

Ephesians Overview

Why study this book: Many people who are following Christ do not realize the standing they have before God. There are incredible blessings available as a result of Christ's death and resurrection. Paul explains what the Christian life looks like: a life that is God-centered and God-initiated.

Author: Paul: the apostle and church planter. Written while under house arrest in Rome as he waited for his hearing before Caesar.

Date: Between AD 60-62. Late in Paul's ministry as the book of Acts comes to a close. Written after he already been in prison.

Main Point: Paul describes the Christian's life as flowing from God and His eternal plan. He brings in the riches and fullness of blessings to believers and ways to practically live that out. Some other themes are those of unity among the church body and the mysterious plan of God. Paul describes God's plan as that Gentiles should be fellow heirs of the truth.

Setting: The letter was written to believers in Ephesus. There are also indications that the letter was to be distributed throughout churches in Asia Minor. Paul wrote the letter to encourage believers to live with an identity rooted in Christ.

Outline:

1. The believer's position in Christ (1:1-3:21)
 - a. Introduction (1:1-2)
 - b. Spiritual blessings (1:3-14)
 - c. Prayer for spiritual wisdom (1:15-23)
 - d. Saved by grace (2:1-10)
 - e. Unity in Christ (2:11-22)
 - f. God's mystery plan revealed (3:1-13)
 - g. Prayer for spiritual growth (3:14-21)
2. The believer's position in the world (4:1-6:24)
 - a. Pursue unity in the body (4:1-16)
 - b. Live no longer as the Gentiles do (4:17-32)
 - c. Live like children of God (5:1-20)
 - d. Submit in your relationships (5:21-6:9)
 - e. Put on the armor of God (6:10-20)
 - f. Closing greetings (6:21-24)

Paul writes the first three chapters with a theological emphasis while the last three chapters focus on practical living. He writes the letter to remind believers of their immeasurable blessings in Jesus Christ. Paul encourages the believers to not just be thankful of those blessings but to live a life that is worthy of them.