

Ephesians – 6 Chapters

Title:

The Epistle to the Ephesians – because it is written to the church in (and around) Ephesus. Ephesus was a major city in western Asia Minor and a center of pagan worship.

Author:

Written by Paul the apostle to the Gentiles. Paul was a strict Pharisee in Jerusalem until he had a revelation of Christ on the road to Damascus. Paul spent the rest of his life as a missionary proclaiming Jesus to Gentiles around the Mediterranean. Paul wrote 13 of the Books of the New Testament.

Occasion and Purpose:

Most likely, Ephesians is a circular letter to all the churches in western Asia minor. It is very general in tone for mature Christians. This epistle has few references to specific situations and issues. It is likely that Ephesians was written and sent at the same time as Colossians, and it could be intended to protect these other churches from falling into the heresy which had infected the Colossian church. Therefore, Paul emphasizes that all the heavenly powers are in subjection to Christ. He is also concerned for Jew/Gentile reconciliation and unity in the church. And Paul focusses on God's cosmic purpose for the church, and he promotes general church health by telling and applying the truth of the Gospel.

Themes:

1. **“In Christ”** – This phrase is used (in various forms) many times in Ephesians. It has its basis in the Old Testament idea of corporate solidarity. This is seeing a group of people as one corporate identity. Every individual Christian is included in Christ, His benefits, and His purposes when they are converted. God's plan for humanity is about Christ, and individuals experience it when they are included in Christ.
2. **Unity of the Church** – Jews and Gentiles are all united together by being united with Christ. Jesus has broken down the wall and made the two into one. And all the church is to live in unity with one another. There is one baptism, one Spirit, one Lord, and therefore the church should live as one unity.
3. **Saved by Grace** – Paul emphasizes that salvation is only by the grace of God. It is not because of good works or anything people have done. Therefore, no one can boast. People receive this salvation through faith, but not because of faith. And they do good works as the result of salvation.
4. **God's Cosmic Purposes** – God's purposes in salvation are not just about humanity. God is using the salvation of humanity to display His goodness in the heavenly realm. This comes in the context of a cosmic battle between good & evil (which Christ has won).
5. **Spirit Filled Living** – Paul encourages his readers to experience the power of Christ's resurrection and to be filled with the Holy Spirit. This works out in very practical ways for ethical living in all relationships and life situations.
6. **Praise and Prayer** – All things that God has done in Christ are to the praise of His glorious grace. Paul's readers are to praise God for what He has accomplished, and Paul repeatedly prays that they would be able to grasp the greatness of God's accomplishment and respond in appropriate worshipful fashion.

Summary:

God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in Christ. God has saved us by grace, even when we were dead in sin. And He has included us in a new humanity of Jews and Gentiles together. Therefore, we should live in unity growing into the fullness of Christ. We should live a new life of love and purity, making a total break with sinful lifestyle and worldview. We should live a wise, Spirit-filled life in all relationships. And we should stand strong in Christ against all spiritual opposition, with the resources given by God.

Organization:

1:1-2 Salutation	
	Authors, Recipients & Blessing
1:3-3:21 The Calling You Have Received (Spiritual Blessings in Christ)	
	1:3-14 Spiritual Blessings in Christ 1:15-23 Prayer 2:1-10 Saved by Grace 2:11-22 Saved into a New Humanity 3:1-13 Mystery of Gentile Inclusion 3:14-21 Prayer
4:1-6:20 Live Worthy of the Calling You Have Received	
	4:1-16 Live in Unity 4:17-32 Live the New Life, Not the Old Life 5:1-6 Live a Life of Love, Not Impurity 5:7-14 Live as Children of Light 5:15-6:9 Be Careful How You Live <ul style="list-style-type: none">○ 5:15-21 Live as Wise, not Unwise○ 5:22-33 Husbands and Wives○ 6:1-4 Parents and Children○ 6:5-9 Slaves and Masters 6:10-20 Stand Strong in the Lord
6:10-20 Stand Strong in the Lord	

Key Verses:

1:3-14; 2:1-10; 2:11-22; 3:2-6; 4:1; 5:15-21