

EPHESIANS

STUDY OUTLINE

Ephesians:

It answers the question, "How do I build a Christian life?"

Introduction

Other than jails and prisons the apostle Paul spent more time in Ephesus than any other place in his service to Jesus Christ. This can probably be attributed to the fact that Ephesus was such an important city in the Roman province of Asia Minor. It served as the capital of the region and was located on an important east-west travel route and within one mile of the eastern edge of the Aegean Sea. Along with Jerusalem and Antioch it proved to be a very powerful springboard for influencing the world for Christ.

Paul visited Ephesus on both his 2nd and 3rd missionary journeys and exerted so much influence in the area that the idol-makers (a very large business group) became worried about their livelihood and incited a riot against him.

Paul's epistle to the church at Ephesus was one of five (5) that Paul wrote while in prison in Rome between A.D. 60-64. The others were the epistles to the churches at Colossae, Philippi and Laodicea (Col. 4:16) and to Philemon who was the owner of the runaway slave Onesimus. The epistles to Ephesus, Colossae and Laodicea were all meant to be sister letters written to be shared among all of these churches that were located in a close general proximity to each other.

The overriding theme of this epistle is the Church as the mystical body of Christ with Christ as the head of the body (5:21). Paul emphasizes the unity of the body (4:4) making it clear that both Jew and Gentile Christians form one body and that the Gentile converts did not first have to convert to Judaism in order to become a part of the Church of Christ.

This epistle is laid out in two distinct sections: 1) chapters 1-3 speak to the doctrine of salvation explaining the believer's position in Christ; 2) chapters 4-6 speak to practical living teaching us how our daily walk with Christ is to be maintained. Remember, Paul is writing to a young church with young and still somewhat immature believers. Thus it was required of him to continue to teach them as they continued to grow in their newfound relationship with Christ and to help them strengthen and deepen this relationship.

STUDY OUTLINE

Theme: *The Church (ekklesia) is the mystical body of Christ. God's great master plan is to bring everything together under Christ as the head (Eph. 1:10, 22-23). As the body we have a part in this plan and the Holy Spirit is the guarantee of God's promise.*

I. Introduction

A. The Parallel Letters to the Ephesian Church

1. Revelation 2:1-7

- a. The Compliment – v. 1-3 – My walk w/ Christ – practical living
- b. The Condemnation – v. 4-6 – My position in Christ – doctrinal learning
- c. The Conclusion – v. 7

2. Ephesians 1-6

- a. Position – ch. 1-3 – doctrinal learning
- b. Walk – ch. 4-6 – practical living

B. The Importance of the Location

1. Geographical

- a. Seaport
- b. Access to water & land travel routes
- c. Provincial capital
- d. Population

2. Cultural

- a. Architecture
- b. Athletics
- c. Arts
- d. Other Cultures

3. Spiritual – the web site www.unmuseum.org shares this insight regarding the spiritual condition of Ephesus after the apostle established the local church fellowship and began sharing Christ to the people of the region:

St. Paul came to the city to win converts to the then new religion of Christianity. He was so successful that Demetrius feared the people would turn away from Artemis (Diana) and he would lose his livelihood. He called others of his trade together with him and gave a rousing speech ending with “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” They then seized two of Paul’s companions and a near riot followed. Eventually the city was quieted, the men released, and Paul left for Macedonia.

It was Paul's Christianity that won out in the end, though. By the time the great Temple of Artemis was destroyed during the raid by the Goths in 262 A.D., both the city and the religion of Artemis were in decline. When the Roman Emperor Constantine rebuilt much of Ephesus a century later, he declined to restore the temple. He had become a Christian and had little interest in pagan temples.

