

**STUDIES IN**

**EPHESIANS**

Prepared by

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## **LESSON #1: EPHESIANS: INTRODUCTION AND OVERVIEW**

### **Time and Place of Writing**

Ephesians was written while Paul was in prison in Rome. It was sent, along with the letters to the Colossians and Philemon, by Tychicus (Eph. 6:20-22).

### **Information Concerning the Church in Ephesus**

Paul briefly visited Ephesus while on his second preaching tour, leaving Aquila and Priscilla (Acts 18:19-21). He returned and remained for three years (Acts 19). The church in its early days was characterized by (1) sound and effective preaching - Acts 18:24-28; 19:10, (2) great miracles - Acts 19:11-17, (3) sacrifice - Acts 19:18-20, and (4) persecution - Acts 19:21-41. Toward the close of his third preaching tour, Paul called for the elders of the church at Ephesus to meet him at Miletus, where he reminded them of his work in their midst and warned them of coming false teachers - Acts 20:17-38.

Many years later the Lord wrote the church through the apostle John (Rev. 2:1-7), indicating that they had been faithful in resisting false teachers, but that they had left their first love and were in danger of having their candlestick removed from its place.

### **General Observations Concerning the Letter**

1. Although Paul had spent much time with the Ephesian Christians, he makes no personal remarks in this letter as he does in other letters.
2. Many similar expressions are found in Ephesians and Colossians, but the two letters deal with different themes: Ephesians focusing upon **the church** and Colossians focusing upon **the supremacy of Christ**. Colossians pictures Christ as the “fullness of God (deity)” (Col. 1:18-19; 2:9), while Ephesians pictures the church as the “fullness of Christ” (Eph. 1:22-23).
3. The letter can easily be divided into two main sections: (1) the doctrinal - chapters 1-3; (2) the practical - chapters 4-6. Other books of the New Testament (Colossians, Romans, Hebrews) are similarly divided.

### ***Answer the following questions from the above material***

1. Who delivered the letter to the Ephesians?
2. What other two letters did he deliver?

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3. Would you categorize the church at Ephesus as one that went from strength to greater strength or as one that went from strength to weakness?

Explain.

4. Colossians pictures Christ as the \_\_\_\_\_, while Ephesians pictures the church as the \_\_\_\_\_.
5. Into what two main sections can the book of Ephesians be divided?

### **Understanding Expressions Found In Ephesians**

*Note: Those who are just beginning their study of the Bible might find the following questions quite difficult. Answer as you are able, then make further notes in class.*

1. The term “heavenly places” is found only in the book of Ephesians. Find the five verses where this expression is found.

Show from Eph. 6:12 that the expression cannot refer to heaven itself.

2. The term “principalities and powers” is found on several occasions in Ephesians (1:21; 3:10; 6:12). Considering these verses, what do you think the term means?
3. Ephesians 1:5 refers to the people of God as being “predestinated”. Using a dictionary, find the meaning of the word “predestinate.”
4. Because of the word “predestinated” some have concluded that God before the foundation of the world determined specifically who would be saved and that if one is not of that number he can do nothing to be saved; that it was all a matter of God’s choice. How would you answer someone who had this belief?
5. The word “church” in the Bible is sometimes used in the “universal” sense, referring to all God’s faithful people, whenever or wherever they might have lived. At other times it is used in the “local” sense, referring to an organized body of Christians in some specific locality. The word “church” is found many times in Ephesians (1:22; 3:10; 3:21; 5: 23, 24, 25, 27, 29, 32). In which of the two senses mentioned above is the word “church” used in the book of Ephesians?

## **LESSON #2: GOD’S PEOPLE – THOSE WHO HAVE ALL SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS**

*Answer the following questions from Ephesians 1:1-14*

1. To whom is this letter addressed according to verse 1?
2. From whom do all spiritual blessings come?  
Where do we receive them? verse 3.
3. Consider verses 4-5. What goals or purposes did God have for us as He chose and predestinated us?
4. One of the spiritual blessings we have in Christ is redemption through Christ’s blood, according to verse 7. What does the word “redemption” mean?
5. What great spiritual blessing is mentioned in verse 9?

