

SWITCH

EASTER CHANGES EVERYTHING

EPHESIANS SERMON SERIES
COMPANION



AN INTRODUCTION

Switch: Easter Changes Everything

It can be easy to think that Easter is all about something that happened a long, long time ago, and might make a difference a long, long time from now. Jesus rose from the dead over 2,000 years ago, and because of this Christians hope to experience eternal life one day. But what does that have to do with today? As it turns out- everything!

Jesus' victory over death and evil was like a switch that changed the world as we know it, and it has implications for every single aspect of our lives: our relationships, our sense of self and purpose, our families, our character, and how we engage with darkness in the world. In the years right after the resurrection of Jesus, a young Christian community was learning all about this. And this spring, we'll join them in learning how Easter is more than a once-a-year celebration. It's a change for a lifetime and beyond!

If you would like to go deeper, we highly recommend reading [N.T. Wright's *Ephesians: 11 studies for individuals and groups*](#).

Series Schedule

April 17	Easter Sunday
April 24	Week 1. Excluded to Included
May 1	Week 2. Death to Life
May 8	Week 3. Divided to United
May 15	Week 4. Darkness to Light
May 22	Week 5. Household Chores
May 29	Week 6. Vulnerable to Prepared

Overview

This is a companion to Highrock's *Switch: Easter Changes Everything* sermon series that walks through the New Testament book of Ephesians. It is best used collectively with a small group. You will find space to take notes on each sermon and Scripture text, reflection questions, prompts to discuss your reflection with others, and a closing prayer.

When considering the reflection questions: notice those that resonate with you and spend some time wrestling with them. The goal is not to answer everything or have all the "right" answers—instead, let these questions serve as a starting point for your conversation with God and others. See the Appendix of this guide for more resources and opportunities to engage with this study.

Appendix (see page 15)

Chapter Summaries of Ephesians

Write Out Ephesians Exercise

Optional Reading: *Ephesians: 11 studies for individuals and groups* (2009) by N.T. Wright

Video: The Bible Project: Ephesians

Conversation Covenant

About

We hope that all small group discussions are lively and enriching, but sometimes conversation topics that are tough will be discussed, too. The Conversation Covenant* is an agreement to hold respect and grace toward all participants within a small group, no matter the conversation. Please adhere to the Conversation Covenant, or think about how to create one that fits your context.

*Adapted from <https://conversational-leadership.net/conversation-covenant/>

I pledge:

To act in good faith, with curiosity. *I will assume the best about my conversation partners when entering into our groups. I will give the benefit of the doubt, recognizing that they may know something I don't.*

To show respect. *I will show respect. I will be polite and give due regard for the feelings and traditions of others. I understand that I do not have to agree with someone to show them respect.*

To speak the truth. *I won't use rhetorical tricks to try to win an argument. I will speak what I genuinely believe is the nuanced truth.*

To aim to discover the truth. *I will not enter into a conversation with the purpose of changing the mind of anyone to my way of thinking.*

To focus on what we can change. *I will focus on what we can do differently in the future since we cannot change what we did in the past.*

To take responsibility for the conversation. *I will take responsibility for the quality of the conversation and the abidance of the rules both in principle and in spirit.*

To follow the covenant even when others fail to do so. *I will abide by the rules regardless of whether another person breaks them.*

To lighten-up and approach the conversation in good humor. *I recognize that humor is a hallmark of a constructive, generative conversation and take the conversation in good humor.*

Excluded to Included

LISTEN | Find sermons on Highrock Online's [YouTube channel](#)

Use this space to jot down notes from the sermon.

What are your initial reactions to the sermon? Note any curiosities, questions, or interesting points (anything surprising? controversial? mysterious? life-giving?):

Themes (What were the main topics touched upon?):

My one-sentence summary of the sermon:

READ | Do on your own

Read [Ephesians 1:1-14](#).

What are your initial reactions to the text? Note any curiosities, questions, or interesting points (anything surprising? controversial? mysterious? life-giving?):

Themes (what were the main topics touched upon?):

My one-sentence summary of the text:

REFLECT | Discuss 3-4 of the prompts below with your small group

- Discuss with your group the observations, curiosities, and/or questions that came up during the Listen and Read sections. Share your one-sentence summaries with one another.
- Are there connections between this scripture and your life today?
- Are there connections between the themes of the sermon and your life today?
- Share your own experiences of inclusion and/or exclusion.
- Does this week's scripture, sermon, or discussion shift/expand/change your picture of God? of others? of yourself? If so, how?

