

LEADER GUIDE

A STUDY OF FAITH AND PRACTICE



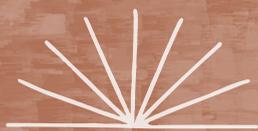
EPHESIANS

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Brentwood, Tennessee



LEADER GUIDE

Welcome! Before you read any further, we want to say how thankful we are for you, the leader. Thank you for your willingness to dive into Scripture, brew the coffee, place the chairs, and set aside the time regularly to meet with other women.

Ephesians: A Study of Faith and Practice is a video- and discussion-based Bible study from Jackie Hill Perry, Jasmine Holmes, and Melissa Kruger. The teaching videos are in a unique conversation format between the three authors and were filmed at a cabin in Georgia's Blue Ridge Mountains. Through their conversation, the authors model what Bible study group conversation can look like for your own group, no matter the size.

Our goal for this leader guide is to help you feel equipped to facilitate and guide your Bible study group gatherings in a way that fosters deep conversation and prayer for you and the women you're leading.

We want to encourage you to use this study however it works best for your group. If you want to follow this leader guide to the letter, do that! If you want to do your own thing, feel free! Our goal is to give you all the tools you might need, but we are certain God has ordained your time with your specific group in your specific setting.

We are grateful for you and are praying for you as you lead this study.

Lifeway Women

WEEKLY GROUP MEETING: SUGGESTED SCHEDULE

7 Group Meetings • Meeting Length: 1.5 hours

SESSION ONE—Introduction: Distribute Bible study books, get to know one another, and watch the **Session One: Introduction** video.

SESSION TWO—Watch the **Session Two: Praise & Prayer** video, and discuss the Session Two personal Bible study.

SESSION THREE—Watch the **Session Three: Alive & Unified** video, and discuss the Session Three personal Bible study.

SESSION FOUR—Watch the **Session Four: Mystery & Power** video, and discuss the Session Four personal Bible study.

SESSION FIVE—Watch the **Session Five: Unity & Maturity** video, and discuss the Session Five personal Bible study.

SESSION SIX—Watch the **Session Six: Light & Love** video, and discuss the Session Six personal Bible study.

SESSION SEVEN—Watch the **Session Seven: Empowered & Equipped** video, and discuss the Session Seven personal Bible study.



HOW TO STRUCTURE YOUR GROUP TIME

Each group session contains the following elements. We've included a suggested amount of time based on a 1.5 hour group meeting. Adjust as you need to for the time you have together!

GATHER (10 MINUTES). This is a time to greet and welcome everyone and to get them comfortable talking. In the first session, you're provided with some general icebreaker questions. In the subsequent sessions, you'll notice a list of questions to help participants review the previous week's personal study. Feel free to adapt, skip, or add questions based on the needs of your group.

WATCH (40 MINUTES). Play the teaching video during this time, and encourage the women to take notes in their book on the "Watch" page for that specific session.

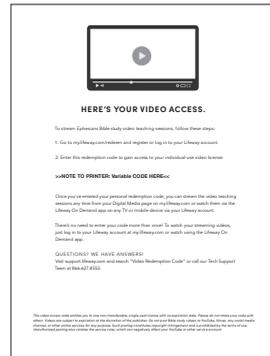
DISCUSS (30 MINUTES). You'll find a suggestion of questions for each week in this Leader Guide. Pick and choose the ones you want to discuss with your group. These questions are designed to help you facilitate conversation around the week's Bible study and personal reflection. As you go through your own study during the week, put a star by any questions or statements you might want to discuss with your group.

CLOSE (10 MINUTES). Brief closing activity ideas and/or prayer prompts have been provided. You can use this time however you wish to enhance or close the session.

HERE ARE A FEW TIPS TO HELP YOU LEAD.

HOW TO WATCH YOUR VIDEOS. The videos for this study are available for streaming through the digital access code on the last page of your Bible study book. Look for the cardstock page labeled “Here’s Your Video Access” and follow the two steps that prompt you to enter your unique redemption code to gain your video streaming access.

If your group doesn’t have adequate Internet connection for video streaming, DVD sets are available for purchase at lifeway.com/ephesiansstudy.



Each video is intended to be viewed after completing the accompanying week of personal study. We strongly recommend you use the teaching videos as a part of this study, but you can still discover truth from Scripture and grow in your walk with God by simply doing the print portion if your setting doesn't allow for video.

