

Investigating the Word of God

Ephesians



The Roman Theater at Ephesus

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An Introduction to Ephesians

The City of Ephesus

Ephesus was the capital of the Roman province of Asia. It was located on the Cayster River about one mile from the seacoast. It was the chief seaport of Asia. Next to Rome, it was probably the most important city the apostle Paul visited.

It was settled in the 11th century B.C. by the

Athenians. It had a very violent history. It was conquered, in succession, by the Persians, the Macedonians and the Romans. It was destroyed by fire in 356 B.C. It was rebuilt because of the pride of its residents and its important location on major trade routes.

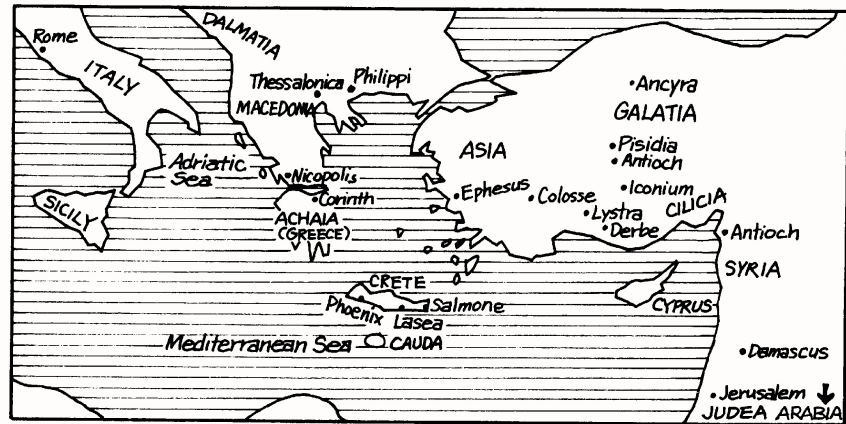
There were two buildings which gave prominence to the city. The first was the Great Theatre of Ephesus. It had a seating capacity of about 25,000. The second was the Temple of Diana, or Artemis, another name for Diana. It was considered one of the Seven Wonders of the World. Built of the finest marble, it took 220 years to complete. It was 342 feet long and 164 feet wide. It was supported by a mass of columns 56 feet high. Today, only one of its columns is standing.

The Church in Ephesus

The church in the city of Ephesus was established by the apostle Paul on his second preaching trip recorded in the book of Acts (Acts 18:18-21). He had earlier wanted to go into Asia but the Holy Spirit did not allow him to go at that time (Acts 16:6). After starting churches at the cities of Philippi, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens and Corinth, he eventually came to Ephesus.

At Ephesus, he preached to the Jews in the synagogue, the Jewish place of worship. Aquila and Priscilla, fellow Christians who had accompanied him from Corinth to Ephesus, remained there after he left. They taught Apollos, a young preacher, the gospel in its fullness since he only knew of the baptism of John the Baptist and not the baptism of Christ (Acts 18:24-28). After receiving that instruction, he went to Corinth to preach to the people of that city.

On his third preaching journey, the apostle Paul came to Ephesus again. On this trip he spent about three years there, a longer period of time than he spent in any other city on any of his trips. Upon his arrival, he taught twelve men who had been baptized only with the baptism of John the Baptist (Acts 19:1-7). After that, he preached for two years in the school of Tyrannus (Acts 19:10). Opposition to him came from silversmiths led by Demetrius (Acts 19:23-41). They made their living manufacturing statues of Diana and replicas of her temple. They caused a riot and endangered Paul's life. He had to leave Ephesus and go into Macedonia (Acts 20:16-38).



Later on in this same trip, when Paul was returning to Jerusalem, while at the city of Miletus, some 30 miles from Ephesus, he called the elders of the Ephesus church to meet him. He wanted to encourage them and warn them of the danger of apostasy, falling away from God (Acts 20:16-38).

In the book of Revelation, Jesus instructed the apostle John to write to the Ephesus church, one of the seven churches of Asia addressed in that book (Rev. 2:1-7).

Author, Date, Place of Writing and Messenger

The apostle Paul identifies himself twice in this book as its author (1:1; 3:1). Its style of writing is very much like the other books of the New Testament he wrote.

Paul spent two years under house arrest in Rome around 59 to 61 A.D. (Acts 28:16-31). During this imprisonment, he wrote four books: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon.

Tychicus, a fellow worker with Paul in the gospel, was the messenger who brought this letter to the Ephesians. He was to take Onesimus, a runaway slave of Philemon who had become a Christian, back to Philemon who lived in the city of Colosse. On the way, Paul had him deliver this writing to the church at Ephesus (Eph. 6:21; Col. 4:7-9).

