

Introducing Ephesians

1.8.12

Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places, even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him. In love he predestined us for adoption as sons through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved. Ephesians 1:1–6 ESV

What Is the book of Ephesians?

When and where was the book of Ephesians written?

What do we know about the city of Ephesus?

Why was the book of Ephesians written?

What are some of its major themes?

1. All people are, by nature, sinners, spiritually dead, and under the rule of Satan until delivered by Jesus. (1:7; 2:1–3, 5, 11–12)
2. God chose and predestined his people in Christ for redemption and holiness according to the free counsel of his will. (1:3–14; 2:4, 8–9)
3. God's rich mercy in (1:7–8; 2:4–14) Christ has saved sinners; this free gift is by grace through faith alone.
4. Christ's earthly work of redemption (1:15–23; 3:1–13) was part of his cosmic reconciliation and exaltation in this age and the next.
5. Christ's (1:23; 2:10–15; 3:1–21) reconciliation entails uniting all people, whether Jew or Gentile, into his one body, the church, as a new creation (4:1–6).
6. Christ's people are renewed to new lives of holiness in thought, word, and deed, and must reject their old, sinful lifestyles (4:1–3, 17–32; 5:1–20).
7. Holiness of life (5:21–6:9) entails submission to proper authorities, and loving and considerate care for those in submission.
8. Christ has given powerful gifts to his church to bring about her unity, maturity, and defense against the onslaughts of the devil and his allies (4:7–16; 6:10–19).

What is the structure of the book?

Friends who follow Jesus : Praise God! Look at Who He is and what He has done! Here are several reasons why you should praise Him:

1. We should praise God because He has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places (v.3).

*Do I have a personal relationship with Jesus? If not, what is keeping me from one?
Am I truly thankful of all that is mine through Jesus? If not, what needs to change?*

These blessings come to us because we have been chosen by God (v.4a):

Election Verses for Further Study:

Rom. 8:30; Eph. 1:11; 1 Thes. 1:4; 2 Thes. 2:13; Titus 1:1, Deut. 7:6; Is. 45:4; John 6:44; Acts 13:48; Rom 8:29; 9:11; 1 Thess. 1:3, 4; 2 Tim 2:10.

Election is to result in our holiness (v.4b)

Do I recognize this as the goal of my salvation? Am I pursuing holiness today?

How This Doctrine Can Help Us:

1. It reminds us our salvation does not depend upon us. Many implications.
2. It reminds us that seeing other people saved doesn't depend *solely* upon us.
 - a. But Rom. 10 is still true. People are not saved apart from hearing and believing.

2. We should praise God because He has, in love, predestined us for adoption as sons (v.5).

Some Questions to Keep in Mind about Predestination:

1. *Does the Bible teach it?*
2. *How does Paul talk about it here?*
 - a. The context in which it occurs is love.
 - b. The context in which Paul is speaking about it is praise to God.
3. *Am I making too much of it? Am I being unfair to the Biblical text to try to 'explain it away?'*
4. *So...what about free will?*
 - a. Humans still have free will. But our will is not freer than God's.
 - b. There is a degree of mystery here.
 - c. This is a centuries old, ongoing debate worthy of much study. :)
5. *Am I being charitable to those around me who may...?*
 - a. Have questions, disagree, be struggling with this doctrine, etc.

We, who were once aliens and strangers, are now sons and daughters of God!

All of this is made possible by & for the glory of Jesus.

Works Consulted: MacArthur Study Bible, New Bible Commentary, Apologetics Study Bible, Messages by Mark Driscoll, Darrin Patrick, The Bible Reader's Commentary, a Commentary Critical and Expository, other Logos Resources