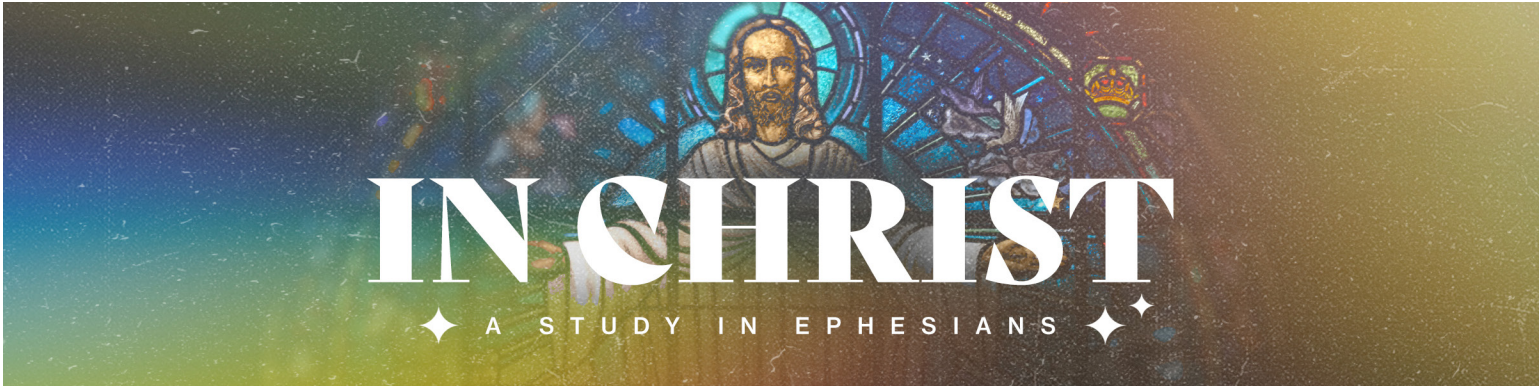




IN CHRIST

✦ A STUDY IN EPHESIANS ✦

DAY 1: GOD'S BLUEPRINT FOR YOUR FAMILY

DEVOTIONAL:

Have you ever tried to assemble furniture without instructions? The frustration mounts as pieces don't fit, and you wonder if you're missing something crucial. Many parents feel this same way about raising children. The good news is that God hasn't left us to figure it out on our own. Just as every piece of furniture comes with a manufacturer's guide, every child comes with divine instructions found in God's Word. These aren't suggestions or outdated traditions—they're timeless principles from the One who designed families in the first place. When we look at our homes, we often focus on making them beautiful and comfortable. But there's something far more important than the physical structure: the spiritual health of those who live within its walls. A home built on God's design becomes a place where hearts are nurtured, character is formed, and faith takes root. God's plan for families isn't complicated, but it does require intentionality. He has specific roles for children and parents that, when followed, create an environment where everyone can flourish. This isn't about perfection—it's about following the loving guidance of our Heavenly Father who knows what's best for us. As we begin this journey together, remember that God's ways aren't burdensome restrictions but loving boundaries that lead to blessing. When we align our families with His design, we discover that His instructions aren't just good advice—they're the pathway to true wellness in our homes.

BIBLE VERSE:

"Unless the Lord builds the house, the builders labor in vain. Unless the Lord watches over the city, the guards stand watch in vain." - Psalm 127:1

REFLECTION QUESTION:

In what ways might you be trying to 'build your house' without consulting God's blueprint, and how could inviting Him into your family decisions change your approach?

