

Get a Life!

Ephesians

Doxology: Praise God

Lesson Sixteen

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Ephesians

As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received.

Ephesians 4:1

Doxology: Praise God

Lesson Goal: To help students know how to praise God for His presence in their lives.

Scripture: Ephesians 3:20, 21

Remember, Paul is in prison when he is writing Ephesians. He has not been to court. He is waiting on the emperor to take time to hear his case. He is chained to a guard night and day. We find in other places that he really wanted to be free to continue his missionary work, that is, telling everyone he could about Jesus everywhere he went. It is not the kind of circumstances that would make most of us happy. The place where Paul found himself would have been very depressing for most of us.

However, as we have seen in the preceding verses, Paul was not depressed, instead he was writing with great joy and urging the Ephesians to rejoice in their circumstances, whatever they were.* He has been praying for the church at Ephesus. It is as if he pauses to think about what he has just said. Then he couldn't contain himself. As he closes his prayer, he begins to praise God.

Some have called the two verses that we are studying today a "Doxology." That is an uncommon word for most of us. A doxology is a poetic, sometimes musical, praise to God. As Paul thinks back he remembers the One to whom he is speaking. God the Father. He says, "Now to Him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask..." In just those few words, we have a lot to think about.

When one speaks to God, that is always a very important time. It is the most important thing that a human can do. When we speak to God, we are speaking to the most important person that we could ever know anything about. Paul sat there dictating this letter while his Roman guard listened. Isn't it amazing that even in those circumstances, he could lift up his praise, knowing that the One to whom he prayed was stronger than the whole Roman army.

And, the One to whom he prayed was able to do immeasurably more than we ask. What is the most fantastic thing that we can ask? How long can we make our prayer list? How big is your imagination when you think about what God can do when we ask. Well, Paul used the word "immeasurably." We can't even imagine what God can do when He is ready to see that His will is accomplished. You can't measure the possibilities.

And here Paul is not so much encouraging us to test God, so that we will know how much He can do, but encouraging us to acknowledge that God is greater than any problem we have and can supply any need we have.

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Francisco was having a birthday. He began to think of all the things that he wanted for his birthday. The list got longer and longer. One day, he asked his mom what he was going to get for his birthday. She said, “Well, what do you want?” Francisco began to list all the things that he had thought of as birthday presents. About half way through the list, his mom stopped him. She said, “Whoa! You can’t have all that.” Francisco said, “Why not? I heard dad say that he just got a good raise at work that would make things much easier for us.” “Well, mom said, “It is not so much about what we can afford, it is about what is good for you to have, and how we spend what God has blessed us with as a family.” Francisco understood and changed his list to be much more reasonable. His parents chose something from his list and gave him a wonderful birthday present. We need to learn the lesson that Francisco learned. We need to ask God for that which will be good for us and good for others through us. God ultimately decides and brings us blessings beyond our expectations.

Paul goes on to praise God for working through His power that is within us. His Holy Spirit, as we discussed in the last lesson, is within all Christians, and God brings good into our lives through the work of His Spirit.

He then urges that the Ephesians, and you, and me, give God the glory...praise Him...sing a doxology about Him and to Him. He also says that God should be glorified in the church...in the gathering of God’s people in worship. He says that we are to praise Christ Jesus, not only as long as time lasts, but “for ever and ever.”

We started this lesson with the reminder that Paul was in prison when he was writing these words. That should encourage us to realize that there are not any circumstances that should keep us from praising God. Humans will always have problems, heartaches and other difficulties. But in the midst of our troubles we can rejoice that those troubles are minor compared to the grace and glory of God demonstrated in our lives each day. Every Christian should spend time each day praising God. That means that we acknowledge Him to ourselves and others for who He is, and pray in gratitude for His love and His care for us.

Memory Verse: “To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever!” Ephesians 3:21

*Underlined sentences in the Teacher’s Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher’s Guide.

Student Worksheet

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Memory Verse: “To Him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever!” Ephesians 3:21

>Paul was not depressed, instead he was writing with great _____ and urging the Ephesians to rejoice in their circumstances, _____ they were.

>When we speak to God, we are speaking to the _____ important _____ that we could ever know anything about.

>We can't even imagine what _____ can do when He is ready to see that His _____ is accomplished.

>God's Holy Spirit is within _____ Christians, and God brings _____ into our lives through the work of _____ Spirit.

>He then urges that the Ephesians, and you, and me, give God the _____...praise Him...sing a doxology _____ Him and to _____.

>He says that we are to praise Christ _____, not only as long as time lasts, but “for _____ and _____.”

>But in the midst of our troubles we can _____ that those troubles are _____ compared to the _____ and _____ of God

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that there is a God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God's Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus' name. Jesus' death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.

Fifth, believe that He has answered your prayer and be ready to live for him all the rest of your life.