GET THE WORD OUT. Be sure to advertise the study early and utilize all methods for getting the word out. Post it on your church's website, send emails to potential attendees, and promote it on all forms of social media. It's best to start advertising the study four to six weeks before it begins. The study is seven sessions long, which means you will meet a minimum of seven or eight times. Visit lifeway.com/ephesiansstudy for free promotional materials to help get the word out about your study.

SCHEDULE. Be sure to make everyone aware of the schedule ahead of time and start promptly each week to honor everyone's time. In your group time, you will watch the teaching video together and discuss what you're learning. You'll also be encouraged to spend a good bit of time in prayer.

STAY IN TOUCH. Prepare a sign-up sheet with space for names, email addresses, and phone numbers. You may also include information like birthdays, social media handles, and favorite candy so that you can foster community among group members.

GET COZY. Make an effort to create a comfortable environment for group meetings. Arrange chairs in a circle to encourage conversation. If your group is large, you may want to watch the teaching video together and then split into smaller groups for the discussion time. If you choose to do so, enlist discussion leaders for each group to keep the conversation moving and focused.

CHILDCARE. Be sure to check with participants to see if childcare is needed, and organize leaders and space for the children in advance.

BIBLE STUDY BOOKS. Each participant will need a Bible study book. Make sure you leave plenty of time for all the books to be ordered and received between announcing and starting your Bible study. Consider offering a scholarship or “buy-one-give-one” option for those who cannot afford a study book on their own.

EARLY PREP. We encourage you to read through the entire leader guide before the first session, and evaluate how this will work best for your group. Highlight specific questions from the leader guide you want to make sure you cover during your group time. We recommend watching the teaching video sessions prior to your meeting and taking note of anything you may want to highlight from the teaching. Be sure you stay on top of your own personal study between each meeting! We’ve left room in the leader guide for you to write down additional talking points and questions you want to pull in from the personal study.

PERSONAL STUDY. Between each meeting, there are five days of personal study to complete in the Bible study book.

PRAYER. Most importantly, be sure to pray for the women who attend the study. And pray for yourself as you prepare to lead. Ask God to draw the women closer to Him as they learn more about Paul’s letter to the Ephesians and the truths it holds for God’s people today.

EVALUATE. At the end of each group session, ask yourself: *What went well? What could be improved? Did you see women’s lives transformed? Did your group grow closer to Christ and to one another?* Also, do a final evaluation at the close of the study.

CONNECT. Find ways to interact and stay engaged with each member of your group throughout the study. Make use of social media, email, text messages, and handwritten notes to encourage them. Continue these connections even after the study ends.

Next, we’ve provided a discussion guide for each session. Remember, these are simply suggestions for how to use your time together. We want to empower you as you lead to do what is best for your group!



DISCUSSION GUIDE

SESSION ONE

Introduction

GATHER. Welcome women to the introductory session of *Ephesians: A Study of Faith and Practice*. Provide name tags and distribute Bible study books if participants don't have them yet.

MEET AND GREET one another! This will be the main point of today's meeting, so spend as much time getting to know one another as you can. (We highly recommend snacks, coffee, and tea!) Here are a few discussion ideas to get your conversation going, especially if you're leading a brand-new group.

Invite each woman to introduce herself and share basic get-to-know-you information.

The videos for this study were filmed at a beautiful spot in the Blue Ridge Mountains. Are you more of a mountain or ocean person? Share why!

WATCH. Play the teaching video for *Session One: Introduction*. Encourage participants to take notes or jot down questions on the Session One Video Viewer Guide (page 9 of the Bible study book).

DISCUSS the video teaching and personal Bible study, using the following questions and prompts as a guide.

Going into your Ephesians study, what is one thing you know about this book of the Bible? It could be anything, from a key teaching or famous verse, to who wrote it and why.

After watching the introduction video, what excites you about studying Ephesians? What do you hope to learn about who God is and who you are in Him?

Jackie describes Bible interpretation as a community project. What are some ways we can encourage, challenge, and hold one another accountable as we go through this study?

What is one thing you will ask God to do as He works in you through this study?

PREVIEW THE STUDY.

Share about the weekly structure and the five days of personal study to complete in each week. Encourage women to read the introductory material on pages 5-8 before they start the first week of personal study.