II. The Believers' Position in Christ – Ch. 1-3 – Doctrinal Learning

A. Laying the Foundation – 1:1-6

1. The Greeting – v. 1-2

- a. Person – *Paul – born Saul of Tarsus (Acts 9:11); minister of the Gospel (1 Corinthians 3:5); “wise” masterbuilder (KJV-1 Corinthians 3:10 – [wise= “sophos”-one who knows how to regulate his course; skillful; expert)*
- b. Position – *apostle – a special messenger – ambassador – one sent to represent another*
- c. Power – *Jesus Christ – the same power source that brought the resurrection*
- d. Plan – *the will of God – will=God's gracious disposition toward something-what pleases Him to do or get done*
- e. Purpose – *“grace & peace” – God's love & security*
- f. Providers – *Father and only begotten Son*

2. The Blessing – v. 3-4

- a. By & To whom – *We bless (praise & worship) God for who He is and He then gives to us His goodness...*
- b. Of what – *which are spiritual (heavenly) in nature – always ...*
- c. And where – *showing us His mind (that we are already occupying heavenly places with Him)...*
- d. And when – *which was prepared by God before time began...*
- e. And why – *so that we might be His holy family and...*
- f. And how – *He accomplished it all by and through His great love!*

3. The Adopting – v. 5-6

- a. Predestined – *God knows (through His omniscience) who will accept His free gift – He knew before He ever sent Jesus – and therefore made the sovereign choice (decision) that they would be the adopted children of God (only Jesus was birthed – begotten - of God the Father)*

- b. Adopted – *We, who were once enemies of God (Romans 5:20), have been made, **not birthed**, to be children of God by & through the work and will of God*
- c. Praised – *God is to be the recipient of all our praise by & through His **glory** (the fullness of who He is) which allows God to give us His **grace** which then makes us His **adopted** children*
- d. Graced – *We could never earn the right to be adopted into God’s family - He just chose to make it so*
- e. Accepted – *God made us deserving of His love & grace which makes us then accepted into the family of His beloved*
- f. Beloved – *those who according to His will (choice) are now part of His family*

B. Placing the Corners – 1:7-12

1. Placed by the Blood – v. 7

- a. Redemption Takes Blood – 7a (Heb. 9:22) – it started with Adam and Eve (Genesis 3:7)

*The Greek word for redemption is “**apolutrosis**” – the recalling of captives (sinners) from their captivity (sin) through the payment of a ransom (blood)*

- b. Sins Are Forgiven (Matt. 12:31) – 7b – Romans 6:23: *sin – death – Jesus - man – God*

*The Greek word for forgiven is “**aphesis**” – to cause to stand away & be released once the sentence has been fulfilled*

2. Flowing From His Grace – v. 7c-11 –

- a. Fullness of His riches - The Greek word for grace is “**charis**” (from which we derive our *charisma*) – to rejoice as a result of the absolute freeness of the lovingkindness of God to us which finds its only motive in the bounty and freeheartedness of the Giver; it is both unearned and undeserved but brings joy and thankfulness to Him as a result

- b. Abounding toward us – NIV = “lavished”

Wisdom – the knowledge (inferred understanding) of how to regulate (direct) one’s relationship with God

Prudence (KJV); Understanding (NIV) – the knowledge (inferred understanding) of how to regulate one’s relationships with other people

Mystery – God’s revealed will (to the apostle) concerning the calling of the Gentiles

Good Pleasure – what pleases God and is in line with His desires and...
Purpose – what is designed beforehand

c. All in 1

In Heaven(s) – singular and plural simultaneously referring to the three levels of heaven:

1st Level – earth’s atmosphere (Genesis 1:20; Isaiah 40:31)

2nd Level – where the celestial bodies reside (Genesis 1:14-16)

3rd Level – where God resides (Psalm 103:19; 2 Corinthians 12:2-4)

On Earth – the domain of man (Genesis 1:28-30)

Under One – the sum total under 1 head – **CHRIST** – **Philippians 2:9-11**

d. To an obtained inheritance – the phrase “to an obtained inheritance” is the aorist tense, passive voice of the verb “to be” and it means that all who accept the gift of eternal life God has already purposed and willed that we receive the fullness of the inheritance that He has already predestinated for us in Christ in order to complete His plan

