

## *EPHESIANS*

### 1. Historical Context.

#### a. Ephesus.

##### (1) Greek period.

- (a) Ephesus was an ancient Greek city in present-day Turkey. It was built in the 10th century bc by Greek colonists.
- (b) Ephesus was famous for the temple of Diana or Artemis, complete in 550 bc and one of the seven wonders of the ancient world (Ac 19:35).
  - 1) One ancient historian said it was the largest building of the ancient world.
  - 2) The local economy depended on this temple (Ac 19:24-27).

##### (2) Roman period.

- (a) Ephesus came under Roman control in 129 bc.
- (b) When Augustus became emperor in 27 bc, he made Ephesus the capital of Asia. Ephesus entered an era of prosperity.
- (c) According to Greek geographer Strabo, Ephesus was second in importance and size only to Rome. Population estimates vary between 50,000 and 225,000 people.
- (d) Heavy silting required a special canal so ships could reach the harbour.

##### (3) After Paul.

- (a) Ephesus was destroyed by the Goths in 263 and declined as a commercial center due to silting in its harbour.
- (b) Ephesus was the site of several church councils, including the Council of Ephesus (ad 431). This council confirmed the original Nicene Creed and condemned the teachings of Nestorius, affirming the full deity of Jesus.
- (c) Ephesus was partially destroyed by an earthquake in 614.

##### (4) Today.

- (a) The ruins of Ephesus are a favoured international tourist attraction.

#### b. Paul's Relationship with the Ephesians.

##### (1) Paul's Second Missionary Journey.

- (a) At the beginning of Paul's second missionary journey, the Holy Spirit forbid Paul, Silas, and Timothy from speaking the gospel message in Asia (Ac 16:6).
- (b) At the close of his second missionary journey, on his way from Corinth to Syria, Paul came to Ephesus, went into the synagogue, and reasoned with the Jews (Ac 18:19). The Jews asked him to stay longer, but he declined (Ac 18:20). He told them he would return if God desired (Ac 18:21).
- (c) At this time Apollos taught in Ephesus, speaking boldly in the synagogue (Ac 18:24-26). He powerfully refuted the Jews in public, showing the Messiah was Jesus (Ac 18:28). The brothers in Ephesus encouraged Apollos to cross to Achaia (Ac 18:27).

##### (2) Paul's Third Missionary Journey.

- (a) While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul came to Ephesus and found 12 disciples of John. He baptised and laid his hands on them, and the Holy Spirit came on them (Ac 19:1-7).
- (b) Paul spoke boldly in the synagogue for three months, but some Jews became stubborn and spoke evil of the Way. So Paul withdrew and reasoned daily in

the hall of Tyrannus. This continued for two years. As a result, “all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks” (Ac 19:8-10). Paul persuaded and turned away a great many people from the Greco-Roman gods (Ac 19:26).

- (c) From the first day Paul set foot in Asia, he served the Lord with humility, tears, and trials through the plots of the Jews. But he did not shrink from declaring to the Ephesians anything that was profitable. He taught them in public and from house to house. He testified to Jews and Greeks of a change of heart toward God and of faith in Jesus (Ac 20:18-21). He did not shrink from declaring to them the whole counsel of God (Ac 20:27). For three years he did not cease night or day to admonish every one with tears. He coveted no one’s silver, gold, or apparel. He ministered to his own necessities and to those who were with him. He worked hard to help the weak (Ac 20:31-35).
- (d) As Paul taught, God did extraordinary miracles by his hands (Ac 19:11-12).
  - 1) Some itinerant Jewish exorcists, seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish high priest, tried to invoke the name of Jesus over those who had evil spirits. But they were overpowered by an evil spirit and completely embarrassed. This became known to all the residents of Ephesus, and the name of the Lord Jesus was extolled (Ac 19:13-17).
- (e) Many new believers came and confessed their sinful practices. Those who had practiced magic arts burned their very valuable books together in the sight of all. The word of the Lord continued to increase and prevail mightily (Ac 19:18-20). During this time, Paul wrote *1 Corinthians* from Ephesus (ad 55).
- (f) Then there arose a great disturbance. Demetrius, a silversmith, gathered the craftsmen and workmen to defend their trade and the temple of Artemis (Ac 19:23-27). The city was filled with confusion, and a crowd dragged two of Paul’s companions into the theatre. Paul wished to go in among the crowd, but the disciples and high-ranking officers of Asia would not let him. Alexander, a Christian, wanted to make a defense to the crowd, but the crowd shouted out for two hours, “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” (Ac 19:28-34). The town clerk was finally able to quiet the crowd, telling Demetrius and the craftsman to bring charges in court if they wanted to. After the uproar, Paul said goodbye to the Ephesian disciples and left for Macedonia (Ac 19:35-20:1).
- (g) At the end of his third missionary journey, on his way back to Jerusalem, Paul decided to sail past Ephesus (Ac 20:16). This was likely because he did not want to cause further trouble for the believers in Ephesus. He did, however, call the elders of the Ephesian church to Miletus (Ac 20:17). He told them they would not see his face again. He commanded them to pay careful attention to themselves and to the church. He warned them to be alert because fierce wolves would come and men from among their own selves would arise speaking twisted things. He commended them to God and to the word. He urged them to work hard in order to help the weak (Ac 20:25-35). Finally, he knelt down and prayed with them. They wept together and embraced and kissed Paul. They accompanied Paul to his ship, extremely sad