Brainstorm specific times when group members might try to complete their personal study each day, and remind them that even if they are unable to finish all five days of the personal study, they can still learn and contribute to the group time each week!

Set the commitment and time expectations you have for your group, and take the opportunity now to cover any important housekeeping notes. Decide together if Scripture memory will be a part of your group time. If so, refer to the suggested memory verses at the start of each day of study.

CLOSE. Lead the group in a closing prayer. Pray for some of the specific hopes you have for this group and the ways God will work in each woman's life over the coming weeks.

REMIND. Encourage group members to complete their personal study before the next session.



SESSION TWO

Ephesians 1: Praise & Prayer

GATHER Welcome participants back to the study.

Icebreaker: What is a song you can't stop playing on repeat right now?

Read Ephesians 1 aloud. Ask for 2-3 volunteers to read through sections of the chapter.

Which day of personal study had the most impact on you, and why?
What lingering or hard questions do you have from Ephesians 1?

WATCH. Play the teaching video for Session Two. Encourage participants to take notes or jot down questions on the Session Two “Watch” page (p. 42).

DISCUSS the video teaching and personal Bible study, using the following questions and prompts as a guide.

How did what you heard on the video clarify, reinforce, or give new insight to what you studied this session?

Discuss responses to personal study question 21 (p. 24): *What does it mean that we've been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavens? What's the difference between spiritual blessings and earthly blessings?*

Discuss how understanding the importance of being “in Christ” (the teddy bear and the box imagery Jasmine shared) impacts the way you understand the spiritual blessings of Ephesians 1.

What is one way you can adjust your prayers for others based on Paul’s example in Ephesians 1:15-19?

Share responses to personal study question 53 (p. 38): *What are a couple of specific ways you would like to grow your own prayer life, both in the frequency and the content of your prayers?*

How do you want to live differently in the week to come because of what we’ve studied this week?

CLOSE your group time in prayer. Use the spiritual blessings from Ephesians 1:3-14 as a guide as you pray over your group.



SESSION THREE

Ephesians 2: Alive & Unified

GATHER Welcome participants back to the study.

Icebreaker: What is something fun you've dreamed of doing but haven't had the chance to yet?

Which day of personal study had the most impact on you, and why?
What lingering or hard questions do you have?

Read Ephesians 2 aloud. Ask for 2-3 volunteers to read through sections of the chapter.

WATCH. Play the teaching video for Session Two. Encourage participants to take notes or jot down questions on the Session Three "Watch" page (p. 74).

DISCUSS the video teaching and personal Bible study, using the following questions and prompts as a guide.

How did what you heard on the video clarify, reinforce, or give new insight to what you studied this session?

In today's video, the authors shared their experiences of moving from spiritual death to life in Christ (Eph. 2:1-10). Take some time now to share your own stories.

Discuss personal study question 17 (p. 55): *In what ways do you attempt to earn God's favor through your works? What's the problem with that type of living? How does Ephesians 2:1-10 encourage you today?*

What stood out to you from the conversation around the body and building imagery in Ephesians 2:11-22? What are the implications for your local church involvement?

Discuss personal study question 36 (p. 65): *What does it mean that we are a "holy temple in the Lord"? How should that impact the way we live our lives?*

Encourage a couple of group members to share their responses to personal study question 41 (p. 69): *The Holy Spirit—not your persuasive or perfect words—opens people's spiritual eyes. How does this truth transform the way you think about evangelism? How does it reframe any fears or hesitations you have about sharing the gospel with others?*

How do you want to live differently in the week to come because of what we've studied this week?

CLOSE your group time in prayer. Spend time specifically praying for peace and unity in your relationships with other believers in the church. Invite as many women to pray as are comfortable.



SESSION FOUR

Ephesians 3: Mystery & Power

GATHER Welcome participants back to the study.

Icebreaker: What is the one electronic gadget that you simply couldn't live without?

Which day of personal study had the most impact on you, and why? What lingering or hard questions do you have?

Read Ephesians 3 aloud. Ask for 2-3 volunteers to read through sections of the chapter.

WATCH Play the teaching video for Session Two. Encourage participants to take notes or jot down questions on the Session Four "Watch" page (p. 108).

DISCUSS the video teaching and personal Bible study, using the following questions and prompts as a guide.

How did what you heard on the video clarify, reinforce, or give new insight to what you studied this session?