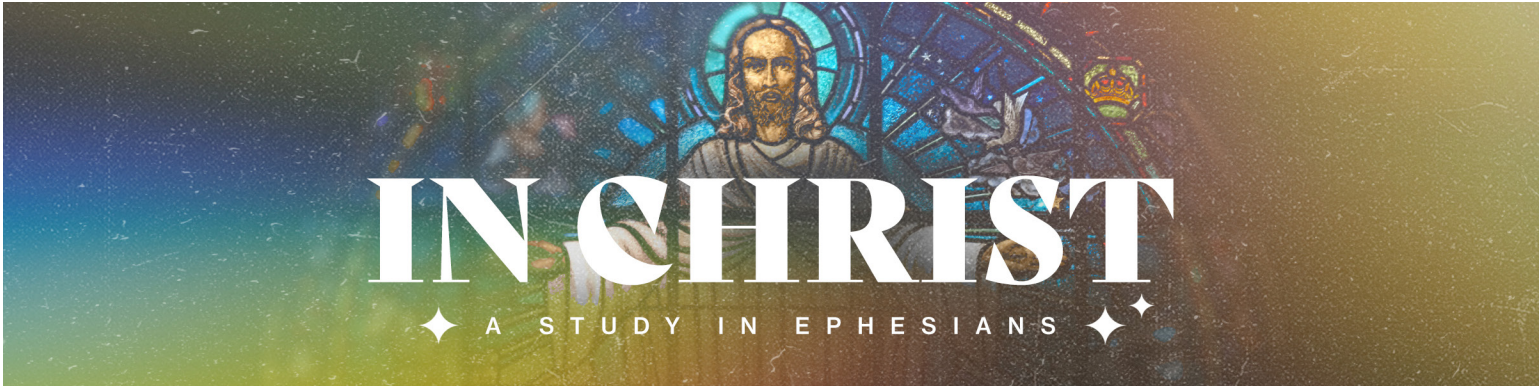
SERMON QUOTE:

"I've heard parents say when they bring a new child into the home, sort of out of exasperation, they'll say, 'this child didn't come with a set of instructions.' I want to suggest to you this morning. Yes, he did. And you find those instructions in the word of God in Psalm 127."

PRAYER:

Heavenly Father, thank You for not leaving us to navigate family life on our own. Help us to trust Your design for our homes and to build our families on the solid foundation of Your Word. Give us wisdom to follow Your instructions with faith and patience. Amen.

NOTES:



IN CHRIST

✦ A STUDY IN EPHESIANS ✦

DAY 2: SHAPING ARROWS FOR GOD'S KINGDOM

DEVOTIONAL:

An archer never grabs a random stick and expects it to fly straight. Instead, he carefully selects wood, shapes it with precision, balances it perfectly, and sharpens the point. Only then does he release it toward its intended target. This beautiful picture illustrates God's design for parenting. Every child is raw material with incredible potential, but they don't automatically become who God intends them to be. Like an archer crafting arrows, parents have the privilege and responsibility of shaping, straightening, and preparing their children for the purposes God has planned. This process isn't always easy. Sometimes the wood resists the shaping. Sometimes progress seems slow. But the archer doesn't give up because he understands the end goal—creating something that can fly true and reach its intended destination. As parents, we're not trying to make our children into copies of ourselves or fulfill our unfulfilled dreams. We're partnering with God to help them become who He created them to be. This requires patience, wisdom, and a deep understanding that each child is unique, requiring different approaches and techniques. The goal isn't to keep our children close forever, but to prepare them to be sent out into the world as effective instruments in God's hands. When we embrace this perspective, every moment of training, every correction, and every lesson becomes part of God's greater plan for their lives and His kingdom.

BIBLE VERSE:

"Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it." - Proverbs 22:6

REFLECTION QUESTION:

What specific qualities or character traits is God calling you to 'shape' in your children, and how might you need to adjust your parenting approach to better accomplish this?

