




GOD'S EXTRAORDINARY CHURCH

Studies in Ephesians

TOGETHER^{IN} FAITH SERIES
Learner Session Guide

Robert Driver-Bishop

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GOD'S EXTRAORDINARY CHURCH: STUDIES IN EPHESIANS
Learner Session Guide

Together in Faith Series
Book of Faith Adult Bible Studies

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Ephesians 1:3-14

Learner Session Guide

Focus Statement

We dedicate the building of God's extraordinary church to our "Beloved," Jesus Christ, through whom God's gracious designs are becoming a reality.

Key Verse

... to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. [Ephesians 1:6](#)

Are We Building in Love?

Focus Image



What are God's designs for the Church? © Cultura Limited / SuperStock

Gather

Check-in

Take this time to connect or reconnect with the others in your group. Talk about who you are and what you hope to learn or gain from this study of Ephesians.

Pray

Blessed Lord God, you have caused the Holy Scriptures to be written for the nourishment of your people. Grant that we may hear them, read, mark, learn, and inwardly digest them, that, comforted by your promises, we may embrace and forever hold fast to the hope of eternal life. Through your Son, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen. (ELW, p. 23)

Focus Activity

- As a group, use a whiteboard or chart paper to sketch out the floor plan of your church and label what each area is called and used for.
- Who was responsible for the design, and how did they determine how the space would be used? If you've been part of a building project, share your experiences with that process.
- How do the Focus Image and Key Verse remind you of God's own design for building the church?



Notes

Open Scripture

Read Ephesians 1:3-14.

- What words or images stay with you?
- In what ways can it be said that God is building something here?
- What kind of changes or transformations does this passage speak of?

Join the Conversation

Historical Context

Ephesus was the third largest city in the Roman Empire behind Rome and Alexandria. It was the capital of the Roman province of Asia and the major seaport of the region. This was a center of significant commerce, which enabled construction of world-class buildings, in particular the Temple of Artemis.

1. In this town God would begin building something different, something new, something that would profoundly change Ephesus and the world. Scan Acts 18–20. Glean as much as you can about what God was building in Ephesus to share with one another.

At the heart of today's lesson is the Key Verse from Ephesians 1:6, which dedicates the building of God's church "to the praise of his glorious grace that he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved." In celebration of this grace, the first Christians gathered weekly to share an "*agape* meal," or love feast. There was an invocation, a blessing, a celebration of God's love, a full meal, and the sharing of Holy Communion. The liturgical elements of this gathering are still the basis of our corporate worship today.

2. In what ways does the ancient image below depict the words of Ephesians 1:6? List the ways our modern worship and fellowship