

Bible Study Buddy: Ephesians

Katie



The Sunday
School Lady

Thanks for downloading *Bible Study Buddy: Ephesians* from Katie the Sunday School Lady. Created using the WEB translation (because it's free Public Domain), this study contains the entire book of Ephesians along with guided highlights for parts of the passage that may be hard to understand and activities to apply the truth to your child's life. It also points out verses to memorize, people of the Bible, cross references, and cultural nuances that a new Bible reader may not know. Many chapters also contain a "Try This!" section to help make the main point of the chapter stick.

The deepest desire of my heart is to get children to dive into the Word of God, and I pray this resource helps them on that journey!

Thanks for downloading!

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Using This Study Buddy

Hey there!

Here are a few pointers into how to use this as you're getting started. In this Study Buddy, there are several sticky notes. Each sticky note will correspond to a word from the text of the Bible and it will be underlined and highlighted so you know which note you're looking for. There are also application sections and activities. If supplies are necessary, those will be listed. I try to keep it simple with basic stuff you may have, but I get excited sometimes. Finally, there are verses to memorize that are simply highlighted with blue font. All of my sources are cited with footnotes. This may be a little confusing because the verse numbers are contained in the Biblical text, but those are subscript, while my notes are outside of the Biblical text and superscript.



There are several different ways you can use this Study Buddy. If your kids are old enough, you can simply have them read and work through it on their own. You can also use it as a family read aloud for your devotion time. If you think it would be more helpful to read in a translation you're familiar with, you can simply keep this Study Buddy open, and use the notes, application, and activities.

When it comes to breaking up the readings, it is a bit difficult with the WEB translation. There are no stops or breaks because those weren't in the original text. You might consider stopping after an application section or activity if a chapter is too long.

When in doubt, my personal recommendation is to keep lessons short. It's always music to my ears when kids beg to hear what happens next in the Bible rather than ask if it's done yet. And please, always feel free to color, highlight, and interact with the text!

At the end of the day, I pray this encourages you and your children to read the Bible. It is incredible what God can do with people committed to his Kingdom, his cause, and his Word. May this be a small help on your journey. And may he pour out his wisdom upon you as you seek him.

Blessings,
-Katie

Ephesians Intro

Ephesus was a city with many different religions. Up to 50 gods and goddesses were worshipped alongside the main goddess Artemis, meaning the new Christians came from backgrounds with a lot of different beliefs. There was also a large Jewish population, which was a common cause of tension in the early church. Finally, Ephesus held a reputation for magic and the occult, leading to incantations and invoking spirits for help.¹

Who wrote it? Apostle Paul

- Acts 19 tells us that Paul preached in Ephesus for over two years, so he knew these people well.
- Also of note is a riot that occurred when the city's idol makers gathered against Paul for harming their trade and discrediting Artemis worship (Acts 19).

Who did he write it to? The church in Ephesus.

Where is Ephesus?

On the coast of the Aegean Sea, Ephesus was the leading city of the richest region of the Roman Empire.³ It was known for its worship of Artemis (also called Diana) and home to her famous temple which was one of the seven wonders of the world.⁴

What is Ephesians?

Ephesians is a letter, but it reads a bit like a sermon and a prayer mixed together.²

When was the letter written?

During 62-64 AD, during Paul's imprisonment in Rome.

Why did Paul write the letter?

Paul wrote to encourage the believers that Christ is above other spiritual forces, to emphasize what a Christian life looks like, and to encourage unity within the church.⁵



Ephesians I

Chapter one of Ephesians serves as a reminder of the truth of the good news of Jesus. After, Paul offers a heartfelt prayer for the people.

Who's Who?

Paul

Paul was a Jew from Tarsus that persecuted the early Christians. In Acts 9, we read about how Jesus spoke to him on the road to Damascus and called him to be a missionary. He suffered much for the name of Jesus, being imprisoned and beaten. In spite of this, he went on three long missionary journeys, planting churches. Many books of the New Testament are letters to the churches he planted.

Where in the World?

Ephesus

Located on the Aegean Sea, it's port and location made it a great commercial center. ¹

God our Father

God is spirit, light, and love. He is everywhere and bigger than we can imagine. However, we also get to call him Father. His love and mercy endure through all generations, and he offered us the greatest sacrifice when he sent Jesus to make a way back to him. No matter your relationship with your earthly dad, God your father is perfect in all ways. ²

Lord Jesus Christ

Jesus is fully God and fully man. He came to earth, lived a perfect life, and died on a cross as the perfect sacrifice for a sinful people to make us right with God once more. Then, he rose from the grave, defeating sin and death and offering new life for those who believe. He is the image of the invisible God (Colossians 1:15) and He is Lord—over all and above all. ³

Say What!?

Holy:

"To be set apart for God to reflect his purity." ⁴

Predestined:

Decided beforehand from eternity. ⁵
God's will is laid in the foundations of heaven, but it is a choice made with deep love. ⁶

Grace:

This word was rarely used in Greek writings but often used by Jewish people to describe God's overwhelming love and kindness. This love and kindness is fully expressed in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus. ⁷

³ Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, ⁴ even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we would be holy and without defect before him in love, ⁵ having predestined us for adoption as children through Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his desire, ⁶ to the praise of the glory of his grace, by which he freely gave us favor in the Beloved.

Memorize this!
Ephesians 1:7

⁷ In him we have our **redemption** through his blood, the **forgiveness** of our **trespasses**, according to the riches of his **grace** ⁸ which he made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence, ⁹ making known to us the

mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him ¹⁰ to an administration of the fullness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens and the things on the earth, in him.

¹¹ We were also assigned an **inheritance** in him, having been **foreordained** according to the purpose of him who does all things after the counsel of his will, ¹² to the end that we should be to the praise of his glory, we who had before hoped in Christ. ¹³ In him you also, having heard the word of the truth, the Good News of your salvation—in whom, having also believed, you were sealed with the promised **Holy Spirit**, ¹⁴ who is a pledge of our inheritance, to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of his glory.

Who's Who?

Holy Spirit

The third member of the Trinity (God the Father, Son, and Spirit), Jesus sent him to believers after his death and resurrection. In Christ, we are given his Spirit and sealed. This word sealed can be used to mean engagement ring. He is our promise as the bride of Christ. ¹⁴

Foreordained

To mark out beforehand; planned. ¹³ God is beyond time. He knows the end before the beginning. This is hard to wrap our brains around, but what a comfort to know we serve such a big God.

Say What!?

Redemption:

To buy back or ransom (often from slavery). Christ, through his blood bought us back from the slavery of sin and death. ⁸

Forgiveness:

"Loosing someone from what binds them."
We are slaves to sin, and God frees us from this. ⁹

Trespasses:

Sinful acts, or leaving the right path. ¹⁰

Inheritance:

Chosen to receive property. ¹¹
In the OT, the Israelites were promised land and people. Through Christ, the inheritance is even greater: living eternally with him. ¹²

Apply This!