Discuss personal study questions 28 and 29 (p. 93): *What does it mean that we have boldness and access to God? What can confidence in this access look like? What does it need to look like for you today?*

When you think about Paul's personal ministry—from who he was before he met Jesus to how God used him after—how are you encouraged or challenged in your own ministry?

How might Paul's example transform your feelings of shame, unworthiness, or arrogance?

Invite group members to share their responses to the "Reflect" questions on page 106:

What did you learn about God the Father, God the Son, and God the Holy Spirit in Ephesians 3?

What did you learn about your relationship with God? Who are you in light of who He is and how He is at work?

How is God challenging you to live transformed by the power of His Word?

CLOSE your group time. Use Paul's prayer for spiritual power in Ephesians 3:14-21 as a model for your group's prayer time today.



SESSION FIVE

Ephesians 4: Unity & Maturity

GATHER. Welcome participants back to the study.

Icebreaker: When you were little, what did you want to be when you grew up?

Which day of personal study had the most impact on you, and why? What lingering or hard questions do you have?

Read Ephesians 4 aloud. Ask for 2-3 volunteers to read through sections of the chapter.

WATCH. Play the teaching video for Session Two. Encourage participants to take notes or jot down questions on the Session Five “Watch” page (p. 138).

DISCUSS the video teaching and personal Bible study, using the following questions and prompts as a guide.

How did what you heard on the video clarify, reinforce, or give new insight to what you studied this session?

How do you see the balance (or lack thereof) between unity and diversity playing out in your church and your Christian relationships?

Discuss responses to personal study question 41 (p. 133): *Write, in your own words, a one-sentence summary of Paul's instructions in this part of his letter.*

What is particularly challenging about the way we are called to live in Ephesians 4:17-32? What are some ways we can help each other be more mindful of the Spirit's presence and power?

Encourage a few group members to share what they wrote in response to the following reflection question from page 137: *What did you learn about your relationship with God? Who are you in light of who He is and how He is at work?*

How do you want to live differently in the week to come because of what we've studied this week?

CLOSE your group time in prayer. Open up the prayer time to any group members who want to pray. Refer to the chart on page 128. As you pray, use each pair of contrasting statements as a guided prayer of praise and thanksgiving to the One who has given you new life.



SESSION SIX

Ephesians 5: Light & Love

GATHER. Welcome participants back to the study.

Icebreaker: What’s the literal darkest place you’ve ever experienced?

Which day of personal study had the most impact on you, and why?
What lingering or hard questions do you have?

Read Ephesians 5 aloud. Ask for 2-3 volunteers to read through sections of the chapter.

WATCH. Play the teaching video for Session Two. Encourage participants to take notes or jot down questions on the Session Six “Watch” page (p. 170).

DISCUSS the video teaching and personal Bible study, using the following questions and prompts as a guide.

How did what you heard on the video clarify, reinforce, or give new insight to what you studied this session?

Based on your personal study and the video conversation, discuss what it means to imitate God—and what it doesn’t mean.

Discuss responses to personal study question 24 (p. 153): *What's at stake if the saints believe that the sexually immoral, impure, and covetous will inherit the kingdom of God? What would it say about the holiness of God?*

Share your own response to personal study question 31 (p. 158) as a word of encouragement for your group: *Describe a time when discerning what was pleasing to the Lord helped you walk as a child of light.*

How has your understanding of Paul's instructions to wives and husbands shifted or grown now that you've studied it with the full letter in view?

How do you want to live differently in the week to come because of what we've studied this week?

CLOSE your group time by praying over your group. Pray for the power of the Holy Spirit to enable us to imitate God in our day-to-day lives. Praise Him for the abundant love, grace, and peace that are yours in Christ. And pray for any marriages represented by the women in your group—that they would be rooted in love and respect and would be models of Jesus's love for His church.



SESSION SEVEN

Ephesians 6: Empowered & Equipped

GATHER. Welcome participants back to the study.

Icebreaker: If you could have one superpower, what would you pick?

Which day of personal study had the most impact on you, and why?
What lingering or hard questions do you have?

Read Ephesians 6 aloud. Ask for 2-3 volunteers to read through sections of the chapter.

WATCH. Play the teaching video for Session Two. Encourage participants to take notes or jot down questions on the Session Seven “Watch” page (p. 200).

DISCUSS the video teaching and personal Bible study, using the following questions and prompts as a guide.

