

10/4/98

Intro. To Ephesians

Tonight we want to begin our study of Ephesians with an introduction to the epistle in order that we may better understand the relationship between the man Paul, the Ephesians and the content of the letter.

As we examine it's parts we will be better able to see their relationship to the whole of the epistle, as well as the progression in thought of the letter.

Ephesians has been called:

1. "The Queen of the epistles".
2. "The divinest composition of man".
3. "God's highest and best".
4. C. H. Dodd called it "The crown of Paulinism".

The church of Ephesus had the best of Pastors, beginning with Paul, then Timothy and last John the beloved, yet by the time John wrote his Revelation, Jesus had many things to commend them but He had one thing against Ephesus, she had left her first love! Rev. 2:4

Let's begin our study by looking at the city itself!

I. The City of Ephesus.

- A. The city had a prominent influence.
 1. The city of Perganum was the capital of proconsular Asia but Ephesus was recognized because of location and influence.
 2. The city was located bout 300 miles dew east of Corinth.
 3. The important of the city was due to it's location in the western coast of Asia Minor, in a plain at the mouth of the River Cayster, now Asiatic Turkey.
 4. The city was situated between mountain range and the sea and served as an export center for caravans and landing port for Rome.
 5. The city had a road from it's harbor to the city 70 feet wide that was lined with columns.
 6. The city rated commercially with Antioch and Alexandria, as a trade centers of the eastern Mediterranean.
 7. The harbor had a problem with silting and in Paul's days, at which time the city was about three miles from the sea.
 - * I visited the city in 1985 and the harbor is no longer negotiable.
 8. The city was one of luxury and the latest of the day, having theaters, baths, libraries, agora, marble paved streets and even running water in some of the wealthy homes.

9. Due to being recognized as the capital by virtue of its location, they were permitted to administer its own affairs through courts, senate and popular assembly.
10. Two officials are mentioned in the riot at Ephesus.
 - a. The chief official responsible for maintaining religious order. Acts 19:31
 - b. The town clerk, civil official responsible for illegal assemblies, believed to be president of Senate. Acts 19.35

B. The city had a religious temple.

1. The temple was of the Famous goddess Diana, about a mile and a half north east of the city?
2. The original settlement and worship was of Anatolian, the fertility goddess, then it took a Greek name, Artemis or Diana.
3. The figure maintained its characteristics of a many breasted statue, who the people claimed to have fallen from Zeus Jupiter. Acts 19:35
4. The goddess Diana was not only worship but had a treasure house, museum and a refuge city for all, while within.
5. Consequently a village sprung up about the temple of criminals.

6. The worship of Diana made the artisans prospered by the manufacture of idols.
7. On January 1, 1870, after 6 years and \$80,000, almost by accident Mr. J. T. Wood from the British Museum, found the Temple foundation.
 - * The find revealed a flight of ten steps, 425 feet long by 220 feet wide and 127 pillars which supported the roof of colonnade of 60 feet high.
8. In 56 B.C. the temple was burned, one of seven times, the same night Alexander the Great was born.
9. Alexander offered to rebuild it at his expense, if he could inscribe his name upon its portals.
10. They refused saying that it was not fitting for one god to build a temple to another god.
11. They built it themselves, which took 220 years for its final completion and remained till 260-2 A.D., when it was destroyed by the Goths. (Paul saw it)
12. North of temple was the stadium where beast would fight each other as well as men and beast. I Cor. 15:32
 - * Possibly Paul saw and related it to the spiritual battle in Ephesus.