Dear friends, you have just read the gospel- the good news- in a few sentences. By his great grace and good pleasure, God sent his only son to rescue us from sin and death. The wages of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord. (Romans 6:23). In the same way that you breaking a rule at home results in punishment, or a criminal breaking a law requires jail, the punishment for sin is death. But Jesus died that death for us; our penalty is paid in full. Now, through him, we have the forgiveness of our sins and an inheritance that lasts forever. His love and grace are beyond measure- far greater than any of the false gods and goddesses the Ephesians had worshipped. If this is the first you've heard of this good news, take a moment to reflect. We've all sinned. The question is who will pay the penalty? Will you remain dead in your sins and pay the fine? Or will you seek God for his forgiveness found in Christ Jesus? The decision is yours. If you know the gospel and have made Jesus your Lord, take some time to thank him for his incredible gift of forgiveness and freedom.

¹⁵ For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you and the love which you have toward all the saints, ¹⁶ don't cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers, ¹⁷ that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him, ¹⁸ having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope of his calling, and what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might ²⁰ which he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly places, ²¹ far above all rule, authority, power, dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in that which is to come. ²² He put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things for the assembly, ²³ which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Memorize this!
Ephesians 1:17-19

Apply This!

Paul can pray such a bold prayer because he knows how big God is. Jesus is Lord. He is the head of the church, and he is a Good Shepherd that cares for his sheep- for those of us who believe. I think this is easy to say, but hard to live. Sometimes worry creeps into our hearts. Or fear. We're afraid of the future or afraid of the unknown. Sometimes we feel alone. Sometimes we feel like our problems are too big and we are too small. If you have those feelings, I want you to reread Paul's prayer to the Ephesians. Our God is mighty. He is bigger than any problem and more powerful than any fear. And the same power that rose Jesus from the grave is at work within those of us who believe. You are not alone. You are not powerless. May his Spirit fill you anew today.



Did you know?

Christ is Lord. He is above all and over all. To the Ephesians who feared the spiritual realm, this was a great comfort to know that Jesus is Lord even there. He didn't just have power in raising from the dead- his Lordship is everlasting. And one day he will return to reign as King of kings and Lord of lords. On that day, Philippians 2 reminds us that every knee will bow and tongue confess that Jesus is Lord.

Try This!

That was quite the prayer Paul prayed for the Ephesians, wasn't it? I don't know about you, but when I was a kid, beautiful prayers intimidated me. Honestly, all prayer intimidated me. I wondered if I would say the wrong thing or sound foolish. I felt uncomfortable because I didn't feel like I was "good" at praying or that I prayed long enough. If you've ever felt any of these things, take a look at the next pages. We're going to dig into a few passages where Jesus talks about prayer to help us understand it better.

Try This!

Read these passages where Jesus talks about prayer, color the pictures, then write your own prayer on the lines provided.

Luke 18:9-14

⁹ He also spoke this parable to certain people who were convinced of their own righteousness, and who despised all others: ¹⁰ "Two men went up into the temple to pray; one was a Pharisee, and the other was a tax collector. ¹¹ The Pharisee stood and prayed by himself like this: 'God, I thank you that I am not like the rest of men: extortionists, unrighteous, adulterers, or even like this tax collector. ¹² I fast twice a week. I give tithes of all that I get.' ¹³ But the tax collector, standing far away, wouldn't even lift up his eyes to heaven, but beat his chest, saying, 'God, be merciful to me, a sinner!' ¹⁴ I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other; for everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, but he who humbles himself will be exalted."



May our prayers be
humble. Circle the
humble man.





**May our prayers be
simple and done in
secret.**

Matthew 6:5-15

⁵ "When you pray, you shall not be as the hypocrites, for they love to stand and pray in the synagogues and in the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men. Most certainly, I tell you, they have received their reward. ⁶ But you, when you pray, enter into your inner room, and having shut your door, pray to your Father who is in secret; and your Father who sees in secret will reward you openly. ⁷ In praying, don't use vain repetitions as the Gentiles do; for they think that they will be heard for their much speaking. ⁸ Therefore don't be like them, for your Father knows what things you need before you ask him. ⁹ Pray like this:

"Our Father in heaven, may your name be kept holy.

¹⁰ Let your Kingdom come.

Let your will be done on earth as it is in heaven.

¹¹ Give us today our daily bread.

¹² Forgive us our debts,
as we also forgive our debtors.

¹³ Bring us not into temptation,
but deliver us from the evil one.

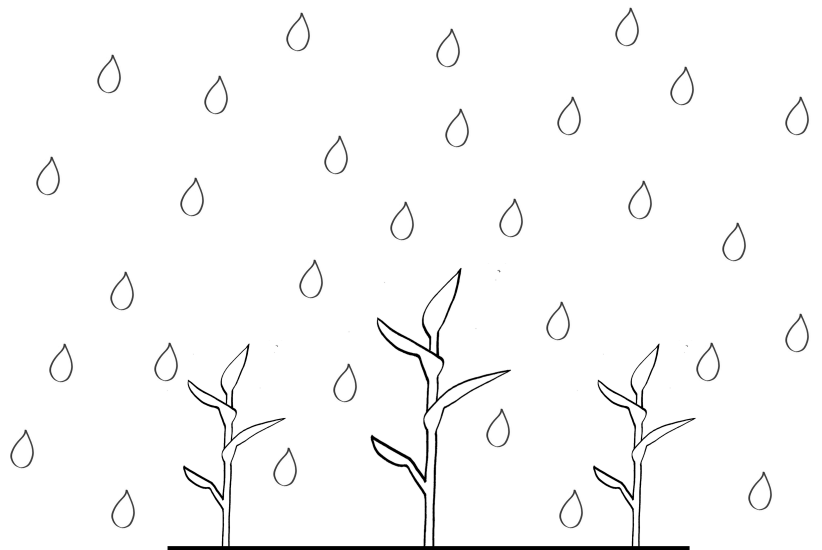
For yours is the Kingdom, the power, and the glory forever.

Amen.'

¹⁴ "For if you forgive men their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. ¹⁵ But if you don't forgive men their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.

James 6:16-18

¹⁶ Confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The insistent prayer of a righteous person is powerfully effective. ¹⁷ Elijah was a man with a nature like ours, and he prayed earnestly that it might not rain, and it didn't rain on the earth for three years and six months. ¹⁸ He prayed again, and the sky gave rain, and the earth produced its fruit.



**May our prayers be
earnest.**

Luke 18:1-8

He also spoke a parable to them that they must always pray and not give up, ² saying, "There was a judge in a certain city who didn't fear God and didn't respect man. ³ A widow was in that city, and she often came to him, saying, 'Defend me from my adversary!' ⁴ He wouldn't for a while; but afterward he said to himself, 'Though I neither fear God nor respect man, ⁵ yet because this widow bothers me, I will defend her, or else she will wear me out by her continual coming.'"