because he had said they would not see his face again (Ac 20:36-38). Two Ephesian disciples, however, Tychicus and Trophimus, continued to travel with Paul to Jerusalem (Ac 20:4).

(3) Paul's First Imprisonment.

- (a) In Jerusalem, it was Jews from Asia who stirred up the crowd against Paul. They claimed Paul was teaching everywhere against the Jewish people, the Torah, and the Jerusalem temple. They also alleged he had brought Greeks into the temple and defiled it. They said this because they had seen Trophimus the Ephesian with Paul and supposed Paul had brought him into the temple. All Jerusalem was stirred up, and the people seized Paul and dragged him out of the temple (Ac 21:27-30). Most likely, these Ephesian Jews were the official complaining witnesses in the trial Paul would be involved in for the next four years.
- (b) As a prisoner in Rome, Paul was allowed to stay by himself, with a soldier who guarded him (Ac 28:16). Though he was chained (Ac 28:20), he was able to meet with local Jews and others (Ac 28:17, 23). From morning till evening, he expounded to them about Jesus (Ac 28:23). He lived there two whole years at his own expense, welcoming all who came to him (Ac 28:30). He proclaimed and taught with all boldness and without hindrance (Ac 28:31).
- (c) During this time, Paul sent Tychicus and Onesimus back home to Asia (Eph 6:21-22; Col 4:7-9) to deliver three letters, one to the Colossians, one, *Ephesians*, a general circular letter intended for all the churches in Asia, and one to Philemon, concerning Onesimus. *Ephesians* is probably the letter to the Laodiceans Paul refers to in Col 4:16.

(4) Paul's Release.

- (a) Some time after his release, Paul ordered Timothy to remain at Ephesus to combat false doctrine. This shows Paul's ongoing concern for the Ephesian church.
  - 1) **1 Ti 1:3** 3 As I [Paul] urged you [Timothy] when I was going to Macedonia, remain at Ephesus so that you may charge certain persons not to teach any different doctrine....

(5) Paul's Second Imprisonment.

- (a) Unfortunately, all Paul's disciples in Asia turned away from him, including Phygelus and Hermogenes (2 Ti 1:15).
    - 1) **2 Ti 1:15** 15 You are aware that all who are in Asia turned away from me, among whom are Phygelus and Hermogenes.
  - (b) Just before his death, Paul sent Tychicus again to Ephesus.
    - 1) **2 Ti 4:12** 12 Tychicus I [Paul] have sent to Ephesus.
- c. Peter's Relationship with the Ephesians.
- (1) Peter also wrote to the Ephesians.
    - (a) **1 Pe 1:1** 1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Messiah, To those who are elect exiles of the Dispersion in Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia....
- d. John's Relationship to the Ephesians.

