claim personal credit for having believed the Bible, because even a person of very low intellectual ability can believe and understand Bible truth. Therefore, the faith system for acquiring doctrinal knowledge is perfectly fair and compatible with Grace. It is the only method of learning which is commonly available to all members of the human race.

The value of faith does not lie in the strength or intensity with which a belief is held. (Every confidence man depends upon his victim's believing very strongly in lies.) The merit of faith lies, rather, in the idea or object which is believed. Faith is valid only when it has a valid object.

Saving Faith has as its object the Lord Jesus Christ and His substitutionary work on the Cross for man's salvation, John 3:36; Acts 16:31. A belief in any other "plan" of salvation, however strongly and emotionally held, will prove to have been faith in an invalid and useless object, Acts 4:12.

Living Faith has as its objects the facts, promises, and commands of the Bible, Matt. 4:4. Faith in Bible principles is the only method which will unlock spiritual truth, I Cor. 1:18 to 2:16. The believer who is growing spiritually receives continuous verification that the divine principles upon which he bases his life are perfectly valid, Eph. 4:11-16.

How to have strong faith

The strongest, best established faith is that which is the result of Christian edification, that process by which a believer is rooted and built up in his spiritual life, Col. 2:6,7. One of the most important results of Christian growth is the progressive increase in the believer's ability to use faith. Several important factors in the development of Christian faith are listed here along with some representative Bible passages.

- Faith requires the continuous intake of truth from the Word of God. "...faith cometh by hearing and hearing by the Word of God...", ROM. 10:17.
- Faith is part of the fruit of the Holy Spirit and requires the control of the Spirit for its function. "...the fruit of the Spirit is...faith...", GAL. 5:22,23; EPH. 5:18.
- Faith must be exercised daily by (1) using Faith-Rest principles in day to day living, "...we who have believed do enter into rest...", HEB. 4:1-3; and (2) by using Faith Patience in all situations, "...the testing of your faith worketh patience", JAMES 1:3.
- Applied knowledge overflowing from the human spirit, which refers to all witnessing, requires the exercise of faith. "...that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith...", EPH. 3:17-20.
- Moving towards maturity includes the development of great faith. "...this is the victory that overcomes the world, our faith...", 1 JOHN 5:4,5; HEB. 11:6.
- Daily occupation with the Lord Jesus Christ "completes" faith. "Looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith...", HEB. 12:2.
- Undeserved suffering both tests and strengthens faith. "...the trial of your faith...", 1 PETER 1:7,8.

The Word "Faith" in the Bible

In the Greek language of the New Testament there are five words which are rendered "faith" in the King James Version. They are:

πιστις, (pistis), noun, meaning "faith; faithful; reliable; that which is believed", and, with the definite article, "doctrine"

πιστος, (pistos), adjective, meaning "dependable; inspiring of trust; believing"

πιστευω, (pisteuo), verb, meaning "to believe; to be convinced"

πειθω, (peitho), verb, meaning "to obey (in the present tense); to be persuaded (in the aorist); to have confidence (in the perfect); faith (all tenses)"

Ephesians Lesson 6

πιστωω, (pistoō), verb, meaning "to show oneself faithful; to feel confidence"

In the Hebrew of the Old Testament there are ten words which are rendered in the King James Version as "faith" or as some equivalent idea of belief or trust. They are:

AHMAN, verb, "to believe without merit"

EIMOON, noun, "belief; faithfulness"

EIMOONAH, noun, "truth; steadiness; doctrine; faith"

AHMEIN, noun, "truth; doctrine"

OHMEIN, noun, "faithfulness"

EMETH, noun, one of the strongest words for truth

BAHTAK, verb, the Faith Rest verb which was originally a word used by wrestlers for giving someone a body slam. See PSALM 37:3; 91:2. It means "to slam your troubles on the Lord", and it means "faith" in the sense of the function of the Faith-Rest principles. This verb is used extensively in the Old Testament.

KAHSAH, verb, PSALM 57:1, used of a rabbit fleeing from a desert fox and finding refuge in the cleft of the rock where the fox can't reach him. Means "to believe" in the sense of finding refuge in the Word or taking shelter in the Lord.

YAHKAL, verb, "to trust" in circumstances of pressure or suffering. JOB 13:15; LAM. 3:21,24.

KAHWAH, used in the sense of binding or twisting strands of fiber together to make a rope. Threads which are weak in themselves are woven together into strength. The meaning is that we are weak and can be broken, but woven into the Lord and His Word, we cannot be broken. ISA. 40:31; LAM. 3:25.

Circumcision

One of the first acts of circumcision in the human race involved Abraham.

Genesis 17:6-11 And I will make thee exceedingly fruitful, and I will make nations of thee, and kings shall come out of thee.

And I will establish my covenant between me and thee and thy seed after thee in their

generations for an everlasting covenant, to be a God unto thee, and to thy seed after thee.

And I will give unto thee, and to thy seed after thee, the land wherein thou art a stranger, all the land of Canaan, for an everlasting possession; and I will be their God.