⁶ The Lord said, "Listen to what the unrighteous judge says. ⁷ Won't God avenge his chosen ones who are crying out to him day and night, and yet he exercises patience with them? ⁸ I tell you that he will avenge them quickly. Nevertheless, when the Son of Man comes, will he find faith on the earth?"

May our prayers be persistent and full of faith.

My Prayer:

Ephesians 2

The original Greek that Paul was writing in carries on chapter two beginning with “and.” He connects the same power of Christ being raised from the dead to the new life in Christ. Paul then goes on to talk about a before and after. Have you ever seen a building get built or remodeled? Perhaps before it was an open field or an abandoned building, but after, it is beautiful and new. Chapter two is all about our before and after picture in Christ.¹ Check it out!

You were made alive when you were dead in transgressions and **sins**,² in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the **prince of the power of the air**, the spirit who now works in the children of disobedience.³ We also all once lived among them in the lusts of our **flesh**, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.⁴ But God, being rich in **mercy**, for his great love with which he loved us,⁵ even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by grace you have been saved—⁶ and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,⁷ that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus;⁸ for by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,⁹ not of works, that no one would boast.¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared before that we would walk in them.

Memorize this!

Ephesians 2:4-10

Say What!?

Transgressions and Sins

Transgressions refers to a lapse, while sin is a shortcoming. Both are emphasized, whether we make a mistake or come up short, we are spiritually dead in these failures before Christ.

Who's Who?

Prince of the power of the air

The prince is Satan—the unholy deceiver. An angel that fell from his height in heaven due to his pride and ambition. The air is where he operates. This doesn't mean the air itself, but the influences of our community and world which we live and breathe.³

Say What!?

Flesh

Not skin, but the natural, human desires for fame, power, and riches.⁴

Mercy

God's compassion for the helpless, shown in his action for their salvation.⁵ God showed his mercy through Christ in his death and resurrection which we did not deserve.

Apply This!

Do you notice that Paul is painting two pictures? The way the Ephesians used to be and the way they are now supposed to be. We all have a BC- a Before Christ. Maybe we used to talk a certain way, gossip about others or live like a bully. Maybe we used to watch things we weren't supposed to watch or read books that we shouldn't have read. But then we met Jesus. Suddenly, we can't live like that anymore. We were in death, but now we are seated with Christ and he begins to change us from our Before Christ life. And as we grow in maturity, our Before Christ life and After Christ life look very different.

But notice how Paul finishes his thought. It isn't us working to earn the grace of God. It isn't about how hard we work or how many good things we do- those things can never make us right with God, can never buy us forgiveness. We are made right with God by the free gift of salvation that comes from the death and resurrection of Jesus alone. He is the way, the truth, and the life, and he is our way to the Father. Out of our gratitude for his salvation, we can work for him and his kingdom, bringing glory to the One who so graciously freed us from sin and death.

? Say What!?

Gentile

Someone that is not a Jew.⁶ The Jews and gentiles often had racial tensions between them. Paul wants to remind them that, through Christ, they are one.

Circumcised

This was a "physical, visible mark that identified those who bore it as members of Israel, God's chosen people."⁷ Jews were circumcised, gentiles were not. This sign represented the old covenants. Meanwhile, a new covenant is made by the circumcision of the heart- the change in a Christian that identifies them as belonging to God.

Did you know?

There was a physical wall in the temple of Jerusalem that the gentiles were not allowed to cross. If they did, the penalty was death. This barrier is removed by Jesus.¹⁰

¹¹ Therefore remember that once you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "uncircumcision" by that which is called "circumcision" (in the flesh, made by hands), ¹² that you were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world. ¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off are made near in the blood of Christ. ¹⁴ For he is our peace, who made both one, and broke down the middle wall of separation, ¹⁵ having abolished in his flesh the hostility, the law of commandments contained in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man of the two, making peace, ¹⁶ and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, having killed the hostility through it.

Covenant

A covenant is a promise. This wasn't a casual pinky promise but was sworn on their life. If one side failed to honor the covenant, they could be punished with death.⁸ The covenants of the promise referenced here mean the promises God made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and David. These promises included land, a nation, and a ruler to sit on David's throne eternally.⁹ All find their fulfillment in Christ, to which the gentiles are now welcome.

Reconcile

To settle or resolve a dispute.¹¹ The Jews and Gentiles were reconciled to God and one another by Jesus' death and resurrection.

¹⁷ He came and preached peace to you who were far off and to those who were near. ¹⁸ For through him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. ¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God, ²⁰ being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief cornerstone; ²¹ in whom the whole building, fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord; ²² in whom you also are built together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.



Did you know?

No matter which country you hail from or what ethnicity you are, if you are in Christ, you are one with others in Christ. Our true citizenship belongs with our glorious King in the kingdom of Heaven. ¹²



Say What!?

Chief Cornerstone

This was the capstone or binding stone that held the whole structure together. ¹³ Colossians 1:17 states, "He is before all things, and in him all things are held together."

In Roman construction, pieces of rock were turned until they fit together perfectly. ¹⁴ God does this with his people, growing them into a holy temple. 1 Peter also talks about Christ followers as being living stones, built into spiritual houses to offer sacrifices to God. We are the temple- the place where God dwells- and he is building us up together to show his glory.

