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**Next Week's Life Group:** Made for More, Study in Ephesians

**Next Week's Story:** Ephesians 2 & Acts 16:25-34

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**Our Church's Definition of a Biblical Disciple of Jesus**

A person who is committed to *following, being changed by,* and *on mission* with Jesus (taken from Matthew 4:19).

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**The Purpose of Life Groups**

Life Groups are where we connect with God and with others through relationships - growing in spiritual maturity as biblical disciples of Jesus and inspiring a culture of discipleship as we do life together. Life Groups are loving, safe, and interactive places where people can be authentic and vulnerable as they explore, experience, serve, and grow in relationship with Jesus, the Word, and others. Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 2:42-47; Hebrews 3:12-13, 10:23-25; 1 Thessalonians 5:11.

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# MADE FOR MORE

A STUDY THROUGH EPHESIANS

WEEK 1  
APRIL 27 & 28

**LIFE**  
**GROUPS**  
GUIDE

## WE WERE MADE FOR MORE

*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in  
the heavenly places,*

Ephesians 1:3

### GETTING STARTED

Describe a time where you weren't punished and should have been punished.

### STORY BACKGROUND

Paul's third missionary journey begins in the regions of Galatia, Phrygia, and the city of Ephesus (Acts 18:23). He ultimately returns to Jerusalem where he reports to James and the Elders what God has done among the Gentiles through his ministry.

Paul was carried outside the city and beaten because the Jews believed he was preaching against Moses by bringing Gentiles into the temple. Roman soldiers rescued him. While they were carrying him to protection, he asked, in Greek, to speak to the angry crowd. He addresses the mob in Aramaic giving his testimony (his conversion story is recounted in Acts 9). In his testimony, Paul relayed a message God gave him, *He said to me, "Go, because I will send you far away to the Gentiles"* (Acts 22:21). The crowd erupted a second time, calling for his life. The Romans seized him again and prepared to punish him. But Paul informs them he is a Roman citizen.

Roman citizenship was a coveted title. A person could become a Roman citizen by birth, buying the privilege, or earning it. Paul's birth into a Jewish family occurred in the Roman city of Tarsus within the province of Cilicia (Acts 22:3). The commander had to pay a large sum of money to earn the right. The third avenue of citizenship was through twenty-five years military service and an honorable discharge.

Those who possessed Roman citizenship enjoyed a wide range of privileges and protections. Roman citizens had the right to sue (and be sued) in the courts, and had the right to have a legal trial where they could appear before a proper court to defend themselves. They could request Caesar, himself, to hear their case. Additionally, citizens could not be tortured, whipped (scourged), or receive the death penalty, unless they were guilty of treason. It was this right that kept Paul from a severe flogging at the hands of Roman soldiers (Acts 22:23-29).



**STORY:** Acts 22:22-29

**MEMORY VERSE:** Philippians 1:6

*And I am sure of this, that he who began a good work in you will bring it to completion at the day of Jesus Christ.*



**Head Level:** These questions help us to examine what the Word tells us.

- Why did the soldiers set out to punish Paul?
- What interrupted or stopped the lashing?



**Heart Level:** These questions help us wrestle with what we believe.

- Describe a time when you strongly desired that someone be punished for a perceived wrong they committed, but instead they were "released."
- How would you compare this to our relationship with Jesus? How does this resonate with your heart?



**Hands Level:** These questions help us commit to a next step and live it out in our everyday lives.

- Read Ephesians 1 as a group. What do you have from "being in Christ"?
- Share with the group which aspect of your identity in Christ you are most in need of acknowledging and living in today.