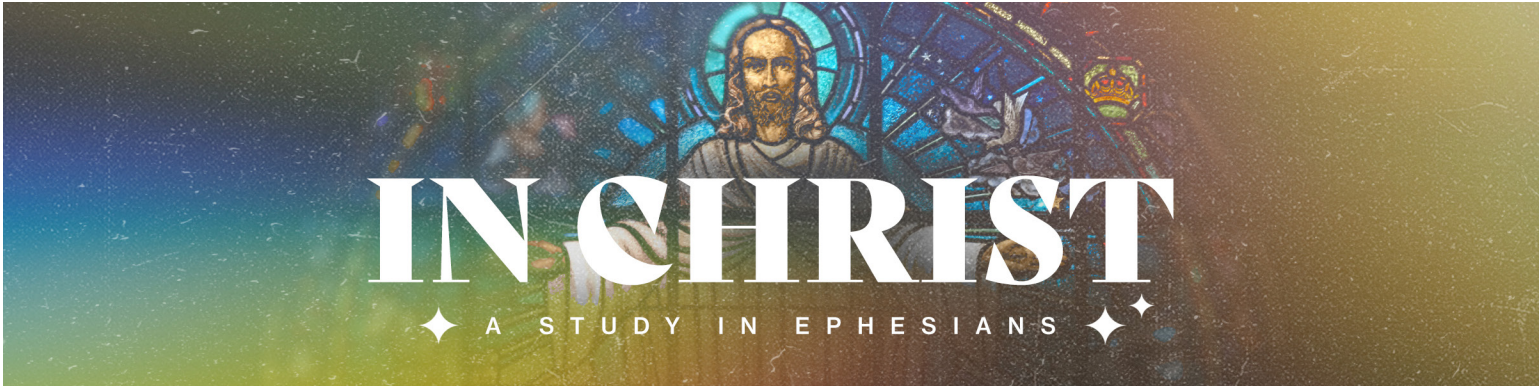




IN CHRIST

✦ A STUDY IN EPHESIANS ✦

DAY 1: TRUTH IN A WORLD OF LIES

DEVOTIONAL:

We live in a culture where deception has become the norm. Studies show that 91% of Americans lie every day, and sadly, there's often no discernible difference between believers and unbelievers when it comes to speaking truth. But as followers of Christ, we're called to a radically different standard. When we became part of God's family, we joined one body - the body of Christ. Just as your hand wouldn't lie to your foot about where it's going, we shouldn't deceive our brothers and sisters in faith. Truth-telling isn't just about avoiding big lies; it's about integrity in the small moments too. Think about your conversations today. Were you completely honest in your interactions? Did you exaggerate a story to make it more interesting? Did you give someone false hope or make a promise you couldn't keep? These seemingly small compromises with truth can grieve the Holy Spirit and damage our witness. The beautiful thing about walking in truth is that it brings freedom. When we're honest, we don't have to remember what we said to whom. We don't have to live in fear of being found out. Truth creates trust, and trust builds authentic relationships. As believers, our commitment to truth should be so evident that people notice something different about us. In a world hungry for authenticity, our truthfulness becomes a powerful testimony to the transforming power of the gospel.

BIBLE VERSE:

"Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body." - Ephesians 4:25

REFLECTION QUESTION:

In what areas of your life are you tempted to bend the truth, and how can you commit to greater honesty in those situations?

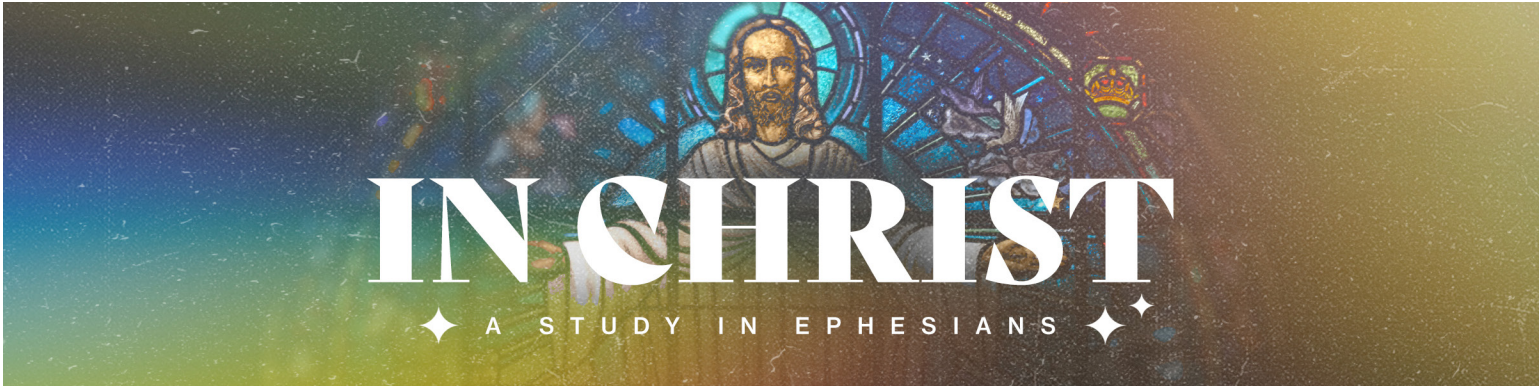
SERMON QUOTE:

"We live in a world that questions truth. Maybe because they find so little of it."

PRAYER:

Lord, help me to be a person of truth in all my words and actions. Give me the courage to speak honestly even when it's difficult, and let my commitment to truth be a reflection of Your character in me. Amen.

NOTES:



IN CHRIST

✦ A STUDY IN EPHESIANS ✦

DAY 2: ANGER'S DANGEROUS TERRITORY

DEVOTIONAL:

Anger is a powerful emotion that can either motivate us toward justice or destroy everything in its path. The difference lies in how we handle it. Paul doesn't tell us never to be angry - even Jesus showed righteous anger. Instead, he warns us not to let anger lead us into sin. There's only one letter difference between anger and danger, and that's no coincidence. When we're angry, we're often not at our best. We say things we regret, make decisions we later wish we could take back, and sometimes damage relationships that took years to build. The key is in the timing. Paul says, "Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry." This isn't just about resolving conflicts quickly - it's about not allowing anger to take root in our hearts. When we nurse our anger, rehearsing the offense over and over, we give the devil a foothold in our lives. Anger becomes dangerous when it controls us instead of us controlling it. It's like temporary insanity that clouds our judgment and makes us act in ways that don't reflect Christ's character. The solution isn't to suppress our emotions but to process them quickly and healthily. Remember, most of the time when we're angry, we're not good. But when we learn to handle our anger biblically, we can channel that energy into positive change and deeper relationships.

BIBLE VERSE:

"In your anger do not sin: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry." - Ephesians 4:26

REFLECTION QUESTION:

What triggers your anger most often, and what practical steps can you take to process these emotions before they lead you into sin?

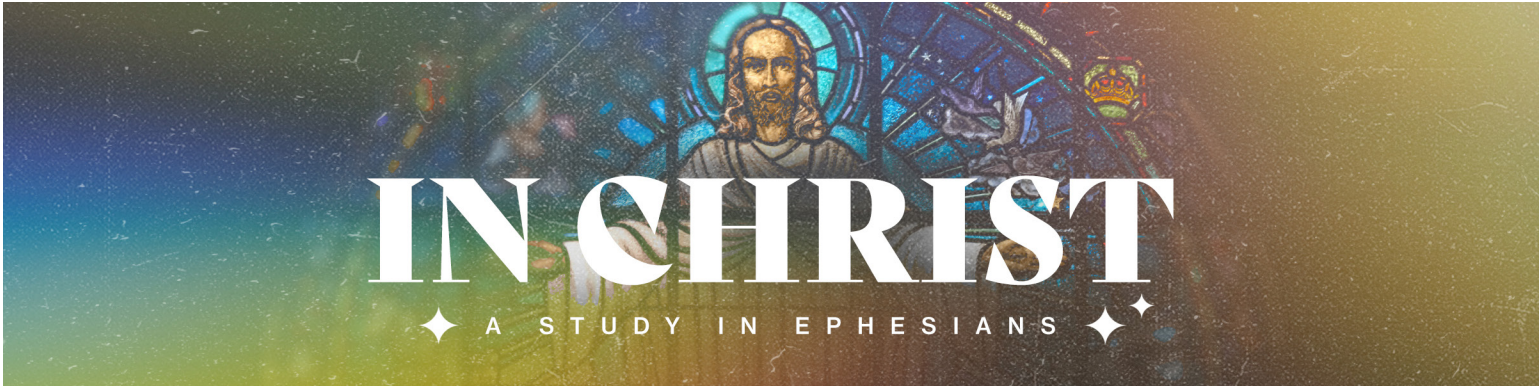
SERMON QUOTE:

"Remember, there's only one letter difference between anger and danger."