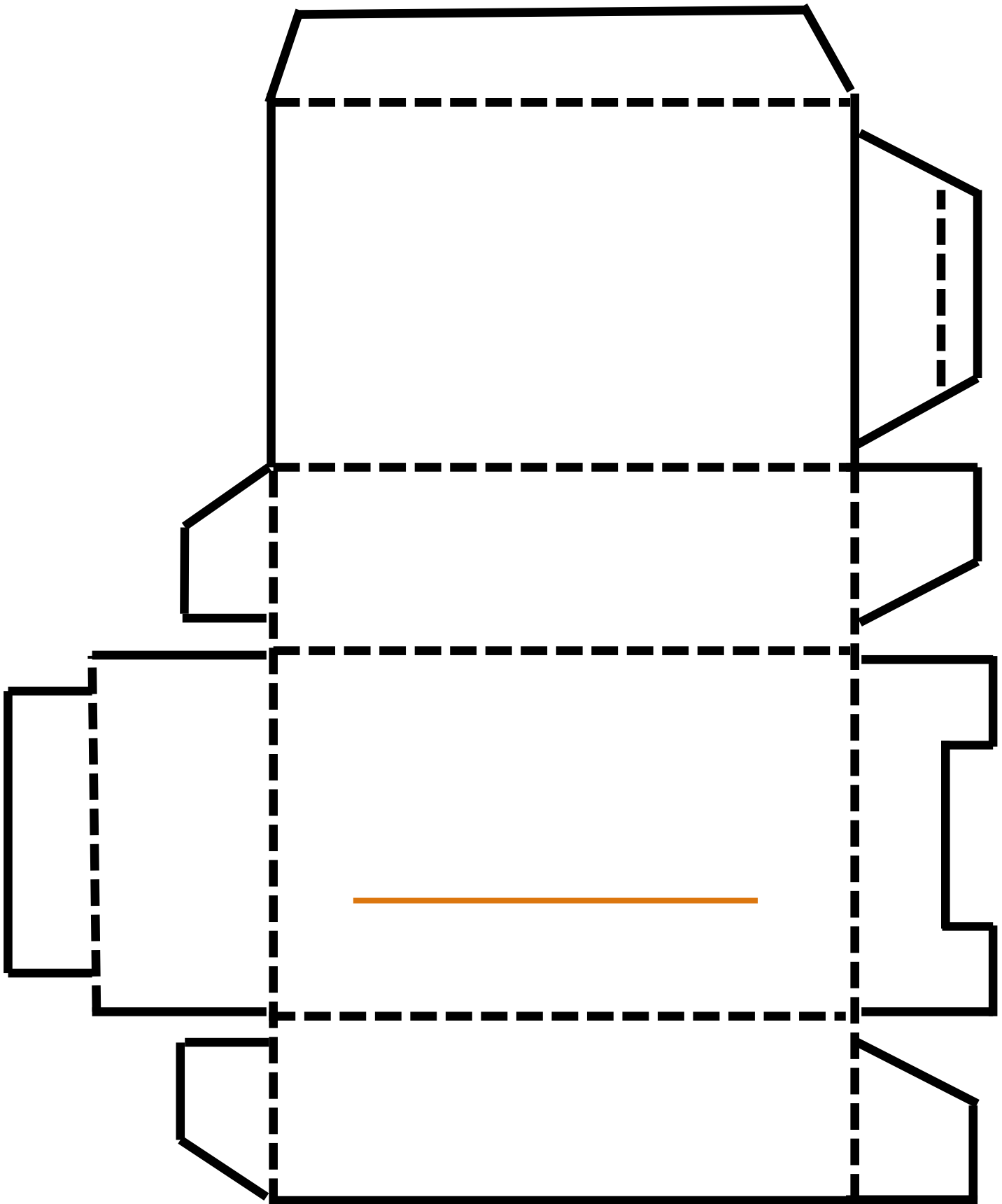
Try This!

With a parent's permission, either print out the box templates on the next page (as many as you want to build your wall) or use cardboard boxes you have around your home. Before building the boxes, print on them some things that divide us as Christians. Maybe the music we like or the kind of home we live in. Once you've filled out your boxes, build them up and create a wall. Then, with a marshmallow (for the paper boxes), or a rock/ball (for the cardboard boxes. Outside please!), throw or flick it at the wall to knock it down.

Apply This!

Christ knocked down the walls that divide us. The color of our skin or hair doesn't matter. The amount of money our family has doesn't matter. How smart we are doesn't matter. How old we are doesn't matter. We are one in Christ. In a world as divided as ours is, may we, as the church, be united in Christ, loving one another with the same love that he showed us in laying down his life.

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Directions: Cut around all the outside lines. Write something that divides us on the orange line in the middle. Then, fold back along the dotted lines to make a box. Tape or glue it together. Once you've made several, build them into a wall.

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Ephesians 3

In chapter three, Paul speaks more on his calling to the gentiles and continues in his prayers for the Ephesians. As you read, notice Paul's commitment to his call, his humility, and his deep love for the Ephesians.

For this cause I, Paul, am the prisoner of Christ Jesus on behalf of you Gentiles, ² if it is so that you have heard of the administration of that grace of God which was given me toward you, ³ how that by revelation the mystery was made known to me, as I wrote before in few words, ⁴ by which, when you read, you can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ, ⁵ which in other generations was not made known to the children of men, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit, ⁶ that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of his promise in Christ Jesus through the Good News, ⁷ of which I was made a servant according to the gift of that grace of God which was given me according to the working of his power.



Did you know?

Paul wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon while in prison. Even in a hard situation, God used Paul to spread the gospel and build up the churches.¹



Say What!?

Mystery

The mystery is God's secret plan to both save the world through Christ and the inclusion of the gentiles into that salvation.² Not a secret in a sense that he didn't want us to find out, but secret in that it wasn't revealed until its proper time.

There was a big debate about gentiles being included in the early church. Check out Acts 15, to see how the leaders met and settled the issue of circumcision and following the Law of Moses for gentiles.

⁸ To me, the very least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹ and to make all men see what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things through Jesus Christ, ¹⁰ to the intent that now through the assembly the manifold wisdom of God might be made known to the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places, ¹¹ according to the eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord. ¹² In him we have boldness and access in confidence through our faith in him. ¹³ Therefore I ask that you may not lose heart at my troubles for you, which are your glory.

Memorize this!
Ephesians 3:12

Apply This!

In verse 12, Paul states that we have boldness and access. The original Greek term was meant to be used between close friends.³ I want you to picture for a moment that the President, or King, or leader of your country came to your school. What would you do? I bet your teachers would want you on your best behavior and everyone would feel a little intimidated, whether you liked the leader or not. By all rights, we should feel that way before the Almighty God. He is way bigger, way more powerful, and way more beyond us than any prince or king of this earth. And yet. And yet we are able to come and talk to him as a close friend. Jesus has made a way to the Father and now we can boldly approach the throne of grace (Hebrews 4:16). Have you taken advantage of this? You have access to the ruler of all! Spend time in his presence. Come boldly to him.

¹⁴ For this cause, I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵ from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶ that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that you may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner person, ¹⁷ that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, to the end that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸ may be strengthened to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and height and depth, ¹⁹ and to know Christ's love which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.

²⁰ Now to him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us, ²¹ to him be the glory in the assembly and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.



Did you know?

There are many postures of prayer in the Bible:
Kneeling showed deep respect.⁴
Standing was the common posture of the Jews.⁵
Other times, the people fell on their faces before God (1 Kings 18:39). In the end, the heart matters more than the posture.

Apply This!

Paul demonstrates coming boldly to the throne of God and asking for strength for his brothers and sisters in Christ. Notice that he doesn't pray for God to give them things, but to strengthen them and to give them a knowledge of the incredible love of God, so they might be filled with him. Dear friends, God is our strength. When we feel weary, when we feel tempted to sin, when we feel unloved or like we don't fit in, when we feel afraid. He is there; he is not far off. His love is so big that we can't even comprehend it. I pray this for you, too. That you would have knowledge of a love that surpasses knowledge, and once you have that, that you would rely on him to be your strength because he is mightier than anything you can face. You are never alone because his Spirit dwells in you and he is able to do more than you can ask or imagine!

Try This!

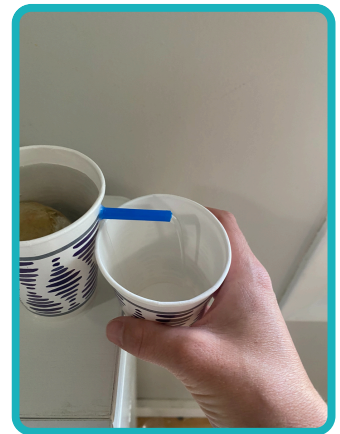
Create a Eureka can.

