

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

Ephesians 1:1-2

Lesson #1

Introduction

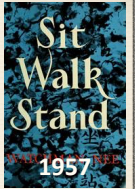
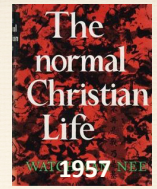
07/23/2017



Watchman Nee

1903-1972

Started the "local church" movement in China. Spent the last 20 years of his life in prison for his faith.



Ephesians

Identity

"sit"
(2:6)

In Action

"walk"
(4:1)

"stand"
(6:11)

Ch. 1-3

**Our Position
before God**

Ch. 4-6

**Our Performance
before the world**

**Our Posture
before Satan**

1

Ephesians 1

"¹ Paul, an apostle **of Christ** Jesus by the will of God, to the saints (*who are **at Ephesus***) and who are faithful **in Christ** Jesus;"

- ✓ **Outside Christ** - those who are spectators, skeptics, or hostile to the faith.
- ✓ **In Christ** - those who are united with Christ through faith. (the term is used 13 times in ch. 1)
- ✓ **Of Christ** - those who are ambassadors for Christ on a mission.

Ephesians challenges those who once were **OUTSIDE** Christ and are now **IN** Christ to join Paul in being **OF** Christ.

2

Identity in **Action**

EPHESIANS

A STUDY THROUGH THE EPISTLE OF EPHESIANS

3

"You are light in the Lord;
walk as children of light."

Eph.5:8

EPHESIANS

A STUDY THROUGH THE EPISTLE OF EPHESIANS

4

How to let
your light
shine.

EPHESIANS

A STUDY THROUGH THE EPISTLE OF EPHESIANS

5

General Introduction

- ✓ *Ephesians*, more than any other letter, gives us a picture of **who Christ is** and **who we are "in Christ"**.
- ✓ *Ephesians* has been called the "**Queen of the Epistles**", "**the divinest composition of man**".
- ✓ This was **John Calvin's** favorite letter.
- ✓ Two thirds of **Colossians** finds a direct parallel in *Ephesians*.

Ephesians & Colossians

Our Wealth

Our Position
Christ's work for us

Ch. 1-3 (1-2)

Our Walk

Our Performance
Christ's work through us

Ch. 4-6 (3-4)

6

Colossians can help us interpret Ephesians.

Ephesians 5

"¹⁸ And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but **be filled with the Spirit**, ¹⁹ speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; ²⁰ always **giving thanks** for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; ²¹ and **be subject** to one another in the fear of Christ."

Colossians 3

"And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in one body; and be thankful. ¹⁶ **Let the word of Christ richly dwell within you, with all wisdom** teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God. ¹⁷ And whatever you do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, **giving thanks** through Him to God the Father. ¹⁸ Wives, **be subject** to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord." 7

General Introduction

- ✓ Of Paul's letters this letter is **distinct** in many ways, causing some to **question Paul's authorship**.
- ✓ **Marcion**, one of the first people to make a collection of Paul's letters in the 2nd century, identifies this letter as the letter to the **Laodiceans**.

Colossians 4:16

"When this letter is read among you, have it also read in the church of the Laodiceans; and you, for your part **read my letter that is coming from Laodicea.**"

8

Ephesians 1

"¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

1. SOLA SCRIPTURA (by Scripture alone)
to the saints (*who are at Ephesus*) and who are faithful in Christ Jesus;

2. SOLA FIDE (by Faith alone)
² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

3. SOLA GRATIA (by Grace alone)

9

Ephesians 1

"¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

1. Paul explains the Gospel of Christ.
to the saints (*who are at Ephesus*) and who are faithful in Christ Jesus;

2. We are "saints" by faith in Christ.
² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

3. The Gospel's light is grace / peace. 10

Ephesians 1

"¹ Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

1.
Paul is the lens through which we understand the Biblical story - the Gospel.

11

Old Testament
Gospels
Epistles

We interpret the Scriptures through lenses.

12

Jesus promised the Apostles that the coming Holy Spirit would bring **more revelation and understanding.**

John 16:13
“But when He, the Spirit of truth, comes, He will guide you into all the truth; . . . and He will disclose to you what is to come.”

Old Testament - Gospels
Old Covenant

Paul's Gospel
Acts - Epistles

13

The Apostles saw the coming of the Holy Spirit as **the beginning of the Gospel community.**

Acts 11:15
“And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us at the beginning.”

Old Testament - Gospels
Old Covenant

Paul's Gospel
Acts - Epistles

14

Paul understood his Gospel to have been a **mystery until his day.**

Ephesians 3:3-5
“that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, . . . which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;”

Old Testament - Gospels
Old Covenant

Paul's Gospel
Acts - Epistles

15

Jesus and Paul

16

Paul's Gospel and Jesus' Gospel

Mark 1
“¹⁴ Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, ¹⁵ and saying, “repent and believe in the gospel.””