**Thought Question:** How can we in our day have access to this?

6. Consider verse 10. What did God purpose to bring together in Christ?
7. What spiritual blessing is mentioned in verse 11?
8. **Thought Question:** The writer changes at verse 13 from the pronoun “we” and “us” (observe verses 1-12) to “you.” Who do you think is referred to by “we”; who by “us”?
9. Consider verse 14. What is the meaning of the word “guarantee” or “earnest”?

What is that guarantee?

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10. According to what were all these blessings given as stated in verses 5, 7, 9, and 11?

11. All was done to \_\_\_\_\_, according to verses 6, 12, and 14.

12. Those who receive these blessings make up the Lord's \_\_\_\_\_.

### **LESSON #3: GOD'S PEOPLE – SITTING WITH CHRIST**

*Answer the following questions from Ephesians 1:15-2:10*

1. Consider verses 15-19. List three things that Paul prayed that the Ephesians would know.
2. Where is Christ now according to verse 20?
3. How is His exalted state described in verses 21-23?
4. What is said of Christ's church in verses 22-23?
5. Look back over verses 20-23. How did Christ come to be in this exalted state **according to these verses?**
6. What is the Christian's present state according to Eph. 2:1, 4-6?

What was their former state according to these same verses?

7. How did the Christian come to be in this exalted state according to these same verses?
8. In what realm does Christ sit at the right hand of God according to 1:20?

In what realm does the Christian sit with Christ and all the redeemed according to 2:6?

9. What was true of the Christian's former conduct according to 2:2-3?

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10. Why would God enable such a person to reach the exalted state mentioned above, according to 2:7?

11. How does one's salvation come about, according to 2:8-9?

12. The person so saved is the workmanship of \_\_\_\_\_. Verse 10.

13. Ephesians 2:6 speaks of Christians as those who have been raised together with Christ. Consider Colossians 2:12. Where were they raised (risen) with Christ?

14. These people who sit together with Christ in the heavenly places are Christ's.  
\_\_\_\_\_.

## **LESSON #4: GOD'S PEOPLE – UNITED IN CHRIST**

*Answer the following questions from Ephesians 2:11-22*

1. To whom were these verses specifically addressed, to Jews or Gentiles?
2. What was the former state of the Gentiles, according to verse 12?
3. What is their present state according to verse 13?
4. What has happened to Jew-Gentile relationships in Christ, according to verses 14-16?
5. How did this take place according to these same verses?
6. What was the middle wall of division (partition) that separated Jew from Gentile?
7. Rather than being strangers and foreigners, Gentiles in Christ enjoy what two relationships, according to verse 19?
8. What type of building are they now a part of, according to verses 20-22?  
Upon what foundation is this building built?
9. Verse 22 contains a definition of the word “temple.” What is that definition?
10. **Special challenge:** Find other scriptures that teach that the law of Moses is no longer in effect as authority in religion. Name some practices that would have ended with the passing of the law.



11. This household of God, made up of both Jews and Gentiles, is Christ's  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**LESSON #5: GOD’S PEOPLE – A DEMONSTRATION OF HIS WISDOM**

*Answer the following questions from Ephesians 3:1-13*

1. How had Paul come to know the mystery of the gospel, according to verses 1-4?
2. How could the Ephesians (and we) come to know it according to the same verses?
3. To whom had that message been revealed according to verse 5?

By whom?

4. **Research Question:** Find the meaning of the word “mystery” as it is used in the New Testament.
5. What is one of the primary themes of the mystery according to verse 6?
6. What wonderful privilege had been given to Paul according to verses.8-9?
7. What is made known by the church according to verse 10?

To whom?

8. **Thought Question:** Referring back to Lesson #1, state who “principalities and powers” are.

How can principalities and powers see God’s wisdom by the church?