Supplies:

Paper cup(s), water, straw cut to about 1½ inches, graduated cylinder (or another cup to catch the water, you just won't be able to measure it), glue (hot glue preferred, may be unnecessary), different objects like rocks or small toys.

Instructions:

Poke a hole in the paper cup and snugly fit the straw into the hole. If the hole is too big, cover the seams with glue to ensure no water can get through. Once the glue is dry, fill the cup with water. Place one of your objects in the cup and catch the water from the straw spout with your graduated cylinder to see the volume of the object. Try this with different objects. If you have a graduated cylinder, you can measure the volume of each object by the mL of water you displaced.



Apply This!

In Ephesians 3:18-19, Paul talked about comprehending the width and length and height and depth. In the translation we're using and the original Greek, Paul doesn't explain what these dimensions are for. Most scholars believe it is the love of Christ, others have suggested it is the power of God.⁶ With either interpretation, the outcome is that we may be filled with the fullness of God.

Now let me get a little scientific here. The mathematical equation for volume is *length x height x width*. And we can think of volume as what a container can hold. Do you see where I'm going with this? For the fullness of God to fill us, we need the right dimensions—understanding of the length, width, and height of God's love or power. I think an understanding of both would be great.

But how can we know this? Even Paul says his love surpasses knowledge! This is a lifelong learning experience. We get glimpses of just how big his love is. And through prayer and seeking him, those glimpses become bigger and more frequent. Also, the more we glimpse of his love, the more of our old self is removed. Just like in our experiment. When the cup was filled with something new, the old water left. As you gain understanding of the love and power of Christ, he begins to fill you with his fullness, replacing your "before Christ" with himself.

Ephesians 4

In chapter four, Paul gets practical for the Ephesians. He longs for them to put into practice the new man and get rid of the old man, and here he explains what that looks like.

I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beg you to walk worthily of the calling with which you were called, ² with all lowliness and humility, with patience, bearing with one another in love, ³ being eager to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴ There is one body and one Spirit, even as you also were called in one hope of your calling, ⁵ one Lord, one faith, one **baptism**, ⁶ one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in us all. ⁷ But to each one of us, the grace was given according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

Say What!?

Baptism

This could refer to the baptism into the body of Christ by the Spirit when one commits their life to Jesus or it could be water baptism, which is done when a Christ follower makes a public declaration of their faith and salvation and is dipped in water to signify their partnership in the death and resurrection of Jesus—dying to their old self and being raised to new life in Christ.¹

Apply This!

One trait of our new self in Christ must be that of unity. We are one body belonging to one faith and one God therefore, we need to act in unity. This means loving others more than we love ourselves. It means putting others wants and desires before our own. It means serving. It means giving. It means sharing. It means sacrificing. These are hard things to do and it goes against our flesh. But we can live like this by his Spirit at work within us, and this kind of lifestyle will lead others to wonder what makes us so different. How can you live this today?

Did you know?

To lead captivity captive means that Jesus took captive the evil principalities. In his victory, he gave gifts to people. Once this Psalm represented the law being given to Moses, but now Paul notes that the true victor is Jesus through his descent to earth and resurrection and ascent back to heaven.²

⁸ Therefore he says,

“When he ascended on high,
he led captivity captive,
and gave gifts to people.”

⁹ Now this, “He ascended”, what is it but that he also first descended into the lower parts of the earth? ¹⁰ He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.

Reference:

This is found in Psalm 68:18

*Note: Commentaries disagree on what descended means. Some believe what was stated in the note to the left, other believe it refers to Jesus proclaiming victory in hades after his death and before his resurrection. Even really smart Christians don't fully understand everything!³

¹¹ He gave some to be apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, shepherds and teachers; ¹² for the perfecting of the saints, to the work of serving, to the building up of the body of Christ, ¹³ until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a full grown man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, ¹⁴ that we may no longer be children, tossed back and forth and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error; ¹⁵ but speaking truth in love, we may grow up in all things into him who is the head, Christ, ¹⁶ from whom all the body, being fitted and knit together through that which every joint supplies, according to the working in measure of each individual part, makes the body increase to the building up of itself in love.



**Say
What!?**

Apostle

A delegate or ambassador of the Gospel; one who is sent. ⁴

Prophets

They receive direct revelation from God or foretell God's actions in the future. ⁵

Evangelists

These bring people to the body of Christ by sharing the good news. ⁶

Shepherds and Teachers

The shepherd of a church is like a shepherd for sheep: he feeds, nurtures, and protects them from enemies. This is often done through teaching the truth. ⁷

Saints

These are God's people. The root word is often related to purity. ⁸ God's people are not pure on their own, but by the cleansing blood of Jesus.

Apply This!

Paul doesn't want his followers to be like children. You may be thinking, "Hey! I'm a kid!" Don't worry, in Matthew 18:2-3, Jesus told people that they needed to be like children to enter the Kingdom of God. So how can both be right? When Jesus was talking about children, he longed for humility in his followers. When Paul doesn't want his people acting like children, he means that he wants them to grow up! Kids can be easily tricked and vulnerable and wishy-washy. Paul doesn't want that; he wants mature Christians who stand on the truth, not babies. So how do we grow in maturity? By doing what you're doing right now- spending time in God's Word. You're planting seeds, young learners! Keep watering them and they will grow in time!

¹⁷ This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, ¹⁸ being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their hearts. ¹⁹ They, having become callous, gave themselves up to lust, to work all uncleanness with greediness. ²⁰ But you didn't learn Christ that way, ²¹ if indeed you heard him and were taught in him, even as truth is in Jesus: ²² that you put away, as concerning your former way of life, the old man that grows corrupt after the lusts of deceit, ²³ and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, ²⁴ and put on the new man, who in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.

²⁵ Therefore, putting away falsehood, speak truth each one with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. ²⁶ "Be angry, and don't sin." Don't let the sun go down on your wrath, ²⁷ and don't give place to the devil. ²⁸ Let him who stole steal no more; but rather let him labor, producing with his hands something that is good, that he may have something to give to him who has need. ²⁹ Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but only what is good for building others up as the need may be, that it may give grace to those who hear. ³⁰ Don't grieve the Holy Spirit of God, in whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, outcry, and slander be put away from you, with all malice. ³² And be kind to one another, tender hearted, forgiving each other, just as God also in Christ forgave you.

Try This!

These are a lot of character traits that Paul lists- some that we don't want to have and others that we do want to have. The idea of getting rid of the old is to take it off.

Think of clothes that are filthy and covered in mud. When you walk into the house, your mom will probably make you change into new clothes that aren't so filthy. God wants us to change from our old self, too. He wants us to throw it away.

Supplies:

Following four pages with the scrolls cut out, a trash bin (if you don't have a bin, tape two pieces of paper together in a cylinder), a line of tape on the ground where you will shoot from.