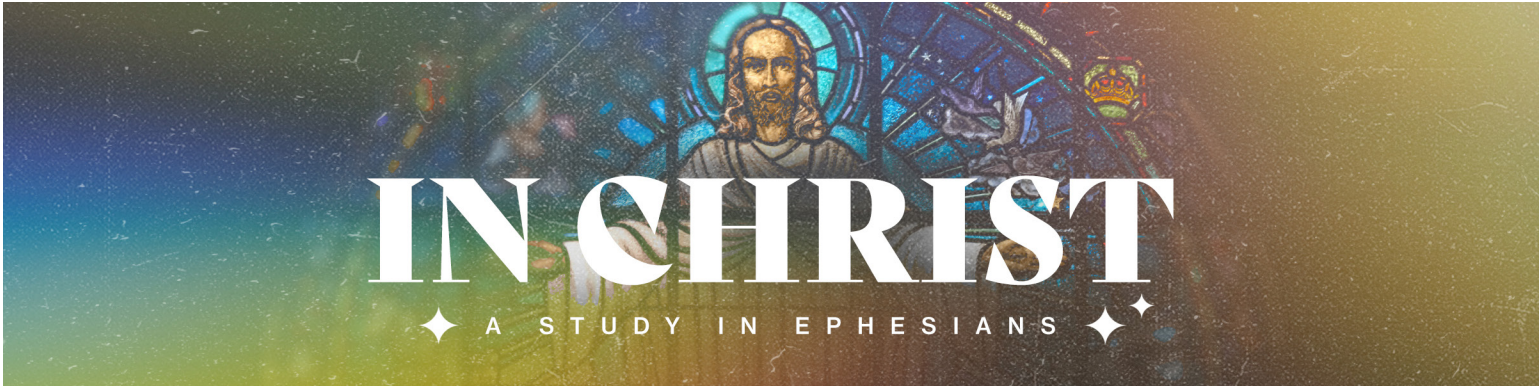
SERMON QUOTE:

"Children are like arrows in the hand of an archer. An archer would not go to a tree, cut off a branch, put it in the bow and shoot it, because a branch is not an arrow. What does the archer do? He takes that piece of wood, that branch, and he begins to shape it."

PRAYER:

Lord, help me see my children as You see them—not as burdens to manage, but as arrows to be carefully crafted for Your purposes. Give me patience in the shaping process and wisdom to know how to train each child according to their unique design. Amen.

NOTES:



IN CHRIST

✦ A STUDY IN EPHESIANS ✦

DAY 3: THE HEART OF OBEDIENCE

DEVOTIONAL:

In our culture, the word ‘obedience’ often feels outdated or harsh. We prefer terms like ‘cooperation’ or ‘negotiation.’ But God’s design for families includes a clear, loving command that children obey their parents—and it’s the only direct command given specifically to children in Scripture. This isn’t about creating little robots or stifling creativity. Biblical obedience means ‘to hear and respond’—it’s about children learning to listen carefully and act accordingly. This foundational skill prepares them for a lifetime of responding to God’s voice and living under His loving authority. God attached a beautiful promise to this command: ‘that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.’ He’s not threatening children into compliance; He’s revealing that obedience leads to blessing. When children learn to honor authority in the home, they develop character traits that will serve them well in every relationship and situation they encounter. This obedience is ‘in the Lord’—meaning it’s part of how children serve God at their stage of life. Just as adults serve God through their various callings, children serve Him by honoring their parents. This creates a beautiful picture of the family as a training ground for kingdom living. When this order is disrupted, it affects not just individual families but entire communities. The stability of our homes creates the foundation for the stability of our society. God’s ways truly are best for everyone involved.

BIBLE VERSE:

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. Honor your father and mother—which is the first commandment with a promise—so that it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth.” - Ephesians 6:1-3

REFLECTION QUESTION:

How can you help your children understand that obedience isn’t about control, but about God’s loving design for their protection and blessing?

