

## Ephesians

<b>Paul in Ephesus</b>	Paul went to Ephesus at the end of his second missionary journey. He stayed there for two years. During his time in Ephesus, a silversmith named Demetrius opposed him and caused a riot because his business of making worship implements from the worship of Artemis was suffering through Paul's preaching. As a result, Paul had to leave the city. He sent Ephesians to them by the hand Tychicus and accompanied by Onesimus. These two also hand delivered Colossians and Philemon.
<b>About Ephesus</b>	Ephesus was home to the temple of Artemis. In Greek mythology, Artemis is the goddess of the hunt and the goddess of childbirth. All of Ephesus centered around the Temple of Artemis, one of the wonders of the ancient world. As a result, people flocked to Ephesus from all over the known world. Consequently, much the church in Rome, the church in Ephesus was multicultural. It consisted of Jews and Gentiles (rejecting the worship of Artemis and following Jesus. With two groups together like that in a city like that, major problems abounded.
<b>A Prison Epistle</b>	Paul wrote Ephesians while imprisoned in Rome. That makes Ephesians one of Paul's Prison Epistles, along with Philipians, Colossians, and Philemon.
<b>The Ephesian Problem</b>	Paul had a major problem on his hands with the makeup of the congregation. They were not unified in light of their background. As a result, he writes Ephesians with the sole objective to unify the church.
<b>The Plan for Unification of the Church</b>	The Book of Ephesians is at the opposite end of the spectrum from 2 Corinthians, which is very personal. Ephesians, however, is idealistic. When you read Ephesians, it is best to keep the phrase "how the church should be" in the back of your mind. That's the Ephesian Ideal. It's lofty – at time seemingly unreachable – but it is still the standard of what God looks for in a church.
<b>Ephesians in a Word and Phrase</b>	Unity / How It Should Be
<b>Key Verses</b>	For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— <sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast. (2:8-9)

### How God Sees Them (1:1-14)

The Gospel came first to the Jew and then to the Gentile. Paul deals with this motif right off the bat. Knowing the context of this will also help you not misinterpret it.	
<b>The Gospel and the Jew</b>	<sup>3</sup> Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. <sup>4</sup> For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love <sup>5</sup> he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. . . <sup>11</sup> In him we were also chosen, <sup>[e]</sup> having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, <sup>12</sup> in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. (1:3-6; 11-12).
<b>The Gospel and the Gentile</b>	<sup>13</sup> And <u>you also</u> were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup> who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God's possession—to the praise of his glory. (1:13-14)

### How Paul Sees Them (1:15-23)

From Paul's perspective, the problem with the church is they didn't see themselves as God saw them. Their disunity was caused by a lack of knowledge and a sense of forgetfulness about Jesus being in charge.	
<b>As A People Who Need to Know Him Better</b>	<sup>17</sup> I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit <sup>[f]</sup> of wisdom and revelation, so that you may know him better. <sup>18</sup> I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you, the riches of his glorious inheritance in his holy people, <sup>19</sup> and his incomparably great power for us who believe. (1:17-19)
<b>As a People Who Had Forgotten Who Was in Charge</b>	<sup>22</sup> And God placed all things under his feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, <sup>23</sup> which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way. (1:22-23)

<b>How It Should Be: The Ephesian Ideal (The Rest of the Book)</b>	
<b>Common Grace</b>	<sup>8</sup> For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— <sup>9</sup> not by works, so that no one can boast. <sup>10</sup> For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do. (2:8-10)
<b>Common Reconciliation</b>	<sup>14</sup> For he himself is our peace, who has made the two groups one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, <sup>15</sup> by setting aside in his flesh the law with its commands and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, <sup>16</sup> and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. <sup>17</sup> He came and preached peace to you who were far away and peace to those who were near. <sup>18</sup> For through him we both have access to the Father by one Spirit. (2:14-18)
<b>Common Revelation</b>	<sup>4</sup> In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, <sup>5</sup> which was not made known to people in other generations as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to God’s holy apostles and prophets. <sup>6</sup> This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus. (3:4-6)
<b>Common Pastor</b>	<sup>14</sup> For this reason I kneel before the Father, <sup>15</sup> from whom every family <sup>[a]</sup> in heaven and on earth derives its name. <sup>16</sup> I pray that out of his glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being, <sup>17</sup> so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith. And I pray that you, being rooted and established in love, <sup>18</sup> may have power, together with all the Lord’s holy people, to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ, <sup>19</sup> and to know this love that surpasses knowledge—that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God. (3:14-19)
<b>A Common Calling</b>	As a prisoner for the Lord, then, I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received. <sup>2</sup> Be completely humble and gentle; be patient, bearing with one another in love. <sup>3</sup> Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace. <sup>4</sup> There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; <sup>5</sup> one Lord, one faith, one baptism; <sup>6</sup> one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all. (4:1-5)
<b>A Common Ethic</b>	<sup>29</sup> Do not let any unwholesome talk come out of your mouths, but only what is helpful for building others up according to their needs, that it may benefit those who listen. <sup>30</sup> And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. <sup>31</sup> Get rid of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling, and slander, along with every form of malice. <sup>32</sup> Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other, just as in Christ God forgave you. (4:29-32)  <sup>21</sup> Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ. <sup>22</sup> Wives, submit yourselves to your own husbands as you do to the Lord. <sup>23</sup> For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior. <sup>24</sup> Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything. <sup>25</sup> Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her <sup>26</sup> to make her holy, cleansing <sup>[b]</sup> her by the washing with water through the word, <sup>27</sup> and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. (5:21-27)
<b>A Common Enemy</b>	<sup>10</sup> Finally, be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power. <sup>11</sup> Put on the full armor of God, so that you can take your stand against the devil’s schemes. <sup>12</sup> For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms. <sup>13</sup> Therefore put on the full armor of God, so that when the day of evil comes, you may be able to stand your ground, and after you have done everything, to stand. <sup>14</sup> Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, <sup>15</sup> and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. <sup>16</sup> In addition to all this, take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. <sup>17</sup> Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. (6:10-17)

What a beautiful representation of “how it should be!”