

**WEEK 8**

# **MADE** **ALIVE**

The Book of Ephesians



# MADE ALIVE

The Book of Ephesians

**WEEK 8**  
**MARCH 4, 2024**



**CHURCH IN THE SQUARE**

©2024 CHURCH IN THE SQUARE  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

EVERY DAY ...

... A **PASSAGE** TO READ,  
... SOME **COMMENTS** TO CONSIDER,  
... THREE **QUESTIONS** TO ASK,  
... A **PRAYER** TO PRAY.



# WEEK 8

## EPHESIANS 4:4-10

---

**DAY 1**  
**EPHESIANS 4:4-5**  
ONE HOPE  
**5**

**DAY 2**  
**EPHESIANS 4:4-5**  
ONE BAPTISM  
**7**

**DAY 3**  
**EPHESIANS 4:6**  
ONE FATHER  
**9**

**DAY 4**  
**EPHESIANS 4:7-8**  
GIFTS ARE A GRACE  
**11**

**DAY 5**  
**EPHESIANS 4:9-10**  
THE ANTI-CELEBRITY  
**13**

**FAMILY GUIDE**  
CONVERSATIONS STARTERS  
**15**





## DAY 1

### ONE HOPE

---

#### First read Ephesians 4:4-5.

Christian hope is not general. It's particular. Our hope isn't a mere feeling but a grounding reality upon which we can and should build our lives. *But what exactly is our hope?*

We live in a particularly anxious time. Supply chain issues, political unrest, racism, and global pandemics swirl all around us like a perfect storm of hopelessness. However, "The greatest threat to our hope for a better world is not the natural environment but the various evils that continually spring from the human heart" (*Hope in Times of Fear*, xviii). While it's tempting, we must learn to avoid building our lives on the latest innovation, brand, or icon. These eventually give way, like a house built on sand in a thunderstorm (see Matthew 7:24-27). Instead, we must anchor our lives on the steady, unchanging, and singular **"hope that belongs to your call"** (v.5).

This "one hope" is unique among other spiritual assurances because it's not an idea. It's not a set of values, beliefs, or practices. Nor is it wishful thinking. Our hope is a person. That's why the Apostle Peter says our Father has **"caused us to be born again to a living hope"** (v.3). Our hope is alive. Our hope took on flesh, suffered, and died. As a human being, Jesus endured anxious times just like us. He faced our greatest fears of shame and death and came out victorious on the other side. Jesus isn't a feeling or wishful thinking. He is our one hope upon which we can safely build our lives.



## DAY 1

### ONE HOPE

---

1. What does it mean that hope is a person?
2. What causes you to doubt and fear?
3. How does Jesus meet you in that doubt and fear?

*Heavenly Father ...*

*Often I consider the future and worry. I worry that I won't have enough, that I won't be enough. I fear that you're not real and that hope is up to me. Settle my soul. Heal my heart. Calm my body. Ease my mind. Reassure me that I can safely build my life on the one hope, your Son, Jesus Christ.*

*In Jesus' Name, Amen.*



## DAY 2

# ONE BAPTISM

---

### First read Ephesians 4:4-5.

Baptism is the sign of our covenant with God, but it's also been one of the most contentious subjects of debate throughout church history. *So, what is our "one baptism?"*

Jesus was baptized. Any discussion of this sacrament or ordinance should begin here. It's a beautifully Trinitarian moment. In Matthew 3, the Father speaks a blessing from heaven (v.17), the Son ascends from the waters (v.16a), and the Spirit descends like a dove (v.16b). God dignifies the practice through his holistic participation. Jesus then instructs his disciples to **"Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and the Holy Spirit"** (Matthew 28:19). At the risk of oversimplification, our "one baptism" is the baptism performed in the name of the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit.

Additionally, God has always given a sign to mark his covenant people. Circumcision marked God's people before Christ. After Christ, the sign became baptism. You see, relationship with God has always been about grace. Yet, the sign of that covenant changes (see Colossians 2:11-12). The Apostle Peter told early converts to **"Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ... For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself"** (Acts 2:38,39). That promise, the covenant grace, was instituted, embodied, and then commanded by Father, Son, and Spirit. And it's visibly demonstrated through baptism.



## DAY 2

# ONE BAPTISM

---

1. Why is baptism important?
2. How ought our baptism be a reminder to us and others of God's grace?
3. Why is it significant that Jesus was baptized and that the Father and Spirit participated?

*Heavenly Father ...*

*Thank you that relationship with you has always been about grace.*

*In Jesus' Name, Amen.*





## DAY 3

### ONE FATHER

---

#### First read Ephesians 4:6.

God is Father. From eternity past, he related to the Son and Spirit as Father. And into eternity future, he relates to his people as Father, too. *But what does it mean that God is Father?*

When the Lord instructs Moses about freeing Israel from Egyptian captivity, he reveals his paternal nature. God told him, ***“say to Pharaoh, ‘Thus says the Lord, Israel is my firstborn son, and I say to you, ‘Let my son go that he may serve me.’”*** (Exodus 4:22-23a). This is our first hint of God revealing himself as Father to his people.

It conveys love.

It demonstrates ownership and advocacy.

It tells us God is devoted and righteously jealous for his people.

That’s what it is to be our Father.

But there’s more.

Before creation and the cross, God was Father. Jesus desires us, his spiritual siblings, to know God as he has always enjoyed him. He prays, ***“Father, I desire that they also, whom you have given me, may be with me where I am, to see my glory that you have given me because you loved me before the foundation of the world”*** (John 17:24). A timeless love ultimately defines God as Father. And this divine affection is offered to us by grace through faith through the Eternal Son.



**DAY 3**  
ONE FATHER

---

1. What does it mean that God is Father?
2. Do you have a hard time relating to God as a son or daughter? Why or why not?
3. How does Jesus' relationship with the Heavenly Father inform our relationship with him?

*Heavenly Father ...*

*You are a gracious Father. You are loving, protective, jealous for me, and gentle. You take really good care of me. Help me to trust your care and rest in you as a humble and joyful child.*

*In Jesus' Name, Amen.*



## DAY 4

# GIFTS ARE A GRACE

---

### First read Ephesians 4:7-8.

Paul moves from the supremacy of God, **“who is over all and through all and in all,”** to the giftedness of the Church (v.6). God is perfect in nature, character, and power. That means he can do anything and everything he pleases perfectly. However, when it comes to accomplishing his will through his people, **“he gave gifts to men”** (v.8). That’s why it’s their gifts are a grace (see v.7). God didn’t have to equip and entrust us to do what he could do infinitely better. But he delights in empowering and including his people in his purposes—fostering unity.

The Lord has gifted **“each one of us”** in different ways (v.7). We’ve learned the Church is like a body (see v.4). We’re **“many members, and the members do not all have the same function”** (Romans 12:4). Some of us are gifted in making friends, others in fundraising, others still in teaching, music, leadership, and cooking. All of our different skills, abilities, and acumens are meant to be received and enjoyed for the good of others and the glory of God. Yet the temptation is always to use our gifts for our good and glory.

Our gifts often divide us, *don’t they?* Usually, this happens because we forget that our gifts are a grace. Our talents, abilities, and opportunities don’t point us to the Father’s generosity and love. Instead, they point us to earthly ambition (see Philippians 2:3). The remedy is to behold the supremely gifted one. Jesus is perfect in nature, character, and power. However, though Jesus **“was in the form of God, [he] did not count equality with God a thing to be grasped, but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant”** (Philippians 2:6-7). The humble service of Jesus humbles us to see our gifts as a grace and to use them graciously.



## DAY 4

# GIFTS ARE A GRACE

---

1. What gifts has God given you?
2. How do your gifts bring good to others and glory to God? How are you tempted to use your gifts for your good and glory?
3. How do Jesus' supremacy and humility help you use your gifts properly?

*Heavenly Father ...*

*Thank you for graciously giving me the ability to \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_. Give me understanding and courage to use these gifts for the good of others and your glory.*

*In Jesus' Name, Amen.*





## DAY 5

### THE ANTI-CELEBRITY

---

#### First read Ephesians 4:9-10.

In her book *Celebrities for Jesus*, author Katelyn Beaty details the damaging effects of celebrity culture within the church. She defines celebrity as "social power without proximity" (17). It's information without intimacy. It's influence despite isolation. It's glory without relationship.

If that's the case, then Jesus is the anti-celebrity.

Among many titles, Jesus was called *teacher*. But in his *Sermon on the Mount*, Jesus says, **"Do not think that I have come to abolish the Law or the Prophets; I have not come to abolish them but to fulfill them"** (Matthew 5:17). He didn't just say something new. He didn't just flaunt his gifts and wow the crowds to build his brand. Jesus showed up. He came. He drew near to accomplish something; to fulfill something.

Jesus has moral integrity. He's the very embodiment of God's Word (see John 1:14). Theologian Michael Reeves explains, "the Father sent his Son to make himself known--meaning not that he wanted simply to download some information about himself, but that the love the Father eternally had for the Son might be in those who believe in him, and that we might enjoy the Son as the Father always has" (*Delighting in the Trinity*, 69). The teachings of Jesus are made alive through his incarnate love. And his love led him to the cross.

While celebrityism promises power *without* proximity, Jesus embodies power *through* proximity. He comes near. He embraces us in pain, shame, and sin. Then, through the cross, he makes a way to be with God forever. Jesus **"descended into the lower regions, the earth,"** and he is the one who **"ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things"** (vv.9,10). Jesus is God with us.



**DAY 5**  
THE ANTI-  
CELEBRITY

---

1. Why did Jesus descend to earth? Why did he draw near us?
2. Why is it so alluring to follow celebrities from a distance?
3. How does Jesus show us a better way of power and proximity? How should that change how you live?

*Heavenly Father ...*

*Thank you for coming close.*

*In Jesus' Name, Amen.*



# **FAMILY GUIDE**

## CONVERSATIONS STARTERS

---

### **DAY 1**

#### **Ephesians 4:4-5**

*There is one body and one Spirit—just as you were called to the one hope that belongs to your call— one Lord, one faith, one baptism,*

Jesus is our one hope.

What does it mean that Jesus is our one hope? What makes you scared or worried?

### **DAY 2**

#### **Ephesians 4:6**

*one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.*

God is Father.

What does it mean that God is our Heavenly Father? What does it mean to be a child of God?

### **DAY 3**

#### **Ephesians 4:7-8**

*But grace was given to each one of us according to the measure of Christ's gift. Therefore it says, "When he ascended on high he led a host of captives, and he gave gifts to men."*

We all have gifts.

What are you good at? How do you think you can use those gifts for the good of others and God's glory?

# MADE ALIVE

The Book of Ephesians

To receive updates about this reading guide and discover more gospel resources to help you enjoy the truth and beauty of Jesus, please visit [churchinthesquare.com](https://churchinthesquare.com).







**CHURCH** IN THE **SQUARE**

©2024 CHURCH IN THE SQUARE  
ALL RIGHTS RESERVED.

