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**Hinged**  
CHRIST AND HIS CHURCH

*WOMEN'S BIBLE STUDY ON EPHESIANS*

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*KAREN HODGE • PAULA MILES*

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Although many publishers do not capitalize terms, and particularly pronouns, which refer to the Trinity, content original to CDM publications will capitalize those elements for clarity of reference.

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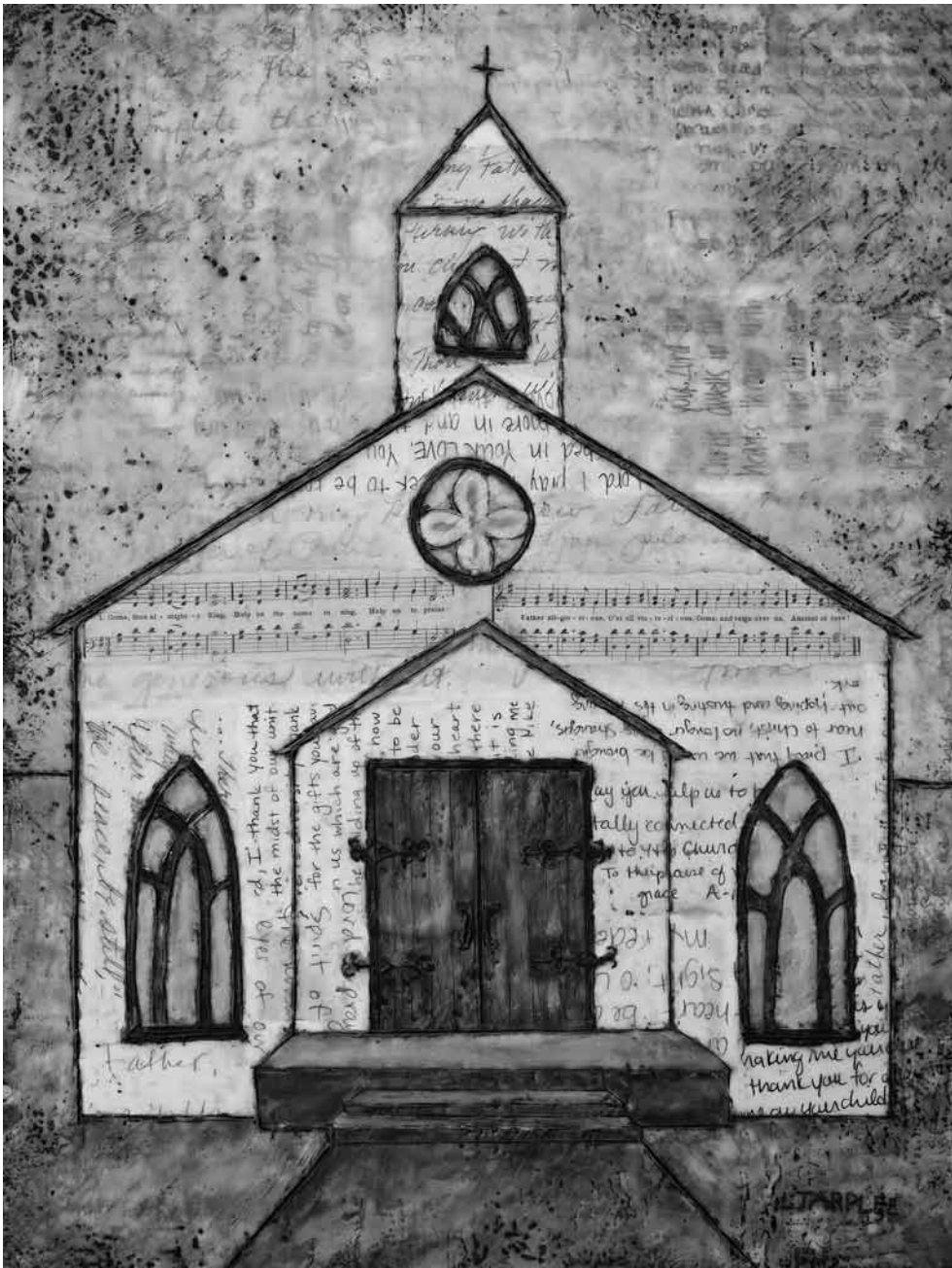
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**Leader’s Guide/Discussion Guide:** <https://bit.ly/2Qv8PIU>



*Dedicated to the **NATIONAL WOMEN'S MINISTRY TEAMS** throughout the history of the PCA whose aim was to help build healthy churches rather than stellar women's ministry programs.*