- (1) The apostle John knew the Ephesians well, living and ministering there during the last decades of his life. John wrote *John*, *1-3 John*, and *Revelation* at or near Ephesus.
- (2) Jesus directed John to deliver *Revelation* to the Ephesian church.
  - (a) **Re 1:10-11** 10 I [John] was in the Spirit on the Lord's day, and I heard behind me a loud voice like a trumpet 11 saying, Write what you see in a book and send it to the seven churches, to Ephesus, to Smyrna, to Pergamum, to Thyatira, to Sardis, to Philadelphia, and to Laodicea.
- (3) Re 2:1-7 is a report card from Jesus to the Ephesian church, written at the end of the 1st century ad.
  - (a) The Ephesian church was characterised by works, toil, and patient endurance (v. 2). It did not tolerate those who were evil, and it tested and found false those who were calling themselves apostles (v. 2). They endured patiently, beared up for Jesus, and did not grow weary (v. 3). They did, however, abandon the love for Jesus they had at first (v. 4). Jesus commanded them to remember from where they fell, change their hearts, and do the works they did at first (v. 5). If not, Jesus would come and remove their lampstand from its place (v. 5). They did hate the works of Nicolaitans, which Jesus also hated (v. 6).

## 2. Author: Paul.

- a. Internal (Eph 1:1) and external evidence points to Paul.
  - (1) **Eph 1:1** 1 Paul, an apostle of Messiah Jesus by the desire of God...
  - (2) Pauline authorship was universally accepted from the first to the nineteenth centuries.
  - (3) Modern scepticism about Pauline authorship will in future come to be regarded as "one of...the curiosities of a hypercritical age."<sup>1</sup>
  - (4) Paul's vocabulary and style are a bit different from other epistles, but Paul is allowed to be flexible under various circumstances.
  - (5) The theology of *Ephesians* in some ways reflects a later development, but this is to be attributed to Paul's own growth and mediation on the church as the body of Messiah and continuing special revelation through the Holy Spirit.
    - (a) **Eph 3:3** 3 ...How the mystery was made known to me by revelation, as I have written briefly.
- b. From *Ephesians*, we learn about Paul:
  - (1) He is an apostle of Messiah Jesus by God's desire (1:1).
  - (2) He regularly includes himself with his audience by continually using "we" and "us" (1:2-6; 2:3, 5, 10, 18).
    - (a) "We" is found 19 times, "us" is found 18 times, and "our" is found 12 times!
  - (3) He is a prisoner for Messiah Jesus on behalf of the Gentiles (3:1).
  - (4) He was given the stewardship of God's grace for the Gentiles (3:2).
  - (5) The mystery of the church was made known to him by revelation (3:3).
  - (6) He has insight into the mystery of Messiah (3:4).
  - (7) He was given the gift of God's grace by the working of God's power (3:7).

---

<sup>1</sup> G. G. Findlay, quoted in John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 21.

- (8) He is the very least of all the saints (3:8).
- (9) He was given the grace to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Messiah and to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery of the church (3:8-9).
- (10) He is suffering for the Ephesians, for their glory (3:13).
- (11) He is a prisoner for the Lord Jesus (4:1).
- (12) He speaks of the mystery of Messiah and the church (5:32).
- (13) He requests prayer (6:19).
- (14) He desires that words may be given him (6:19).
- (15) He desires to boldly proclaim the mystery of the gospel (6:19).
- (16) He is an ambassador in chains for the gospel (6:20).
- (17) He sent Tychicus to the Ephesians to tell them everything (6:21).
  - (a) Paul doesn't share any details about his trial in the letter. He wants Tychicus to do that in person. This because Jews from Ephesus are the complaining witnesses in Paul's trial (Ac 21:27-29). He has many enemies in Ephesus.
- (18) He wants the Ephesians to know how he and his companions are doing (6:22).
  - (a) Paul mentions no one by name in the Ephesian church. This is because he doesn't want to cause unnecessary trouble for anyone (i.e., not mentioning "China" in an email to a missionary).

### 3. Recipients: Ephesian Believers.

- a. Paul writes to saints who are faithful (Eph 1:1). He considers them believers who have been justified and adopted into God's family.
  - (1) **Eph 1:1** 1 Paul, an apostle of Messiah Jesus by the desire of God, To the saints (τοῖς ἁγίοις) who are in Ephesus, and are faithful (πιστοῖς) in Messiah Jesus.
  - (2) Many ancient manuscripts omit "in Ephesus" in Eph 1:1.
- b. Tychicus delivered the epistle to the Ephesian church.
  - (1) **Eph 6:21-22** 21 So that you [Ephesians] also may know how I [Paul] am and what I am doing, Tychicus the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord [Jesus] will tell you everything. 22 I have sent him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage your hearts.

### 4. Purpose.

- a. *Ephesians* is a circular letter intended for all churches in the region of Asia.
  - (1) It doesn't address particular local church problems, as do *Galatians* and *1 and 2 Corinthians*.
  - (2) Like *Romans*, it is a Christian treatise designed for general use. It directly applies to every local church in the Church age.
- b. Paul's goals are to:
  - (1) Inform believers of their spiritual wealth in Messiah.
  - (2) Explain the church's importance in God's plan for angelic and human history.
  - (3) Promote unity between Jewish and Gentile believers in the church.
  - (4) Motivate a spiritual walk that corresponds to the believer's spiritual wealth.
  - (5) Ready believers for spiritual warfare.
- c. *Ephesians* is very relevant. It answers key questions people ask today.
  - (a) Do I really matter to anyone but myself?

- (b) Do we matter as a human race?
- (c) Does planet earth really matter?
- (d) Does God have a plan?

## 5. Characteristics.

- a. The scope of *Ephesians* is very broad (Eph 1:9-10).
  - (1) In *Ephesians*, we view history from a mountain peak. We get perspective on all God is doing in the world.
- b. *Ephesians* is universal in character. It applies equally to every local church.
- c. *Ephesians* divides clearly into two major sections, doctrine and practice. There are no imperatives in Eph 1-3, but 35 imperatives in Eph 4-6.
- d. *Ephesians* stresses the community, not the individual.
- e. “Ephesians is affirmation.”<sup>2</sup> It is neither apologetics nor polemics. It is non-controversial. It abounds in bold and jubilant affirmations about the Trinity and the church.

## 6. Leading Ideas.

- a. God’s Plan and Purpose.
  - (1) **Eph 1:4-10** 4 ...Even as [God] chose us in [Jesus] before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love 5 he [corporately] *predetermined* us for adoption to himself as sons through Jesus Messiah, according to the purpose of his *desire*, 6 to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight 9 making known to us the mystery of his *desire*, according to his *purpose*, which he set forth in Messiah 10 as a *plan* for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.
  - (2) **Eph 3:8-11** 8 To me [Paul], though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Messiah, 9 and to bring to light for everyone what is the *plan* of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things, 10 so that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places. 11 This was according to the eternal *purpose* that he has realized in Messiah Jesus our Lord....
  - (3) From eternity past, God has had a plan. Everything he does is purposeful. As believers, we have a huge part to play in his plan. His plan revolves around Jesus and our intimate personal relationship to him. This is why nothing is so important as our relationship to God in Jesus. Many today believe there is no purpose, but this is completely false. There is a plan, and it is being worked out. It won’t fail. Our lives do matter. We have a purpose. We each have an individual purpose, but there is also grand purpose for angelic and human history.
- b. “In Messiah Jesus.”
  - (1) List.

---

<sup>2</sup> John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 19.

- (a) The Ephesian saints are faithful in Messiah Jesus (Eph 1:1).
  - (b) The Father has blessed us in Messiah with every spiritual blessing (Eph 1:3).
  - (c) The Father chose us in Messiah before the foundation of the world (Eph 1:4).
  - (d) The Father has blessed us in the Beloved (Eph 1:6).
  - (e) We have redemption in Messiah (Eph 1:7).
  - (f) God set forth his purpose in Messiah as a plan for the fulness of time (Eph 1:9-10).
  - (g) God is uniting all things in heaven and on earth in Messiah (Eph 1:10).
  - (h) In Messiah we have obtained an inheritance (Eph 1:11).
  - (i) In Messiah we were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13).
  - (j) The Father has seated us in the heavenly places in Messiah Jesus (Eph 2:6).
  - (k) We are created in Messiah Jesus for good works (Eph 2:10).
  - (l) In Messiah Jesus we Gentiles believers have been brought near by the blood of Messiah (Eph 2:13).
  - (m) In Jesus, the church grows into a holy temple (Eph 2:21).
  - (n) In Jesus, Gentile believers are co-heirs, members of the church, and partakers of the New Covenant promise (Eph 3:6).
  - (o) In Jesus, we have boldness and access with confidence to the Father (Eph 3:12).
- (2) Comments.
- (a) Paul uses the phrase “in Messiah” or its equivalent about 35 times.
  - (b) To be “in Messiah” is to be personally and vitally united to Messiah and Messiah’s people, as branches are to the vine and members to the body.<sup>3</sup>
  - (c) Jesus dominates Paul’s mind and fills his vision. It is through and in Jesus that God’s new society has come into being.<sup>4</sup>
  - (d) If we are not in Messiah Jesus, we have nothing. In Messiah Jesus, we have everything. This is why evangelism is so important. It is only in Jesus that any human being can fulfil God’s plan for his or her life. There is no real life outside of Jesus.
- c. The Riches of Divine Grace.
- (1) Verses.
- (a) **Eph 1:3** 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Messiah, who has blessed us in Messiah with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places
  - (b) **Eph 1:6-8** 6 ...To the praise of [the Father’s] glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. 7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, 8 which he lavished upon us....
  - (c) **Eph 1:11** 11 In [Messiah] we have obtained an inheritance....
  - (d) **Eph 1:14** 14 ...[The Spirit] is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.
  - (e) **Eph 1:18** 18 ...Having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,