RELATE | Conclude your small group time with these questions

Bring the reflection of your head/heart into conversation with your community.

What might God be inviting you to do, pray, or consider through this week's reading? A next step might be:

What is the implication of this text for our lives? How do we think, feel, and act in light of this text?

Someone (else) I'd like to talk about this with is _____

CLOSING PRAYER (repeat 5x)

INHALE: *God, may we draw in others*

EXHALE: *As you draw us in*

WEEK 2: MAY 1

Death to Life

LISTEN | Find sermons on Highrock Online's [YouTube channel](#)

Use this space to jot down notes from the sermon.

What are your initial reactions to the sermon? Note any curiosities, questions, or interesting points (anything surprising? controversial? mysterious? life-giving?:

Themes (what were the main topics touched upon?):

My one-sentence summary of the sermon:

READ | Do on your own

Read [Ephesians 2:1-10](#).

What are your initial reactions to the text? Note any curiosities, questions, or interesting points (anything surprising? controversial? mysterious? life-giving?:

Themes (what were the main topics touched upon?):

My one-sentence summary of the text:

REFLECT | Discuss 3-4 of the prompts below with your small group

- Discuss with the group the observations, curiosities, and/or questions that came up during the Listen and Read sections. Share your one-sentence summaries with one another.
- Are there connections between this scripture and your life today? What are they?
- Are there connections between the themes of the sermon and your life today? What are they?
- What leads to death (either literal or figurative/spiritual)? What leads to life?
- Does this week's scripture, sermon, or discussion shift/expand/change your picture of God? of others? of yourself? If so, how?

RELATE | Conclude your small group time with these questions

Bring the reflection of your head/heart into conversation with your community.

What might God be inviting you to do/pray/consider through this week's reading?
A next step might be:

What is the implication of this text for our lives? How do we think, feel, and act in light of this text?

Someone (else) I'd like to talk about this with is _____

CLOSING PRAYER (repeat 5x)

INHALE: *God, gather us in*

EXHALE: *And make us your own*

WEEK 3: MAY 8

Divided to United

LISTEN | Find sermons on Highrock Online's [YouTube channel](#)

Use this space to jot down notes from the sermon.

What are your initial reactions to the sermon? Note any curiosities, questions, or interesting points (anything surprising? controversial? mysterious? life-giving?):

Themes (what were the main topics touched upon?):

My one-sentence summary of the sermon:

READ | Do on your own

Read [Ephesians 2:11-22](#).

What are your initial reactions to the text? Note any curiosities, questions, or interesting points (anything surprising? controversial? mysterious? life-giving?):

Themes (what were the main topics touched upon?):

My one-sentence summary of the text:

REFLECT | Discuss 3-4 of the prompts below with your small group

- Discuss with the group the observations, curiosities, and/or questions that came up during the Listen and Read sections. Share your one-sentence summaries with one another.
- Are there connections between this scripture and your life today? What are they?
- Are there connections between the themes of the sermon and your life today? What are they?
- Share experiences of both division and unity. What was it like to be divided? What was it like to be united?
- Does this week's scripture, sermon, or discussion shift/expand/change your picture of God? of others? of yourself? If so, how?

RELATE | Conclude your small group time with these questions

Bring the reflection of your head/heart into conversation with your community.

What might God be inviting you to do/pray/consider through this week's reading?
A next step might be:

What is the implication of this text for our lives? How do we think, feel, and act in light of this text?

Someone (else) I'd like to talk about this with is _____

CLOSING PRAYER (repeat 5x)

INHALE: *God of all,*

EXHALE: *Bring us together*

Darkness to Light

LISTEN | Find sermons on Highrock Online's [YouTube channel](#)

Use this space to jot down notes from the sermon.

What are your initial reactions to the sermon? Note any curiosities, questions, or interesting points (anything surprising? controversial? mysterious? life-giving?):

Themes (what were the main topics touched upon?):

My one-sentence summary of the sermon:

READ | Do on your own

Read [Ephesians 4:1 - 5:20](#).