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**CHANDRA OLIVER**

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**There's within my heart a melody Jesus whispers sweet and low,  
"Fear not, I am with thee, peace, be still," in all of life's ebb and flow.**

*Growing up, our home was filled with "hymns, psalms, and spiritual songs" my father served as the music director for our church. He was a classically trained professional in vocal performance and music theory. However, his passion was not simply "music." Week after week, I watched my father labor over which hymns to sing, often changing words or tempo or even creating "mash-ups" (long before this idea was popular). I recall asking him why he put such effort into "music." Sure, I enjoyed singing, but what was all the fuss about . . . it was just "music"?*

*My father smiled and said, "Pun'kin, music is never simple, because music anchors your soul to truth or lies." How often have you heard a few lines of a song and were immediately transported to a specific memory or experience? You might have been flooded with emotion as if you were back in that very moment. My thoughts often wander to the rich theological hymns my father selected. They saturate my thoughts in gospel truth regardless of my circumstances. Whether happy or sad, my heart could "Sing the wondrous love of Jesus, sing His mercy and His grace."*

*As an adult, these hymns continue to create the background music of my life. In many ways, they are musical prayers, a constant dialogue of speaking God's truth to my heart. More times than I can count, when I begin to wrestle with fear or loneliness or uncertainty, as if out of nowhere, I begin to sing refrains like:*

**"Great is Thy faithfulness, O God my Father,  
there is no shadow of turning with Thee. . ."**

*or*

**"What a Friend we have in Jesus, all our sins and griefs to bear!  
What a privilege to carry everything to God in prayer!"**

*The words I have sung since childhood continue to focus my heart on my faithful, loving Father. They can dissolve fear and worry. My father has not sung on this earth in almost a decade, yet daily I am reminded of his tenor voice singing musical prayers, training my thoughts to trust in my heavenly Father.*

Chandra resides in Washington state with her husband Matthew, a PCA teaching elder and Army Chaplain. Most days are spent facilitating women's Bible study, or teaching classes for military spouses, or chasing cats. However, at the end of the day, few things compare to sweet conversations around the dinner table—a foretaste of heaven.

*WEEK TWO*

# Ephesians 1:15-23

—  
*LISA TARPLEE*  
—

“**P**inch me; I must be dreaming.” “This is too good to be true.” These are phrases we have used or heard when we have found ourselves in amazing circumstances. Imagine a child’s first visit to the Magic Kingdom. Her favorite princess is her best friend for the day. Ushered to the front of every ride, she never waits. She shares a royal meal in the castle. The princess takes off her crown and places it on the child’s head.

Make a Wish® foundation is dedicated to making these dreams come true for terminally ill children. It’s heartwarming to see the lengths that celebrities go to grant the child’s wish. As amazing the time and as dear the memories, they are just a drop in the bucket compared to what God’s people are given in Christ. Paul prayed that his readers would have eyes to see the riches that belong to them by being united to Christ.

When we catch even a glimpse of what we are given in Christ, we stand awestruck in wonder. We have the love of a Father, who cares for us infinitely and waits for us eagerly to return home. We have the Holy Spirit as Counselor and Helper to never leave us. We have Christ who clothes us with His robes of righteousness and places a crown of sonship on our heads.

***MEMORY VERSE:***

**And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, which is his body. ~ Ephesians 1:22-23a**

***OPENING PRAYER:***

Father, open the eyes of my heart to see the deep truths You hold out to me in Your Word. Holy Spirit, make me attentive to You during this time and throughout this day. I do believe, help my unbelief!

**DAY 1: Ephesians 1:15-23**

Underline the words or phrases that stand out to you.

*<sup>15</sup>For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, <sup>16</sup>I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, <sup>17</sup>that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, <sup>18</sup>having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup>and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might <sup>20</sup>that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup>far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. <sup>22</sup>And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, <sup>23</sup>which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.*

**1. In what way does Ephesians 1:15-23 build on the verses preceding it?**

**2. Write a description of each Person of the Trinity from this prayer.**

Father	
Son	
Holy Spirit	



***HINGED MIND: THINKING BIBLICALLY***

Following Paul's run-on sentence of praise for who God is, what God has done, and who we are in Christ (Eph. 1:3-14), Paul prayed in another run-on sentence for the church. Notice he did not start with a list of rules but instead brought them to the throne of God. Paul knew that God works first in hearts to transform lives that follow Him.