---

<sup>3</sup> John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 22.

<sup>4</sup> John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 28.

- (f) **Eph 1:23** 23 [The church] is [Messiah’s] body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.
- (g) **Eph 2:6-7** 6 ...And raised us up with [Messiah] and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Messiah Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Messiah Jesus.
- (h) **Eph 3:6** 6 This mystery is that the Gentiles are co-heirs, members of the same body, and partakers of the promise in Messiah Jesus through the gospel.
- (i) **Eph 3:8** 8 To me [Paul], though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Messiah....
- (j) **Eph 3:16-19** 16 ...That according to the riches of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in your inner being, 17 so that Messiah may dwell in your hearts through faith—that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, length, height, and depth [of your inheritance], 19 and to know the love of Messiah that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.
- 1) **Ge 13:14-17** 14 [Yahweh] said to Abram, after Lot had separated from him, Lift up your eyes and look from the place where you are, northward, southward, eastward, and westward, 15 for all the land that you see I will give to you and to your seed forever. ...17 Arise, walk through the length and the breadth of the land, for I will give it to you.
- (k) **Re 2:9** 9 I [Jesus] know your tribulation and your poverty (but you are rich....
- (2) Comments.
  - (a) Believers are blessed in the Beloved, recipients of the riches of divine grace. They have an eternal inheritance awaiting them. We are indescribably rich. We are to know the content of our heavenly bank account, every spiritual blessing in Messiah. Our spiritual wealth is the foundation for our spiritual walk. We are rich beyond measure. We are not to be ignorant of our wealth.
  - (b) #FOMO: Do you have a fear of missing out? In this case, you should!
  - (c) Do you have low self-esteem? Knowing your divine riches in Messiah is the key to healthy self-esteem.
  - (d) There is a worldly elite, but we are the spiritual elite. As King’s kids, we are a spiritual aristocracy. We are not to live as spiritual paupers.
- (3) Illustration: Discuss my struggles with self-esteem in high school and university and how learning about the “40 Things God Does at the Moment of Salvation” totally changed my outlook.
- d. The Mystery of the Church.
  - (1) The church was a mystery that is now revealed.
    - (a) **Eph 1:9** 9 ...Making known to us the mystery of his desire, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Messiah....
    - (b) **Eph 3:3-4** 3 ...How the mystery was made known to me [Paul] by revelation, as I have written briefly. 4 When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Messiah....
    - (c) **Eph 3:9** 9 ...And to bring to light for everyone what is the plan of the mystery hidden for ages in God, who created all things....



