

1. LIFE LESSON #1: IN CHRIST, WE ARE ACCEPTED.

Ephesians 1:6 (NKJV)

⁶ to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved.

Because God has bestowed his grace upon us: we are special; we are loved; and we can face any challenge in life.

2. LIFE LESSON #2: PRAYING SCRIPTURE IS TRANSFORMATIVE.

Please see the blogpost for Thursday, August 17, 2023.

3. LIFE LESSON #3: TRUE ENLIGHTENMENT BEGINS WITH THE KNOWLEDGE OF GOD.

Ephesians 1:17 (NIV)

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.

If we want to gain insight into how the world works, then we need to know God better.

4. LIFE LESSON #4: SALVATION IS BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH ALONE.

Ephesians 2:8-9 (NIV)

⁸ For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God—⁹ not by works, so that no one can boast.

God's salvation does not come to us through human effort. Salvation is a free gift of God that we receive by faith.

5. LIFE LESSON #5: FAITH ALONE SAVES, BUT THE FAITH WHICH SAVES IS NOT ALONE.

Ephesians 2:10 (NIV)

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

The Holy Spirit makes us more like Christ in our character and actions.

6. LIFE LESSON #6: GOD WANTS TO REPRODUCE HIS LOVE WITHIN EACH OF US.

Ephesians 3:16-19 (NIV)

¹⁶ I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, ¹⁷ so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, ¹⁸ may have power, together with all the Lord's holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, ¹⁹ and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God.

The more we come to know God, the more we will walk in love towards others. The more we allow his Spirit to work in us, the more we reflect his glory. Paul concludes in 3:20-21 with a doxology: “Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.”

7. LIFE LESSON #7: WE NEED TO BE AGGRESSIVE IN OUR OBEDIENCE TO THE LORD.

Ephesians 4:1 (NIV)

... I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

Ephesians 4:22-24 (NIV)

²²You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self, which is being corrupted by its deceitful desires . . . ²⁴and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Romans 13:14

¹⁴Rather, clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ, and do not think about how to gratify the desires of the flesh.

Putting off and putting on require intentional effort (as with the armor in Ephesians 6). We can be successful in doing so through the power of the Holy Spirit.

8. LIFE LESSON #8: OUR POSITION IN CHRIST REQUIRES US TO REMAIN CHRISTLIKE IN OUR RELATIONSHIPS WITH OTHER PEOPLE.

Ephesians 4:2-3

Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

Ephesians 5:1-2

Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children ² and live a life of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Ephesians 5:21

Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ."

Paul's teaching on humility, love & submission is similar to what we find in Phil. 2:3-8,

3 Do nothing out of selfish ambition or vain conceit, but in humility consider others better than yourselves. 4 Each of you should look not only to your own interests, but also to the interests of others. 5 Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, 7 but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death-- even death on a cross!

Like Jesus we need to be humble and sacrificial in our love for others.

9. LIFE LESSON #9: WE NEED TO DISCOVER AND FLOW IN OUR SPIRITUAL GIFTS SO THAT THE BODY OF CHRIST WILL GROW IN MATURITY.

Ephesians 4:11-12

¹¹So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹²to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

10. LIFE LESSON 10: IN CHRIST, WE HAVE EVERYTHING WE NEED TO OVERCOME THE ATTACKS OF THE EVIL ONE.

Ephesians 6:10-11

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God so that you can take your stand against the devil's schemes.

- We have **salvation** and **faith**.
- We have **righteousness** and **truth/integrity**.
- We have the **gospel** and the **Word**.

11. LIFE LESSON #11: WE CAN BE IN THE PERFECT WILL OF GOD AND STILL FACE DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES.

Ephesians 4:1

As a prisoner for the Lord, ...

Ephesians 6:19-20

¹⁹ Pray also for me, . . . ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.

Paul's plight reminds us that sometimes we can be in the perfect will of God even when our circumstances aren't quite right. This is why Paul declares in Philippians 4:12, 13:

"¹² I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. ¹³ I can do all things through Christ who gives me strength."

We need to keep our focus on Christ and what he has called us to do. The Lord will sustain us even in the midst of trying circumstances. Even though Paul is in prison, his true position is in Christ! This is true of each of us!