**Metadata**

* + Ephesus was the greatest city in the province of Asia. It was founded in by Ionian colonists about 1,100 B.C. It came under control of the Greeks in about 480 B.C., and became a Roman city in 133 B.C.
  + The greatest landmark in the ancient city was the temple of Diana (one of the 7 wonders of the world). 425 feet long, and 220 feet wide, surrounded by 120 columns 60 feet high.
  + Temple a center of immorality. Though tradition had Diana as a virtuous figure, the “priestesses” of the temple were prostitutes.
  + Though the letter was written to the church at Ephesus, it seems Paul intended a wider distribution (cf. 1:1).
  + Paul went through Ephesus at the end of his second tour, preached in the synagogue, and left Aquila and Priscilla there (Acts 18:19-21).
  + Paul returned to Ephesus on this third journey, and remained there for about 3 years (Acts 19; cf. 20:31).
  + Paul’s interest in the church there led him to call for the Ephesian elders for a conference while in Miletus (Acts 20:17-38).
  + Years later, John’s writing (Revelation) revealed a church in decline (Revelation 2:1-7).
  + The style of the letter to the Ephesians is not polemic (as with others of Paul). It is intended as a sweeping statement of God’s eternal purpose, accomplished in Jesus Christ.
  + The book was probably written late in his imprisonment in Rome (62 A.D.?)

**Concise Outline of Book**

*(Adapted from an outline by Colly Caldwell,  
in his Truth commentary on Ephesians)*

1. **Salutation (1:1-2)**
2. **God’s Eternal Purpose in Christ (1:3-3:21)**
   1. Spiritual Blessings in Christ (1:3-14)
   2. Extent of God’s Power and Grace (1:15-23)
   3. God’s plan for our salvation (2:1-10)
   4. All men together in one (2:11-22)
   5. The revelation of the mystery of Christ (3:1-21)
3. **Life in Keeping with God’s Eternal Purpose (4:1-6:24)**
   1. The unity of the Spirit (4:1-16)
   2. The old man and the new man (4:17-32)
   3. Imitating God (5:1-21)
   4. Christ’s relationship to the church compared to our domestic and social relationships (5:22-6:9)
   5. The great battle for the soul (6:10-18)
4. **Benediction: Mutual Prayer for One Another (6:19-24)**

**Paul’s Purpose in Writing [Book]**

* In the epistle to the Ephesians, it was Paul’s intent to reveal and discuss the eternal purpose of God to redeem mankind through His extended grace in Jesus*, “the chief cornerstone.”*

**Chapter Synopsis**

1. God chose (predestined) the redeemed from before the world’s foundation. As such, Paul states that they are forgiven, and heirs of God. He prays that they might understand this mystery revealed.
2. The discussion of the mystery continues, with Paul describing our salvation by grace through faith, secured by a merciful God. This salvation is available to the Gentile, as Christ has broken down the wall between Jew and Gentile in reconciling both to God. As such we all are a holy temple to God, with Christ as the chief cornerstone.
3. Here Paul notes that God had chosen him to share that wonderful mystery to the Gentiles, that they too have the hope for redemption. He received this knowledge by direct revelation from God. The revelation Paul describes as the *“manifold wisdom of God*” and the *“eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.”* He expresses his appreciation to God, *“to Him be the glory”* for the fact that they might be *“filled with all the fullness of God.”*
4. Because of the blessings received in Christ, Paul called the Ephesians to live a consecrated life. In this chapter, he discusses the importance of unity among God’s people, and establishes a platform upon which it can be attained. He pointed out the different positions and gifts given to all Christians, to equip them to edify one another, and grow spiritually. He likens the relationship to a physical body, with Christ as its head. He calls them to put off sinful practices, and live a holy and sanctified life. He is very specific in what should be avoided, that they might not *“grieve the Holy Spirit of God.”*
5. In this chapter Paul’s instructions for a holy life continues, with his call for them to walk in love, walk in light, and walk in wisdom. Sinful lusts are to be put off, replaced by things such as the giving of thanks, exposing of evil, singing of spiritual songs, and submitting to one another. A wonderful explanation of the husband/wife relationship is given as it is compared to Christ’s relationship with His church.
6. In this chapter, Paul gives specific instructions to parents and their children, and to bondservants and their masters. He then uses the image of a soldier to express the importance of resisting the onslaught of the Devil. The *“armor of God”* is described, which includes truth, righteousness, the gospel of peace, faith, salvation and the word of God. He calls upon them to pray for one another, and for him as well, that he might remain a bold proclaimer of the gospel of Christ. Paul then ends his letter with a final, short benediction.