What are your initial reactions to the text? Note any curiosities, questions, or interesting points (anything surprising? controversial? mysterious? life-giving?):

Themes (what were the main topics touched upon?):

My one-sentence summary of the text:

REFLECT | Discuss 3-4 of the prompts below with your small group

- Discuss with the group the observations, curiosities, and/or questions that came up during the Listen and Read sections. Share your one-sentence summaries with one another.
- Are there connections between this scripture and your life today? What are they?
- Are there connections between the themes of the sermon and your life today? What are they?
- In what way(s) have you experienced transformation personally? Can you name a way you hope to grow in maturity in the future?
- Does this week's scripture, sermon, or discussion shift/expand/change your picture of God? of others? of yourself? If so, how?

RELATE | Conclude your small group time with these questions

Bring the reflection of your head/heart into conversation with your community.

What might God be inviting you to do/pray/consider through this week's reading?
A next step might be:

What is the implication of this text for our lives? How do we think, feel, and act in light of this text?

Someone (else) I'd like to talk about this with is _____

CLOSING PRAYER (repeat 5x)

INHALE: *Living God,*

EXHALE: *Fill us with your Spirit*

Household Chores

LISTEN | Find sermons on Highrock Online's [YouTube channel](#)

Use this space to jot down notes from the sermon.

What are your initial reactions to the sermon? Note any curiosities, questions, or interesting points (anything surprising? controversial? mysterious? life-giving?):

Themes (what were the main topics touched upon?):

My one-sentence summary of the sermon:

READ | Do on your own

Read [Ephesians 5:21 - 6:10](#).

What are your initial reactions to the text? Note any curiosities, questions, or interesting points (anything surprising? controversial? mysterious? life-giving?):

Themes (what were the main topics touched upon?):

My one-sentence summary of the text:

REFLECT | Discuss 3-4 of the prompts below with your small group

- Discuss with the group the observations, curiosities, and/or questions that came up during the Listen and Read sections. Share your one-sentence summaries with one another.
- Are there connections between this scripture and your life today? What are they?
- Are there connections between the themes of the sermon and your life today? What are they?
- In this passage, Paul is writing about what it means to be faithful to the vision of the Kingdom of God in a particular context. What does it mean to be faithful to the vision of the Kingdom of God in your own context?
- Does this week's scripture, sermon, or discussion shift/expand/change your picture of God? of others? of yourself? If so, how?

RELATE | Conclude your small group time with these questions

Bring the reflection of your head/heart into conversation with your community.

What might God be inviting you to do/pray/consider through this week's reading?
A next step might be:

What is the implication of this text for our lives? How do we think, feel, and act in light of this text?

Someone (else) I'd like to talk about this with is _____

CLOSING PRAYER (repeat 5x)

INHALE: *God of the Covenant,*

EXHALE: *Move us to your mission*

Vulnerable to Prepared

LISTEN | Find sermons on Highrock Online's [YouTube channel](#)

Use this space to jot down notes from the sermon.

What are your initial reactions to the sermon? Note any curiosities, questions, or interesting points (anything surprising? controversial? mysterious? life-giving?):

Themes (what were the main topics touched upon?):

My one-sentence summary of the sermon:

READ | Do on your own

Read [Ephesians 6:10-17](#).

What are your initial reactions to the text? Note any curiosities, questions, or interesting points (anything surprising? controversial? mysterious? life-giving?):

Themes (what were the main topics touched upon?):

My one-sentence summary of the text:

REFLECT | Discuss 3-4 of the prompts below with your small group

- Discuss with the group the observations, curiosities, and/or questions that came up during the Listen and Read sections. Share your one-sentence summaries with one another.
- Are there connections between this scripture and your life today? What are they?
- Are there connections between the themes of the sermon and your life today? What are they?
- How do you understand Paul's final call at the end of this letter? What attitudes and actions is Paul encouraging the Ephesians to take? What do you think Paul would say to your community of faith?
- Does this week's scripture, sermon, or discussion shift/expand/change your picture of God? of others? of yourself? If so, how?

RELATE | Conclude your small group time with these questions

Bring the reflection of your head/heart into conversation with your community.

What might God be inviting you to do/pray/consider through this week's reading?
A next step might be:

What is the implication of this text for our lives? How do we think, feel, and act in light of this text?