C. The city had a Church.

1. The church had its origin in the mind and will of God
2. Paul the apostle in his second missionary journey was forbidden by Holy Spirit to preach the word in Asia Minor. Acts 16:6
3. Then at Troas he received a vision from a man of Macedonia, declaring to come over and help them, so he and went. Acts 16:7-9
4. Paul then continued through many cities till he came to Ephesus. Acts 17-18
 - a. Paul went to Lystra and took Timothy as his disciple.
 - b. Then he and Silas went to at Philippi where they were imprisoned for casting out a demon from a girl and the jailer and his family were saved.
 - c. Leaving Philippi they came to Thessalonica where the Jews from the synagogue raise up evil men to persecute them.
 - d The brethren then sent Paul and Silas by night to Berean, only to be persecuted again, escorting Paul to Athens while Timothy and Silas remained.
 - e. The apostle them preached to the Epicurean and Stoic philosophers, only to be mocked but few believed.
 - f. Paul then left and came to Corinth and met Priscilla and Aquila, who had

- been expelled from Rome for being Jews by Claudius. Acts 18
- g. Silas and Timothy met Paul at Corinth and the Lord appeared to Paul and told him not to fear of any hurt for He had many people in the city.
 - h. Returning to Jerusalem Paul stopped at Ephesus with Priscilla and Aquila and leaving them there, he was asked to stay longer but refuse, telling them if god willed it, he would return.
5. Paul landed in Caesarea, kept the feast at Jerusalem and then went up to the church at Antioch, then after a while returned to strengthen the brethren in the region of Galatia and Phrygia, this was his third missionary journey.
 6. Meanwhile Aquila and Priscilla confronted Apollos at Ephesus about the baptism of John he was preaching and pointed him to Christ. Acts 18:24-28
 7. Paul then arrived at Paul and stayed for two years. Acts 19:8-10
 - * A total 3 years. 20:31
 - a. He taught for three months in synagogue, reasoning and persuading concerning the things of the Kingdom of God. Acts 19:8
 - b. speaking evil of the way, he removed himself and taught two years in the school of Tyrannus and all in Asia

- heard the word of the Lord Jesus both Jew and Gentile. Acts 19:9-10
- c. Paul was at Ephesus when he received letter from Corinth and called it an effectual door with many adversaries. I Cor. 16:8-9
 - d. The city had many who were engaged in the magical arts and the occults Acts 19:13-14, 19
 - e. Paul's ministry had affected the religious and commercial status of Ephesus and a riot broke out that nearly cost him his life, at which time he departed to Macedonia. Acts 19:21-20:1
 - f. His last meeting was with the Ephesian elders, which he laid out to the principles of ministry and the witness of his own integrity while with them. Acts 20:17-38
8. Many churches sprung forth from Paul's ministry at Ephesus, Colosse, Hierapolis Laodicea and others, in fact the seven churches of Revelation are believed to be directly or indirectly related to him.
9. After Paul's release from his Roman imprisonment he left Timothy as the Pastor of Ephesus and exhorted him to continue at Ephesus and to charge some to teach no other, apart from Christ 1 Tim. 1:3

10. The church of Ephesus, despite of the great Pastors, Paul, Timothy and John the beloved, was castigated for leaving its first love. Rev. 2:1, 4
- * That will be the first step that leads to the go astray from God, "You've left your first love".

This was the City of Ephesus!

II. The authenticity of Ephesians.

- A. The traditional view is that Paul is the author of the letter.
 1. The internal evidence would seem to support this.
 - a. Paul mentions his name two times. Eph. 1:1a, 3:1b
 - b. Paul alludes to his conversion and imparting of the gospel, the mystery of Christ. Eph. 3:2-6
 - c. Paul called himself a minister of the gospel according to the grace given. Eph. 3: 7
 - d. Paul calls himself a prisoner of Jesus Christ in tribulation for the church, at Rome. Eph. 4:1, 13
 - e. Paul calls himself an ambassador in chains. Eph. 6:20
 - f. Paul uses the first person singular.
 2. The external evidence.