9. What is said in verse 11 about God’s purpose along these lines?
10. There are those who say that the scriptures cannot be understood. Find evidence in verses 1-13 that this is false.

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11. Find evidence in these same verses that all Christians in the first century did not receive direct guidance of the Holy Spirit.

12. These people who stand as a demonstration of God's wisdom are Christ's  
\_\_\_\_\_.

## **LESSON #6: GOD'S PEOPLE – HIS FAMILY**

*Answer the following questions from Ephesians 3:14-21*

1. From whom does God's family receive its name, according to verses 14-15?
2. **Thought Question:** God's family is found both in heaven and earth, according to verse 15. Who are these who make up this family?
3. Consider Paul's prayer in verses 14-19. Is Paul praying for the Ephesians' physical well-being or for their spiritual well-being?

**Thought Question:** Is it wrong to pray for the physical well-being of others?

4. What is Paul's desire for them, according to verses 16-17?
5. What four dimensions of the love of Christ did Paul want them to comprehend?
6. **Question For Discussion:** How could the Ephesians (and we) "know" that which "passes knowledge" as suggested in verse 19?
7. Read again Paul's prayer in verses 14-19. Who would bring the Ephesians to this state of spiritual strength?

What two verses in the prayer state this?

8. **Thought Question:** Does this mean that the Ephesians (and we) have nothing to do in order to reach this spiritual strength - that God does it all while they (we) remain inactive?

Discuss this.

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9. To what degree is God able to bring us to spiritual strength according to verse 20?
  
10. To whom must the glory be given?
  
11. God's family, being brought back through His power to greater and greater spiritual strength, is Christ's \_\_\_\_\_.

## **LESSON #7: GOD'S PEOPLE – REACHING TOWARD SPIRITUAL MATURITY**

*Answer the following questions from Ephesians 4:1-16*

1. Look back to Eph. 3:1. Observe that the verse ends with a dash. This indicates that Paul is leaving his thought temporarily, and he does not come back to it until 4:1. Consider 3:1 and 4:1 together. Whom is Paul addressing as he returns to his thought in 4:1, Jews or Gentiles?
2. What kind of walk was to characterize the Ephesian Gentiles?
3. What unity of the Spirit had been discussed in the verses just before chapter 3?
4. Why was it important to maintain this unity, according to 4:4-6?
5. What gifts were given by our Lord when He ascended on high, according to verse 11?
6. The word “pastors”, found only in Eph. 4:11, is synonymous with the word “shepherds”. Who are the shepherds of the local church, according to 1 Peter 5:1-4.
7. What purpose was to be fulfilled through these gifts, according to verse 12?
8. What is the goal to be achieved, according to verse 13?
9. What is characteristic of those who are spiritually immature, according to verse 14?
10. Who stands as the ultimate object of our goal, according to verse 15?
11. Read carefully verse 16. Summarizing, state how the church is brought to spiritual maturity and strength.

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12. Who is the true source of this strength, according to verses 15-16?

13. This maturing body of Christians is the Lord's \_\_\_\_\_.

**LESSON #8: GOD’S PEOPLE – MORALS THAT MAKE THEM DIFFERENT**

*Answer the following questions from Ephesians 4:17-32*

1. Describe the conduct of the Gentiles generally as pictured in verses 17-19.
2. True Christians have put off the \_\_\_\_\_ and have put on the \_\_\_\_\_ according to verses 20-24.
3. How is the new man described in verse 24?
4. **Thought Question:** How much of one’s lying is he to put away?  
Does this include “little white lies”?
5. Is all anger sin?  
What instructions are given concerning anger in verse 26?
6. **Thought Question:** What sins can easily result from anger?
7. There are three major divisions in verse 28. State these.
8. What is not to proceed from our mouths?  
What should come from them?
9. **Thought Question:** Can one grieve the Holy Spirit today?  
If so, how?



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10. What change in disposition should take place as one matures in Christ, according to verses 31-32?