Imagine working hard for something. A promotion, a role in the play, an academic scholarship, or running a marathon takes devotion and hard work. If our work is solely born out of a desire to succeed, it can bring glory to self. When our work is born of the Spirit, we live for His glory.

**3. What are distinguishing signs of the Ephesians' saving faith?****4. Who did Paul put his confidence in to complete the work that had begun in them? What concepts from Ephesians 1:1-14 support this?*****HINGED HEART: LIVING COVENANTALLY***

In today's do-it-yourself culture, it is easy to forget the role of prayer. When we do so, we short circuit God's work in our lives. Praying reorients us to the One who is supreme and sets our affections and our priorities in proper perspective. God has not left us alone in this struggle to pray. He gives us brothers and sisters who have the same Spirit residing in them.

**5. Read James 5:13-16. According to this passage, what circumstances should prompt us to pray?**

*IN PRAYING TOGETHER,  
WE DISCIPLE ONE ANOTHER:  
WE STRENGTHEN ONE  
ANOTHER'S FAITH, TESTIFY  
TO OUR EXPERIENCES  
OF GOD, SHAPE ONE  
ANOTHER'S REPENTANCE  
AND DESIRES, STIR  
ONE ANOTHER TO  
THANKSGIVING, AND  
ENCOURAGE ONE ANOTHER  
IN GODLY HABITS.<sup>1</sup>*

Megan Hill

**6. What steps can you take to make prayer a priority in your daily routine?**

**DAY 2: Ephesians 1:18-19**

Underline the words or phrases that stand out to you.

*<sup>18</sup>having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup>and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might.*

**1. What part of the body did Paul pray for the Spirit to enlighten? How does this speak to his specific conversion to Christ? (See Acts 9:18 and Acts 26:14-18.)**

**2. What do you think Paul meant by “eyes of your heart”?**

*IT WOULD SEEM THAT OUR LORD FINDS OUR DESIRES NOT TOO STRONG, BUT TOO WEAK. WE ARE HALF-HEARTED CREATURES, FOOLING ABOUT WITH DRINK AND SEX AND AMBITION WHEN INFINITE JOY IS OFFERED US, LIKE AN IGNORANT CHILD WHO WANTS TO GO ON MAKING MUD PIES IN A SLUM BECAUSE HE CANNOT IMAGINE WHAT IS MEANT BY THE OFFER OF A HOLIDAY AT THE SEA. WE ARE FAR TOO EASILY PLEASED.<sup>2</sup>*

C.S. Lewis

### ***HINGED MIND: THINKING BIBLICALLY***

Unless a power beyond us opens our eyes, we will blindly walk right past the infinite magnificence of God's treasure. We take for granted the glorious truth in Christ: we are God's beloved children. Paul prayed for the eyes of our hearts to be opened to behold the magnificence of the treasures we possess. Here, heart is translated as "intestines or gut." Have you heard, "I have a gut feeling?" Paul prayed for the Ephesians to know God at the core of their beings. Knowing God is to be the nucleus around which everything is built. When we read what the Bible says about our hearts, we quickly see our great need for rescue and help. We need a new vision, new desires, and new hearts!

### **3. Read the following verses and note what they say about the heart:**

Jeremiah 17:9	
Ephesians 4:18	
Psalms 139:23-24	
2 Corinthians 4:6	
Matthew 12:33-34	

## ***HINGED HEART: LIVING COVENANTALLY***

What are our motives for doing “Christian” things? Do we fall into the trap of knowing more *about* God than knowing more *of* God? *Knowledge about* God can blind us from seeking to *know* God. In John 17:3, Jesus prayed we would know the only true God and Jesus Christ whom He has sent. As you continue today’s study, pray God will open your eyes to where you are settling for *knowledge about* God rather than *love for* God.

As a freshman in college, I “decided” I wanted to be a Christian. I attended every Bible study I could find. I bought a Bible and underlined key verses. I went to church every time the doors were open. Playing the part of a Christian, I did everything I could to learn *about* God. It took less than a month for me to hear the gospel of Jesus Christ. When I heard God desired to be in a relationship with me and He loved me as His daughter, it revolutionized my thinking about Christianity. I learned that to be a Christian was not knowing as much as you can about God, but *knowing* God in an intimate relationship. Now over twenty years later, I still struggle to know more of Christ. Unbelief blinds me, and I need the Spirit to renew my mind and heart to see, know, and abide in Him.

