

DEEP SIX STUDY

February 15th, 2026

***New Light* – “The ‘Main Character’ Trap: Rethinking Identity”**

MESSAGE HIGHLIGHTS *(You can view the full message online at capecodchurch.com)*

Opening: (Ephesians 1:1^{NIV}) – We kick off a new series this week exploring Paul’s letter to the Ephesians, which offers a beautiful “mountaintop perspective” on our calling as Christians. Written as a circular letter to multiple churches, Ephesians offers a wide-angle vision of what it truly means to follow Jesus – and right out of the gate, Paul makes it clear that the Christian life isn’t about being the hero of your own story, but about participating *together* in God’s much larger one. This shift—from *me* to *us*—should change how we understand purpose, belonging, and community.

1. You Are Not The “Main Character” (Ephesians 3:7-8,10^{NIV})

- Paul introduces himself as an apostle “by the will of God,” signaling immediately that his life is not self-authored. This opening line sets the tone for the entire letter: we are part of God’s story, not the center of it. While we long to be part of something meaningful, our culture pushes us to place ourselves at the center—often at the cost of others.
- Modern culture celebrates hyper-individualism, where others become supporting characters in our personal narrative. Though self-awareness and self-care are good concepts, when taken too far they lead to isolation, narcissism, and diminished joy. Ironically, centering life entirely on ourselves often produces the opposite of what we seek: less happiness, less connection, and less meaning.

2. We Have a New Identity – Together (Ephesians 1:1b^{NIV}, 3:10^{NIV})

- When Paul addresses “God’s holy people,” he is describing a *community* set apart for a shared purpose—not merely morally upright individuals. To be “in Christ” means belonging to Christ’s body, representing Jesus together in the world. Christian identity is therefore communal: God is forming a people who are meant to reflect heaven on earth.
- Many resist Christian community because it feels like an unwanted group project—messy, inefficient, and uncomfortable. Yet the point of a group project is not perfection but learning to work together. The Christian life is meant to be lived with others to practice patience, forgiveness, grace, and love. We cannot fully live *like* Christ unless we are willing to live *with* one another.
- Paul models how individual calling and communal purpose coexist—his personal mission only makes sense within the church’s larger mission. When we step out of the spotlight, we don’t lose ourselves; we actually find deeper purpose and joy. God’s intent is to reveal His wisdom *through the church*—a diverse community living out Christ’s love together.
- The invitation of Ephesians is clear: move from an “me” mindset to an “us” mindset. God is forming a people who, together, offer the world a glimpse of what life under Christ’s reign looks like; the Christian life was never meant to be done alone. “The Christian life can be hard, because we are meant to live out a miracle.”

ADDITIONAL SCRIPTURE

These passages may provide additional insights related to the subject of this week's message. All verses are NLT unless otherwise noted.

Matthew 16:24-25; John 13:34-35; Acts 2:42-47; Galatians 3:26-28^{NIV}, Hebrews 10:23-25; 1 John 3:16

Video of the Week: [The Last Will Be First](#) by the Bible Project

QUESTIONS FOR REFLECTION AND DISCUSSION

1. Honesty check: On a scale of 1-10 (1 = not at all, 10 = very), how prone would you say you are to thinking and acting like you're the "main character" of the story of your life? Explain your answer.
2. In general, does the idea of not being the main character in your story – but rather being a "supporting character" in a much bigger story – feel *freeing* or *threatening* to you? Explain your answer.
3. How would your understanding of your salvation (i.e., being "in Christ") shift if you viewed it primarily as being incorporated into a community of people rather than just being forgiven and "saved" as an individual?
4. Read Ephesians 3:10^{NIV} again. Rather than just a place to gather for worship and learning once a week, what cosmic purpose and identity does Paul assign to "the church"? How can we possibly live that purpose out?
5. What would it look like – and what would you be inspired to do – if you saw your own gifts, talents and abilities not as personal achievements, but as potential contributions to the church's shared mission?
6. As a follower of Jesus – someone who is "in Christ" – what's one tangible step you could take to make your life more about playing your role in His Story and less about being the "main character" in your own story?