3. For His Glory – v. 12

a. In praise & glory – *lauding & commending: deserved honor, renown & recognition*

b. In Christ – *full faith & trust*

C. Sealing the Blocks – 1:13-14

1. Do you trust it? – v. 13a

a. The Word of Truth

Trusted – *accepted & acted upon*

Heard – *it was spoken to you*

Word – *(logos) intelligent voice*

Truth – *(alethia) verified matter*

b. The Gospel of Salvation

Gospel – *(euaggellon) good news*

Salvation – *(soteria) deliverance & preservation*

2. If so, you’re sealed! – v. 13b-14a

a. Believing brings sealing

Believed – *(pisteuo) accepted & received (see promise below)*

Sealed – *(sphragio) securely stamped to preserve*

Holy Spirit – *(haggios pneuma) the consecrated, set apart, invisible,*

powerful, immaterial breath of God

Promise – (*epaggella*) *a gift graciously given – not a pledge secured by negotiation*

b. Sealing brings inheriting

Earnest – *a pledge, but only part of the price*

Inheritance – *an earthly type of something heavenly*

c. Inheriting brings redeeming

Redemption – *recalled from captivity*

Believing(trusting) brings Sealing which brings Inheriting which brings Redeeming

3. And purchased! – v. 14b

a. A possession – *I am bought with a price and I belong to a Prince!*

b. Unto praise – *All of this brings “praise” to God’s glory!*

D. Covering the House: The Roof of Prayerful Protection – 1:15-23

1. The Movement – v. 15-16

a. Faith in Jesus

b. Love for Saints

c. Thanks to the Father

d. Mentioned in Prayer

2. The Source – v. 17a

a. The Father of the Lord Jesus Christ

b. Gives to the Adopted Children of Jesus Christ (John 17)

3. The Course – v. 17b-18

a. The Spirit of Wisdom, Revelation & Knowledge in God

b. The Eyes of Understanding & Enlightenment

c. The Hope of His Calling

d. The Riches of His Glorious Inheritance

4. The Force – v. 19-23

a. Power² – 1st = *dunamis* = *explosive; implied & inherent (speaks to ability & capability)*

2nd = *kratos* = *retained strength; dominion (speaks to force of rule)*

b. Power Displayed – resurrection – *what greater power than to allow yourself to be physically killed & then raise yourself from the dead!*

*resumption & restoration – restored to your rightful place
in order to resume your lawful duties*

E. A Magnificent Makeover – 2:1-10 - SALVATION

1. The 3 Stages of Salvation – v. 1-7

- a. Justification – v. 1-3 – “*made just as if I had never sinned*”
- saved from the **penalty** of my sin

My dreadful past:

- dead – trespasses – steps taken outside the bounds; sins – missing the mark
- depraved – Psalm 1:1 – walked the course of this world; children of disobedience (unbelief)
- doomed – lifestyle – lusts – nature (wrath, anger, revenge)

- b. Sanctification – v. 4-5 – “*made to live free in Him*”
- saved from the **power** of sin

My blessed present:

- live – quickened – made alive
- liberated – were dead – past tense
- lifted – with Christ – I am not alone!

- c. Glorification – v. 6-7 – “*made to live forever with Him*”
- saved from the **presence** of sin

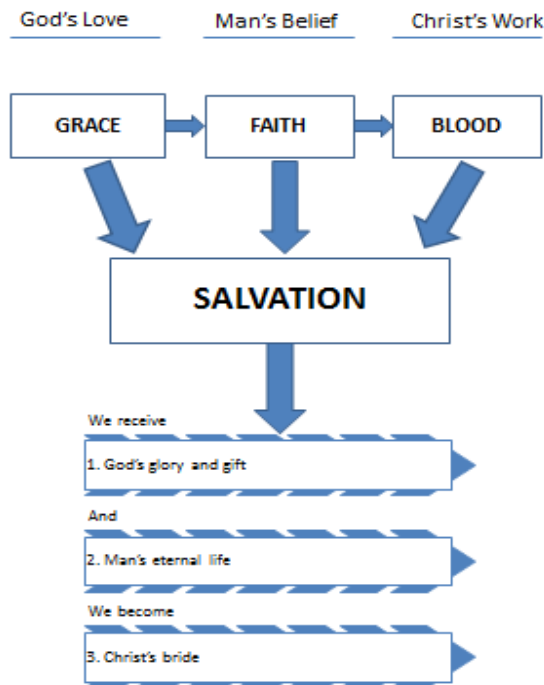
My glorious future:

- immortal – in Christ
- just – sit together
- glorious – heavenly places; ages to come