- (d) **Eph 5:32** 32 This mystery is profound, and I am saying that it refers to Messiah and the church.
- (e) **Eph 6:19** 19 ...And also for me, that words may be given to me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel....
- (2) The church is hugely important in God's plan.
  - (a) **Eph 1:22-23** 22 ...[God] put all things under [Messiah's] feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.
  - (b) **Eph 2:6-7** 6 ...And raised us up with [Messiah] and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Messiah Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Messiah Jesus.
  - (c) **Eph 3:10** 10 ...So that through the church the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places.
  - (d) **Ge 12:3** 3 ...In you [Abram] all the families of the earth shall be blessed.
- (3) The church is God's new creation.
  - (a) Three times Paul uses new creation language.
    - 1) **Eph 2:10** 10 ...We [believers] are [God's] workmanship (ποίημα), created (κτίζω, aor. pass.) in Messiah Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
      - a) ποίημα: "that which is made, *work, creation*, in our lit. only of the works of divine creation" (*BDAG*, 842).
      - b) κτίζω: "to bring someth. into existence, *create*, in our lit. of God's creative activity" (*BDAG*, 572).
    - 2) **Eph 2:15** 15 ...By abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he [Messiah] might create (κτίζω, aor. act.) in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace....
    - 3) **Eph 4:24** 24 ...And to put on the new self, created (κτίζω, aor. pass.) after the likeness of God in true righteousness and holiness.
  - (b) God is building a new society in the midst of the old.<sup>5</sup>
    - 1) "...[W]e [the church] are nothing less than God's new society, the single new humanity which he is created in and which includes Jews and Gentiles on equal terms. We are the family of God the Father, the body of Jesus Christ his Son and the temple or dwelling place of the Holy Spirit. Therefore we are too demonstrate plainly and visibly by our new life the reality of this new thing which God has done...."<sup>6</sup>
    - 2) Karl Marx and many others have presented a vision of a new society, a utopia. But in Ephesians we have the only new society that is realistically possible. The new society must be created by God. The new man and the new society are God's creative work.<sup>7</sup>
- (4) Comments.

---

<sup>5</sup> John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 24.

<sup>6</sup> John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 25.

<sup>7</sup> John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 26.

- (a) While *Ephesians* it is not a systematic theology of the church, *Ephesians* is where Paul outlines most deeply and consistently a theology of the church.
- (b) The church is one living organism created from individual believers of the Church age, whom God has united in a vital relationship with Messiah Jesus.
- (c) The church was planned in the past, is being built in the present, and will serve the purposes of God throughout eternity future.
- e. Walking as Christian.
  - (1) Seven times Paul speaks of how one should, or should not, walk.
    - (a) **Eph 2:2** 2 ...In which you once walked (περιπατέω, aor.), following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience....
    - (b) **Eph 2:10** 10 ...We are his workmanship, created in Messiah Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk (περιπατέω, aor.) in them.
      - 1) This could be the theme verse of the entire book.
    - (c) **Eph 4:1** 1 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk (περιπατέω, aor.) in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called....
    - (d) **Eph 4:17** 17 Now this I say and testify in the Lord, that you must no longer walk (περιπατέω, pres.) as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds.
    - (e) **Eph 5:2** 2 And walk (περιπατέω, pres.) in love, as Messiah loved us and gave himself up for us....
    - (f) **Eph 5:8** 8 ...For at one time you were darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk (περιπατέω, pres.) as children of light....
    - (g) **Eph 5:15** 15 Look carefully then how you walk (περιπατέω, pres.), not as unwise but as wise....
  - (2) The church is to *walk* in accordance with her *wealth*. As a new *creature*, she is to engage in new *conduct*. With so much *blessing*, her *behaviour* is to be different. Her *riches* means she has tremendous *responsibility*.
  - (3) There is always a clear before and after with Paul. In each of our lives, the moment of salvation is monumental. Has that moment happened in your life?
  - (4) Our spiritual walk is to be rooted in our spiritual wealth. Our position is to be the basis for our practice in all areas of life.
- f. Power.
  - (1) Eph 1:18-19; 2:4-6; 6:10-11
  - (2) The Church will succeed. God's eternal power will build his Church and defeat his enemies.
  - (3) The church grows as a result of God's power working through believers' lives.
  - (4) We are to draw on our huge spiritual endowment. We have all the resources we need to live a life to the glory of God.
    - (a) Eph 1:6
- g. Love.
  - (1) ἀγάπη is found 10 times in *Ephesians* (Eph 1:4, 15; 2:4; 3:17, 19; 4:2, 15-16; 5:2; 6:23).
  - (2) ἀγαπάω is found another 10 times (Eph 1:6; 2:4; 5:2, 25, 28, 33; 6:24).
- h. Knowledge.
  - (1) Verses.