And God said unto Abraham, Thou shalt keep my covenant therefore, thou, and thy seed after thee in their generations.

This is my covenant, which ye shall keep, between me and you and thy seed after thee; Every man child among you shall be circumcised.

And ye shall circumcise the flesh of your foreskin; and it shall be a token of the covenant betwixt me and you.

This initial act of circumcision was the seal of Abraham's faith in God's promise of possessing the land. It was the indication that Abraham believed God's word. Abraham separated himself unto the Lord and to the Lord's promise.

Circumcision is, therefore, a sign of regeneration for the Jews. It was to the born again Jew what water baptism is to the born-again believer in the Church Age, a sign.

Circumcision is also used by God as a teaching mechanism, a visual aid to provide a picture of regeneration by faith. The circumcision of male children on the 8th day was an act of dedication by the parents. By this means they declared that they would teach salvation by faith to their children. They anticipated that their children would become believers.

Col. 2:11-13 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

Buried with him in baptism, wherein also ye are risen with him through the faith of the operation of God, who hath raised him from the dead.

And you, being dead in your sins and the uncircumcision of your flesh, hath he quickened together with him, having forgiven you all trespasses.

Ephesians Lesson 6

Circumcision is also a picture of positional truth, especially the identification with Jesus Christ in His death, burial, and resurrection.

There can be no victory in the Christian way of life without victory over the old life, over the sin nature. This is the application of positional truth to experience.

The Lord also used circumcision as a picture of Israel's restoration to fellowship and service.

READ Joshua 5:1-9

This restoration, by faith, was necessary for the victory the Israelites were about to experience (Jericho) and for the time of rest they were about to enter. There can be no victory over Canaan until there is victory over carnality (Egypt). Circumcision denotes separation from the world and the flesh, self-judgment, yieldedness, dedication, commitment.

Romans 4:9-13 Cometh this blessedness then upon the circumcision only, or upon the uncircumcision also? for we say that faith was reckoned to Abraham for righteousness.

How was it then reckoned? when he was in circumcision, or in uncircumcision? Not in circumcision, but in uncircumcision.

And he received the sign of circumcision, a seal of the righteousness of the faith which he had yet being uncircumcised: that he might be the father of all them that believe, though they be not circumcised; that righteousness might be imputed unto them also.

And the father of circumcision to them who are not of the circumcision only, but who also walk in the steps of that faith of our father Abraham, which he had being yet uncircumcised.

For the promise, that he should be the heir of the world, was not to Abraham, or to his seed, through the law, but through the righteousness of faith.

Circumcision is a sign of imputed righteousness; it is the sign that one has believed and is cleansed by the blood of Christ and has God's Righteousness credited to his account. Gen. 15:6; 2 Cor. 5:21.

The true significance of circumcision was not in the physical act being perpetuated but in the reasons the ritual was begun in the first place. Circumcision was a sign that something had already taken place, namely, Abraham's salvation.

Circumcision was also a seal. A seal indicates the validity of the thing to which it is attached. It has no significance apart from that which it covers. Circumcision was a seal attached to something valuable, salvation.

During the Church Age, water baptism is the outward sign of an inward faith. Circumcision was the outward sign for the Jews before the Church Age.

Religious Jews tried to make the seal valuable in itself. They attached spiritual value to the act of circumcision, ignoring the substance. They contended that circumcision was needed for salvation, which led to the formation of a ritualistic religion.

Abraham was saved by faith, long before he was circumcised. He is, therefore, the "father of all who believe" because he is the pattern of those who were saved in status quo unccircumcision, whether Jew or Gentile.

Peace

The word "peace" in the Bible, from the Greek word (*eireinei*), refers to a mental attitude of tranquillity based on a relationship with God in the Christian Way of Life. It is a word which describes the result of a person's correct response to God's Grace.

The Bible uses "peace" in two ways. There is personal peace with God which comes when a person accepts Jesus Christ as Savior. Then, there is the peace of God which is available on a daily basis as the believer participates in the Christian way of life according to the Plan of God.

So, where you find peace mentioned in the Bible it refers either to the reconciliation of a Christian in salvation, as in Eph. 2:14,17, or to the mental attitude found in the believers.

2 Tim. 1:7 "For God has not given us a spirit of fear; but of power, and of love, and of a sound mind."

Ephesians Lesson 6

Peace With God - Peace in Salvation

Peace with God is never available apart from Grace. The Cross of Christ is the focal point of Grace and is the source of Peace. Jesus Christ is our eternal Peace.

Romans 5:1 "Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ."

Grace removed the Barrier and made peace between man and God. So, when the unbeliever responds to Grace by faith, the result is Peace.

Ephesians 2:14-18 provides a good illustration of how God made it possible for anyone to have peace with God, with special emphasis on the fact that such different types as Jews and Gentiles have been provided for.

