

It's A-L-I-V-E!

Monday, 9/15/08 – Read Ephesians 1:17--2:7

My Observations _____

A Question to Answer: This week we begin our more detailed study of Ephesians. Today we read through the whole passage that we'll be studying the rest of this week. ... Read these verses through slowly a couple of times. Jot down your reactions. What catches your attention? What impresses you? What new insights come? What questions are raised?

**Tuesday, 9/16/08 – Read Ephesians 1:19-20
& Luke 24:1-12**

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Try to imagine God's raising Jesus from the dead. Imagine God's loving creativity reaching down into that tomb and enlivening Jesus. What awesome power: the power to give life, the power to give life to the dead! ... Ephesians claims that this same power, the power that raised Jesus, this power of resurrection, is available to (and is at work in) you. How does that strike you? Would you live any differently if you were confident that God's power of resurrection was flowing through you? How?

**Wednesday, 9/17/08 – Read Ephesians 1:20-23
& Colossians 1:15-20**

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Ephesians claims that the Christ (the aspect of God that lived through Jesus) -- that not only was Christ raised from the dead but also that Christ is the unifier and harmonizer of the whole universe! God's project in Jesus is the renewal of the whole universe! God's plan is cosmic in scope. ... And we are part of that cosmic plan. Your life matters to the whole universe. As you live your life today, stand up tall: Your living matters!

Thursday, 9/18/08 – Read Ephesians 1:17-20

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: What do you pray for? ... All our prayers are good prayers when they flow from the yearnings of our hearts. But sometimes our praying just doesn't go far enough. Sometimes our prayers are too small. ... Just look at today's reading: prayer for wisdom and spiritual insight, for knowledge of God & what God has in store for us! ... Sometimes we get so imprisoned in the urgencies of our daily lives that we fail to recognize (we just don't know) the grandeur of God's vision for us. ... As you pray today, include in your prayer requests for wisdom, knowledge, and spiritual understandings.

Friday, 9/19/08 – Read Ephesians 2:1-3

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Have you ever felt a kind of "deadness" inside? All of us humans experience that in one way or another because all of us participate in the brokenness of life. The Bible and Ephesians are very direct about our human condition -- our separation and resulting loneliness, our destructive addictions, our violations of ourselves and those we love. The inevitable result is a kind of "deadness" -- a loss of vitality and liveliness. Specifically in what ways are brokenness and loss-of-liveliness true for you -- personally and

individually? In your prayer today, honestly make your confession to God.

Saturday, 9/20/08 – Read Ephesians 2:4 & Psalm 86:5-13

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: What's God like? When you think "God," what images come to mind? ... The essential quality that is at the heart of God is mercy and love. Ephesians struggles for words to express the depth of God's love: "rich in mercy," "the great love with which God loved us." Compare Psalm 86 where poetry seems like the right way to express God's love, and notice how personal God's love is for the Psalmist. Yesterday we tried to face our brokenness, but really it's only the tenderness of God's love (which comes to us in our brokenness) that enables us to face up to ourselves. Take a moment and write a couple lines of your own psalm about God's love for you personally.

**Sunday, 9/21/08 – Read Ephesians 2:5-7
& John 10:10, 14:18-19**

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: The results of our brokenness and separation is a kind of deadness and loss of liveliness. God's love is aimed at restoring us to full vigor and vitality -- life in exuberant abundance. ... When do you feel most fully alive? When are you invigorated? Are you aware in those moments of the active love of God "making you alive" and "raising you up"?

My Faith Journal, September 14, 2008

Becoming Grownups #2

It's A-L-I-V-E!

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

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

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.