What Gospel were they supposed to believe?

1 Corinthians 15
“¹ Now I make known to you, brethren, **the gospel which I preached to you**, which also you received, in which also you stand, ² by which also you are saved, if you hold fast the word which I preached to you, unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you as of **first importance** what I also received, that Christ **died** for our sins according to the Scriptures, ⁴ and that He was buried, and that He was **raised** on the third day according to the Scriptures,” ¹⁷

Romans 16

“²⁵ Now to Him who is able to establish you according to **my gospel** and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of **the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past,** ²⁶ but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, **has been made known to all the nations,** leading to obedience of faith; ²⁷ to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, be the glory forever. Amen.”

18

The New Testament

Old Covenant

Matthew

Mark

Luke

John

The beginning of
Jesus' ministry

a. Paul's Gospel is framed in the wake of the coming of the Spirit at Pentecost.

Acts

Epistles

The continuation of
Jesus' ministry

19

The New Testament

Old Covenant

Matthew

Mark

Luke

John

The beginning of
Jesus' ministry

Acts 11:15

“And as I began to speak, the Holy Spirit fell upon them just as He did upon us **at the beginning.**”

Ephesians

Rev.

Epistles

The continuation of
Jesus' ministry

The conclusion of Jesus' ministry

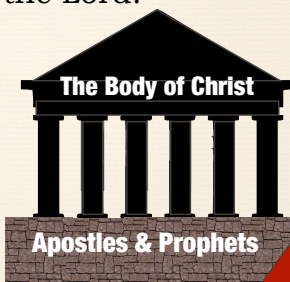
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Ephesians 2:20-21

“having been built on the **foundation** of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the **cornerstone**, in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy **temple** in the Lord.”

In Paul's epistles
the Gospel is made
clear.

Ephesians is like a
cover letter for the
rest of his writings.



Christ
Jesus

21

b. Paul has a record of show and tell.

Pentecost
A.D.30

conversion
A.D.35
silent years
A.D.35-37
trip to Antioch
A.D.43

Paul visits
Ephesus

1st mission
A.D.48-49
2nd mission
A.D.49-51
3rd mission
A.D.52-56

Ephesians written
while in prison

arrest & trial
A.D.56
trip to Rome
A.D.59-60
death
A.D.68

Ministry preparation

11 years Acts 9-12

Traveling missions

11 years Acts 13-21

Prison ministry

11 years Acts 21-28

Chronology of
Paul's ministry

Galatians
1&2 Thess

1&2 Cor.
Romans.

Ephesians
Colossians
Philemon
Philippians

1&2 Tim.
Titus

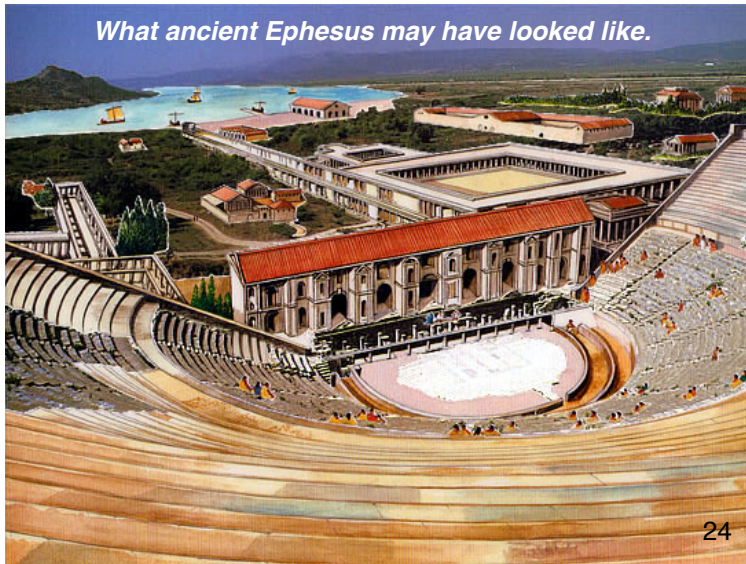
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Paul spent
3 years
in Ephesus

Paul's 2nd mission
Acts 15:36-18:22

23



c. Paul was a chosen Apostle of Christ.