Verse 14 deals with peace as a product of reconciliation. Verse 15 explains that the "enmity" between God and man, that which we call the Barrier, was "abolished" once and for all. Verses 16 to 18 explain that the enmity has been slain for both Jews and Gentiles so that now those who were near to God, the Jews, and those who were far off, non-Jews, have been brought into union with Christ through the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

Peace in the Christian Way of Life

In our lifetime we can experience Peace on a daily basis. When the believer responds by faith to Grace, God provides many blessings which can result in great inner happiness.

Isaiah 26:3,4 "Thou wilt keep him in perfect peace, whose mind is stayed on thee; because he trusteth in thee. Trust ye in the Lord forever: for in the Lord JEHOVAH is everlasting strength."

In the Christian Way of life, peace comes through fellowship with God and daily growth, advancement in spiritual things which brings stability, a relaxed mental attitude, orientation to the plan of God, occupation with Christ, and the ability to employ faith-rest principles in all areas of life.

READ Philippians 4:6-9

Peace, or tranquillity, precedes the enjoyment of prosperity. It is part of the preparation for prosperity. One must have Peace to have the capacity for prosperity. God may hold prosperity back until there is the capacity to enjoy it.

Acts 9:31 "Then had the churches rest throughout all Judea and Galilee and Samaria, and were edified; and walking in the fear of the Lord, and in the comfort of the Holy Spirit, were multiplied."

READ Jeremiah 29:1-7

Any loss of peace is followed by adjustment to the plan of God (confession and restoration to fellowship), faith-rest, and relaxed mental attitude, and Peace in the new situation.

The man or woman who receive grace and peace from the Lord is in perfect position for spiritual production, and reproduction.

READ James 3:13-18.

Ephesians Lesson 6 Quiz

Instructions

The following questions relate to your study of this lesson.

To answer a question, type your response in the space provided after the word "Answer:". A question may be True/False, multiple choice, fill in the blank, or short answer type.

The last question requires you to write one or two paragraphs in "essay" form. Use the space provided; it will expand to accommodate your response.

You have choices about sending the quiz back to Grace Notes.

- If you received an email file containing the quiz, you can use the REPLY feature of your e-mail application to open the quiz. Enter your answers in the reply message. Then SEND the message to Grace Notes.
- You can enter your answers on these pages, then send the whole file back to Grace Notes as a file attachment. This is handy, but these lessons will average 100K to 200K in size. As an alternative,
- After you answer the questions here, copy and paste the whole list of questions into a new MS Word document; then, send the new file to Grace Notes as an attachment. The new file will, of course, be much smaller than this main file.
- Finally, you can print the Quiz pages on your printer and send your response back to Grace Notes in the regular mail. If you do this, send the mail to:

Grace Notes

% Warren Doud

1705 Aggie Lane

Austin, Texas 78757 USA

Whichever transmission method you use, when Grace Notes receives your completed Quiz, the next lesson will be sent to you, by the same means you received this one. EXCEPT: when you have sent in the FINAL QUIZ, we will send your certificate to you, by regular mail.

Questions on Ephesians Lesson 6

1. Ephesians 2:9-10 show that a person obtains salvation through a combination of grace and works.

Answer:

2. What are the three spheres of the believer's walk?

Answer:

3. What nationality, or race, were "The Circumcision?"

Answer:

4. What did the Jewish religion hold up to Gentiles as the basis for spirituality?

Answer:

5. The Apostle Paul condemned circumcision as a bad thing. [True/False]

Answer:

6. If circumcision is nothing, and uncircumcision is nothing, what really matters?

Answer:

7. How are Gentiles who were at one time strangers from the covenants and without God in the world, brought near to God?

Answer:

8. A person uses faith every day in all things, not just in thinking about God. [True / False]

Answer:

9. Faith is a _____ process. [A. prayer; B. mental; C. conversational; D. educational]

Answer:

10. Fill in the blank: "Faith is complete _____ in some things for which there is no empirical or rational _____ available."

Answer:

11. Christian _____ leads to strong faith. [A. edification; B. living; C. fellowship; D. works]

Answer:

12. Abraham was circumcised [A. before he believed God's promises; B. after he believed God's promises, C. when he was 8 days old, in the Jewish tradition; D. as a teenager].

Answer:

Ephesians Lesson 6

13. Circumcision has no meaning to Christian Jews. [True / False]

Answer:

14. In the bible, peace is based on [A, a lot of Bible study; B. going to church regularly; C. a relationship with God; D. having Christian friends].

Answer:

15. Fill in the blanks: "For God has not given us a spirit of fear, but of _____, and of _____, and of a _____."

Answer:

16. Peace with God is never available apart from [A. doing good works; B. faith in Christ; C. a good church life].

Answer:

17. The Peace of God is part of the answer to problems of [A. worry; B. depression; C. old age; D. economic troubles; E. all of these].

Answer:

18. Essay Question: Suppose you have a friend who is Jewish and is sincerely interested in hearing about how salvation was made available to Jews and Gentiles alike. Write down an outline of the subjects you could talk about with your friend, using Ephesians as a basis of study.

End of Quiz