

CROSSROADS GROUPS

WINTER 2020 EPHESIANS

Week 1

Week 2

Week 3

Week 4

Week 5

Week 6

Week 7

Week 8

LEADERS

Start here

Hey, leader. Yea, that's you. These next eight weeks will rock your group's world. This season, we're focusing IN, and diving into the book of Ephesians. So come along, (you won't regret it), this guide has all you need for an awesome group.

BACKGROUND & TERMS

Season: We do seasons of groups at Crossroads. Each season is eight weeks of group content that we do together.

IN: IN means how we regularly connect with other believers to build community. For example, the group you're leading.

Facilitation: You probably know what this means already, but it's worth calling out. Your job as the leader is NOT to have all the answers, but to keep the conversation going and ensure everyone is included and gets to speak.

With that covered, this **SEASON** of groups is focused on **IN** with you as the **FACILITATOR**.

This guide will take your group through the book of Ephesians. (Spoiler alert: there is NO WAY to cover everything in 8 weeks.) So your goal is to use this guide as the basis for discussion and see where your group goes.

**If you have people in your group who aren't sure about Jesus, that's great! Having them in the group is what matters most. Just keep in mind they still have some questions. Give them space to ask and process.*

CRDS MODEL

Everything is so much easier when you (and your group) know what to expect. So we put together a model you'll follow at each group meeting. It's easy to remember too—we named it after Crossroads. It's the CRDS model, and it stands for Connect, Receive, Do Something, and Seal with Prayer.

Connect: You'll start by just hanging out. Maybe over dinner, with ice breaker questions, or something to help you get the party started.

**Protip: Any time you can start the group and conversation over a meal, do it. Food is magic, trust us.*

Receive: This is the meat & potatoes of group time. You'll dig into a topic with some guided questions to keep the conversation flowing.

Do Something: The Bible says it's important not just to learn something, but to do something about it. That's where we get to see life change. Each week, you'll leave with something to do.

Seal with Prayer: Prayer connects all of what we're doing back to God. We find encouragement, strength, and peace as we pursue a next step.

PREPARE YOUR GROUP

You've got one big to-do before your first group meeting, and that's setting up expectations for your group. We'll make it easy though. Here's a template for an email, or text, or face-to-face conversation (gasp!) that you should have before you get started.

Hey crew!

Welcome to the group. This season we're doing a deep dive into the book of Ephesians. But this isn't a "sit and talk about it" Bible study. We're gonna DO stuff too. Ready? Good. Let's get started with a little background so we're ready for the first meeting.

First, you don't need to be a Bible scholar (or have even read the Bible) to get a ton out of this group. No matter where you are, you have something to offer the group and ways that you can grow.

Second, a little about Ephesians. It's a letter that a guy named Paul wrote to the church in Ephesus. [Here's a quick \(and super good\) overview from The Bible Project.](#)

To get ready for the first meeting, make sure you read the first chapter. That's it. Read it and think about it.

See you soon.

GET STARTED

Alright leader. With those things under your belt, you're pretty much ready to go. Look ahead at the first week of content. Invite your people. And let's start this thing. Remember, all you gotta do is Connect, Receive, Do Something and Seal it with Prayer. Every time.

WEEK 1

CROSSROADS GROUP | WINTER 2020

CONNECT

LEADER:

Read aloud

Welcome to the group! Whether this is our first time together, or we're grizzled veterans, we're starting with some "get to know you" time. Here's your super-official-first-group-questions. Everyone answers. Go.

- Tell us something about yourself that you want us to know. (What you do, about your family, maybe your celebrity crush—you know, whatever makes you, you.)
- What made you pick this group over any others?
- What are you looking to get out of the next 8 weeks?
- What stands out as the best group experience you've had? (Could be a group, team, or anything else with other people involved.) Everyone gets two minutes to tell the story.

RECEIVE

LEADER:

Read aloud

No matter why we're in this group or what we've experienced before, God has something for each of us. There is power when we gather together in community. In fact, the Bible has a lot to say on the subject. Let's look.

LEADER:

Pick readers to read the following verses out loud.

And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds, not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Hebrews 10:24-25

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

Proverbs 27:17

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

James 5:16

My command is this: Love each other as I have loved you. Greater love has no one than this: to lay down one's life for one's friends.

John 15:12-13

LEADER:

Read aloud

Which of these verses resonates the most with you and why?
After reading these, why do you think God values community?
How does this differ from why you value community?

DO SOMETHING

LEADER:

Read aloud

For the next seven weeks, we're going to look at this group, at community and at the Church by reading an old letter called Ephesians written by this guy named Paul. This letter was written to the church in Ephesus—which is widely considered to be the early church that had its act together. (Mostly.) We're gonna use that letter as a model to explore community and God together.

Luckily, we have technology beyond letter writing that will help us stay connected and more present than sending a scroll via ship across the sea.