Mix up and spread out the scroll pieces in your game area. If you have a friend or a sibling you can play with, each get a set of your own, or race to see who gets rid of the most.

To begin, grab all the traits we want to get rid of, crumple them up, and shoot them from behind the tape line into the trash can. Don't get fooled and accidentally get rid of a trait we want to keep!



Lowliness

Humble or meek in manner.⁹



Humility

Showing submissive respect.¹⁰



Patience

Bearing affliction with calmness;
persevering; bearing delay.¹¹



Unity

Being one; in agreement.¹²



Peace

Freedom from quarrels and
disagreement; freedom from
strife.¹³



Righteousness

Meeting the standard of
what is right and just.¹⁴



Holiness of Truth

Fully observing God's
regulations.¹⁵



Speak Truth

Fact; actuality. To speak in such
a way.¹⁶

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Labor

Physical or mental exertion.¹⁷

Give to those in need

Share with those who have less.

Speech that builds up

Use words that encourage

Kind

Of a friendly, generous, warm-hearted nature; one who shows sympathy and understanding.¹⁸

Tenderhearted

Easily moved by others distress; compassionate.¹⁹

Forgiving

To excuse a fault or offense; to pardon.²⁰

Alienated from God

Removed; turned away from; to become indifferent or unfriendly to God.²¹

Hardhearted

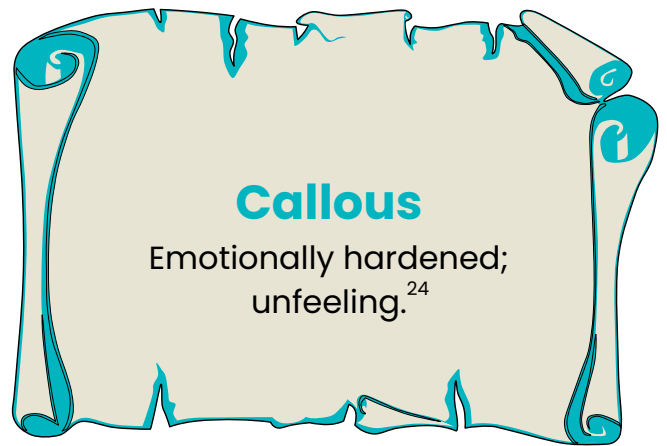
Lacking in feeling or compassion.²²

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Greedy

Excessive desire for more.²³



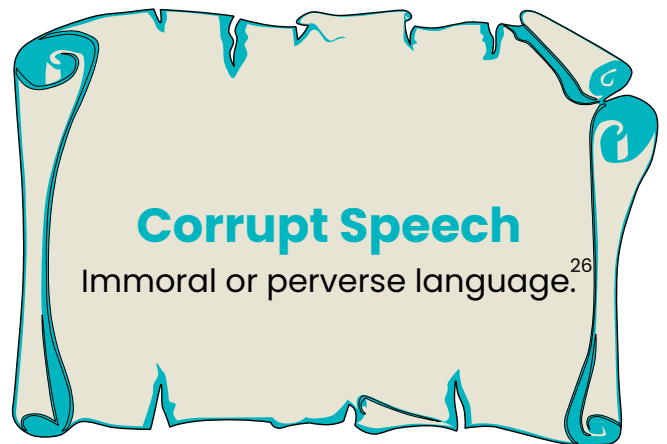
Callous

Emotionally hardened;
unfeeling.²⁴



Stealing

Taking without right or
permission.²⁵



Corrupt Speech

Immoral or perverse language.²⁶



Bitterness

Marked by resentment.²⁷



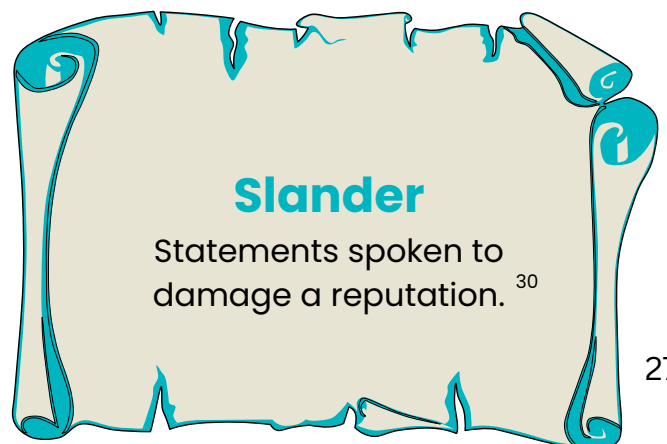
Wrath

Anger; rage; fury.²⁸



Anger

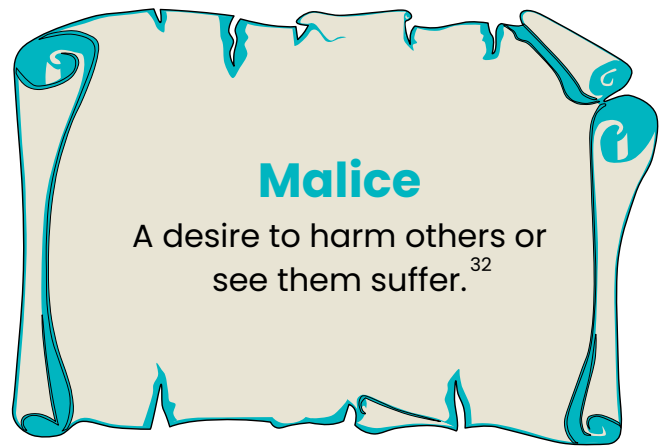
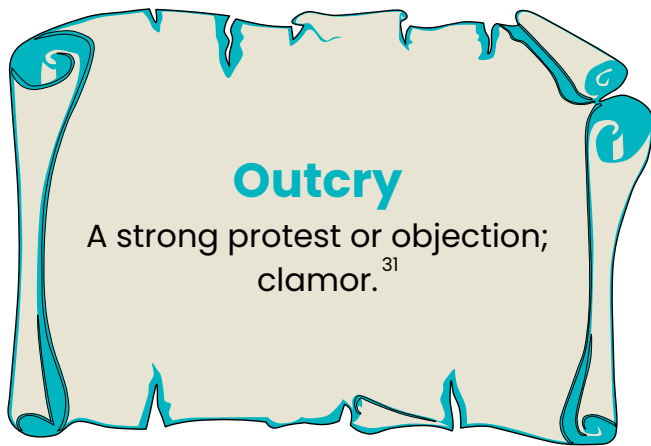
Extreme displeasure; hostility;
rage.²⁹



Slander

Statements spoken to
damage a reputation.³⁰

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Ephesians 5

Paul continues to give ways to practically live out the Christian faith in chapter five. There is more to get rid of and more to put on to become an imitator of God. Check it out!

Be therefore imitators of God, as beloved children. ² Walk in love, even as Christ also loved us and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling fragrance.

³ But sexual immorality, and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be mentioned among you, as becomes saints; ⁴ nor filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not appropriate, but rather giving of thanks.