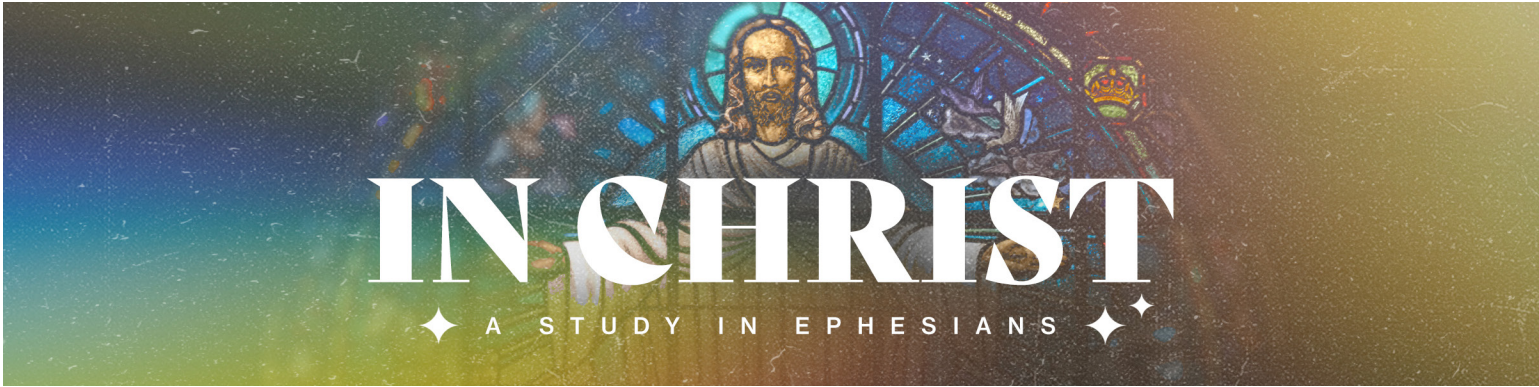
SERMON QUOTE:

“This, by the way, is the only imperative instructed to children in the Bible. Children, obey your parents. That is the command. That is the plan. That is the intention. That is God’s expectation.”

PRAYER:

Father, help our children understand that obedience is a gift that leads to blessing, not a burden that restricts them. Give us wisdom to lead with love and consistency, making it easier for them to honor and obey. May our homes reflect Your order and peace. Amen.

NOTES:



IN CHRIST

✦ A STUDY IN EPHESIANS ✦

DAY 4: LEADING WITHOUT PROVOKING

DEVOTIONAL:

Being a father in today's world can feel overwhelming. Society sends mixed messages about masculinity, leadership, and parenting roles. But God's Word provides clear, loving guidance for fathers who want to lead their families well. The command to fathers is twofold: don't provoke your children to anger, and bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord. This isn't about being passive or permissive—it's about leading with intentionality and grace. Provoking children to anger happens when discipline lacks love, when expectations are unclear or unreasonable, or when correction focuses on punishment rather than training. Biblical discipline is always directional—it points children toward righteousness and helps them understand God's character. Fathers are called to take initiative in their children's spiritual development. This means more than just attending church together; it involves daily conversations about faith, modeling godly character, and creating an environment where children can grow in their relationship with God. Remember, you don't have the power to make your children grow spiritually—that's God's work. But you can provide a healthy environment where growth naturally occurs. Like a gardener who prepares soil, provides water, and removes weeds, fathers create conditions where their children's faith can flourish. This calling is both a privilege and a responsibility. When fathers embrace their role as spiritual leaders, they're not just shaping their children's lives—they're participating in God's plan to pass faith from generation to generation.

BIBLE VERSE:

"Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord."
- Ephesians 6:4

REFLECTION QUESTION:

What changes might you need to make in your approach to discipline and instruction to ensure you're building up rather than tearing down your children's spirits?

