

Seven Bible Studies 2017

Epistles

June 11: Ephesians 1-3 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, June 11, 2017 ~ Ephesians 1 - 3

PAUL'S MINISTRY IN THE REGION: Paul first came to Ephesus for a short visit toward the end of his second missionary journey (Ac 18:18-19). Located on the SW coast of Asia Minor (modern day Turkey), Ephesus was one of the great cities in that part of the world. A Roman capital, it was a wealthy commercial center and home for the worship of the goddess Diana (cf. Ac 19:23-41). Though Paul briefly studied with the Jews at the local synagogue and was invited to stay longer, he made plans to visit them again after a quick trip to Jerusalem (Ac 18:20-21).

On his third missionary journey Paul made it back to Ephesus for an extended stay of three years (cf. Ac 19:1,10; 20:31). After his initial success in converting twelve disciples of John (Ac 19:1-7), Paul spent three months teaching in the local synagogue (Ac 19:8). Resistance to his doctrine forced him to leave the synagogue, but he was able to continue teaching in the school of Tyrannus for a period of two years. The end result is that the gospel spread from Ephesus throughout Asia Minor (Ac 19:9-10). A disturbance created by some of the local idol makers finally forced Paul to leave Ephesus (Ac 19:23-20:1).

Toward the end of his third journey, Paul stopped at nearby Miletus, and met with the elders of the church at Ephesus. Reminding them of his work with them, he charged them to fulfill their own responsibilities as overseers of the flock of God, and then bid them a tearful farewell (Ac 20:17-38). (CCEL.org)

In the first fourteen verses, Paul speaks of the blessings we have graciously received through Christ's death and resurrection.

"In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory. (13-14)

15 - 23

Paul continues in his prayer for the Ephesians that they will understand the greatness of Christ salvation. The great power that has been placed in Christ after his death in being placed beside His Father and having full control of the church (His body).

Ch 2

Paul has high words of praise for the Ephesians as they are dead to this past lives of sin and are serving Christ. Luckily, though we are all worthy of an eternal death, Christ's death has graced us with the hope of eternal salvation.

“But because of his great love for us, God, who is rich in mercy, made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions—it is by grace you have been saved.

For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith—and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God— not by works, so that no one can boast. For we are God’s handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.” (2:4-5, 8-10)

11 - 22

Since Christ brought in the new law through His teachings and ultimately, through death, both Jews and Gentiles were brought together in God’s plan of salvation.

“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, and in one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility.” (2:15-16)

The Jews didn't like the fact that the Gentiles were also now part of God's plan!! Christ brought peace to earth through his message but the Jews struggled as they felt they were better than the Gentiles.

Paul was excited to be able to deliver this message to the Gentiles at Ephesus that were now able to receive God's promise as well. We, as Gentiles ourselves, should be able to read Ephesians and be excited as well knowing we are just like the Ephesians here. Without Christ, we would also be lost! Praise God!!

“In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.”
(2:21-22)

Ch 3

Paul starts off in this chapter by stating God's marvelous plan for salvation was hidden from generations of Gentiles until Christ came to this earth to die for all people.

“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.” (3:6)

7 - 13

Paul remains very humble as a servant of Christ's! He always places himself as the least among the apostles even though he, I believe, had the most influence and devout servitude! While in prison for the Gentiles, he continues to keep an up-beat attitude towards God's people. It's really awesome how God chose to use Paul, who persecuted Gentiles, to relay the message of salvation to them now.

“In him and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.” (3:12)

The remainder of the chapter is a very beautiful prayer from Paul to Christ regarding the Ephesians.

I can't help but to recall the marvelous song created by verses 20 - 21!

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.” (20-21)

<https://youtu.be/zetpK950L1U>

“Acappella-Now to Him”

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, brother Ryan!

Comment:

Steven Wright:
Thank you Ryan! Just had a chance to read and listen!

Comment:

Debbie Bolinger:
Thanjs 4 sharing!!!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Thank you, Ryan Ingle! love, love, love the beautiful prayer put in to song! God's sovereign purpose and planning- chapter 1. We are His workmanship to do good works- chapter 2. And a conclusion from the apostle that God's power and love is immeasurably more than men can imagine- chapter 3. A beautiful prayer of thanksgiving that encourages our souls! ❤️

June 18: Ephesians 4-6 (Ryan Ingle)

Sunday, June 18, 2017 ~ Ephesians 4 - 6

Happy FATHER'S Day!

Ch 4

Again, Paul reinforces his previous comment in ch 3 of him being in prison for his service to God. He continues telling the Ephesians how they should live their lives for God in the first few verses. He speaks of staying unified as a body...“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to one hope when you were called; one Lord, one faith, one baptism; one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” (4-6)

When we start having divisions amongst ourselves, that's what leads to satan getting his stronghold on us. Paul wanted to make sure they stayed true to God.

