

DAILY BIBLE READING PLAN

12-03-2023 // WEEK 48 NOTES

Ephesians 4-6 • Colossians • Philemon • Philippians • Acts 1-10

Ephesians Chapters 4 - 6

Ephesians is perhaps the **deepest theological treatise** in all of Paul's letters. The depth of God's love is shown to us all. Remember, **chapters 1-3** are orthodoxy, great Christian theology.

Chapters 4-6 are orthopraxy—the practical application of right theology. We are called to walk in the light, not darkness (**chapter 4**). Run away from any kind of impurity. Have healthy relationships and marriages (**chapter 5**). And learn how to fight our spiritual enemy, Satan, with the full armor of God (**chapter 6**).

Colossians

In this Pauline letter, you see **who Jesus is and what he did** (the creation of the world!) like no other epistle. In **chapter one**, Jesus is clearly described as God in human flesh. And as he is victorious over the evil one: there was a spectacle, a victory parade that happened in heaven after Jesus's ascension (**chapter 2**). Then **chapters 3-4** give the practical application of living in the victory of Jesus. Our minds are fixed on eternity (**chapter 3**). And we live out our faith in healthy relationships, being great workers in the workplace, and strive to have strong, Christ-centered families (**chapter 3**). We are wise toward outsiders in the faith, always praying people will come to faith in Jesus (**chapter 4**).

Philemon

Paul is encouraging a good friend, Philemon, to accept a runaway slave back to his home, but do so as accepting a **Christian brother back**. Philemon must have come to faith under Paul's tutelage when he ran away to Rome. Yes, Paul never rebuked slavery. But it was not like southern, chattel slavery. Often, in Rome, slaves became a part of the family they were under. Actually adopted! Paul wants Philemon to accept Onesimus back as a brother in Christ. Also, he says that if there are any expenses owed, Paul will pay for them. **It's a beautiful illustration of redemption, forgiveness, and the church as a family.**

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Philippians

It's Paul's **letter of joy**. Imprisoned, his faith is great. He only wants the gospel to be proclaimed (**chapter 1**). He encourages the Philippian church to be unified and quit fighting (two women are used as an example by name!). Paul then uses Jesus's incarnation as an example of humility and love (**Philippians 2:1-11**). The final two chapters are about not living under self-righteousness, which is the law, but under grace. Trusting in God no matter what situation we may be in. And believing that he will supply all of our needs according to his riches in Jesus.

Acts Chapters 1 - 10

Acts is the continuation of Luke's gospel. **Luke 24** ends and **Acts 1** is the next chapter. It's the formation of the church and its mission to the world (read **Acts 1:8**). **Acts 1-7** is the mission to Jerusalem and Judea (think Charlotte and then Mecklenburg County). Primarily through the witness of Peter, the gospel spreads throughout this region. The story of Stephen in **Acts 7** is remarkable. A deacon, Stephen recounts the entire Old Testament in this chapter, then gives his life for Jesus. **Acts 8-12** is the mission to Samaria. Philip is one of the major evangelists here, witnessing to the Ethiopian eunuch

Keep reading! We are almost through the Bible in a year.

David