Why This Book Was Written

The book of Ephesians was written to set forth the nature of the universal church, the body of Christ, and its eternal purpose (1:1 - 3:21). This book also serves to encourage the members of the church to proper conduct toward each other, the world, God and members of their own earthly families (4:1 - 6:9). Finally, it was written to warn members of the church to be prepared for the spiritual conflict that results from putting the principles of Christianity into practice (6:10-24)

The Themes of the Book

There are three great themes found in this book. It is important for everyone to understand what each teaches.

The first is that of the glorious relationship between Christ and His church. In this book, the church is set forth as the body of Christ (1:23); the temple of God (2:19-22); the family of God (2:19; 3:14-15); the bride of Christ (5:22-32); and the “fullness of Him who fills all in all” (1:23).

The second theme is the “walk” of the Christian. As it is used in this writing, the word “walk” means manner of life. According to this book, the Christian is to walk: (1) not according to the course of the world (2:2); (2) in good works (2:10); (3) worthy of his calling (4:1); (4) not as the Gentiles in the vanity of his mind (4:17); (5) in love (5:21); (6) as a child of light (5:8); and (7) circumspectly, wisely (5:15).

The final theme is that of unity of God’s people. Among Christians: (1) no distinction exists between Jew and Gentile (2:15); (2) all are reconciled in one body (2:16); (3) all have access by one Spirit to the Father (2:18); and (4) all should be endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace (4:3-6)

An Outline of Ephesians

Introduction (1:1-2)

I. Blessings in Christ (1:3-21)

- A. All spiritual. (3)
- B. Children of God in Christ. (4-6)
- C. Forgiveness in Christ. (7-10)
- D. God's heritage is in Christ. (11-12)
- E. Sealed by the Holy Spirit in Christ. (13-14)
- F. Paul's prayer for the Ephesians. (15-23)

II. The Church in God's Eternal Purpose (1:22 - 3:21)

- A. The church, the fullness of Christ. (1:22-23)
- B. The church, alive in Christ. (2:1-10)
- C. The church, the body of the reconciled. (2:11-18)
- D. The church, the kingdom, family and temple of God. (2:19-22)
- E. The church, the product of God's revelation. (3:1-21)
- F. Paul's prayer. (3:14-21)

III. Unity in the Body (4:1-16)

- A. Responsibilities of the members. (1-3)
- B. God's platform for unity. (4-6)
- C. Gifts provided for unity. (7-16)

IV. Practical Applications (4:17 - 6:24)

- A. Do not walk as other Gentiles. (4:17-19)
- B. Rather you should walk as a new creation in Christ. (4:20-32)
- C. Walks contrasted. (5:1-21)
- D. Family relationships. (5:22 - 6:4)
- E. Social relationships. (6:5-9)
- F. Spiritual relationships. (6:10-20)

Conclusion (6:21-24)

Ephesians Chapter One

Keys to This Chapter

Key Passage: Verses 22-23

“And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”

Key People

Paul

Key Places

Ephesus

Key Words

Saints

Predestined

Adoption

Redemption

Mystery

Dispensation

Inheritance

Guarantee

Principality

Power

Might

Dominion

Key Lesson

Questions on the Text

1. To whom is the book written? By whom is it written?
2. Where are all spiritual blessings to be found?
3. By the good pleasure of the will of God, what can one become?
4. In whom is one made acceptable to God? Who is he?
5. Where is redemption found? What makes it possible?
6. What is the guarantee of the Christian's inheritance?
7. Why was Paul thankful for the Christians in Ephesus?
8. What things did Paul request in prayer for the brethren at Ephesus?
9. After being raised from the dead, where was Christ seated?
10. Who is head over the church?

Matching

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|--|---|
| ___ 1. The God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ | A. The body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. |
| ___ 2. Paul | B. In Him Christians have obtained an inheritance. |
| ___ 3. Christ | C. Blessed Christians with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ. |
| ___ 4. Saints in Ephesus | D. An apostle of Jesus Christ. |
| ___ 5. The church | E. Faith in the Lord Jesus and love for all the saints. |

True - False

- | | | |
|---|---|--|
| T | F | 1. All spiritual blessings are in Christ. |
| T | F | 2. Redemption is through the blood of Christ. |
| T | F | 3. Christians are sealed with the Holy Spirit. |
| T | F | 4. Jesus is now seated on His throne in Jerusalem. |
| T | F | 5. All things are under Christ's feet. |

Discussion Question

What is meant by the phrase “the fullness of Him who fills all in all?”

Ephesians Chapter Two

Keys to This Chapter

Key Passage: Verses 8-9

“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.”