2. The Flow of Salvation – v. 8-10

- a. God’s Love = Grace
- b. Man’s Belief = Faith
- c. Christ’s Work = Blood

The Flow of Salvation



F. A Revived Relationship – 2:11-22

1. Fleshly Gentiles – v. 11-12

- a. Remembering can help you stay right
- b. Alienation makes you a stranger

2. Fresh Christians – v. 13-15

- a. Now you're new in Jesus – *2 Corinthians 5:17; Galatians 2:20*
- b. Given a special peace inside – *Philippians 4:7*

3. Freely Reconciled – v. 16-18

- a. In 1 body by the Cross – *reconcile* – “*apokatallaso*” (refers to relationship) to separate (from something and to something else) and to change

Types - (see Matthew 13:1-9)

lost – no relationship – Romans 3:10, 23; 10:9, 13

prodigal – related but very far apart – Luke 15:11-32

unserving – related w/ some contact but not close

close walkers – *Galatians 5:16*

- b. Through preaching peace – *peace* = no longer @ enmity, strife, w/God or any other family member (Jews v. Gentiles)

- c. Bringing access to the Father – *this spiritual relationship allows us complete & open access to the Father as His adopted children – Romans 8:15*
4. Full Citizenship – v. 19-22
- a. Strangeness gone-fellowship in place – *“sojourners”=temporary dwellers in a foreign land*
“saints”=household of God-His set apart family
 - b. Built strong in Jesus by apostles & prophets – *Jesus is the primary foundation stone while the apostles & prophets (God’s messengers) form the remainder of the building’s foundation*
 - c. With all parts properly in place – *strong/straight foundation; strong / plumb walls; tight / solid roof*
 - d. To house all of God

G. When You Look in the Mirror, What Do You See? – 3:1-13

1. Prisoner – v. 1 – to reveal His mystery of “heirship” –v. 3-6 – *one who is captive to another – Paul was a prisoner to the Word, Will & Mandate of Jesus Christ who sent him to the Gentiles with this message of grace so that he could make known the mystery of God’s salvation through Jesus Christ which would make them joint heirs with Christ. This revelation was:*
 - a. Made possible through the Gospel – *Romans 1:16*
 - b. Promised by Christ
 - c. Revealed by the Spirit
 - d. Empowered by the Father
2. Minister (servant) – v. 7-13 – *We are saved by grace and gifted by God to preach the unsearchable riches of Him. Among these riches are:*
 - a. God’s grace
 - b. God’s power
 - c. God’s fellowship
 - d. God’s heaven
 - e. God’s wisdom
 - f. God’s purpose

- g. God's confidence
- h. God's glory – *sufferings (tribulations)-James 1:2-4; 13(explain the “crown of life”)*

H. Strong Prayers Come from Strong Faith –

3:14-21 (go to James 1:2-6)

1. A Vertical Attitude – v. 14-21

Steps to Strong Prayers

- a. Begins on the ground
- b. Takes its purposed plane
- c. Is strengthened & enriched from within
- d. Becomes deeply rooted in love
- e. Can work with all the saints to understand God's love
- f. And be completely filled with it
- g. Seeing its power work within us
- h. Bringing glory to Him forever

2. A Horizontal Aptitude – v. 17-19

- a. Rooted & grounded in love
- b. Comprehending the depths of His love
- c. Knowing that God's love surpasses all knowledge and completes & fulfills His children

The Power Flow

From God → To Us → From Us → To Others

III. The Believers' Walk in Christ – Ch. 4-6 – Practical Living

A. Our Body: Is it healthy? – 4:1-16

1. Are you walking worthy (*admirable & honorable*)? – v. 1-6

- a. In love – *agape – a choice of the will*
- b. In unity – *1 Corinthians 12:12 – different, yet 1!*
- c. In oneness – *Spirit – direction – Romans 14:12-22a*

We must be sensitive to where and how the Holy Spirit leads us to minister and serve! (Share why I don't go into jails & prisons or deliver gifts or food.)

