

REview & PREview

**Monday, 9/29/08 – Read Ephesians 1:8b-10
and Romans 16:25-27**

My Observations _____

A Question to Answer: This week we're going to pause in our walk through Ephesians to get ourselves oriented. We'll do just a bit of REview and also a bit of PREview so we can get a bird's eye view of the whole letter. We'll read some verses on more than one day but look at them with different questions in mind. ... We begin by remembering that God's activity in human life is not erratic or impulsive. God has had a clear purpose and intention -- a "mystery" hidden in the heart of God until the coming of Christ. ... Have you ever felt like there was some plan for your life, that you were part of something larger? Have you ever participated in some activity or enterprise and thought to yourself: "This is what I was made to do." If you have, write down your feelings about it.

**Tuesday, 9/30/08 – Read Ephesians 1:4-5
and John 1:10-13**

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: You have a destiny! Your life is headed somewhere. It is not random; it is not an accident. Your destiny is relationship with the God who made you, knows you, loves you. ... Just ponder how great it is to be you: chosen before the foundation of the world (Ephesians 1:4); destined by God for relationship -- destined to be adopted as one of God's own kids. You, of course, have a choice; God will not coercively impose this on you against your will. But it is your destiny. ... What feelings come up when you entertain the idea that your life has a divine destiny?

Wednesday, 10/1/08 – Read Ephesians 1:8b-9

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: You have a destiny, and so does the entire universe. It is God's purpose in Christ to bring together everything, literally everything!, in harmony. ... For now we live in fractured, fragmented, and conflicted world. It's easy to become cynical, to conclude that the world is just never going to get any better. To trust God is to live with hope -- that somehow, someday God is going to bring harmony to all this chaos. ... If you began living with hope, what is one thing that would be different about your life today. Write it down.

Thursday, 10/2/08 – Read Ephesians 1:17-19

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: The author of Ephesians thought that there was some knowledge that the people of faith needed if they were going to live fully. So he prays for the people. He prays for wisdom (verse 17), revelation (discovery, insight), and knowledge (verses 17, 18). ... When was a time that your life got better because you acquired some knowledge? Remember the sense of mastery and strength that knowledge brought you? If we're going to have strength in our faith, there is some knowledge that we've got acquire. ... Jot down your reaction to this. And in your prayer today, ask God to lead you into wisdom, revelation, and knowledge.

Friday, 10/3/08 – Read Ephesians 4:1-6

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: The Letter to the Ephesians has a "turning point," a single verse -- Ephesians 4:1. In the first three chapters the author is sharing some knowledge of the faith -- some things about the "mystery" of God that the author wants the people to know. Then in Ephesians 4:1, the letter

"turns" to a discussion of lifestyle and behavior. The author is saying: once we know what God is doing, then we can begin to think about how we should live in response to God. ... Think about your own life. You make many choices every day. Are some of those choices made in response to God? Which ones?

Saturday, 10/4/08 – Read **Ephesians 4:1-2**
and **Romans 12:1-13**

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Notice that as soon as the author has spoken of "living worthy," there are four virtues mentioned: humility, gentleness, patience, and "bearing with one another in love." How do these four compare with the life qualities mentioned in today's reading from Romans 12? Which of these virtues seems most important for your own life right now? Write that virtue down on a card and carry it with you today. Look at the card occasionally -- just as a reminder that God is making that virtue real in your life.

Sunday, 10/5/08 – Read **Ephesians 4:3-6**
and **1 Corinthians 1:10-17**

My Observations: _____

A Question to Answer: Notice that the emphasis in these verses is on unity: "make every effort to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." "Living worthy" aims at unity. ... What is true unity? Is it peace at any price? Is it agreeing with another's ideas? Is it just "getting along"? ... Can you remember a time when you felt real unity with another person or with a group? What was that like? ... Just for today what effort will you make to maintain or move toward unity with another?

My Faith Journal, September 28, 2008

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.