- a. Clement of Rome reflected it's language when he wrote to Corinth in 95 A.D.
 - b. Ignatius of Antioch gave witness to it. 115 A.D.
 - c. Polycarp of Smyrna also. 130 A.D.
 - d. Marcion the heretic acknowledged it in his list of ten Pauline epistles yet he placed the name of "Laodicea", due to Colossians. 140 A.D. Col. 4:16
 - e. Tertullian of Carthage took Marcion to task for such corruption of Paul's letter to the Ephesians. 193-216 A.D.
 - f. Moratorium Canon lists it 180 A.D.
 - g. Eusebius of Caesarea, the doyen of church historians, claims to have investigated all the sources available to him in order to discover what Christian writers in each period had said about the canonical and acknowledged books. He reports that the fourteen epistles of Paul, he had classified them as "divine writings" and unquestionable. H.E.3.3.4-7
* This has been the consistent verdict of orthodoxy!
- B.** The modern day consensus by some so called scholars is that Paul did not write the letter.

1. The attacks first came in the 19th century.
2. Based on the lack of personal greetings in view of having spent three years there, having only one seeming personal phrase yet they are equally lacking in some of his other epistles. 2Cor., Gal., 1-2Thess.
3. Based on the fact that some 75 of 155 verses of Ephesians are found in Colossians and one third of the word repeated but the way they are used differs.
4. There is no other letter of Paul resembles his hand than Ephesian declares Goodspeed who claimed that out of 618 short phrases which Ephesians may be divided up, no less than 550 could be matched in the undisputed Epistle.
5. Based on the fact that many new words and the style is different, there being one-hundred words not found elsewhere in Paul yet they are cited in other New Testament books and apostolic fathers.
* The style is said to be complex and cumbersome from his other letters and they point to the lengthy sentences.
Eph. 1:3-14, 15-23; 4:11-16
6. Based on the fact of allusions to Gnostic ideas.

7. Based on the fact of the absence of a strong Pauline central doctrine of “justification by faith”. Eph. 2:8
8. Based on the fact that the opening verse of does not have the name “in Ephesus”. 1:1
 - a. They say the name is not found in what they believe to be the oldest manuscripts, which are three, one is a second Century Papyrus known as the Chester Beatty, dating about 200 A.D.
 - * Yet all other texts we possess have “in Ephesus”
 - b. The other two are fourth Century Codices, Sinaticus and the other is Vaticanus and in fact may be due to the corrupt text of Marcion, Linskie declares.
 - c. On the other hand the phrase “in Ephesus” is found in commentaries form the time of John Chrsystontom, A. D. ?,onward.
 - d. But the truth of the matter is that all but these have the name “Ephesus” from mid-century on.
 - e. Origin in third Century and Jerome in fourth also said "Ephesians" was missing.

C. Others believe that the letter was a circular letter to the churches.

1. There is no indication of such a practice apart from the mention of reading the epistle from Laodicea and the reverse, but that does not mean they were ciruclar letters. Col. 4:16
2. Then the epistle would then be a catholic epistle to the general church as is first Peter.

This is the facts of the authenticity of Ephesians!

III. The epistle to the Ephesians.

- A. The bearer of the epistle.
 1. He is named, Tychicus. Eph. 6:21
 2. He was the bearer of the epistle to the Colossians also. Col. 4:7
 3. He is mentioned as one of Paul’s traveling partners as he left Ephesus, “And Sopater of Berea accompanied him to Asia--also Aristarchus and Secundus of the Thessalonians, and Gaius of Derbe, and Timothy, and Tychicus and Trophimus of Asia”. Acts 20:4
 4. He was sent to Timothy by Paul, “And Tychicus I have sent to Ephesus. 2Tim. 4:12
 5. He was going to be sent to Titus by Paul, “When I send Artemas to you, or Tychicus, be diligent to come to me at

Nicopolis, for I have decided to spend the winter there. Tit. 3:12

B. The occasion for the epistle.

1. There is no evidence of doctrinal problems as with the epistle to the Colossians.
 - a. Epaphras who is believed to of been the Pastor of Colosse came to Paul in Rome during his imprisonment to tell him of the heresy regarding the sufficiency of Christ for salvation, at which time he also wrote Ephesus. Col. 1:7
 - b. Onesimus the run away slave had also been saved by Paul and he was sending him back to his master Philemon with a letter by the hand of Tychicus. Col. 4:7-9
 - 1) Paul's imprisonment allowed him to receive visitors, from where he wrote the four prison epistles! Acts 28:30-31
 - 2) Paul at this time wrote Colossians, Ephesians and Philemon.
 - c. The similarities are many in that seventy five of the versus of Ephesians are found in Colossians.
 - d. Christ is the focus in both epistles but the focus is different.