Someone (else) I'd like to talk about this with is _____

CLOSING PRAYER (repeat 5x)

INHALE: *God who freely serves,*

EXHALE: *Free us to serve*

Appendix

Chapter Summaries of Ephesians

Ephesians 1: Spiritual Blessings in Christ

A beautiful introduction to how we have received every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus. We have been adopted to sonship, we have been chosen, forgiven and redeemed. We have been marked with a seal and given the Holy Spirit as a down payment of our inheritance. Then Paul prays that we will have the revelation of Christ so we can know the hope and power we have been called to as His body, the Church of whom He is the head.

Ephesians 2: Made Alive in Christ

Starts with a reminder of God's great love for us, that even when we were dead, Christ made us alive in Him. We have been raised and seated with Christ in heaven and all of this comes by His Grace that we receive through faith. Paul then reminds us that Christ has made one Church out of those who had the covenant (Jews) and those who were hopeless and without God (Gentiles) and reconciled both to God through the work of the cross. Now we have access to the same God and the Holy Spirit lives in us.

Ephesians 3: The Mystery of Christ

Opens with the mystery of Christ – made known through revelation by the Spirit of God – that through the gospel, Gentiles are heirs together with Israel. They are members of one body and partakers in the promise of Christ Jesus. Paul states his mission as an apostle to the Gentiles is to preach the administration of this mystery now revealed. Paul ends this chapter with a powerful prayer for believers to know and experience the love of God and to be filled to full measure of God according to the power that now lives in us.

Ephesians 4: Unity in the Body of Christ

Reminds us to live a life worthy of the calling we have received in Christ Jesus. We are called to unity as a body of believers through one Lord, one Spirit, and one hope. God has given us apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers to prepare God's people for works of service so the body of Christ may be built up and obtain the whole measure of the fullness of Christ. We are reminded to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness.

Ephesians 5: Be Imitators of God

Emphasizes that we are to be imitators of God and live a life of love because Christ gave himself up for us as a sacrifice to God. We are to put away sexual immorality, impurity, greed, and foolish talk as it is improper for God's holy people. We are to live as children of light and find out what pleases the Lord. We are to make use of every opportunity, to understand the Lord's will, and to be filled with the Spirit. Paul reminds us to give thanks for God in all things and submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. The chapter ends with instructions for husbands and wives, which illustrates the profound mystery of Christ and the Church.

Ephesians 6: The Armor of God

Picks up immediately with instructions to children, parents, enslaved people, and masters. Paul gives practical instructions on how to relate well with others in whatever position you are in life. As final instructions in this letter, Paul uses the illustration of a soldier to show how we have been equipped as believers. We are to be strong in the Lord and put on this armor to withstand the devil's schemes, as our struggle is against spiritual forces in this dark world. Paul ends this letter with an administration of grace and peace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ.

Write Out Ephesians Exercise

Writing out scripture interrupts our quick reading and makes us slow down and notice things that we might have otherwise missed. Practice writing out the letter to the Ephesians over the course of six weeks, one chapter per week. Refer to the following breakdown:

[Ephesians 1](#) (23 verses)

[Ephesians 2](#) (22 verses)

[Ephesians 3](#) (21 verses)

[Ephesians 4](#) (32 verses)

[Ephesians 5](#) (33 verses)

[Ephesians 6](#) (24 verses)

Additional Content:

- **Book:** [*Ephesians: 11 studies for individuals and groups* \(2009\)](#) by N.T. Wright

N.T. Wright is a prominent New Testament biblical scholar. We highly recommend his book on Ephesians. You can easily read it over the course of eight weeks alongside the book of Ephesians itself for a deeper dive into the epistle. See the following reading plan:

Week 1	Read through Ephesians 1-6; N.T. Wright pages 5-9
Week 2	Ephesians 1; N.T. Wright chapters 1 & 2
Week 3	Ephesians 2; N.T. Wright chapters 3 & 4
Week 4	Ephesians 3; N.T. Wright chapters 5 & 6
Week 5	Ephesians 4; N.T. Wright chapters 7 & 8
Week 6	Ephesians 5; N.T. Wright chapters 9 & 10
Week 7	Ephesians 6; N.T. Wright chapter 11
Week 8	Conclusion

- **Video:** [Bible Project: Ephesians](#)

BibleProject is a non-profit whose mission is to make the Bible more accessible. Check out their [website](#) - they have a lot of great educational resources!