2. Are you walking in grace? *(the gift of the undeserved love and favor of God)* – v. 7-12
 - a. Gifted to be a saint – *salvation is the greatest gift of all and given the same to everyone* – John 3:16
 - b. Gifted as a saint – *all of us are different here (4:11) but for 1 purpose (4:12) with 3 roles: perfect the saints; do the work of the ministry; and, edify (grow & strengthen) the body* – Romans 12:6-8; 1 Corinthians 12:27-28
3. Are you walking in Christ *(our position as a child of God in the family of God)?* – v. 13-16
 - a. In perfection – *spiritual completeness and maturity which comes from unity – family togetherness; knowledge = clear understanding that leads to full participation*
 - b. In maturity – *growth that has us strong in our standing on biblical doctrine versus the ever changing doctrine of the world*
 - c. In truth – *continually living in the reality of His love and expressing that love so that others believe the reality of Christ*
 - d. In growth – *individual and corporate – as we individually grow stronger in our walk with Jesus the entire body grows stronger and works more effectively in sharing the love of Jesus*

B. Our Body: Is it mature? – 4:17-32

1. Is your mind empty? – v. 17-19
 - a. With vanity *(vain, useless thinking)*
 - b. With darkness *(that separates from God)*
 - c. Void of feeling *(insensitive)*
2. Or, has it learned Christ? – v. 20-24
 - a. His truth *(verifiable essence; no falsehood or insincerity)*
 - b. His life *(totally pure; nothing dirty)*
 - c. His mind *(Romans 12:1-3; Philippians 2:5-8)*
 - d. His holiness *(to live and walk so closely w/ Him that I become like Him)*
3. And, His absolute way! – v. 25-32
 - a. Absolute honesty
 - b. Absolute love
 - c. Absolute integrity

- d. Absolute purity
- e. Absolute graciousness

Absolute – not to be doubted or questioned; positive & certain - James 1:2-8; 12

C. Our Attitude: How's the heart? – 5:1-20

1. Is it like the Christ child's – v. 1-2

- a. A dear child of God

Followers = those who go after and imitate another

Dear children = those re-birthed spiritually; special to God

- b. A heart full of love

Walk in love = love must guide everything you do in life (1 Corinthians 13)

As Christ loved us = sacrificially as a matter of His choice

2. Kept Clean! – 3-7

- a. Don't be a harlot – *keep yourself spiritually & physically pure*

pernemi-to sell

pornos-male prostitute

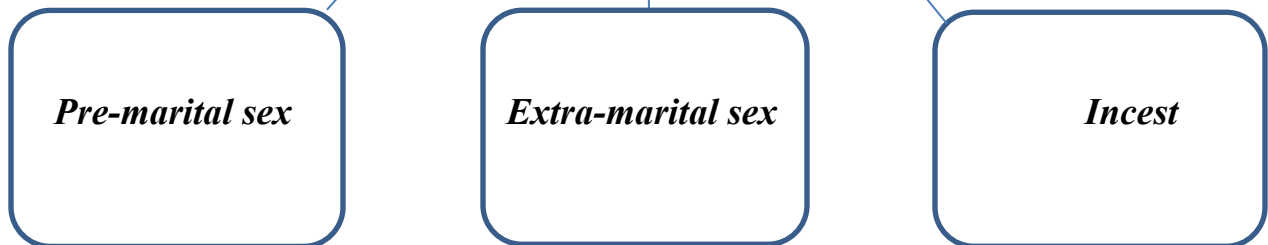
porneuo-unlawful lust

FORNICATION

PORNEIA

uncleanness-filth & impurity

covetousness-wrong desires



- b. Nor full of shame

Filthiness – shameful actions (that which is obscene)

Foolish talkings – speech that shows your own foolishness – lack of real understanding