- e. In Ephesians the focus is on the church the body, whose head is Christ, while in Colossians focuses on Christ the head of the church. Eph. 1:10:22-23
 - f. Ephesians shows us our position in Christ, while Colossians shows us our completeness in Christ.
 - g. Ephesians and Colossians focus on the household and family.
2. The theme of Ephesians seems to be the unity of the church and oneness in Christ, this is Paul's usual theology of Salvation history at it's finest.
 - a. The believer is seen as sitting in the heavenlies, wit Christ.
 - b. The church is comprised of Jew and Gentile, Scythian, Barbarian, male, female, without any distinction or inferiority.
 - c. The church is called the family of God, the temple and the bride of Christ.
 - d. Jesus is the head and his church the body.
 - e. The epistle is believed to be the result of Paul's many years of understanding of the vastness and privilege of the believer and church in Christ.
 3. The date of the epistle is believed to of been during the summer of 62-63 A.D.

4. The theological themes are consistent with Paul.
 - a. God's gracious sovereignty. Eph. 1:3, 9, 11, 12; 2:4-7
 - b. Christ's work of the cross. Eph. 1:7; 2:8-9, 13-18; 5:2, 25
 - c. Salvation history by the full revelation of the gospel. Eph. 1:10; 3:2-7
 - d. The end of the age. Eph. 1:14; 2:7; 4:30; 5:5; 6:8, 13
 - e. The resurrection and exaltation of Jesus. Eph. 1:20-23; 4:10
 - f. The place of prayer. Eph. 1:15-23; 3:14-21; 6:18
 - g. The position of the believer with Christ "in the heavenlies". Eph. 1:22; 2:6; 5:27
 - h. The conduct and life of the believer. Eph. 1:4; 4:1; 5: 8, 11, 15, 17-19, 32
 - i. The person and ministry of the Holy Spirit. Eph. 1:13-14; 2:18, 22; 3:5, 16; 4:1-4, 30; 5:18; 6:18
 - j. The oneness of Jew and Gentile. Eph. 1:4; 2:11-15, 19-22
 - k. The purpose of the church to perfect the saints by virtue of Christ's exaltation through resurrection. Eph. 4:9-16
 - l. The importance of the unity of the family to a lost world. Eph. 5:21-6:9

- m. The church is seen in various metaphors.
 - 1) The family of God. Eph. 2:19
 - 2) The new temple. Eph. 2:21
 - 3) The fullness of Christ. Eph. 1:23, 4:13
 - 4) The bride of Christ. Eph. 5:23, 28
 - 5) The army of God. Eph. 6:10-18
 - 6) The church of God and Christ, nine times. Eph. 1:22; 3:10, 21; 5:23-25, 27, 29, 32
 - 7) The body of Christ, nine times. Eph. 1:23; 2:16; 3:6; 4:12, 16; 5:23, 30
 - n. The spiritual warfare of the believer. Eph. 6:12
 - * Thought they may be treated differently than in his other letter should not be used to deny the authenticity of the letter!
- C. The division of the epistle.
1. The book falls into two equal parts.
 - a. The first three chapters are doctrinal.
 - b. The last three chapters are practical.
 - c. The doctrinal deals with the wealth of the believer.
 - d. The practical deals with the walk of the believer.
 2. In the doctrinal section, we see the wealth of the believer. Eph. 1-3

