

Walk Through The New Testament

St. Matthew's Parish

Shirley and Church Streets

New Providence,

Bahamas

24th October 2023

The Epistle to the Ephesians

Introduction and Chapter 1

Ephesus was a city known for its intellectual and religious practices. While some have argued against Paul's authorship of this epistle, more than likely he was the one responsible for its writing while he was in prison.

There are two themes which dominate this epistle: 1. Christ has reconciled all of the created order to Himself and to God; and 2. Christ has united people of all nations to himself and to one another.

In Chapter 1:

- Paul recognizes the faithfulness of the saints at Ephesus
- Paul provides a list of all the blessings that they have received because of Christ's atoning work; God has predestined them to be his people in Christ; God has adopted them as his children; In Jesus they have been redeemed and God has poured his riches blessings on them; In Christ, God has provided all wisdom and insight for them to know the will of God; everything which has happened to them is a part of the mystery and will of God.
- They are growing in their spiritual discernment and they are being enlightened as they understand their hope in Christ. Indeed, they are growing in subjection to the authority of Christ.

Scriptural Summary for Chapters 2, & 3

1. Salvation by Grace through Faith ([Eph. 2:1-10](#))

- A. Hopelessness and helplessness without Christ ([Eph. 2:1-3](#))
- B. Hope in Christ ([Eph. 2:4-10](#))

2. Unity and the Peace of Christ ([Eph. 2:11-22](#))

- A. Unity of Christ's people ([Eph. 2:11-15](#))
- B. Peace with God ([Eph. 2:16-18](#))
- C. Implications of Christ's peace ([Eph. 2:19-22](#))

3. Revelation of the Gospel Mystery ([Eph. 3:1-13](#))

- A. Paul's apostolic ministry ([Eph. 3:1-7](#))
- B. The mystery and wisdom ([Eph. 3:8-13](#))

4. Paul's Prayer for Strength and Insight ([Eph. 3:14-21](#))

1. Ephesians 2:1-22 From Hostility to Peace

- a. 1-10 Paul now speaks about the former influences on their lives. They were spiritually dead through their sins and acts of disobedience; led astray by the prince of the air (Satan); and worse of all led by the passions and desires of the flesh. But God in His rich mercy and out of pure love changed all of that for their sake. While they were still dead, Christ made them alive and saved them and returned them to the course that God had chosen for them. It is by grace that they have been saved and not by works-it is the free unmerited gift of God. They are what God has made them, and whatever good works they achieve is what God prepared beforehand.
- b. 11-13 The gentiles who were aliens to the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants God made with Abraham were without hope

and without God. But by the blood of Jesus they have been brought near to God.

- c. 14-18 Jesus becomes the source of their peace. He has broken down the dividing wall of the Laws, statutes and ordinances which separated the Jew from the Gentile by His death on the cross. In short, by His death Jesus abolish the law; in other words they were not under a system of law-keeping trying to justify themselves but they were now under grace. The message of peace had been preached by Paul and the others. Through Christ both Jew and gentile have access to the Spirit of God.
- d. 19-22 Being found in one Body, the gentiles were no longer strangers and aliens, but they belonged to one household with the Jews, the foundation being the preaching of the gospel which is nothing more than a fulfilment of the apostles and prophets. Christ Jesus remains the head cornerstone. Jesus not only holds the building together, He is the source of its growth. It is through Jesus that they become God's Temple-the dwelling place of God!!!

2. Ephesians 3:1-21 Ministry to The Gentiles

- a. 1-6 Paul who had place people in prison for their confession of Christianity has now become a prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of the gentiles. Paul's work has been heard of by many within the Mediterranean region. The gospel Paul had proclaimed to the gentiles was not been revealed to him by human origin, but rather by Divine revelation. Despite the fact that what Paul had received was a mystery hidden in previous ages, Paul wrote this epistle for the purpose of making things plain and clear to his readers. And what is this mystery??? That the Gentiles would be joint heirs and partakers in the promises with God's people, the Jews, through the gospel.

- b. 7-13 Paul addresses his readers by pointing out that he is even less than the least of the saints because of his former life. Yet God chose him to be the instrument to bring the good news of boundless riches of grace to the gentiles. In fact, the message was not only for the gentiles but for the whole world. The mystery is not only revealed to the world but also to the heavenly powers so that they too could understand the wisdom (workings) of God. All this has become possible because of Jesus Christ who has given the gentiles access to God through faith. Paul indicates that his suffering for preaching such a gospel is proof that his work has been for the glorification of the gentiles.
- c. 14-21 Paul talks about the outward posture of reverence to God, by the bending of the knee. The same God from whom all the families of the earth exist and are controlled. Paul prays that both Jew and Gentile are strengthened by the God of all grace. Paul prays for them to grow in their relationship with Christ and be rooted and grounded in His love. The apostle prays for his readers the ability to comprehend the breath, length, height and depth of the love of God-even though the love of Christ can never be fully understood. Why?? So that the Christians, gentiles and Jews, make partake of the nature of God. Paul ends this section by a great act of praise to the God who is able to accomplish great things, far greater than anything that they could ask or imagine in this life. Glory be to Christ Jesus for making all this possible.