PRAYER:

Father, help me to handle my anger in ways that honor You. When I feel frustrated or upset, remind me to pause, breathe, and seek Your wisdom before I respond. Don't let anger control me or damage my relationships. Amen.

NOTES:



IN CHRIST

✦ A STUDY IN EPHESIANS ✦

DAY 3: WORKING WITH PURPOSE

DEVOTIONAL:

Work isn't a curse - it's a calling. Even in the perfect Garden of Eden, Adam and Eve were given meaningful work to do. They weren't handed a work-free paradise but rather perfection in the form of unrealized potential that required their faithful stewardship. Paul addresses those who had been stealing, telling them to work with their hands so they can share with those in need. This reveals God's beautiful design for work: we don't just work to accumulate wealth for ourselves, but to have something to share with others who are struggling. This perspective transforms how we view our jobs, whether we're in an office, a factory, a classroom, or at home. Our work becomes an act of worship when we see it as a way to serve others and glorify God. Every honest day's work is an opportunity to reflect God's character and provide for both our families and those in need. The contrast Paul draws is striking: instead of taking from others through theft or dishonesty, we should be giving to others through honest labor. This principle applies beyond just avoiding stealing - it includes being fully present at work, giving our best effort, and using our skills and resources to bless others. When we work with this mindset, our jobs become ministry opportunities, and our paychecks become tools for kingdom impact.

BIBLE VERSE:

"Anyone who has been stealing must steal no longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need." - Ephesians 4:28

REFLECTION QUESTION:

How can you view your current work - whether paid employment, volunteer service, or caring for family - as an opportunity to serve God and bless others?

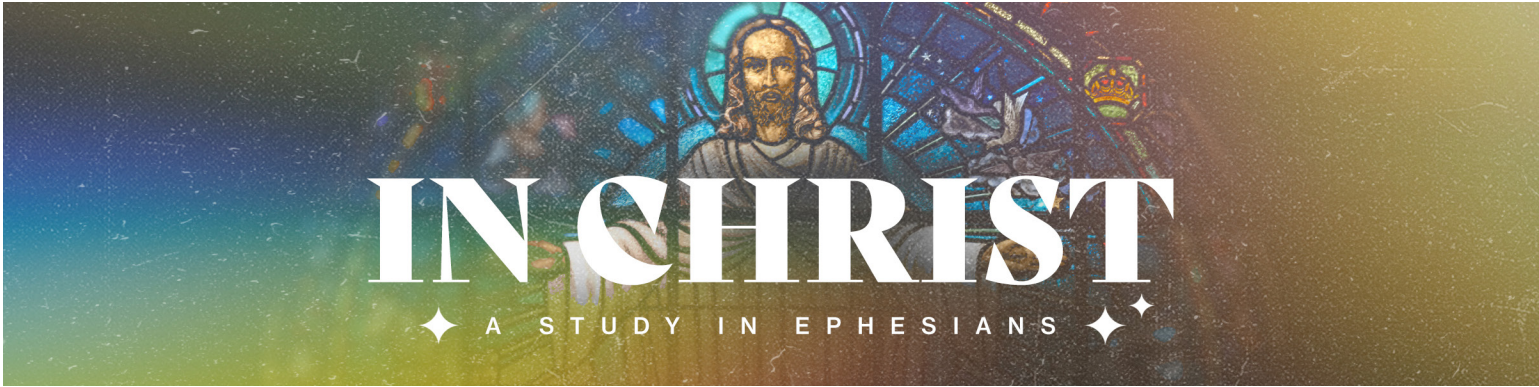
SERMON QUOTE:

"Work so you can help. Not work so you can accumulate work so you can help you have something you can share with the one who has need."

PRAYER:

Lord, help me to see my work as a calling from You. Give me diligence and integrity in all I do, and show me how I can use the fruits of my labor to bless others and advance Your kingdom. Amen.

NOTES:



IN CHRIST

✦ A STUDY IN EPHESIANS ✦

DAY 4: WORDS THAT BUILD UP

DEVOTIONAL:

Our words have incredible power. They can build up or tear down, encourage or discourage, heal or wound. In our culture, we've become increasingly sloppy with our conversation, often using language that doesn't reflect the grace we've received from God. Paul calls us to let no unwholesome talk come from our mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs. This isn't just about avoiding profanity - though that's part of it. It's about making every word count for good. Before we speak, we should ask ourselves: Is this necessary? Will this build up the person I'm talking to? Am I edifying anyone with these words? These simple questions can transform our conversations and relationships. The goal isn't to become boring or fake, but to become intentional with our words. When we speak with grace, seasoned with wisdom and love, people are drawn to the hope we have in Christ. Our conversations become opportunities to minister grace to those who hear. It's time for believers to take back our conversation. In a world filled with harsh words, criticism, and negativity, our gracious speech should stand out like a lighthouse in the darkness. Every conversation is a chance to reflect Christ's character and show His love to others.

