



LC STUDY GUIDE
“Your Place In God’s World”
The Passage: Ephesians 1:13b-23
February 5 - 19

How to use the LC Study Guide

Hello Leaders! Thank you for your ongoing commitment to pursue Christian community and the study of Scripture that leads to life transformation in Christ and strives to serve “the other.”

These studies have been designed with the following aspects in mind:

1. To facilitate a discussion on the passage of Scripture that was preached that particular Sunday using the Inductive Bible Study Method (not necessarily on the themes of that particular sermon). In summary, this method stresses “Observation” (what the reader can see from the text), “Interpretation” (what we can learn when we study the text with various tools, commentaries, and resources), and “Application” (how we can apply the Scripture to our lives).
2. Groups using this study range from the new leader to the highly experienced. Groups themselves have their own context. This study attempts to hit the middle. The stronger studies require about an hour or two of leader preparation to contextualize this resource to the needs and personalities of your group.
3. In addition to prep time, please spend time in prayer during preparation and before and after the study. It’s the power of the Holy Spirit that illuminates the Word of Scripture and we are humbled that He uses our combined efforts as part of this work. (For more tips on using this study, please see the endnotes.)

As always, we are so grateful for you, your gifting, your servant leadership and all that you do for the cause of Christ. Please let us know if we can help you in any way.

Grace and peace,
Pastor Tim, on behalf of the LC Team

Introduction

This is our final Ephesians study in the series “Your Place in God’s World” and we find ourselves back in the first chapter, with a very rich set of verses. Here we want to see the inheritance Paul describes God extending to the church and the power by which God does it. As we receive this message, may we also continue to find our place and role in God’s mission.

Ephesians 1:13b-23

^{13b} When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, ¹⁴ who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.

¹⁵ For this reason, ever since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all God’s people, ¹⁶ I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers. ¹⁷ 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. ¹⁸ 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, ¹⁹ and his incomparably great power for us who believe. That power is the same as the mighty strength ²⁰ he exerted when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, ²¹ far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every name that is invoked, not only in the present age but also in the one to come. ²² And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way.

O – Read this passage again silently. What words, concepts, and verses resonate with you and capture your attention?

O – Identify all the verbs in this passage (circle them). Who is performing the different actions (underline them)? What can you appreciate about the scene Paul is describing?

I – Paul uses the word “inheritance” to describe God’s salvation. How is God’s vision of inheritance different from the way our society has organized it?
(In short, God’s inheritance invites all to partake in an inexhaustible salvation and joy for all of humanity to receive versus the limited wealth that a parent can give a child.)

I – Inheritance is a sacred word to Israel as it references what God had promised Abraham. Why do you think Paul uses it again here?
*(In Exodus, the children of Israel leave Egypt, wander the desert guided by a pillar of cloud by day and fire by night, and eventually enter the Promised Land. For the Church, Paul is describing a similar scene in which the **Holy Spirit** is guiding them to receive their inheritance; verses 17-20.)*

A – Christ-followers in Paul’s time—and most of us today—might not feel powerful by the world’s estimation. Yet, Paul clearly states in 19b-20 that this Holy Spirit power that raised Christ from the dead is the same that opens the eyes of the heart so that it “may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you.” In our everyday life, there is a confidence and strength we can draw from. How might this change your approach to the challenges (whether great or trivial) that you face in this life? What does it mean as you live out your God-given calling?

- a. Please note that not all these questions are to be asked in a single meeting. Take some time to prayerfully discern what will serve your LC the best. Select and reword the questions that best fit your voice and your Life Community group.
- b. Complement these questions with “process questions” (what else? what more? what do others think?)
- c. When you ask questions, give people ample time to think and respond. Wait. Take your time; don’t rush people but encourage participation. Avoid answering your own questions!
- d. Application: Pace the study to conclude with difference-making application.
- e. Secondary texts—use other texts sparingly, even if they are relevant. Such texts will push you into “teaching” rather than facilitating, causing people to feel distracted or de-powered.