⁵ Know this for sure, that no sexually immoral person, nor unclean person, nor covetous man (who is an idolater), has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Christ and God.

⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes on the children of disobedience. ⁷ Therefore don't be partakers with them. ⁸ For you were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord. Walk as children of light, ⁹ for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth, ¹⁰ proving what is well pleasing to the Lord. ¹¹ Have no fellowship with the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but rather even reprove them. ¹² For it is a shame even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. ¹³ But all things, when they are reproved, are revealed by the light, for everything that reveals is light. ¹⁴ Therefore he says, "Awake, you who sleep, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you."

Apply This!

The practical living of the Christian life could be summed up in these two verses. We must imitate God by living a life of sacrificial love. How are you doing that? Where could you improve? Pray for God's wisdom and conviction to show you where you're lacking and for the courage to walk in obedience and love.

Memorize This!

Ephesians 5:8

Apply This!

Our bodies, our words, and our desires are called to imitate Christ. You see, the Ephesians used to live according to their culture. The Roman world was filled with sexual immorality, foolish talk, and a desire for wealth. Do you notice any similarities in your culture? Paul calls the Ephesians out of this. That was their before Christ. Their after Christ must be different. They have been cleansed and washed from their past, now able to inherit the Kingdom of God. Why go back to the empty lives they used to live in darkness when they are now children of the light?



Did you know?

Drunkenness was a central part of the worship of the Roman god Dionysus.

Partakers then believed in their drunkenness that they were filled with the spirit of Dionysus. Paul calls the Ephesians from this false worship of a false god, encouraging them to be filled with the

Holy Spirit. This is not an act of drunkenness, but living in the same power that filled the believers on Pentecost in Acts 2. ¹

¹⁵ Therefore watch carefully how you walk, not as unwise, but as wise, ¹⁶ redeeming the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷ Therefore, don't be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸ Don't be drunken with wine, in which is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs; singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; ²⁰ giving thanks always concerning all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; ²¹ subjecting yourselves to one another in the fear of Christ.

Apply This!

Paul is about to start a new section of thought. Before it was how Christians filled with the Spirit will live. Now, he transitions to how Christians relate to one another. He'll do this through three main relationships: husband and wife, parent and child, master and slave. As you read, note the theme of submission.

²² Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³ For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the assembly, being himself the savior of the body. ²⁴ But as the assembly is subject to Christ, so let the wives also be to their own husbands in everything.

Say What!?

Assembly

The church was never meant to be just a building. It is a people; it is us- the bride of Christ.

²⁵ Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the assembly and gave himself up for her, ²⁶ that he might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷ that he might present the assembly to himself gloriously, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without defect. ²⁸ Even so husbands also ought to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself. ²⁹ For no man ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, even as the Lord also does the assembly, ³⁰ because we are members of his body, of his flesh and bones. ³¹ "For this cause a man will leave his father and mother and will be joined to his wife. Then the two will become one flesh." ³² This mystery is great, but I speak concerning Christ and the assembly. ³³ Nevertheless each of you must also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Try This!

The chapter ends in the middle of Paul's relationship advice, so we'll take a pause for a moment and do an activity relating to Paul's call for us to live as light from earlier in the chapter.

Supplies:

A laser pointer, index cards, playdoh (or something to stick the cards into), a mirror

OR

A flashlight, a large field, and two grown ups

Experiment 1:

Cut small holes into an index card (these will be your targets). Place them in small balls of playdoh so they stand upright. Then, using a mirror, try to bounce the light of the laser through the target and onto a wall. (Make sure you never point a laser at your eyes).

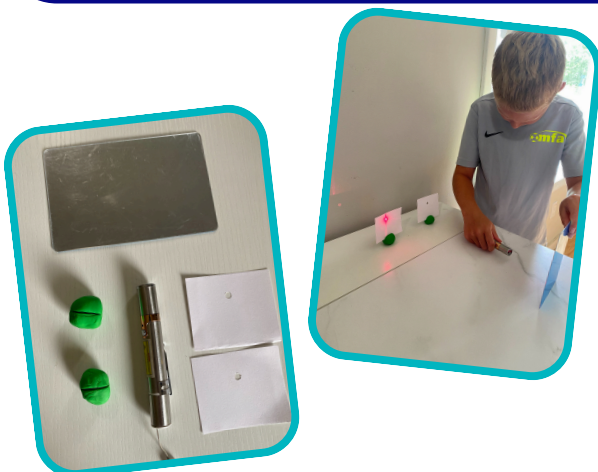
Experiment 2:

If you don't have those supplies, grab a flashlight and two grownups on a dark night. Have one grown up take the flashlight while you stay with the other. Have the grownup walk as far as they can until you can no longer see their light. Mark the spots and come back during the day to see how far you went.

Apply This!

Light can do some pretty incredible things. It can bounce with reflection. It can bend with refraction. It can disperse, absorb, and transmit with speed. It also brightens the darkness. If you did the experiment in the field, how far did you get? Some suggest a candle can be seen for miles. Is your life shining like that? Once you were darkness, just like everyone else, in the way you used to live, think, and act. But now you are light. You are different and visible. You glow as a reflection of the Living God who dwells within you with his Spirit. Write down three ways to let your light shine this week and live as children of the light!

How I'll Light Up the Dark This Week:



Ephesians 6

Chapter six isn't a new thought, but a continuation of instruction on relationships. Chapter five included a husband and wife theme, now we'll move into parents and children, slaves and masters. Then, Paul will finish his letter with a call to arms.



Did you know?

Children were expected to obey their parents in the ancient world. The Bible also calls for parents to treat their children in a way they will want to obey.¹

Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ² "Honor your father and mother," which is the first commandment with a promise: ³ "that it may be well with you, and you may live long on the earth."

Reference:

This is found in Deuteronomy 5:16

⁴ You fathers, don't provoke your children to wrath, but nurture them in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

⁵ Servants, be obedient to those who according to the flesh are your masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as to Christ, ⁶ not in the way of service only when eyes are on you, as men pleasers, but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart, ⁷ with good will doing service as to the Lord and not to men, ⁸ knowing that whatever good thing each one does, he will receive the same good again from the Lord, whether he is bound or free.

⁹ You masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with him.



Did you know?

About 1/3 of the population of Rome were slaves. Paul doesn't condemn slavery, but he creates a counter cultural approach. Slaves were seen equally in the church and here he commands both masters and slaves to submit to God. This eventually paved a way for the end of slavery.²

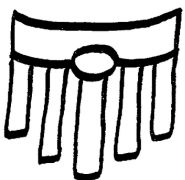
Apply This!

Do you see the call to submission? God has created a world of order and authority. Wives, children, and slaves are called to submit. But so also are husbands, parents, and masters called to submit to God. Jesus gave us the greatest example of this, living as a servant and becoming obedient to death on a cross (Philippians 2). Submission and obedience are hard, especially if the person in authority isn't a Christ follower. If that is your situation, pray about it. Talk to God about your fears and concerns. Ask him to convict the person in authority over you. Ask him to help you submit, even when you don't want to. But also remember that your first submission is always to God. No one should make you go against his Word and if they do, choose to obey God rather than people.