How did what you heard on the video clarify, reinforce, or give new insight to what you studied this session?

Discuss together personal study question 22 (p. 185): *If all people, both slave and free, will one day stand before the judgment seat of Christ (2 Cor. 5:10), how should we think about the way God ultimately views earthly social distinctions?*

How do the instructions in Ephesians 6:1–9 give you further understanding of how to imitate God in a wide range of relationships, from home to work to community?

Encourage a few group members to share their responses to personal study question 38 (p. 193): *How has prayer assisted you in your fight against evil?*

We were reminded in the video that, in Christ and through the Spirit, we have everything we need to fight the spiritual battle we enter into daily. In light of this truth, encourage each other with ways you can boldly stand firm in your faith.

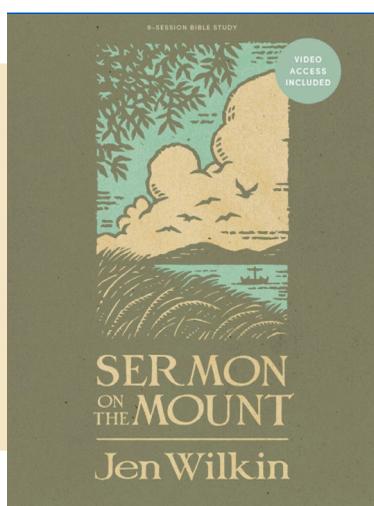
How do you want to live differently in the week to come because of what we've studied this week?

Wrap up your group time by sharing responses to personal study question 52 (p. 199): *Summarize in two to three sentences what you've learned from Ephesians about who God is (orthodoxy). Summarize in two to three sentences what you've learned from Ephesians about putting your faith into practice (orthopraxy).*

CLOSE your group time in prayer. Allow time for silent reflection as you let your thoughts linger on this New Testament book God has so graciously left us. After a few minutes, close by praying the words of Ephesians 3:20-21 over your group: “Now to him who is able to do above and beyond all that we ask or think according to the power that works in us—to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”

FINISHING WELL

NEXT STEPS Even after the study concludes, follow up and challenge women to stay involved through another Bible study, church opportunity, or anything that will continue their spiritual growth and friendships. Provide several options of ministry opportunities the members can participate in individually or as a group to apply what they have learned through this study.



What's Next?

If you enjoyed this study, check out *Sermon on the Mount* by Jen Wilkin.

lifeway.com/sermononthemount



VIDEO ACCESS STUDY

INTRODUCING BIBLE STUDIES with VIDEO ACCESS INCLUDED!

As trends in media consumption change from DVDs to streaming video, Lifeway made the decision to invest in technology that would allow for Bible studies to be accessed through mobile devices and smart TVs in addition to our website.

The concept of a Bible study book with video access allows us to use the technology to give all participants easier access to teaching videos. This will alleviate a concern we have heard from many group leaders of members who stop coming to their group after they miss a week of study.

How will customers access the videos that come with their Bible study book with video access?

There is a unique access code printed in each Bible study book. They will access their video content at my.lifeway.com or through the Lifeway On Demand app.

How long will they have access to the videos that come with their Bible study book?

There is no expiration date on the video access that comes with their Bible study book. They'll be able to access it as long as it is available through our Lifeway On Demand video apps.

What are the benefits of video access being included in each Bible study book?

- This provides more flexibility for group meeting time. Groups now have the option to have group members watch video sessions outside of group meetings to allow more time for discussion.
- If a group member misses a weekly group meeting due to sickness or travel, they will be able to access the video content on their own and continue in their study.
- Group members can re-watch video sessions that were particularly impactful on their own time.

- This simplifies what a group leader needs to facilitate Bible study. You'll now get everything you need with just the Bible study book.
- Our goal is to provide an affordable option for both individuals and churches who are looking for Bible study options.

What do churches and individuals need to lead a group?

Each group member will need a Bible study book, which will include video access. There is also a DVD option for groups who want a non-streaming viewing option. In addition, select studies provide a Video Streaming - Group option for groups who choose not to use the Bible study books. For the best experience, we recommend each group member have a Bible study book.

When do group leaders need a DVD Set?

Because the Bible study book includes video streaming access, the purchase of the DVD set is optional (not essential) for group leaders. This option is for groups who may not have reliable streaming internet access.