

New Testament Foundations: Session Fifteen

Ephesians: The Queen of the Epistles

Authorship

1. Ephesians was written during Paul's first imprisonment at Rome, between 60-62 AD.
2. It was probably written as a circular letter sent first to the capital city of Ephesus and then distributed to the churches of Asia Minor.
3. Ephesus was a huge metropolis, the fourth largest city in the Roman empire. It was the Asian center for the worship of Diana/Artemis, and its temple was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world.
4. The structure of the letter follows a pattern that is normal with Paul: doctrine then application.

Themes

1. The first theme of Ephesians is the exalted Christ.
 - In Ephesians, Paul celebrates the person of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:19-23

These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fulness of Him who fills all in all.

- In Ephesians, Paul celebrates the work of Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:7

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace.

Ephesians 2:13

But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.

- In Ephesians, Paul celebrates the believer's position in Christ.

Ephesians 1:3

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

Ephesians 3:12

In Him and through faith in Him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.

2. The second theme of Ephesians is the glorious church.
 - Ephesians tells us more about the Church than any other letter.

DESCRIPTION	TEXT
The Fullness of Christ	1:22, 23
God's Workmanship	2:10
One New Man	2:15
The Household of God	2:19
The Temple of God	2:21
The Expression of God's Manifold Wisdom	3:10
The Stature of Christ	4:12, 13
The Bride of Christ	5:23-32
The Object of Christ's Love	5:25
The Members of Christ's Body	5:30
God's Warrior	6:11-18

Ephesians 2:19-22

So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

3. The third theme of Ephesians is God's eternal plan.

Ephesians 1:4; 9, 10

For he chose us in Him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in His sight. He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him with a view to an administration suitable to the fulness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth.

Ephesians 3:10-11

His intention was that now, through the Church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms, according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.

4. The fourth theme of Ephesians is grace.

Ephesians 2:4-8

*But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ—by **grace** you have been saved—and raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his **grace** in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. For by **grace** you have been saved through faith.*

5. The fifth theme of Ephesians is love.

Ephesians 5:1-2

Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children. And walk in love, as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us, a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

6. The sixth theme of Ephesians is "mystery."

Ephesians 1:9

And He made known to us the mystery of His will according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Christ,

- What we could never understand on our own God has revealed to us in Christ. This book emphasizes the "divine disclosure."

Ephesians 1:18, 19

I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know...