Ephesians 1:1

“Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus **by the will of God,**”

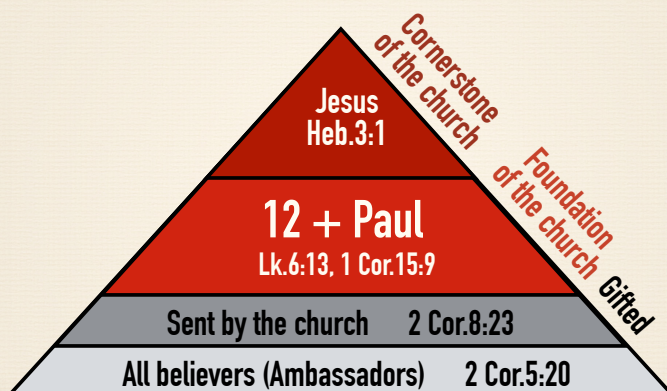
- ✓ Paul describes himself as **chosen by the will of God** (not aspiration, usurpation, or nomination).

The choice (election) of Paul in this context is for **service** (not salvation).

Election to salvation (**predestination**) will come up later in this chapter.

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- ✓ The word “apostle” means **one who is sent**.



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Characteristics of the Foundation Apostles

An eyewitness to the resurrected Jesus

Acts 1:21-22

“Therefore it is necessary that of the men who have accompanied us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us - beginning with the baptism of John until the day that He was taken up from us - one of these must become **a witness with us of His resurrection.**”

1 Corinthians 9:1

“Am I not an apostle? **Have I not seen Jesus our Lord?** Are you not my work in the Lord?”

Signs and wonders

2 Corinthians 12:12

“The **signs of a true apostle were performed among you** with all perseverance, by signs and wonders and miracles.”

Fruitfulness in ministry

1 Corinthians 9:1

“Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? **Are you not my work in the Lord?**”

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Paul's Apostleship

1 Corinthians 15:9

(Paul is included as an apostle)

"For I am the least **of the apostles**, and not fit to be called an apostle, because I persecute the church of God."

2 Peter 3:16 (Paul's authority)

"as also in all his (Paul's) letters, speaking in them of these things, in which are some things hard to understand, which the untaught and unstable distort, as they do also **the rest of the Scriptures**,"

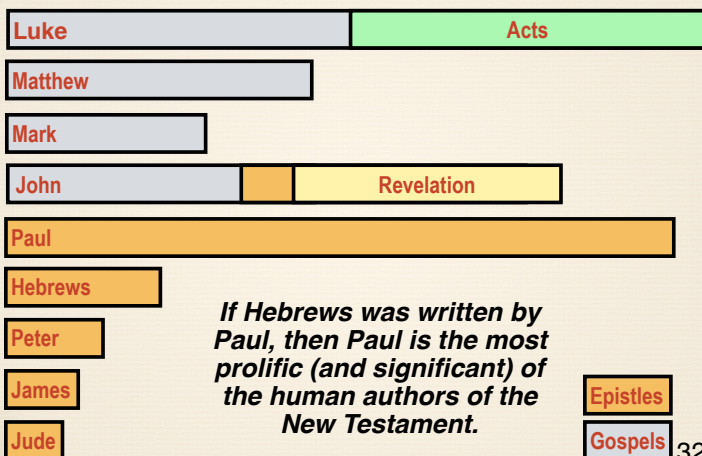
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The Gospels and Paul's letters dominate the New Testament



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Relative length of material by N.T. authors



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Ephesians 1

"...to the **saints** (who are at Ephesus) and who are **faithful** in Christ Jesus;

2.

All believers are "saints" (perfectly holy) imputed with the righteousness of Christ by faith.

Ephesians 2:8

"For by grace you have been saved through faith;"

33

Ephesians 1

"...to the **saints** (who are at Ephesus) and who **are faithful** in Christ Jesus;

✓ **saints** - means **holy, sanctified, set apart**.

He refers to "saints" nine times in this letter (1:1,15, 18; 2:19; 3:8,18; 4:12; 5:3; 6:18).

✓ **are** - not (can be, should be, or will be).
(positional status "in Christ")

✓ **faithful (believers)** - possessing a **living faith** (not to be confused with spiritual perfection).

All who have a living faith in Christ are **SAINTS** with **two homes**: 1. In Christ, 2. In this world.

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Ephesians 1:2

"**Grace** to you and **peace** from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

3.

The Grace of God apart from works of the Law is the source of peace with God and man.

Ephesians 2:8

"For by grace you have been saved through faith;"

35

Ephesians 1:2

“Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.”

- ✓ **grace** - redemption based on the merit of Christ.
- ✓ **peace** - reconciliation with God, self, and others.

שלום **Shalom**

Having a clear **conscience** before God,
in harmony with the deepest **purpose** of God,
and fully human, reflecting the **image** of God.

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Biblical “peace”



Social peace

What Christ does **THROUGH** us as his church.



Psychological peace

What Christ does **IN** us through his Spirit.



Theological peace

What Christ has done **FOR** us at the Cross.

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Ephesians 1

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