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. ¹² For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world's rulers of the darkness of this age, and against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. ¹³ Therefore put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. ¹⁴ Stand therefore, having the utility belt of truth buckled around your waist, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵ and having fitted your feet with the preparation of the Good News of peace, ¹⁶ above all, taking up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God; ¹⁸ with all prayer and requests, praying at all times in the Spirit, and being watchful to this end in all perseverance and requests for all the saints. ¹⁹ Pray for me, that utterance may be given to me in opening my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the Good News, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Apply This!

The believers in Ephesus knew about spiritual forces and the battle in the spiritual realm. It is the same battle we face today, and it isn't against people but against the evil forces at work in the world. This spiritual war is raging around us, but we are not left without armor! Take a look at how Romans used each of these pieces of equipment, color them, then consider how you can use them in a spiritual battle.



Belt

This had leather strips hanging from it to protect the lower body.³



Shield of Faith

Usually 2.5 x 4 ft, the shield protected from flying objects or an enemy attempting to use a weapon against them.⁶



Breastplate

Made of hard leather or metal, this went all the way around the body, protecting from the front and back.⁴



Helmet

This protects the head and mind.⁷



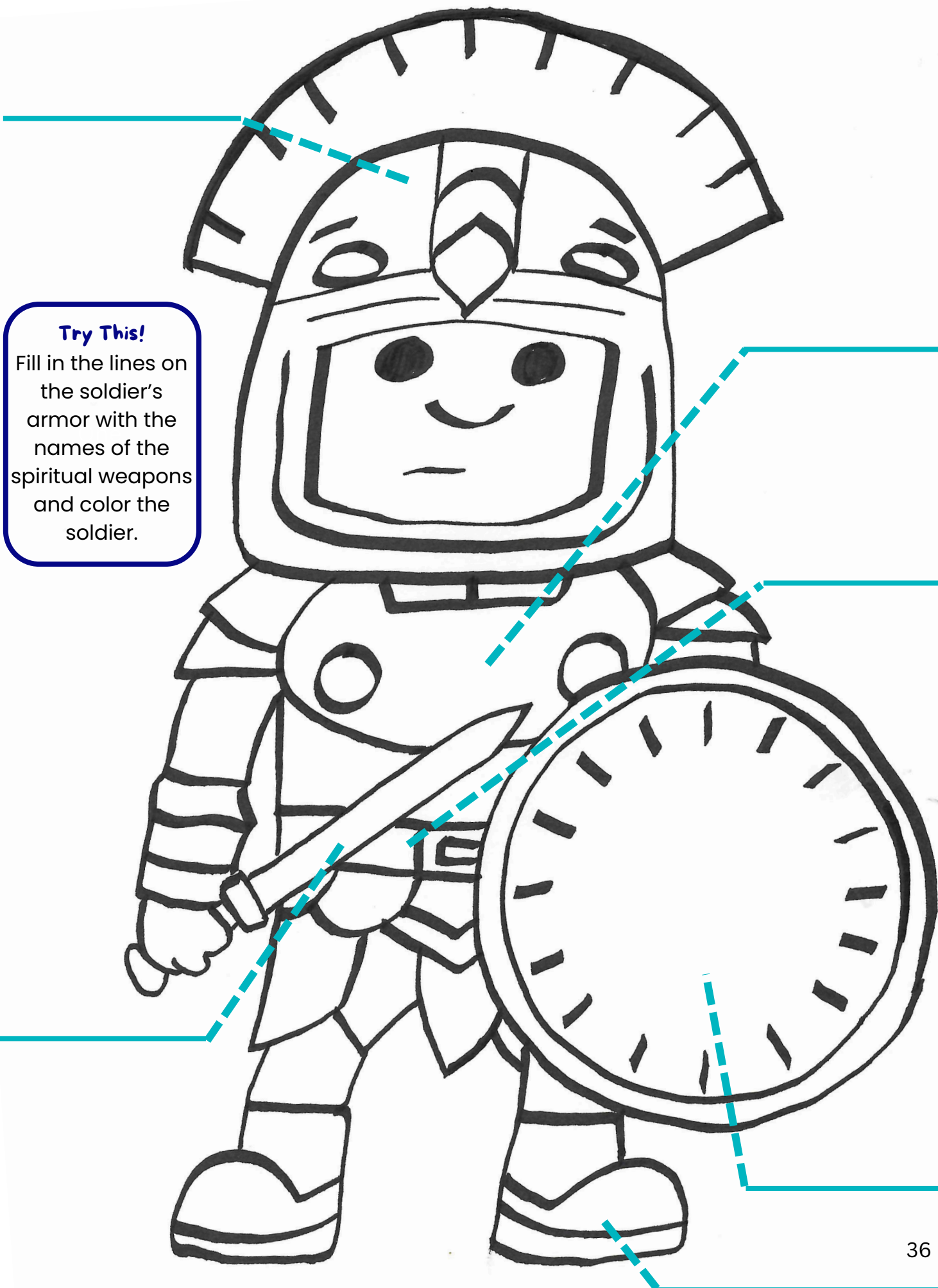
Shoes

Roman Soldiers wore hard, studded shoes. These would provide a firm foundation and help them to trek long distances.⁵



Sword

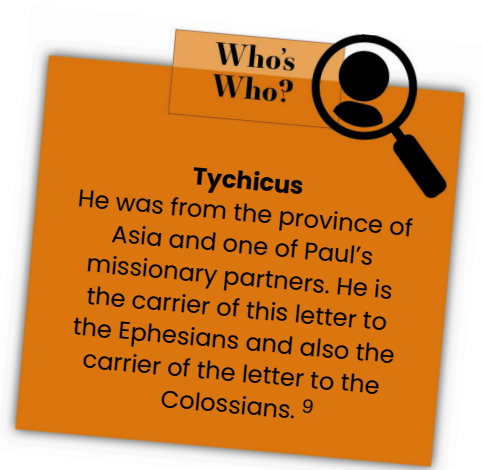
This is the only offensive weapon. It both defends and attacks.⁸



Try This!

Fill in the lines on the soldier's armor with the names of the spiritual weapons and color the soldier.

²¹ But that you also may know my affairs, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will make known to you all things. ²² I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know our state and that he may comfort your hearts.



²³ Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with incorruptible love. Amen.

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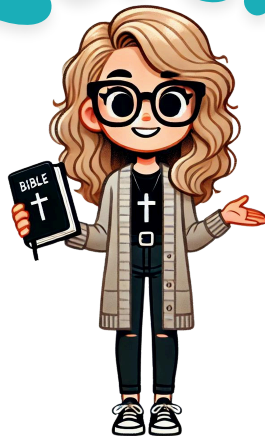
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