**4. Describe a time when God opened your eyes to see a glorious truth about Him?**

**5. In what areas of your life do you need the Spirit to open the eyes of your heart to Him? Ask a trusted Christian friend or mentor to help you identify some of your blind spots.**

I am encouraged God has taken my heart of stone and given me a heart of flesh. This new heart comes with a new love for God and His ways. With this new heart, the Spirit continues to shape and mold me, to awaken me to see the glory of God even in my most mundane moments.

**DAY 3: Ephesians 1:18b-20**

Underline the words or phrases that stand out to you.

*<sup>18</sup> having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup>and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might <sup>20</sup>that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places.*

**1. What three things did Paul pray for them to know?**

(v. 18b):

(v. 18c):

(v. 19a):

**2. What are the riches of Christ's glorious inheritance in the saints?**

*HERE'S THE GORGEOUS MESSAGE OF THE GOSPEL: EVEN THOUGH I'VE BOWED AGAIN AND AGAIN TO AN ENDLESS CATALOG OF GOD REPLACEMENTS, EVEN THOUGH I'VE LOVED MYSELF MORE THAN I'VE LOVED GOD, EVEN THOUGH I'VE REBELLED AGAINST GOD'S KINGDOM AND SOUGHT TO SET UP MY OWN KINGDOM, GOD COMES TO ME IN GRACE AND WRAPS ARMS OF LOVE AROUND ME AND BEGINS A PROCESS THAT WILL RESULT IN TOTAL TRANSFORMATION OF THE CORE OF MY PERSONHOOD, THE HEART. HE WON'T REST, AND HE WON'T RELENT UNTIL HE'S CREATED IN YOU AND ME A COMPLETELY PURE HEART.<sup>3</sup>*

Paul Tripp

***HINGED MIND: THINKING BIBLICALLY***

I've had days where hope comes easily. There have also been many times when hoping in God has been a battle. We need an anchor to hold us firmly as the storms of life threaten to undo us.

**3.** Paul first prayed for his readers to know the hope to which they are called. Define “hope.”

**4.** Read 1 Peter 1:3-9 and Ephesians 1:3-14. In the chart below compare how the two passages speak about the hope we have in Christ.

1 Peter 1:3-9	Ephesians 1:3-14

A friend might tell you she “hopes you feel better soon,” or “I hope the weather cooperates.” This hope is more like a wish than the hope we read about in the Bible. Because God is unfailing and unchanging, what He says will happen as He has promised. Hope calls the believer to stake her life on what is true, even though she cannot fully see or experience it yet. Nothing can separate you from the love of Christ; this is our hope.

Paul prayed for them to know “the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints.”

**5.** Note how each of these verses speaks of *the Lord’s inheritance* in the saints.

Isaiah 19:25	
Psalm 2:7-8	
Romans 8:16-17	
Psalm 135:3-4	

**6. Note how each of the following speaks of *our inheritance* in Him.**

Romans 8:17	
Galatians 3:29	
Acts 20:32	
Colossians 1:12	

There are two common interpretations for “riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,” in verse 18. Both are equally beautiful. The first one is of *our inheritance* in Christ. The second one is *we are His inheritance*. We need eyes to see both of these truths. If you are His inheritance, can you see how valuable you are to Him?

The Greek word for immeasurable power is *dunamis*. “Dynamite” and “dynamic” have their root in this word. It is a mighty power “beyond human capacity.” This power raised Christ from the dead. This power resides in believers through the Holy Spirit, and it is at work within you!

***HINGED HEART: LIVING COVENANTALLY***

I have tried many things to improve my life. I have tried the latest diet, exercising more, going to counseling, and spending time doing the things I enjoy. All these things can be good, but none of them is THE answer to a better life. While these things add value, there is only One who gives life-lasting value. If our hope is set on Christ and our value is found in Him, then we look for power to live in Him and are on a path of growth. We have a hope that cannot fail, and we are made strong to fight the daily battles of life.

**7. How does having hope in Christ affect your daily life?**

8. In what ways do you struggle to hold on to this hope, or do you put your hope in lesser things?

## **DAY 4: Ephesians 1:20-23**

Underline the words or phrases that stand out to you.

*<sup>20</sup>that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup>far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. <sup>22</sup>And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, <sup>23</sup>which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.*

**1.** According to this passage, in what great act was God's mighty power at work?

**2.** From which place did this power raise Christ and to which place did it seat Him?



**HINGED MIND: THINKING BIBLICALLY**

The power of sin and temptation wreaks havoc in our lives. I know the struggle to overcome nagging temptation. I am weak to fight habitual sins. God gives us power beyond ourselves to overcome our old selves and live in our new identity as His child. One step at a time by God's power, we learn to walk in His ways (2 Cor. 12:9). Paul said the mighty strength God exerted when He raised Christ is the same power that resides in the believer through the Holy Spirit.