**Suggested Memory Work**

**(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.”*

**(1:7),** *“In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.”*

**(1:11-12),** *“In Him also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will, 12 that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.”*

**(1:22-23),** *“And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”*

**(2:8-9),** *“For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, 9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.”*

**(2:13),** *“But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.”*

**(4:1),** *“I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called.”*

**(4:4-6),** *“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism; 6 one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.”*

**(4:11-12),** *“And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ.”*

**(4:31-32),** *“Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.”*

**(5:6-7),** *“Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. 7 Therefore do not be partakers with them.”*

**(5:8),** *“For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light.”*

**(5:11),** *“And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.”*

**(5:15-16),** *“See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise, 16 redeeming the time, because the days are evil.”*

**(5:18-19),** *“And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord.”*

**(5:22),** *“Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.”*

**(5:25),** “Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her.”

**(6:4),** *“And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.”*

**(6:10-11),** *“Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might. 11 Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.”*

**Note:** Other, longer passages are also very worthy of memorization, but not included here for lack of space.

**Difficult Passages**

* What is Paul’s meaning when he writes that God has *“predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself”*? (1:5,11)
* What does it mean to be *“sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise”*? (1:13)
* What is meant by the phrase, *“by nature children of wrath”* (2:3)
* Explain Christ as *“chief cornerstone”* in a *“holy temple to the Lord”* (2:20-21)
* In what way are *we “a dwelling place of God in the Spirit”*? (2:22)
* What was the *“dispensation of the grace of God”* given to Paul? (3:2,8)
* Explain the phrase *“fellowship of the mystery”* (3:9)
* Explain the intent of God regarding the church in the unfolding of His plan to redeem (3:10-12)
* Explain the phrase, *“to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man”* (3:16)
* Using the context, explain *“to each one of us grace was given”* (4:7)
* Explain the phrase, *“do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed”* (4:30)
* Explain the phrase, *“Therefore be imitators of God”* (5:1)
* Explain the phrase*, “it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.”* (5:12)
* Explain the phrase *“making melody in your heart”* (5:19)

**Doctrinal Considerations**

* **God’s Plan for Redeeming Man (1:1-14, 18-23; 2:1-10; 3:1-21)**
* Salvation is to be found in Christ alone (1:3,7-13; 3:20-21)
* We are adopted into the family of God (1:5)
* Christ is the head of the one Body (1:22-23; 4:4)
* **Gentiles are included in God’s plan for redeeming man (2:11-22; 3:1-13)**
* The Love of God & its impact on our redemption (2:4-7)
* **Salvation by Grace through Faith (2:8-10)**
* **The foundation of Christian Unity (4:1-6)**
* Conversion requires transformation (4:17-24)
* Christian Walk - *Love, Light, Wisdom* (5:1-20)
* Singing as Worship (Ephesians 5:18-21)
* **The Husband/Wife relationship (as illustrated by Christ and the church) (5:22-33)**
* The Armor of God (6:10-20)

**Practical Considerations**

* It is beneficial to pray on behalf of others (1:15-21)
* Consider the import of Paul’s words, *“when you read, you may understand”* (3:4)
* A worthy walk, to those called, requires lowliness, gentleness, longsuffering, love (4:1)
* Note the purpose of the Christ-given offices in the church (4:11-16). Name the benefits Christians obtain through them.
* Evil actions must be put off, and replaced with a righteous, kind, tender, forgiving heart (4:25-32)
* Our walk of love must mimic Christ’s love for us (5:2)
* Immoral people have no inheritance from God (5:3-7). Heed the warning! (5:7)!
* We must not fellowship the *“unfruitful works of darkness”* (5:11)
* The truly wise are wise because they understand the will of the Lord (5:17)
* Wives are to submit to their husbands (5:22-24)
* Husbands are to love their wives (5:25-31, 33)
* Children are to obey their parents (6:1-3)
* Fathers are to instruct their children in the way of righteousness (6:4)
* Bondservants (Employees?) are to obey their masters (Employers?) (6:5-8)
* Masters are to treat their servants well (6:9)
* Explain how each component of God’s armor can protect us against Satan (6:10-17)
* Pray supplications for the saints (6:18)
* Pray for those who preach the gospel (6:19-20)

**Questions to Consider**

* How do you explain Paul’s self-designations? (1:1; 3:1,7,8)
* How & why does Christ’s blood redeem us? (1:7)
* Who is *“the Beloved”*? (1:6)
* What does Paul mean in referring to the *“fullness of times”*? (1:10)
* What does Paul mean when he says we are *“His* [God’s] *workmanship”*? (2:10)
* What is the *“middle wall of separation”*? And why and what does it separate? (2:14)
* What is the significance of the words *“broken down”* (2:14); *“abolished”* (2:15); and *“putting to death”*? (2:16)
* What does Paul mean when he uses the word *“revelation”*? (3:3,5)
* Consider Paul’s reaction to God’s providential work (3:14-21). How might we cultivate the same regard for our blessings in Christ?
* How can we avoid being misled by false teachers? (4:11-16)
* What does it mean to be a *“perfect man”?* (4:13)
* Why does Paul call sinful actions the walk of the Gentiles? (4:17; cf. 1 Peter 4:1-6)
* What is a circumspect walk? (5:15)
* How can a Christian redeem the time? (5:16)
* What does it mean to submit yourselves to one another? (5:21)
* What are the truths about the relationship between Christ and the church revealed in (5:22-33)?
* What does *“which is the first commandment with promise” mean?* (6:3)
* How can fathers avoid provoking their children to wrath? (6:4)

**Student Questions**

*(Use the rest of this page to prepare questions and comments for class discussion. Since this is not a “verse by verse” study, make sure that all your questions concerning the text are answered).*