

My Faith Journal, September 7, 2008
Becoming Grownups #1
What's God Up To?

Saturday, 9/13/08 – Read Ephesians 6:1-24

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: In our modern world we have become a bit cavalier or nonchalant about spiritual dangers. And surely we can go off track when we live fearfully. But pause for a moment and think about it. Where do you sense danger spiritually? Sometimes the dangers are inside us as well as outside. Where do you encounter them? ... And which piece of the armor that's listed would be most helpful to you when you sense the dangers?

Sunday, 9/14/08 – Read Ephesians 2:4-10

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: These are the "theme verses" for our study of Ephesians this Fall. They are the touchstone that we'll return to frequently, the centerpiece from which we will view the rest of the Letter to the Ephesians. For today, write down your own answer to this question: What are the characteristics of a person who is spiritually mature? ... Think of someone you have known whom you thought was spiritually mature. What were they like? What characteristics or qualities did you notice in them? Write down your list.

What do I want to remember out of today's message?

Does God have a purpose, a plan, a will, an intention?
If so, what is the purpose that God is working out here on planet earth?

What action do I intend to take as a result of today's message?

How will I intentionally participate in God's eternal purpose this week?

Each day this week, take a few minutes. Begin with PRAYER. Then READ through the Bible passage indicated on the inside of this guide. WRITE down your own thoughts, reactions, observations. ANSWER THE QUESTION to begin connecting the Bible with your life experience. Use additional paper or your own notebook if you need more space to write.

Becoming Grownups: Getting Started

Monday, 9/8/08 – Read Ephesians 1:1-23

My Observations _____

A Question to Answer: This Fall we are going to study the Bible together on Sunday mornings. We're going to walk our way through the Letter to the Ephesians. So, to get started, let's read the whole letter this week -- one chapter per day. This will give us an overview of the whole letter as we begin.

Today we read chapter 1. Focus on verses 3-14. The author celebrates the goodness and the generosity of God -- and the ways that God has blessed us and lavished riches upon us. The language may seem a little dense, so read slowly, and make a list of all the gifts that God has given us. What do these verses say is God's plan for people? As you look over your list what feelings are evoked?

Tuesday, 9/9/08 – Read Ephesians 2:1-22

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: In chapter 2, focus on verses 1-5. Coming to faith is described as being like an awakening, waking up from sleep -- or, even more dramatically, as coming alive after having been dead. ... Can you remember a time in your life when you felt numb, "deadened"? What was it like to come alive? How did that feel to you? ... Does your faith make you feel more alive?

Wednesday, 9/10/08 – Read Ephesians 3:1-21

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Chapter 3. Let's focus today on the prayer at the end of the chapter, verses 14-21, and especially verses 17-19. The language here is almost mystical. Ponder it a moment. What thoughts enter your mind as you re-read these verses? ... The prayer is that we be "rooted and grounded in love" and "filled with all the fullness of God." Conclude today by praying that prayer for yourself.

Thursday, 9/11/08 – Read Ephesians 4:1 -- 5:2

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Chapter 4. Verse 1 marks a shift in the letter. Up to this point the letter has spoken of the awesome gifts that God has lavished upon us. And chapter 3 concluded with the prayer that we be filled up with God. Now, chapter 4 shifts gears. It becomes more practical -- more behavioral. Given that God has been so good to us, how then should we live our lives? Or in the words of verse 1: "Lead a life worthy of the calling ..." Take a moment and reflect on this for yourself. How would you answer? How would you describe a life worthy of God's generous goodness?

Friday, 9/12/08 – Read Ephesians 5:3-33

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Chapter 5. We respond to God by the way we live -- even by the way we live in our most intimate and private spheres. Even in our closest friendships and marriages. ... Careful now! It's easy to miss the point here. Focus on verse 21 which speaks of **mutuality** in our relationships. What do you think this verse means: "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ"?