AS WE CLOSE, HERE ARE THREE THINGS FOR THIS GROUP TO DO.

Start a text thread with your group. (Text, the Crossroads App, GroupMe, whatever works.) This will help us stay connected to each other, take action on the things we're learning, and help us make the most of our time together.

[Watch the Bible Project video on Ephesians before the next meeting.](#)

Read the first Chapter of Ephesians before we get together next time.

SEAL WITH PRAYER

LEADER:

Read aloud

As we close each week, we're going to seal our next steps in prayer. 1 John 5:14 says "This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to his will, he hears us." So let's do that.

LEADER:

Pray us out. If you need a template, here's a good one.

"God, thank you for each person in this group. Thank you that you have brought us together and for the friendships that are already forming. May you bless each relationship here in the coming weeks so we can know you more. Amen."

WEEK 2

CROSSROADS GROUP | WINTER 2020

CONNECT

LEADER:

Read aloud

Welcome back team—let's get started. Take a minute and recall what has happened since the last time we met as a group. Share one high point and one low point with the group. (We're still getting to know each other, so don't skimp on the details. Sharing this stuff is good.)

Truth time. Who forgot to read the first chapter of Ephesians? No shame. No matter what. We'll catch you up

RECEIVE

LEADER:

Pick the person with the best radio voice to read Ephesians 1 out loud. (Relax, it's 23 verses and only 300 words.) Take your time and don't forget punctuation. (Seems like Paul might have, though.)

What stood out to you in the passage?

What in that passage do you not understand or have questions about?

Time for a rewrite. There are about 9 run-on sentences in this chapter. Pick one and rewrite it in your own words. Then share it with the group. What does it mean to you?

If we were to believe that every word that we read (and rewrote) is true, what does it say about God?

DO SOMETHING

LEADER:

Read aloud

We're gonna do something that we see Paul doing in this chapter. In it, he says he doesn't "cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers."

Take time now to thank each member of the group for something they shared tonight. Whether it was a funny story, or something crazy insightful, it's good to call out the value of each other. It's what Paul is doing. Ready? Go.

SEAL IT WITH PRAYER

LEADER:

Pray us out like Paul did at the end of the first chapter.

"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. I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, and his incomparably great power for us who believe." Amen.

See you next week.

[Be sure to read Ephesians 2](#)

WEEK 3

CROSSROADS GROUP | WINTER 2020

LEADER:

There's a chance that in this session, that someone may want to say "yes" and receive Jesus for the first time. That's amazing! You can lead them to Jesus.

ALL YOU GOTTA DO IS TWO THINGS.

Lead the person in this prayer.

"Jesus, I agree that you are God. I accept the grace you freely give. I'm sorry for the mistakes that are in my past. And I'll do my best to follow you for the rest of my life."

Tell us!

Email us at groups@crossroads.net

CONNECT

Encouragement time. Each person get a slip of paper and write something encouraging on it—whatever pops into your mind, write it down. Fold the paper and put them all in a pile in the center of the room.

After everyone is done, each person will grab a random paper from the pile and read it outloud for him or herself. Let's see what happens and if someone gets a needed boost.

***Leader:** If you're meeting online, match people randomly.

"Sarah, you read your encouragement for Dave. Dave read yours for Sam" etc.

RECEIVE

LEADER:

Read aloud

For this week, we read Ephesians 2. Anyone need a refresher? If you do, Mr. or Ms. Radio Voice can read the chapter out loud again.

Great Let's start.

What stood out to you in [Ephesians 2](#)? (It's a big one.)

[Read Ephesians 2:1-5](#) out loud. Then as a group, share what you see in those specific verses.

There's a lot in there—let's get a bit of context. [Read Genesis 3:1-3](#). (Bonus points if you want to read all the way through verse 19). Then, look again at [Ephesians 2:1-5](#) and think of it as a solution to what you just read. What do you see now?

Verse 8 talks about grace being the solution to sin and death. "By grace you have been saved." What does this mean to you? Asked a different way: Grace, how does that work?

Have you ever experienced grace? What was it like?

DO SOMETHING

LEADER:

Read aloud

Let's say that we believe scripture when it says we're "no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God." If that's true, that means this group is a small part of a big family.

What are some things we can do this week to treat each other like family?

Why would someone want to be part of this family?

How would people around us know that we're part of that family?

LEADER:

Read aloud

You likely came up with some good ideas. Pick one that's feasible (no family road trip to Montana) and try it out this week.

SEAL WITH PRAYER

LEADER:

Have each person write out a prayer that reflects where they are in God's family. Write an honest one, whether you feel like a son, a daughter, or an outsider—open up and tell Him how you feel.

FOR NEXT WEEK

Bring three pictures with you of things you're thankful for. (on your phone is great), and read [Ephesians 3](#).

WEEK 4

CROSSROADS GROUP | WINTER 2020

CONNECT

LEADER:

Read aloud

Welcome back, fam. Picture time. Each of us brought three pictures that show things we're grateful for. Time to break them out. Show the group and tell us why you brought them.

RECEIVE

LEADER:

Read aloud.

This week we are covering [Ephesians 3](#). The chapter starts with the words "For this reason I, Paul, a prisoner of Christ Jesus" and he's being literal. Paul was in the slammer when he wrote this. Remember that as we dive in.

Group vote. Are we reading it out loud, or are we ready to go?

We're going to use our imaginations for a bit. It's a completely legit way to read scripture, especially if you're stuck or looking to get below the surface. All set? Let's do it.

What do you think a Roman jail was like in the first century? Use your imagination, and describe it as a group. What did it look like? Smell like? What was the temperature?

How would you describe Paul's mood in this chapter? (Again, it's okay to use your imagination.)

With the mental picture of Paul's experience in the cell, silently [look over Ephesians 3](#) again. What sticks out to you now? Everyone should share their impression.

In verses 1-6, Paul mentions a "mystery" three different times. What do you think that's all about?

DO SOMETHING

LEADER:

Read aloud

Paul demonstrated incredible faith and resolve on his mission to share the news of Jesus with the Gentiles—those on the outside who had not yet heard about Jesus.

Where does each person in the group need that kind of resolve? Each person share something in their world that could use a Paul-sized-scoop of faith. After each person shares, someone in the group take a few moments to pray for them. After you finish, it's your turn to share. Keep going until everyone has a chance to share and get some prayer.

SEAL WITH PRAYER

LEADER:

Read aloud.

There's really no better way to end than by using the prayer that Paul uses at the end of chapter three.

“Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, forever and ever. Amen.”

For next week, read [Ephesians 4](#)

WEEK 5

CROSSROADS GROUP | WINTER 2020

CONNECT

LEADER:

Read aloud

Welcome back! Take two minutes and think of one word that describes an attribute you see in each person in the room. For example, Molly is loud, Susan listens, Joe is kind. Just pick whatever comes to mind first. Then we'll go around the room and share with each person the words we have for them. Two minutes to collect your thoughts first — go!

Great. Hold onto those words to come back to later.

RECEIVE

LEADER:

Read aloud.

This week, we read [Ephesians 4](#). We're moving into the part of this book where we'll talk about how we live after receiving God's lavish love. Hold on tight. It could get messy. Let's talk through the different sections.

If you had to pick one sentence to describe what "walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called" means, what would it be?

There are seven "one's" listed in [verses 1-7](#). List them out. Why do you think Paul listed each of them here? What does that mean for us today?

Camp out in [verses 8-16](#) for a while. The person with the most forceful voice, read those verses. What's the purpose of the gifts listed here? Unity and maturity for the Church. See a theme?

Let's put it all together. We each have a specific role to play that contributes to the wellbeing of the Church. Now go back to the list of attributes your group shared at the beginning of group time. How do you think those things help you contribute to the unity and maturity of the Church? It's ok if you aren't completely sure. This week you'll have a chance to dig a little deeper.

DO SOMETHING

LEADER:

Read aloud

This week, check out the [True Talent Indicator](#) at [crossroads.net](#) to discover how God has uniquely gifted you. Compare your results with the attributes you received earlier today and see if there is any overlap.

The last part of the chapter ([v. 17-32](#)) lists some things to stop doing as you live in your new life with Jesus. Take a second to look through those. Then ask God for one thing you need to let go of so you can fully live the life you were called to as part of the Church.

SEAL WITH PRAYER

LEADER:

Pray us out. Here's one as an example.

“God, thank you for choosing each of us to have a unique role in your Church, and for equipping us to do that work. Show us how you’ve gifted us, and how you want us to step into those roles. Help us to let go of the things that are barriers for us to live a life worthy of your call as we go throughout our week. Amen.”

For next week, come back ready to share any insight from the [True Talent Indicator](#), and read [Chapter 5](#).

WEEK 6

CROSSROADS GROUP | WINTER 2020

CONNECT

LEADER:

Read aloud

Welcome back gang. Let's take some time to talk over the True Talent Indicator. Anyone surprised? Anyone see overlaps between the indicator and the words we had for each other last week? How do the different gifts we've discovered show up in this group?

Ready to move on? [Ephesians 5](#) lays out some pretty challenging ideas. We're going to start by playing a game of "Would You Rather" with some of them, just for fun. Each person answer, and be sure to say why.

WOULD YOU RATHER...

Speak in only psalms, or hymns?

Sit in the light, or in the dark?
(Don't overspiritualize this. Just go with your gut.)

Be foolish and unaware of it, or be foolish and have someone tell you?

Okay, enough foolishness. Let's dive in.

RECEIVE

LEADER:

Read aloud.

In most translations, [Ephesians 5:1-21](#) has the heading "Walk in Love." Take a minute and look back over those verses. What stands out to you?

What does it mean to "walk in love?"

Why do you think Paul focused on behaviors when talking about love, and why these behaviors in particular?

Before we dive into the second half, take one final look at verse 21 and how it connects to the rest of the chapter. It reads "submitting to one another out of reverence for Christ." or "being subject to one another" or "in service to one another." Then Paul goes on to describe the covenant of marriage as an example.

Why does Paul use marriage as an example?

What relationships do you have where you are subject to one another?

How might you be more willing to give yourself up for them?

DO SOMETHING

LEADER:

Read aloud

Those relationships that we just talked about? They're important. Super important. They are a model (albeit an imperfect one) of how Jesus loved the Church. Using Jesus as a model...

How can you love the heck outta those people, everyday?

How can you show them "you would give yourself up" for them?

Group, we're in this together, and back in the first week we started a text thread. We're gonna put it to use this week. Each time we take a step to love the people in our lives better, we'll text the group. (Not to show off, but to show our group we're getting reps at loving like Jesus.) Got it?

SEAL WITH PRAYER

LEADER:

Being subject to each other is how we live out the faith in Jesus that we have. As you close this week, pray for each other and for the strength to walk in love.

For next week, read [Ephesians 6](#). Yep. The final chapter.

WEEK 7

CROSSROADS GROUP | WINTER 2020

CONNECT

LEADER:

Read aloud

After seven weeks together, we pretty much know everything about each other, right? Doubt it. We're playing two truths and a lie.

Each person think of two hard-to-believe facts about themselves, and one lie. On your turn you will tell all three things to the group—two truths and a lie. Then, it's up to the group to guess which one is a lie. Ready? Go.

Keep truths and lying on the top of your mind. This final chapter of Ephesians deals with them—a lot.

RECEIVE

LEADER:

Read aloud.

There's a lot in this chapter—a war and the armor to fight in it.

What jumps out at you?

What do you think about the concept of spiritual battle or the devil having schemes against you?

The Bible has a lot to say about the enemy. Here's a couple examples. Read 'em as a group.

[Revelation 12:10](#)

He's an accuser

[John 8:44](#)

He's a liar

[2 Cor. 11:3-4](#)

He's a deceiver

[1 Peter 5:8,](#)

[John 10:10](#)

He's a destroyer

Has your story ever been interrupted by an accuser, liar, deceiver, or destroyer?

With all this against us, some protection makes sense. Look through [verses 10-20](#) and call out each piece of the armor of God. What do they each do?

Is this armor more than a metaphor? Hash it out as a group.

DO SOMETHING

LEADER:

Read aloud

Let's assume that all this armor talk is a powerful metaphor, and it's something we should do every day—be ready, walk in truth, etc.

Just like one of our earlier group meetings we're going to spend some time recognizing the gifts we see in each other that might relate to this "armor" being put on. Take a few minutes with each person and give them some encouragement around where you see their gifts, and this armor overlap.

For example, "Steve, you're always on the ball and ready to go, and you always tell it to me straight. I think everyday you're putting on Truth and Readiness."

SEAL WITH PRAYER

LEADER:

Paul prays in the end that He would make known to others the mystery of the gospel. Is there someone in your life that needs to know the love of Jesus? Pray for that person now, and specifically that you would be given the right things to love them well.

For next week: We sum up, have some discussion, and plan what's next. It would be awesome to share a meal together. If there is any way the group can pull this off, make it happen.

WEEK 8

CROSSROADS GROUP | WINTER 2020

CONNECT

LEADER:

Read aloud

Celebrate! You've earned it. Take some time to sit in the fact that you led your group through a dense book of scripture. Well done group!

And if you need some celebration ideas, we recommend a nice game of [Tug Bucket](#).

RECEIVE

LEADER:

Read aloud.

It's debrief time. Here's our final set of questions.

What has been most impactful from what you learned?

Where have you heard God or seen God in all we've discussed?

Based on what we discovered, what should a group be like? What should the church be like?

How can this group, or any group be more like the church Paul was writing to?

DO SOMETHING

LEADER:

Read aloud

Two final chunks of discussion today.

What are we going to DO with all we covered? Asked a different way, aside from going to church, and this group, how would people know that we're in Jesus' family?

What's next for us?

Here are some options. You can:

Take a break. Next groups season starts April 20.

Keep meeting and chart our own course. It could be a study. A project. Or just hanging out.

Call it quits and try something else—that's totally okay too!

SEAL WITH PRAYER

LEADER:

You're an expert now. Pray us out.

Well done.

We'd love to celebrate with you. Send the story of your group and what happened this season to groups@crossroads.net