

Believers Boot Camp (Ephesians) – Part 3

The Lord Jesus Christ has already defeated our Enemy hands down. However, He has left it up to us to enforce every day in earth's trenches the victory He has won in the Heavens. The book of Ephesians serves as a **Believers Boot Camp**, teaching us that the church is equipped with vast spiritual weaponry in order to accomplish this very task. Victory is ours if we fight for it! Ephesians is **serious training for serious Christians**.

When people become Christians one of the hardest things to do is to RETRAIN them not to continue to operate according to the world system. It took one night to get Israel out of Egypt, but forty years to get Egypt out of them. There is always a battle between the NEW MAN and the OLD MAN. And that is why we need teaching like Paul gives to us in Ephesians.

The attitude of WORSHIP we walk in daily is the classroom of the Holy Spirit. The more we cultivate a worshipful life, the more He can teach us the ways of God. As we grow up in the Lord, we UNDERSTAND more and we SURRENDER more. As we remain faithful to God's Word and follow the leading of His Spirit, we will give up idols, put off sinful thinking, and crucify the flesh – over and over and over again! And we each new REVELATION about God, our worship becomes RICHER.

When we consider worship in light of Ephesians, we can see why Paul waits until chapter three to declare that he is a PRISONER. Worship is different than praise, because the worshipper has stepped beyond praising God FOR THEIR CONDITION to worshipping Him FROM THEIR POSITION. Paul was not forced to be a prisoner of Jesus Christ – he chose to become that!

WORSHIP IS NOT ACCOMPLISHED IN “SERVICES” – RATHER, WORSHIP IS OUR “SERVICE” TO GOD.

The MESSAGE is far more important than the MESSENGER. In fact, the messenger's life is just a CANVAS for the message. From the first moment of his encounter with the Lord, Paul signed up for HARSHIPS.

Acts 9:5 (KJV) And he said, Who art thou, Lord? And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: **it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.**

Acts 9:5 (AMP) And Saul said, Who are You, Lord? And He said, I am Jesus, Whom you are persecuting. ***It is dangerous and it will turn out badly for you to keep kicking against the goad [to offer vain and perilous resistance].***

Acts 9:16 For I will shew him how great things he must **suffer** for my name's sake.

3:1 - Paul had a Jewish PEDIGREE, but he became a PRISONER on behalf of Gentiles he wouldn't have even spoken to before he knew Jesus Christ!

3:2 – “dispensation” – “administration” (Paul's role to the Gentiles)

3:3 – the church is “THE MYSTERY” – the carnal mind cannot understand it – unbelievers are supposed to think teachings of Scripture are ridiculous!

1 Corinthians 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned.

IN SCRIPTURE, A MYSTERY IS NOT SOMETHING “HIDDEN” BUT SOMETHING “REVEALED” – that is why a lifestyle of worship is foundational and non-negotiable, because it brings revelation to you!

3:5 – we are highly PRIVILEGED to live in the CHURCH AGE

3:6 – GOD BROKE ALL PROTOCOL IN SAVING THE GENTILES!

Luke 14:16-24 ¹⁶ Then said he unto him, A certain man made a great supper, and bade many: ¹⁷ And sent his servant at supper time to say to them that were bidden, Come; for all things are now ready. ¹⁸ And they all with one consent began to make excuse. The first said unto him, I have bought a piece of ground, and I must needs go and see it: I pray thee have me excused. ¹⁹ And another said, I have bought five yoke of oxen, and I go to prove them: I pray thee have me excused. ²⁰ And another said, I have married a wife, and therefore I cannot come. ²¹ So that servant came, and shewed his lord these things. Then the master of the house being angry said to his servant, Go out quickly into the streets and lanes of the city, and bring in hither the poor, and the maimed, and the halt, and the blind. ²² And the servant said, Lord, it is done as thou hast commanded, and yet there is room. ²³ And the lord said unto the servant, Go out into the highways and hedges, and compel them to come in, that my house may be filled. ²⁴ For I say unto you, That none of those men which were bidden shall taste of my supper.

THREE CALLS TO THE FEAST:

- Them that were bidden – the Jews
- The poor, maimed, halt, and blind – the Gentiles
- Yet there is room / highways and hedges – last days revival!

3:7 – Paul is referring to the miraculous moment of his conversion

3:8 – “less than the least of all saints” – Paul stood in awe that God would save a murderer of Christians and call him to be an Apostle!

1 Corinthians 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

1 Timothy 1:15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

3:8 – “unsearchable” = “inexhaustible”

3:9 – “fellowship of the mystery / hid in God” – revelation of the church hidden in the Old Testament, but even Gentiles who obeyed were blessed

Luke 4:25-27 But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian.

Matthew 8:8-10 The centurion answered and said, Lord, I am not worthy that thou shouldest come under my roof: but speak the word only, and my servant shall be healed. For I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth; and to another, Come, and he cometh; and to my servant, Do this, and he doeth it. When Jesus heard it, he marvelled, and said to them that followed, Verily I say unto you, I have not found so great faith, no, not in Israel.