11. Look back over the titles of lessons #2 - #6. Why should we be this kind of people?

12. Those people, saved by God's grace, sitting with Christ in the heavenly places, maturing as God works in them, and maintaining these morals in their lives are Christ's

\_\_\_\_\_.

**LESSON #9: GOD’S PEOPLE – THE WALK THAT MAKES THEM DIFFERENT**

*Answer the following questions from Ephesians 5:1-21*

1. Glancing through these 21 verses, state the three things that are said concerning how Christians are to walk.
2. Considering these things, what do you think is meant by the term “walk”?
3. List six things that are not to be named among Christians, found in verses 3-4.

What is meant by the phrase “not to be named”?

4. Why should these things not be named among Christians, according to verse 5-7?
5. What differences should be seen in a Christian’s actions toward light and darkness, according to verses 8-12?
6. What do you think the scriptures mean when they say to “walk circumspectly”?

When they say to “redeem the time”?

7. Can one today be “filled with the Spirit”?

Does the expression necessarily imply miraculous manifestations?

Discuss this.

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8. What two things are to flow from a heart that is filled with the Spirit, according to verses 19-20?
  
9. In what way is one to make melody?
  
10. **Thought Question:** What would be the actions of Christians who are “submitting to one another” (verse 21)?
  
11. Find evidence in these verses that one can understand God’s will.
  
12. These people who are walking as they are instructed in this passage are Christ’s  
\_\_\_\_\_.

## **LESSON #10: GOD'S PEOPLE – CHRIST'S BRIDE**

*Answer the following questions from Ephesians 5:22-33*

1. Consider verses 22-24. How is the relationship of husband and wife compared to the relationship of Christ and His church?
2. **Thought Question:** Verse 25 states that husbands are to love their wives. How will love affect the husband's actions as the head of his wife?
3. To what degree is a husband to love his wife according to verse 25?
4. Consider verses 26-27. Describe the bride that Jesus wants as pictured in these verses.
5. What did He have to do in order to have this kind of bride?
6. How are a husband's actions toward his wife to be like Christ's actions toward His church as described in verses 28-29?
7. What further comparison is given in verses 30-31?
8. While Paul is writing concerning Christ and His church, what lessons are husbands and wives to learn from this teaching, as stated in verse 33?

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9. **Research Question:** Describe the body of which Christ is the Savior (verse 23). Especially consider Eph. 1:22-23; 2:14-16; 4:4.
  
10. **Thought Question:** What is meant by the expression, “with the washing of water by the word,” found in verse 26?
  
11. This bride of Christ, sanctified and cleansed, to be presented without spot or wrinkle or blemish, is Christ’s \_\_\_\_\_.

## **LESSON #11: GOD'S PEOPLE – EQUIPPED FOR BATTLE**

*Answer the following questions from Ephesians, chapter 6*

1. What instructions are given to children in verses 1-2?
2. What are fathers not to do according to verse 4?  
What are they to do ?
3. Consider verses 5-8. What is to be a servant's greatest concern as he serves his master?
4. What must a master remember as he deals with his servants, according to verse 9?
5. In what way will a Christian be able to stand against the wiles of the devil, according to verses 10-11?

What does the word "wiles" mean?

Discuss this aspect of the devil's work.

6. Why is it so important that the Christian find his strength and protection in that which the Lord provides rather than in himself, according to verse 12?
7. The Christian's girdle is \_\_\_\_\_, breastplate is \_\_\_\_\_, shoes are \_\_\_\_\_, shield is \_\_\_\_\_, helmet is \_\_\_\_\_, sword is \_\_\_\_\_.
8. While putting on his armor is important, what other things must he do if he is to survive the battle, according to verses 14 and 18?

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9. Think over each piece of armor that is listed. Is there any piece that can be left off without endangering oneself?

Discuss this.

10. For what did Paul ask the Ephesians to pray in verses 19-20?

11. Looking back over the lessons we have studied, write a short paragraph describing Christ's church.