**3. How do the following verses show Christ's dominion? From each verse, list what He has dominion over.**

Daniel 7:14	
Psalms 8:6-8	
Matthew 8:27	
Mark 1:27	
1 Peter 3:22	

**4. How does Ephesians 1:22-23 describe the Church? How is the Church connected to Christ?**

***HINGED HEART: LIVING COVENANTALLY***

My morning routine includes boiling a pot of water to pour into my French press for a hot cup of coffee. I anticipate with glee the smell of my coffee, steam rising as I pour it into my cup, and moments of quiet reflection as I sit in my favorite chair with coffee in hand. Sometimes my water seems slow to boil. Imagine my frustration when I check to discover I failed to turn on the burner. No power. No boiling water. No coffee. No good!

During my morning rush, I often think about the things I have to do in my day. My list includes good things, sometimes even “spiritual” things such as reading my Bible or going to Bible study. I set everything just so, sit to read in my favorite chair, and my mind runs rampant to every distraction. At times, I busily move from one thing to the next, forgetting to pray.

Relying on God’s power makes all the difference in our lives. If we forget to plug into His power, we remain weak, we do not communicate in love, we are susceptible to fall into old sin patterns, and we live for self rather than for God. But if our heart’s posture is relying on His immeasurable power for us throughout our day, we have all we need to live in His ways. It connects us in brotherly love to others around us for His glory.

If we don’t access power through prayer, we are like the pot on the stove that never comes to a boil. We cannot live in His ways if we do not rely on His power. Just as the water on the powerless stovetop cannot make the coffee I want, we cannot fulfill His purpose without living by His power given to us. This power is resurrection power! This power is for you and me and the Church.

**5. In the chart write an example of how you are trying to handle something in your power and how you pray you might rely on God’s power to approach the challenge.**

<b>In your strength</b>	<b>In God’s strength</b>

**DAY 5: Ephesians 1:15-23**

Reread Ephesians 1:15-23 and review what you have learned this week.

***HINGED MIND: THINKING BIBLICALLY***

**1.** Read Colossians 1:3-18 and compare it to Ephesians 1:15-23. How do these passages reinforce what we have learned about prayer, inheritance, God’s power, Christ’s dominion, and the importance of being connected under Christ?

	Colossians 1:3-18	Ephesians 1:15-23
Prayer		
Inheritance		
God’s Power		
Christ's Dominion		
The Church		

Paul put his confidence in the work only God can do. His confidence was not in his power, nor the strength his readers could muster, but in the power of God which raised Christ from the dead. He thanked God for the work he saw in the people, entrusting them to God, and pointing out the dominion of Christ over all things.

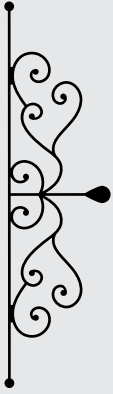
***HINGED HEART: LIVING COVENANTALLY***

**2. Read Colossians 3:1-4. How can you set your hope rightly by seeking the things above?**

**Name some practical steps.**

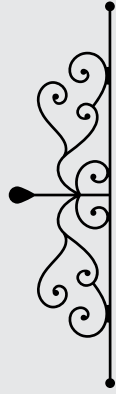
**3. How can you live more connected to Christ and the Church in the light of the truths studied this week?**

As we close this week, what tender places of your heart need to see these truths and be given hope afresh? Take time to pray through these areas, trusting God's power to meet you in areas of weakness. Each of us has battles and daily struggles we face which wage war against the Kingdom of Light in our lives. These battles may be in our hearts, families, communities, or churches. We have more than a "wish" that things will be better. Christ, through His mighty power, stands with us in these times.



**CLOSING PRAYER:**

Father, work in me by the power of the Holy Spirit to give me wisdom and revelation of Your path for me. Open my eyes so I may better know the hope to which You have called me. Show me the areas in my heart where I settle for lesser things. May I live as Your treasured daughter.



---

**END NOTES**

- <sup>1</sup> Megan Hill, *Praying Together* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2016), 70.
- <sup>2</sup> C.S. Lewis, *The Weight of Glory* (New York: Harper Collins, 2001), 26.
- <sup>3</sup> Paul Tripp, *Whiter Than Snow* (Wheaton: Crossway, 2008), 114.

 **Journaling Space**