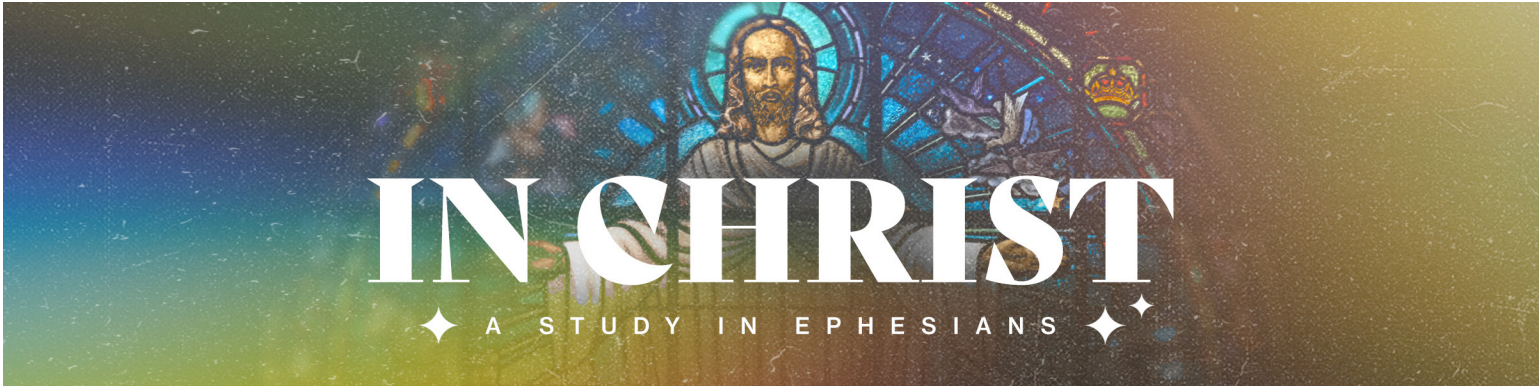
SERMON QUOTE:

"Too often, discipline and instruction in the home is relegated by the father to the mother. And Paul is saying, dad, take responsibility for your home. Take responsibility for your children."

PRAYER:

Heavenly Father, give me wisdom to lead my family with both strength and gentleness. Help me discipline with love, instruct with patience, and model the character I want to see in my children. Make me the father You've called me to be. Amen.

NOTES:



IN CHRIST

✦ A STUDY IN EPHESIANS ✦

DAY 5: GENERATIONAL FAITH: A LEGACY THAT LASTS

DEVOTIONAL:

One of the most beautiful aspects of God's design for families is His intention for faith to flow from generation to generation like a river that never runs dry. This isn't automatic—it requires intentional effort and faithful commitment from each generation. When families operate according to God's blueprint, something remarkable happens. Children who grow up in homes where God's Word is honored and His ways are followed naturally develop their own relationship with Him. They see faith lived out in real life, through both joyful times and difficult seasons. This generational transfer of faith doesn't happen through perfect parenting—it happens through authentic faith. Children need to see parents who depend on God, who admit their mistakes, who seek forgiveness, and who consistently point their family toward Christ. The impact extends far beyond individual families. When homes are healthy and operating according to God's design, entire communities benefit. Strong families create stable neighborhoods, which build healthy cities and nations. Wellness in our country truly begins with wellness in the home. As you consider your own family's legacy, remember that it's never too late to start building generational faith. Whether you're beginning this journey or continuing what previous generations started, God can use your faithfulness to impact not just your children, but their children and their children's children. This is God's heart for families—not just individual salvation, but entire family lines walking in His ways, generation after generation, creating an unbroken chain of faith that honors Him and blesses the world.

BIBLE VERSE:

"We will tell the next generation the praiseworthy deeds of the Lord, his power, and the wonders he has done."
- Psalm 78:4

REFLECTION QUESTION:

What specific steps can you take today to ensure that your faith becomes a lasting legacy that your children will want to pass on to their own children?

SERMON QUOTE:

"God's plan is that your faith would be passed down to your children. It is God's intention for there to be generational faith. That our faith is passed on from one generation down to the next."

PRAYER:

Lord, help me be faithful in passing on my faith to the next generation. May my children see You clearly through my life and choose to follow You with their whole hearts. Use our family to impact future generations for Your glory. Amen.

NOTES:
