

# GOD'S PLAN FOR YOUR FUTURE

## A Bible study for focus and direction in the New Year

In Ephesians, God reveals the following about your future...

### EPHESIANS 1:1-14, BY GRACE GOD CHOSE US FOR SALVATION

My future is secure since God predestined me to be adopted as his child.

I am redeemed by the blood of Christ.

The purpose of my life is to live for the praise of his glory.

**Focus questions:** What are some ways you could daily remind yourself of your identity in Christ and how it became yours?

Regularly tell yourself: "My purpose is to live to the praise of God's glory." How will that change your attitude? Your schedule? Your expenses? Your relationships?

### EPHESIANS 1:15-23, PRAISE GOD FOR HIS GRACE IN THE WORK OF JESUS

The most important thing I need in the future is the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so I may know...

a) Christ better, b) the hope that I have, c) the riches of my inheritance and d) the power of God working for me.

**Focus questions:** Wisdom and revelation come from God who gives them through his Word. What will you include in your action plan so you will have the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in increasing measure? Describe how you think 2015 would be better than 2014 if you substantially increased your knowledge of Christ, the hope he gives, and the inheritance that waits you. Think of the confidence you will have knowing that the power of the almighty God is working for *you!*

### EPHESIANS 2:1-10, WE ARE SAVED BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH

God wants me to know that by nature I am dead in my sins. But in Christ I have been made alive because of God's grace. I will look for the good works God has prepared for me to do.

**Focus questions:** Memorize these essential daily questions: Who am I by nature? Who am I in Christ?

As God's child, what good works has he prepared for me to do today? (Some you can anticipate, some will surprise you!)

### EPHESIANS 2:11-22, BY GRACE WE ARE PART OF THE HOLY CHRISTIAN CHURCH

Christ has made me a member of God's household which means I have community with all of God's people.

**Focus questions:** What will you do this year to strengthen your connection to fellow believers, and to work together with them for the mission Christ has given us?

### EPHESIANS 3:1-13, GOD'S GRACE SENT PAUL TO PREACH TO THE GENTILES

Through the mystery of God's salvation now revealed in Christ, I am one with believers of every race, social status, gender, location, and time.

**Focus questions:** The next few times you're in church, notice all the people around you (especially those you don't know very well). For each individual, think, "Brother/sister redeemed by the blood of Jesus." Christ is the *world's* light. How will this truth break down the prejudiced and judgmental attitudes in you in the coming year?

### EPHESIANS 3:14-20, PAUL PRAYS THAT WE GROW IN GRACE

The most important thing for me and the most important thing I can request in prayer for everyone I know is this: That I/they may know Christ and his love more and more.

**Focus question:** Starting now, develop a habit of including this request in your prayers. Why is an increasing knowledge of Christ and his love the most important thing?

**EPHESIANS 4:1-16, BY GRACE EACH OF US IS TO GROW AS A FRUITFUL MEMBER OF THE BODY OF CHRIST**

I will make every effort to establish, preserve and protect the unity of God’s people. I will use my gifts for Christ and his people to help his church grow and become stronger.

**Focus questions:** Evaluate: What abilities, interests, talents and skills has God given you? Write down three ways you can use them for the growth and strengthening of Christ’s church in 2015. Next, write down the specific steps you will take to make it happen!

**EPHESIANS 4:17-32, LIVE A LIFE OF HOLINESS IN CHRIST**

I will strive to live as a child of God’s light in true righteousness and holiness, being kind, compassionate and forgiving to everyone.

**Focus questions:** Who do you struggle most to forgive? Starting with those closest to you and moving out, list specific attitudes, words and actions that would reflect kindness, compassion and forgiveness. Next, write down the name of the person you should be closest to. What is one thing you will do *daily* to foster kindness, compassion and forgiveness?

**EPHESIANS 5:1-20, BY GRACE LIVE AS ONE FILLED WITH THE SPIRIT**

I will be careful how I live, not as unwise, but as wise and make the most of every opportunity.

**Focus questions:** For every decision you make this year, ask yourself, “What is the *wise* thing to do?” Do NOT ask the usual questions: “What do I *want* to do?”

What do I usually do? What do others do?” Rather, as a blood-bought child of God living to the praise of his glory, what is the wise thing to do?

**EPHESIANS 5:21-33, JESUS’ LOVE FOR THE CHURCH IS A PATTERN FOR MARITAL LOVE**

I will treasure God’s roles in marriage: Husbands responsibly leading and sacrificially loving. Wives, willingly helping and respecting.

**Focus questions:** Think of instances where you have not followed God’s pattern for marital love. How did that work out? What can you do in 2015 to change that? What will you do today to change that?

**EPHESIANS 6:1-9, CHRISTIAN CHILDREN AND FATHERS, WORKERS AND BOSSES**

I will respect the authorities that God has established, giving honor, obedience, love and respect where it is due.

**Focus questions:** Against what authority do you push back the most? Recall some specific negative consequences of this. List specifically what it will look like going forward if you give what God requires: honor, obedience and respect with an attitude of love.

**EPHESIANS 6:10-20, PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOR OF GOD**

I will recognize the spiritual battle raging all around me, and equip myself with the armor God provides.

**Focus questions:** How will you daily put on: God’s truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation and the word of God? Without a daily, intentional plan, you *will* be vulnerable to attack!

**NEW YEAR’S ACTION PLAN:** Based on God’s plan for my future revealed in Ephesians, I pray God will bless the following plans in this New Year.

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