Key People

The prince of the power of the air

Key Words

Trespasses

Lusts

Wrath

Mercy

Grace

Works

Circumcision

Aliens

Commonwealth

Abolished

Enmity

Ordinances

Reconcile

Access

Cornerstone

Key Lesson

Questions on the Text

1. What did Jesus do for those who were dead in trespasses and sins?
2. What had been the “walk” of the Ephesians in the past? What had been the manner of life of all people?
3. According to verses eight and nine, what brings salvation? What does not bring salvation?
4. For what purpose is one created in Christ?
5. Who was the “Uncircumcision” in the flesh? Who was the “Circumcision?”
6. What was the “middle wall of separation” between Jew and Gentile that was broken down by Jesus?
7. Where are both Jew and Gentile reconciled today?
8. With whom can both Jew and Gentile have citizenship?
9. What is the foundation of the holy temple of the Lord? What is its chief cornerstone?
10. What is “a dwelling place of God in the Spirit?”

Matching

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|---|--|
| ___ 1. The prince of the power of the air | A. Gentiles in the flesh. |
| ___ 2. God | B. The spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience. |
| ___ 3. Uncircumcision | C. The foundation of a holy temple of the Lord. |
| ___ 4. Christ Jesus | D. Rich in mercy and possessing great love. |
| ___ 5. The apostles and prophets | E. Abolished the enmity, the law of commandments. |

True - False

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|---|---|--|
| T | F | 1. Every person should walk the course of this world. |
| T | F | 2. God saved man when he was dead in trespasses and sins. |
| T | F | 3. One is saved by works. |
| T | F | 4. Those who were afar off were brought near by the blood of Christ. |
| T | F | 5. Jesus preached peace. |

Discussion Question

How are Christians the “workmanship” of God?

Ephesians Chapter Three

Keys to This Chapter

Key Passage: Verses 4 and 6
“By which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ....that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel.”

Key Words

Dispensation

Revelation

Mystery

Unsearchable

Fellowship

Manifold

Wisdom

Principalities

Powers

Tribulations

Comprehend

Key Lesson

Questions on the Text

1. What had God given to Paul?
2. How did Paul know the mystery of God’s will? How could the Ephesians know it?
3. What was Paul made a minister to preach?
4. What makes known the manifold wisdom of God? To whom does it make it known?
5. Who accomplished God’s eternal purpose for mankind?
6. For whom is the whole family in heaven and earth named?
7. Through whom does God strengthen the inner man?
8. What, according to verse 19, passes knowledge?
9. Who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all we ask or think?
10. To whom should be glory in the church to all generations?

Matching

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|--|--|
| ___ 1. Paul | A. The one in whom Christians have boldness and access with confidence. |
| ___ 2. Sons of men | B. Fellow heirs and partakers of the promise in Christ through the gospel. |
| ___ 3. Gentiles | C. In other ages ignorant of the mystery of Christ. |
| ___ 4. Christ Jesus | D. The one to whom Paul bowed his knees. |
| ___ 5. The Father of our Lord Jesus Christ | E. The prisoner of Christ Jesus. |

True - False

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|---|---|--|
| T | F | 1. The mystery of Christ can never be understood. |
| T | F | 2. The Gentiles can never be fellow heirs and partakers of the promise of God in Christ. |
| T | F | 3. Paul thought he was the greatest of all the saints. |
| T | F | 4. Paul’s tribulations for the Ephesians were their glory. |
| T | F | 5. Christ dwells in one’s heart through faith. |

Discussion Question

How does God “do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think?”

Ephesians Chapter Four

Keys to This Chapter

Key Passage: Verse 1

“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called.”

Key Words

Worthy

Lowliness

Gentleness

Longsuffering

Endeavoring

Unity

Apostles

Prophets

Evangelists

Pastors

Equipping

Craftiness

Futility

Lewdness

Corrupt

Edification

Grieve

Bitterness

Clamor

Malice

Key Lesson

Questions on the Text

1. According to verse one, how were the Ephesians Christians to walk? How, according to verse 17, were they not to walk?
2. What were the Ephesians to endeavor to keep?
3. What gifts did Jesus give to the church? Why were they given?
4. By what are Christians neither to be tossed to and fro nor carried about?
5. What are Christians to speak? How are they to speak it?
6. How do the Gentiles walk?
7. What are Christians to put off? What are they to put on?
8. When a person is angry, what should he not do?
9. What kind of word should never come from the mouth of a Christian? What should he speak?
10. Who is the Christian not to grieve?