- a. In chapter one we see.
 - 1) Personal introduction: Salutation and greeting. Eph. 1:1-2
 - 2) Praise to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for all spiritual possession. Eph. 1:3-14
 - 3) Prayer to God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ for spiritual perception. Eph.1:15-23
- b. In chapter two we see.
 - 1) Our new position in Christ, alive in the heavenlies. Eph. 2:1-10
 - 2) Our new relation in Christ, a new man. Eph. 2:11-23
- c. In chapter three we see.
 - 1) The proclamation of the divine mystery. Eph. 3:1-12
 - 2) The appropriation of the divine fullness. Eph. 3:13-21
- 3. In the practical section, we see the walk of the believer. Eph. 4-6
 - a. In chapter four, we see.
 - 1) Our walk is to be in the unity of the one body. Eph. 4:1-6
 - 2) Our walk is to be according to the gift of grace. Eph. 4:7-11
 - 3) Our walk is to be in view of growth, development and maturity of the body, in love. Eph. 4:8-16
 - 4) Our walk is to be as a New man. Eph. 4:17-24

- 5) Our walk is not to grieve the Holy Spirit. Eph. 4:25-32
- b. In chapter five and six, we see.
 - 1) Our walk in love in contrast to the lost. Eph. 5:1-7
 - 2) Our walk in light in contrast to our past darkness. Eph. 5:8-14
 - 3) Our walk in wisdom by being filled with the Holy Spirit not the worldly stimuli. Eph. 5:15-21
 - 4) Our walk in marriage in relation to Christ. Eph. 5:22-33
 - 5) Our walk in parental, children and slaves in relation to Christ. Eph. 6:1-9
 - 6) Our spiritual warfare being in Christ. Eph. 6:10-20
- D. The key verses, phrases and words of the epistle.
 - 1. The key verses.
 - a. The key verse for the doctrinal section is verse three. Eph. 1:3
 - b. The key verse for the practical section is in verse one. Eph. 4:1
 - c. The key versus of each chapter.
 - 1) Eph. 1:3, 5, 7 10, 23
 - 2) Eph. 2:4, 7, 19
 - 3) Eph. 3:4, 20
 - 4) Eph. 4:1, 7, 20, 32
 - 5) Eph. 5:1, 8, 18, 25-27

- 6) Eph. 6:10, 12, 18
2. The key phrases.
 - a. In the heavenlies. Eph. 1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12
 - b. In Christ, in Him, by Christ, of Christ, by Whom.
 - c. The riches of Christ. Eph. 1:7, 18; 2:7; 3:8, 16; 4:19
 3. The key words.
 - a. Household. Eph. 2:19
 - b. Temple. Eph. 2:21
 - c. Fullness. Eph. 1:23; 4:13
 - d. Wife. Eph. 5:23, 28
 - e. The army of God. Eph. 6:10-18
 - f. Church. Eph. 1:22; 3:10, 21; 5:23-25, 27, 29, 32
 - g. Body. Eph. 1:23; 2:16; 3:6; 4:4, 12, 16; 5:23, 30
 - h. Spirit. Eph. 1:13, 17; 2:18, 22; 3:5, 16; 4:3, 4, 23, 30; 5:9, 18; 6:17, 18
 - i. Head. Eph. 1:10, 22; 4:15; 5:23
- E. The outline of the epistle.
- I. The wealth of the believer **by** the love of God. Eph. 1-3
* Eph. 1:6, 15; 2:4; 3:17
 - II. The walk of the believer **in** the love of God. Eph. 4-6:9
* Eph. 4:2, 15, 16; 5:2, 25, 28, 33
 - III. The warfare of the believer **through** the love of God. Eph. 6:10-24
* Eph. 6:23, 24

1. The key theme that makes it all possible is the love of God mentioned some twenty times.
2. Ten times in “agapao” Eph. 1:6; 2:4; 5:2, 25, 28, 33; 6:24
3. Ten times in “apapee” Eph. 1:4, 15; 2:4; 3:17, 19; 4:2, 15, 16; 5:2; 6:23

This is the epistle to the Ephesians!

Conclusion

I hope this introduction has provided for you a good historical background and overview of Ephesians by our study of these three things:

- I. The City of Ephesus!
- II. The authenticity of the Ephesians!
- III. The epistle to the Ephesians!