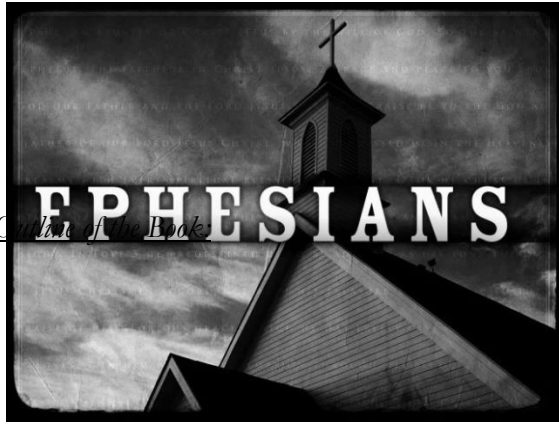


# Reading Through the New Testament

## Paul's Letter to the Ephesians



### Outline

#### **I. Doctrine: Riches in Christ (1-3)**

- Spiritual Possessions (1:4-14)
- Prayer for Enlightenment (1:15-23)
- The Believer's Position (2:1-22)
- Prayer for Strength (3:1-21)

#### **II. Duty: Responsibility to Christ (4-6)**

- Walk in Unity (4:1-16)
- Walk in Purity (4:17-5:17)
- Walk in Harmony (5:18-6:9)
- Walk in Victory (6:10-24)

### Background to the Letter

- Ephesus was a large sea port, sometimes called the “mother city of Asia” (modern Turkey)
- The famous temple of Artemis, in Ephesus, was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world
- Paul briefly visited the city in Acts 18:18-19, during his second missionary journey
- On his third missionary journey, the apostle spent more than three years with the church and enjoyed a very effective ministry, Acts 19
- Timothy would later remain in Ephesus to serve the church for some time (1 Tim. 1:3)
- Ephesians was written around 61 AD during Paul's imprisonment in Rome
- Unlike most of his other letters, Paul does not seem to be writing in response to a specific problem or situation in the church
- It is possible this was a “circular letter” addressed to all of the churches of that region
- One of the themes of the letter is the nature of the Church, the Body of Christ

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#### **I. Saved by Grace: (2:1-10)**

1. In what sense were we dead, according to verses 1-3, before coming to know Christ as Savior? Are people aware of the seriousness of our spiritual condition apart from God?

2. Did God wait for humanity to take the first step before reaching out to us in love? Does He tell us to first clean ourselves up, then jump through a bunch of religious hoops, and finally perform a certain number of good deeds... before He will be willing to accept us?

3. How would you define “grace”? If we are saved by grace, how are we NOT saved (v.9)?

4. If salvation is a gift, can we do anything to earn it? Does it depend upon our effort to keep?

5. Faith is the one requirement the Lord sets in place for a person to be saved. What does it mean to trust in the Lord with saving faith?

6. Paul speaks of how God changes us when we enter a relationship with Him through Christ:

- God made us a \_\_\_\_\_ with Christ (v.5)
- God r\_\_\_\_\_ us up with Christ (v.6)
- God has s\_\_\_\_\_ us in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus (v.6)
- God promises to show the r\_\_\_\_\_ of His grace to us in the coming ages (v.7)

7. Do good works have any part in the believer's life (see verse 10)?

## II. The Church

8. Salvation is not merely an individual matter, but when we are saved we are brought into fellowship with God's people. Throughout the letter, Paul uses several images to describe the Church:

- A B\_\_\_\_\_ (1:22-23; 4:16) – Christ is the head and we are the members
- A T\_\_\_\_\_ (2:20-22) – built of the foundation of the apostles, Christ the cornerstone
- A F\_\_\_\_\_ (1:5; 3:14) – in which we are adopted, and are able to call God our Father
- A B\_\_\_\_\_ (5:25-27) – husbands are to love their wives as Christ loves the Church

8. In addition to these metaphors, the apostle shows us that the Church is not simply an upgrade of OT Israel, but is a new creation of God in this present age (2:14-18). How has Christ established peace between believing Jews and Gentiles? Does God show favoritism in the church?

9. Paul also explains that the Church of this dispensation was a m\_\_\_\_\_, never before revealed in other generations (3:4-6). If it was a mystery, hidden in the mind of God, would we expect to read about the church in the Old Testament Scriptures?

10. If the Lord has saved us by grace, given us a place in His family, made us members of His Church, how then should we live? (4:1; 4:17-18; 4:30; 5:15:15-16)