Matching

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|-----------------------|--|
| ___ 1. Be endeavoring | A. In all things into Him who is the head—Christ. |
| ___ 2. Be speaking | B. To keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. |
| ___ 3. Be growing up | C. The old man which grows corrupt according to deceitful lusts. |
| ___ 4. Be putting off | D. The new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness. |
| ___ 5. Be putting on | E. The truth in love. |

True - False

- | | | |
|---|---|---|
| T | F | 1. There are many faiths. |
| T | F | 2. Unity of the faith can never be attained. |
| T | F | 3. The Gentiles had their understanding darkened and were alienated from the life of God. |
| T | F | 4. Give no place to the devil. |
| T | F | 5. Let no bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor and evil speaking be put away from you. |

Discussion Question

Is anger always a sin? Tell when it is sinful. Tell when it is not.

Ephesians Chapter Five

Keys to This Chapter

Key Passage: Verses 25-27

“Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her, that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word, that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.”

Key Words

Imitators

Sacrifice

Filthiness

Foolish talking

Coarse jesting

Fornicator

Covetous

Unfruitful

Exposed

Circumspectly

Dissipation

Submit

Sanctify

Key Lesson

Questions on the Text

1. Who are Christians to imitate?
2. In what are Christians to walk? Who is their example as to how to do it?
3. What is not to be “named” among Christians?
4. Who has no inheritance in the kingdom of God and Christ?
5. What will “children of light” seek to find out?
6. With what is the Christian to have no fellowship?
7. Rather than being unwise, what should the Christian do?
8. Instead of being drunk with wine, with what should the Christian be filled?
9. What is the Christian to sing?
10. To whom are wives to submit? Why?
11. According to verse 25, how are husbands to love their wives?
12. Why did Christ give Himself for the church?
13. According to verse 28, how are husbands to love their wives?
14. What does verse 31 teach about the marriage relationship?
15. According to verse 33, what is a husband to do for his wife? What is a wife to do for her husband?

True - False

- T F 1. Christ gave Himself for us as an offering and sacrifice to God.
T F 2. The wrath of God comes upon the sons of obedience.
T F 3. The fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness and truth.
T F 4. Christians must redeem the time because the days are good.
T F 5. Christians are to play the piano in worship to God.

Discussion Question

Verse 17 says, “Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.” How can a person understand what the will of the Lord is?

Ephesians Chapter Six

Keys to This Chapter

Key Passage: Verses 10-11

“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”

Key People

Tychicus

Key Words

Admonition

Eyeservice

Goodwill

Armor

Supplication

Utterance

Ambassador

Sincerity

Key Lesson

Questions on the Text

1. Why should children obey their parents? What else are they to do with respect to their parents?
2. What are fathers not to do to their children? What are they to do for them?
3. What are bondservants to do in relation to their masters?
4. How are masters to treat their servants?”
5. According to verse 11, what is the Christian to put on?
6. List the various parts of the whole armor of God?
7. According to verse 11, why should the Christian put on the whole armor of God?
8. According to verse 13, why should the Christian put on the whole armor of God?
9. What request did Paul want them to make in their prayers for him?
10. Why had Paul sent Tychicus to them

Matching

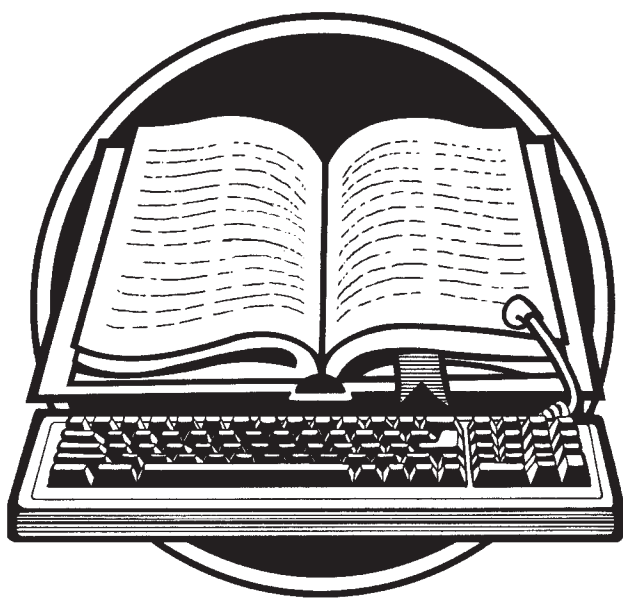
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|----------------------------|--|
| ___ 1. Waist | A. Faith. |
| ___ 2. Breastplate | B. Salvation. |
| ___ 3. Shoes | C. The word of God. |
| ___ 4. Helmet | D. Truth. |
| ___ 5. Sword of the Spirit | E. Righteousness. |
| ___ 6. Shield | F. Preparation of the gospel of peace. |

True - False

- T F 1. Children who obey their parents may live long on the earth.
- T F 2. Bondservants should be eyepleasers.
- T F 3. Whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord.
- T F 4. Our wrestling as Christians is against flesh and blood.

Discussion Question

Who is the wicked one? What does it mean “to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one?”



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