Paul goes on to mention Christ's appearance on earth for a time and how while he was here on earth, he gave us the apostles, prophets, the evangelist, the pastors and teachers to help in this unification of His body here on earth.

These aides in our walk are meant to help support our spiritual development in Christ's body so that we don't give into false teachings...“From him the whole body, joined and held together by every supporting ligament, grows and builds itself up in love, as each part does its work.” (4:16)

Paul finishes out the chapter by telling them not to be as the other Gentiles and continue sinning. Continue in what you have been taught and share with others the great message of Christ.

These are a couple verses each one of us should know as we have heard them quoted very often for good reason.

“Therefore each of you must put off falsehood and speak truthfully to your neighbor, for we are all members of one body. “In your anger do not sin”: Do not let the sun go down while you are still angry, and do not give the devil a foothold. Anyone who has been stealing must steal no

longer, but must work, doing something useful with their own hands, that they may have something to share with those in need.”
(25-28)

Ch 5

“For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth)” (5:8-9)
Paul shows his approval of the Ephesians here by stating, "but now you are light in the Lord."

“But everything exposed by the light becomes visible—and everything that is illuminated becomes a light. This is why it is said: “Wake up, sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you.”” (5:13-14)

How many of us have picked a piece of wood outside and found the insects scatter quickly as the light has exposed them? Let's make sure as being Christians we don't have anything to hide...as we are to be the light of the world...exposing evil and overcoming evil with goodness (light)

“...Instead, be filled with the Spirit, speaking to one another with psalms, hymns, and songs from the Spirit. Sing and make music from your heart to the Lord, always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (18-20)

Well referenced group of verses here! If we immerse ourselves in psalms, hymns, and songs from the spirit, just think how much our own spirits will be lifted up as well as we will be praising God. Most people love to sing as it uplifts them and others around them.

The remainder of this chapter addresses the husband and wife relationship. The first part speaks of how the wife should submit to their husband as he is the head of the house. That seems like such a old-time concept anymore as "women are to be equals.

“In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated their own body, but they feed and care for their body, just as Christ does the church— for we are members of his body.”(28-30)

And men! Don't be thinking it's a oneway street! We aren't off the hook! "Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her to make her holy, cleansing her by the washing with water through the word, and to present her to himself as a radiant church, without stain or wrinkle or any other blemish, but holy and blameless. In this same way, husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself.” (25-28)

We have very specific instructions to treat our wives correctly and to love them as Christ loved His church. Just cause the woman is to submit to the husband doesn't mean the man abuses the woman. Let's all keep in mind that we have to keep Christ as the center of our families and to love Him first, even before our spouses!

Ch 6

“Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. “Honor your father and mother” — which is the first commandment with a promise—” (1-2)

The purpose here is for the children to understand they aren't supreme. If a child get away with things, then they learn they don't need to listen to anyone. However, if they are taught to obey their parents, then they will also obey God and His commandments. We, as parents, have a critical role here in developing our children correctly so they will respect God as well as us.

“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. Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist, with the breastplate of righteousness in place, and with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace. In addition to all this,

take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. Take the helmet of salvation and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.”
(6:13-17)

Paul's final words to the Ephesians is one that we use on a regular basis ourselves. The devil knows our weaknesses! Even with knowing that, our time here on earth is our testing period to see if we will be like Christ. If we will be like Paul. Christ we perfect, so we know we can't attain to that level. Paul, even though he felt he was the least apostle, he was one of the strongest in my opinion. He had the humbled attitude as his former life always weighed on him. We should have that same feeling though as our past life should remind us of how we have changed and that we always need God's grace! The armor of God in this passage is key to us passing the test here on earth.

“And pray in the Spirit on all occasions with all kinds of prayers and requests. With this in mind, be alert and always keep on praying for all the Lord's people. Pray also for me, that whenever I speak, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should.”
(6:18-20)

We should all have this attitude, that we pray for one another. Such a beautiful ending to Paul's letter here!

I wanted to add that we are blessed at Pleasant Hill to have John Lee with us this week. He referenced Paul's prayer here and starts that it was interesting Paul did not pray that God would help him to get out of jail, nor provide for his daily rations, but that God would continue to help him in his courage to continue spreading His word!

Ephesians is such an encouraging letter as it was not a corrective letter but of encouragement that they were on the right track. This was a relief for Paul while he was in prison to know how they were doing.

Comment:

Butch O'Neal:
Thank you, brother Ryan!

Comment:

Marc Hermon:
These three chapters should be revisited often by all Christian readers. Outstanding!

Comment:

Ginger Hermon:
Some of my favorite chapters & verses were in Sunday's study. Full of instruction for Holy living. Thanks, Ryan!

Comment:

Charles Fry:
Priorities for Christian Life.
4:1-5:21, discipleship.
5:22-33, Christian marriage.
6:1-4, Christian parents and children.
6:5-9, Christians in the workplace
6:10-20, Christian maturity, take your stand.