- (a) **Eph 1:17-19** 17 ... That the God of our Lord Jesus Messiah, the Father of glory, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, 18 having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints 19 and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe....
- (b) **Eph 3:18** 18 ... May have strength to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth, length, height, and depth, 19 and to know the love of Messiah that surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled with all the fullness of God.
- (c) **Eph 4:13** 13 ... Until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Messiah....
- (d) **Eph 4:17** 17 Now this I say and testify in the Lord [Jesus], that you must no longer walk as the Gentiles do, in the futility of their minds.
- (e) **Eph 4:23** 23 ... And to be renewed in the spirit of your minds....
- (2) Comments.
  - (a) We must not to be ignorant of God's plan or our wealth as believers. We must be aware of the content of our heavenly bank account.
  - (b) Paul prays the Ephesian believers will receive spiritual illumination and come to perceive what is true about themselves in Messiah. Church leaders are to do the same for the believers of their local church.
    - 1) Eph 1:15-23 is a prayer for revelation. Eph 3:14-21 is a prayer for realisation.
- i. Relationships.
  - (1) Our most important relationships are the ones we have at home, at work, and at church. Paul deals directly with these relationships.
    - (a) Husbands and wives (Eph 5:22-33).
    - (b) Parents and children (Eph 6:1-4).
    - (c) Employers and employees (Eph 6:5-9).
  - (2) Mutual submission in the fear of Messiah is the basis of all human relationships.
    - (a) **Eph 5:21** 21 ... Submitting to one another out of reverence for Messiah.
  - (3) Our faith is to have a huge and noticeable impact on these relationships.
  - (4) The church makes its confession before the world, not primarily by formulating creeds of belief, but by demonstrating sanctification in the rough and tumble of everyday relationships.
- j. Spiritual warfare (Eph 5:10-20).
- k. Prayer.
  - (1) "Ephesians is intercession."<sup>8</sup> It has the character and form of prayer.
  - (2) Eph 1:15-21 and 3:14-19 is really one extended prayer separated by an extraordinary digression (Eph 1:22-3:18).
  - (3) The substantive content of *Ephesians* ends with a passionate appeal to pray.
    - (a) **Eph 6:18-20** 18 ... Praying at all times in the Spirit, with all prayer and supplication. To that end, keep alert with all perseverance, making supplication for all the saints, 19 and also for me, that words may be given to

---

<sup>8</sup> John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Ephesians*, 18.

me in opening my mouth boldly to proclaim the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains, that I may declare it boldly, as I ought to speak.

## 7. Central Truth.

- a. We are to walk in accordance with our wealth.
  - (1) **Eph 2:10** 10 For we [believers] are [God's] workmanship, created in Messiah Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.
  - (2) **Eph 4:1** 1 I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called. . . .
- b. Our wealth is to result in a walk. Our position is to result in a practice. Our blessings are to result in behaviour. Our riches entail responsibilities. Our doctrine entails duty.

## 8. Application.

- a. Catch God's vision for the church.
  - (1) "It is only when we are heavenly minded that we are of any earthly good."
  - (2) "The church of God can never help God when she ceases to be other-worldly. When she is other-worldly she helps the world; and cannot avoid doing so."<sup>9</sup>
- b. Realise your tremendous spiritual riches. Draw upon your heavenly bank account.
- c. Walk according to your wealth.
- d. War against the forces of evil.

---

<sup>9</sup> G. Campbell Morgan.

## ***Bibliography***

- Arnold, Clinton E. *Ephesians*. Zondervan Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament 10. Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 2010.
- Best, Ernest. *Ephesians*. International Critical Commentary. Edinburgh: T. & T. Clark, 1998.
- Bruce, F. F. *The Epistles to the Colossians, to Philemon, and to the Ephesians*. The New International Commentary on the New Testament. Eerdmans, 1984.
- Constable, Thomas L. *Notes on Ephesians*. 2020. <https://planobiblechapel.org/tcon/notes/pdf/ephesians.pdf>
- Hoehner, Harold W. *Ephesians: An Exegetical Commentary*. Grand Rapids: Baker, 2002.
- Lincoln, A. T. *Ephesians*. *Word Biblical Commentary*. Dallas: Word, 1990.
- O'Brien, Peter T. *Ephesians*. Pillar New Testament Commentary. Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1999.
- Snodgrass, Klyne. *Ephesians*. New International Version Application Commentary. Zondervan, 1996.
- Stott, John R. W. *The Message of Ephesians*. 1991.
- Wilkinson, Bruce, and Kenneth Boa. *Talk Thru the New Testament*. Kansas City: Thomas Nelson, 1983.

## ***Videos***