BIBLE VERSE:

"Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen." - Ephesians 4:29

REFLECTION QUESTION:

What changes do you need to make in your speech patterns to ensure your words consistently build up rather than tear down those around you?

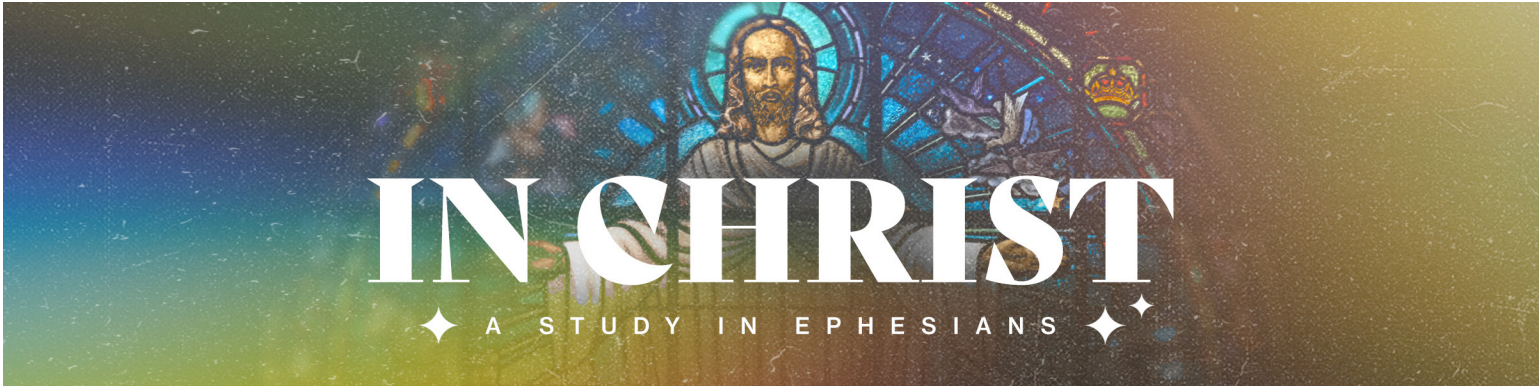
SERMON QUOTE:

"It's time for believers to take back our conversation."

PRAYER:

God, help me to be mindful of my words. Let everything I say bring grace and encouragement to others. Guard my tongue from unwholesome talk, and fill my heart with Your love so that it overflows in my speech. Amen.

NOTES:



IN CHRIST

✦ A STUDY IN EPHESIANS ✦

DAY 5: LIVING THE DIFFERENCE

DEVOTIONAL:

After four days of examining specific behaviors, we come to the heart of the matter: transformation. Paul asks a penetrating question through his teaching - since you came to Christ, are you different? Do you look different? Sound different? Think different? The Holy Spirit who lives within us can be grieved when we respond to God's grace with unfaithfulness. When we continue living like the world around us, we're essentially telling the Spirit that His presence and power aren't enough to change us. But that's not true! True transformation goes beyond external behavior modification. It's about allowing God to change us from the inside out. When Christ lives in us, there should be a notable difference in how we speak, think, post on social media, and interact with others. This isn't about perfection - it's about direction. The beautiful truth is that we don't change to earn God's love; we change because we've already received it. Our transformation is evidence of the gospel's power in our lives, not a prerequisite for God's acceptance. As we conclude this journey together, remember that these changes aren't burdens to bear but privileges to embrace. When the world sees authentic transformation in our lives, they get a glimpse of the hope that's available to them too. Your changed life becomes a living testimony to the reality of Christ's power.

BIBLE VERSE:

"And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption."
- Ephesians :30

REFLECTION QUESTION:

Looking at your life since becoming a Christian, what evidence of transformation can you celebrate, and what areas still need the Holy Spirit's transforming work?

SERMON QUOTE:

"Since you came to Christ, are you different? Do you look different? Do you sound different? Do you think different? Do you talk different? Do you use different words?"

PRAYER:

Holy Spirit, I don't want to grieve You with my choices. Continue Your transforming work in my life. Help me to live in a way that honors the grace I've received and points others to the hope found in Christ. Make me different in all the best ways. Amen.

NOTES:
