

**Bible Study - Lesson #8**  
**Four Great Loves – Loving God’s Purposes *A Mission from God* – Ephesians 1**  
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**Call In Time: 7:00 P.M.**

**December 7, 2022**

**Author’s Dialogue:** *Love makes the world go ‘round.* At least that’s how the old song goes. But we live in a broken, love-starved world. Relationships go sour. Families squabble and sometimes hurt us. Friends disappoint us. Even the church can add to our sense of aloneness.

The Bible gives us hope and encouragement. It reveals that we are called to be a loving community – loving God, loving God’s Word, loving God’s people in all their diversity and loving God’s purposes in the world. That’s an awesome task, but God promises to equip us for it. We can love because God first loved us unconditionally, in spite of our unfaithfulness.

But what does it mean to love God? How can we learn to love God’s Word? Who are the people we are called to love? Just what are God’s purposes in the world? This set of eight studies examines these questions in the light of Scripture – God’s written Word. You’ll be amazed at how the Bible provides startling, practical direction for your life today.

Begin each study with prayer and close each session with a time of prayer and worship, expressing your love for God. If you study with others, plan to spend enough time together that you can enjoy one another’s fellowship.

Most of all, enjoy discovering new things from God’s Word!

**Suggestions/Ground rules for this Bible Study Series:**

(1) **Pray** that God will speak to you through his Word.

(2) **Carefully read the assigned passage:** I suggest that you purchase an NIV, New Revised Standard Bible or a New King James Version Bible.

These translations have been authored by modern day Biblical Scholars in an effort to be more harmonious with the original Biblical text, and their modern use of language will be helpful in your personal study and understanding.

(3) **Do the homework:** Take time to read and answer the questions found in the lesson in advance of the class. It is helpful to have a study buddy when studying any Bible Lesson Series. I suggest that you seek out a Study Buddy (i.e. a spouse, a sibling, a child, a grandchild, a person who shares in a similar Davison church ministry, a close friend, a new friend, a co-worker, a neighbor). It should be someone that you enjoy studying with or are willing to speak to, check on and pray with, at least once a week.

(4) **Don't give up and remain patient:** Sometimes when we read a Biblical passage it may be necessary to read it and re-read it several times before it sinks in. That's common for most believers, including your teacher/pastor.

(5) **Keep coming to Bible Study and invite others:** We will attempt to schedule Bible Studies bi-weekly whenever possible until the series is completed. This allows the student time to study, answer homework questions, share with their study buddy and reflect upon any new-found knowledge.

**Note:** Sometimes delays occur in the bi-weekly Bible Study due to church events, weather alerts or the teacher's schedule. When this occurs, every effort will be made to get us back on track as soon as possible.

A person doesn't have to be a member of Davison to share in bi-weekly Bible Study. Invite others, especially those who do not currently have a church home or are seeking a new local fellowship to be affiliated with.

All are welcome to attend Davison's Bible Study regardless to their geographic location. With Zoom access it is easy for everyone to participate, even out of town participants.

(6) **Be respectful and sensitive to others in the Bible Study group:** We all have different life experiences. Listen attentively when others describe what they have learned. You may be surprised by their insights! In all cases, there is no one single answer to a question. In fact, there may be many answers which can be heard through the personal Christian testimonies of others.

(7) **Be careful not to dominate the Bible Study discussion:** Sometimes we are so eager to express our thoughts that we leave too little opportunity for others to respond. Allow others to participate in the discussion also. Although we are all at different levels in our spiritual journey, remember that no single individual knows it all.

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**Purpose of the Lesson:** To understand and participate in God’s greater purposes for all humankind.

“I like being on God’s side in this battle,” a friend whispered. “We know how it ends!” There’s something about having a clear picture of where we’re headed that gives us patience with the details and endurance for the long haul. These opening verses of Ephesians give us a broad picture of God’s eternal purposes and plan.

GROUP DISCUSSION. How does being a Christian make you any different from those who don’t know Christ?

PERSONAL REFLECTION. What do you believe God is calling you to do with your life?

The apostle Paul wrote Ephesians, most likely as a general letter to be circulated among several churches. He was probably in prison at the time.

***Read Ephesians 1 (NIV).***

<sup>1</sup>Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To God’s holy people in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus:

<sup>2</sup>Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>3</sup>Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.

<sup>4</sup>For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love

<sup>5</sup>he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will—

<sup>6</sup>to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves.

<sup>7</sup>In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace

<sup>8</sup>that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding,

<sup>9</sup>he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ,

<sup>10</sup> to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

<sup>11</sup> In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will,

<sup>12</sup> in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.

<sup>13</sup> And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit,

<sup>14</sup> who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory.

<sup>15</sup> For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God's people,

<sup>16</sup> I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers.

<sup>17</sup> I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better.

<sup>18</sup> I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people,

<sup>19</sup> and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength

<sup>20</sup> he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms,

<sup>21</sup> far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come.

<sup>22</sup> And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church,

<sup>23</sup> which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

### **Lesson #8 – Questions**

1. According to verses 3-14, what has God done for us?

Describe a practical difference one of these blessings has made in your life recently.

2. What are God's purposes and plans, according to verses 9-10?

How do you see this plan unfolding around you in your community?

In world events?

3. What role do you have in fulfilling God's plan to "bring all things together under Christ"?

4. According to verses 11-14, what was involved in your coming to Christ?

5. Examine Paul's prayer in verses 15-23. What does he give thanks for (vv. 15-16)?

6. Who are the people you thank God for, and how have they affected you?

7. Notice Paul's request in verses 17-19. How would your church or fellowship group be different if each person were to experience these things?

8. How have you seen the kind of power from God that is described in verses 19-20 displayed?

9. According to verses 20-23, how is God working to accomplish his purposes in the past, present and future?

10. Look at the role God gave the church in verses 22-23. How do you see that mission being fulfilled in your own congregation?

If your church does not have a strong mission focus, how could you help to expand its vision and outreach?

*Thank God for the people he has put in your life and the blessings he has given you. Then pray Paul's prayer in verses 17-19. Ask God to show you how he wants you involved in his worldwide mission to unite all things in Christ, and then ask for boldness to follow through. Conclude by praising God for his power and glory.*

**Now or Later**

*Read Revelation 21:1-7, 22-27; and 22:1-7. According to these verses, what will life in the New Jerusalem be like?*