3:9 – “created all things by Jesus Christ” – the same God who brought a WORLD out of nothing brings His CHURCH out of nothing!

John 1:3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made.

3:10 – “to the intent that NOW” – what was hidden before is revealed NOW

God always reveals Himself, His principles and His purposes progressively in stages. You couldn't take it all at once, that's why God waited until NOW in your life. With God, timing is everything – catch His “proceeding” Word!

PROGRESSIVE REVELATION – a nameless animal was sacrificed to be a COVERING for Adam's sins in Genesis, a LAMB for Abel's sins later on, Exodus shows us that this blood sacrifice is to be APPLIED, Leviticus tells us that it is to be a SPOTLESS male lamb, Isaiah tells us that the lamb is actually a MAN, but we don't know which man until John the Baptist says, “BEHOLD THE LAMB OF GOD!”

Matthew 4:4 But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that **PROCEEDETH (continually)** out of the mouth of God.

Hebrews 1:3 Who being the brightness of his glory, and the express image of his person, **and upholding all things by the word of his power**, when he had by himself purged our sins, sat down on the right hand of the Majesty on high;

Isaiah 55:11 So shall my word be that **GOETH (continually)** forth out of my mouth: it shall not return unto me void, but it shall accomplish that which I please, and it shall prosper in the thing whereto I sent it.

When God says something, His Word continues to work (“let there be light”); the same Word that delivered you still says “YOU SHALL LIVE ...”

3:11 – “eternal purpose” – what happens to you as a child of God in TIME was predestined in ETERNITY – God didn't just redeem you in TIME, but in ETERNITY (Rev. 13:8 – “the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world”)

GOD FIXED IT IN ETERNITY, AND THEN MANIFESTED IT IN TIME.

That's why it is only “a matter of time” before God brings me out of my trouble, because He fixed it in eternity!

3:12 – “boldness and access with confidence” (!)

3:12 – “by the faith OF HIM” – we live by HIS FAITH!

Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I **live by the faith of the Son of God**, who loved me, and gave himself for me.

The only thing still alive when Jesus went into the tomb was the words He had spoken BY FAITH. Many times, our faith and confidence in the Word is all we have when we are buried in our trials! And without the resurrection of Jesus, we would have no proof that “His faith” actually worked.

John 2:19 Jesus answered and said unto them, Destroy this temple, and in three days I will raise it up.

1 Corinthians 15:17 And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins.

3:13 – tribulation for the gospel's sake brings glory to God and to His church – your tribulations are not only for you – your experiences impact others

2 Corinthians 4:17 For our light affliction, which is but for a moment, worketh for us a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory;

2 Corinthians 3:18 But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord.

We are not going from battle to battle and from trial to trial, but we are going from revelation to revelation, from victory to victory, and from glory to glory!

2 Timothy 1:8 Be not thou therefore ashamed of the testimony of our Lord, nor of me his prisoner: but be thou partaker of the afflictions of the gospel according to the power of God;

2 Timothy 2:9 Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.

You can't do anything in your own strength that has eternal benefits anyway!

3:14 – “for this cause I bow” – Paul is in awe of the plan of God

3:15 – “the whole family” – the church is bigger than North America, and the church is also bigger than NOW (it reaches to the PAST and the FUTURE); the whole family includes an innumerable host of saints, and even the angels – **REMEMBER THAT YOU HAVE NEVER WORSHIPPED ALONE!**

Hebrews 12:1 Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us,

Psalms 34:7 The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them.

God knows how to use what we do and say today to bless someone around the world – or even someone in “the whole family” in a future generation!

3:16 – “inner MAN” – not “inner child” – you are called to be MATURE, strengthened by God to be MATURE, and expected to be MATURE!

3:17 – “dwell” – “to live in as a home” – this means that Christ is not just living in our hearts, but that He is “feeling at home” in us!

3:17 – “rooted and grounded” – securely fixed!

3:19 – “passeth knowledge” – greater than what you can figure out!

There is no dysfunction in a child who knows that they are truly loved – God’s love dispels our dependence on others for our happiness.

3:20 – “exceeding abundantly above all” – English translators are struggling a bit here to give us the sense that God’s power is “over the top” ☺

3:20 – “according” – common word in Ephesians, meaning “in harmony with” – in the first two chapters refers to something God or the devil did (in spirit realm) – here it is used to refer to something that WE as the church allow!

3:21 – “Amen” – “absolutely, unequivocally true” – you can’t argue with a statement that has an “Amen” at the end of it!

2 Corinthians 1:20 For all the promises of God in him are yea, and in him **Amen**, unto the glory of God by us.

Romans 16:20 And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. **Amen**.

Revelation 22:20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. **Amen**. Even so, come, Lord Jesus.