Jesting – coarse joking; mischievous speech

- c. Or debauchery

Whoremonger – constant fornicator

Unclean person – one laced with idolatry & abomination

Covetous man – one who defrauds

- d. Or easily deceived
 - Vain words – empty, useless speech*
 - Wrath of God – God’s indignation shown*
 - Children of disobedience – those who do not believe*
- 3. As a non-participant of evil! – v. 8
 - Partaker = participant; partner*
 - Were darkness = one who is in a state of ignorance or error*
 - Now...light = one who knows & understands*
 - Walk = continuously & repeatedly*
 - Psalm 1:1-6
 - Hebrews 4:15
 - Philippians 2:5
- 4. Transition from Heart to Family with “4 Ways to Understand God’s Will in Your Life – 5:15-21
 - 1. *What “fills” you? – It’s a matter of control!*
 - 2. *How do you “speak?” – Articulate w/ words God’s love & truth!*
 - 3. *Are you “thankful?” -*
 - 4. *Do you know how to “submit (show kindness to)?” – “fear of God”=respectful reverence to so as to prevent the wrath of*
- D. Our Attitude: How’s the Family – 5:21-6:4
 - 1. It’s all about submission – v. 21
 - a. To God – *fear; reverence – 2 Corinthians 8:1-5* – key verse
 - b. And each other – *give primary consideration to*
 - 2. Ladies first! – v. 22-24 – *submit=to place in an orderly fashion under*
1 Corinthians 14:26; 33-34
 - a. To your husband – to Jesus
 - b. It’s a responsibility thing
 - 3. Men more! – v. 25-31
 - a. Love like Christ
 - b. Love like it’s you
 - 4. Jesus most! – v. 32-33
 - a. See Philippians 2:8-9
 - b. It’s His church

5. Children obey – 6:1-4

- a. It's the right thing to do – Prov. 22:6
- b. It's the commandment – Exodus 20:12 Deut. 6:6-7
- c. It brings long life
- d. It stops the provoking – *Why does the verse just command the fathers?*
(Genesis 2:18, 21; 3:9; Ephesians 5:2)

E. Our Attitude: How's the work? – 6:5-9

1. Obedience is a must! – v. 5-6 – *Servants – one who is bound to another; who chooses to serve another (Psalm 50:1-12)*
Obedient – to give heed; yield; follow; to humbly accept
Masters – those who wield authority (Romans 13:1-2; 4-5)

- a. Jesus was
- b. Make it real

“If you refuse to serve the earthly masters that God places over you, will you truly serve your heavenly Master?” Follow His example from John 19:10-11; 30 and Philippians 2:5-8!

2. Good will to all! – v. 7-8
 - a. It's for Jesus
 - b. It will come back – *Luke 6:38*
3. Boss – return the favor! – v. 9
 - a. Be nice
 - b. Because your Boss is watching
 - c. He treats all the same

F. Is Your Armor On? – 6:10-24 – *Why do we need armor? 1 Peter 5:8-10; Daniel 10:1-13*

1. How can I be strong enough to defend myself? – v. 10-12
 - a. Know where the strength comes from
(2 Corinthians 12:7-10)
 - b. Use all the tools God gives you
 - c. Understand who your real enemies are
2. What keeps me standing in the heat of

battle? – v. 13-17

- a. Take on the whole armor
- b. All the defensive weapons
- c. And the 1 offensive weapon – Psalm 119

How did Jesus defeat Satan in the wilderness? (Matthew 4:1-11;
Luke 4:1-13)

3. Are there other weapons that will help? –

v. 18-20

- a. Praying – Psalm 86 w/overhead which gives results as stated in James 5:13-18
- b. Preaching – *speak the Word of God—boldly & unashamedly (Romans 1:16) so that others may stand strong in the faith (Romans 10:17)*
- c. Performing – “ambassador” – *one who represents another*
- d. Be sincere

CONCLUSION

As Paul sits imprisoned in Rome he contemplates the condition of the newly founded churches and the news he is receiving concerning their growth and stability and he is moved to pen letters to them: Ephesus, Philippi, Colossae, and Laodicea (see Col. 4:16). The letters are personal to each fellowship to address the issues and needs that have arisen within the individual bodies but also to strengthen and embolden them as they live for and serve their Savior.

So to the church at Ephesus, that epicenter of government, culture, and trade, he reminds them of their position in Christ as he reiterates the doctrine of salvation (ch. 1-3) and how they are to live and conduct themselves as followers of Christ in their everyday walk (ch. 4-6). It is a reaffirmation of his and Christ’s love for them and of their place and role in the spread of the gospel of Christ and the building of His church. It also serves as a reassurance from Paul of their eternal security in Christ and of the complete provision that Christ gives to them in order to stand firm in the faith and complete the work of the ministry (4:12).