

# Ephesians



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A *Discover Together*  
BIBLE STUDY

# Ephesians

*Discovering Your Identity  
and Purpose in Christ*

Sue Edwards



 **Kregel**  
Publications

*Ephesians: Discovering Your Identity and Purpose in Christ*  
© 2012 by Sue Edwards

Published by Kregel Publications, a division of Kregel, Inc., P.O. Box 2607, Grand Rapids, MI 49501.

Previously published by Kregel Publications as *Ephesians: Finding Your Identity and Purpose in Christ*, © 2007 by Sue Edwards.

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ISBN 978-0-8254-4309-1

Printed in the United States of America

12 13 14 15 16 / 5 4 3 2 1



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## How to Get the Most Out of a Discover Together Bible Study

Women today need Bible study to keep balanced, focused, and Christ-centered in their busy worlds. The tiered questions in *Ephesians: Discovering Your Identity and Purpose in Christ* allow you to choose a depth of study that fits your lifestyle, which may even vary from week to week, depending on your schedule.

Just completing the basic questions will require about one and a half hours per lesson, and will provide a basic overview of the text. For busy women, this level offers in-depth Bible study with a minimum time commitment.

“Digging Deeper” questions are for those who want to, and make time to, probe the text even more deeply. Answering these questions may require outside resources such as an atlas, Bible dictionary, or concordance; you may be asked to look up parallel passages for additional insight; or you may be encouraged to investigate the passage using an interlinear Greek-English text or *Vine’s Expository Dictionary*. This deeper study will challenge you to learn more about the history, culture, and geography related to the Bible, and to grapple with complex theological issues and differing views. Some with teaching gifts and an interest in advanced academics will enjoy exploring the depths of a passage, and might even find themselves creating outlines and charts and writing essays worthy of seminarians!

This inductive Bible study is designed for both individual and group discovery. You will benefit most if you tackle each week’s lesson on your own, and then meet with other women to share insights, struggles, and aha moments. Bible study leaders will find free, downloadable leader’s guides for each study, along with general tips for leading small groups, at [www.discovertogetherseries.com](http://www.discovertogetherseries.com).

Through short video clips, Sue Edwards shares personal insights to enrich your Bible study experience. You can watch these as you work through each lesson on your own, or your Bible study leader may want your whole



study group to view them when you meet together. For ease of individual viewing, a QR code, which you can simply scan with your smartphone, is provided in each lesson. Or you can go to [www.discovertogetherseries.com](http://www.discovertogetherseries.com) and easily navigate until you find the corresponding video title. Woman-to-woman, these clips are meant to bless, encourage, and challenge you in your daily walk.

Each lesson also includes short teaching clips that are available to view at [www.discoveryseries.net](http://www.discoveryseries.net). You can view these as you work through each lesson on your own, or your Bible study leader may want your whole study group to view them when you meet together. For ease of individual viewing, a QR code is provided for each clip, which you can simply scan with your smartphone. Or you can go to the and easily navigate until you find the corresponding video title. Woman-to-woman, these clips are meant to bless, encourage, and challenge you in your daily walk.

Choose a realistic level of Bible study that fits your schedule. You may want to finish the basic questions first, and then “dig deeper” as time permits. Take time to savor the questions, and don’t rush through the application. Watch the videos. Read the sidebars for additional insight to enrich the experience. Note the optional passage to memorize and determine if this discipline would be helpful for you. Do not allow yourself to be intimidated by women who have more time or who are gifted differently.

Make your Bible study—whatever level you choose—top priority. Consider spacing your study throughout the week so that you can take time to ponder and meditate on what the Holy Spirit is teaching you. Do not make other appointments during the group Bible study. Ask God to enable you to attend faithfully. Come with an excitement to learn from others and a desire to share yourself and your journey. Give it your best, and God promises to join you on this adventure that can change your life.





## Why Study Ephesians?

*Who are you?* If someone asked you that, what would you say? Would you list your relationships or your abilities? Those are important components of your life, but they don't fully answer the question. What if those relationships ended? What if you lost that ability? Would you still be *you*? Paul wrote Ephesians to help us discover who we are in Jesus Christ and what God created each of us to do on this earth, an identity and purpose we can never lose. When you unearth those personal treasures, hold on! Your life will never be the same.



**Introduction to Studying Ephesians** (8:36 minutes)

### HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

Paul planted a church in Ephesus on his third missionary journey. After three years in Ephesus, he returned to Jerusalem, where he was taken prisoner and later transported to Rome to stand trial. In A.D. 61, while under house arrest in Rome, Paul wrote a letter to his beloved Ephesians.

Ephesus was the grandest city in Asia, and God chose to plant a church there because of its strategic location. The economy was booming, making Ephesus an international trade center. Tourists flocked from all over the Roman Empire. They came to see the outdoor theater, which seated 25,000 people, and the Temple of Artemis, which housed the thirty-seven-breasted fertility goddess. Under Artemis's perverse influence, sex was big business in this red-light city of public baths, cult prostitution, homosexuality, and bestiality.

Like many American cities today, people of all cultures and ethnic backgrounds called this metropolis home. Large Greek, Roman, and Jewish settlements had taken root, and each worshipped differently. Converts to the church came from diverse ethnic groups, making harmony a challenge.



Under Artemis's influence, the Ephesians incorporated black magic into their religion. As a result, Ephesus was known as the Roman Empire's stronghold for the occult and magical arts. When Paul planted a church in Ephesus, he knew he was invading Satan's den. This letter contains numerous references to spiritual warfare. Remember that when Paul wrote this letter, the Ephesians were only six years old in the Lord, and many were saved out of the occult. If the Ephesians learned to live victoriously, so can we!