

Ephesians

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Welcome to a study of the book of Ephesians

The close study of any book of literature often begins with the questions of authorship, time of authorship, purpose, and themes. The authorship of Ephesians is contested; the dates for writing range from 60 CE to 90 CE; the purpose receives some general agreement: Paul or someone wrote to strengthen, fortify people in the church confronted with controversies or at least a temptation to live as children of the world; and finally, most writers would agree with Daniel P. Wallace's succinct statement: "The Church is to maintain the unity in practice which Christ has brought about positionally." Pragmatically stated, "Christians, get along with each other!"

As for Paul himself, as a historical person, as founder of Christianity, the discussion is on-going. What is clear is that Paul's Christianity contained eclectic and hellenized components. That he did not know Jesus as a contemporary in the way of the other apostles but received his apostleship directly from the resurrected Christ is meriting on-going discussion. In back of this discussion is the on-going debate about whether Jesus was Jewish and how fully or completely. That Jews would have accepted an anointed one, a messiah--and even a resurrected messiah--as human is contrasted to Paul's incarnated, dying, and

resurrected God. Sorting through the tangle of intellectual positions and counter-positions is a challenging task taking one back into early church history and continuing scholarly treatises in the present era. Deciding one's personal position is ultimately a matter, not so much of intellect although its rigor is needed, of responding in faith to a critical commitment: the relationship of the divine and human and bridging the divide between the two so often created by systems of logic.

This approach to Ephesians is largely one of reading what the epistle in six chapters has to say and responding to what the text in its current form seems to mean. Beneath such an approach are obviously complicated issues of authorship, manuscript and language in which originally transmitted, a history of the first century of emerging Christianity, and generally understood themes complicated by who the writer is and what the purpose for writing was as well as what has resulted from years of interpretation and application.

The reader will find links to other resources designed to encourage on-going study and enquiry.

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Authorship

The debate continues whether Paul is the author of Ephesians. *The Oxford Companion to the Bible* quotes 1.1, 3.1-13:4.1, and 6. 19-22 as indicating this letter was written while the author was in prison. It goes on to say some postscripts in ancient manuscripts also indicate that the epistle is written in Rome. The conclusion, then, is that the letter was written about 61-63. Based on Acts 23-26 and the Caesarean imprisonment of Paul, some have suggested the letter could have been written as early as the mid 50's (Bruce Metzger and Michael D. Coogan, Oxford 1993, 186). *Oxford Companion* summarizes other scholarship questioning Paul's authorship:

In 1792 the English divine Edward Evanson first questioned Pauline authorship. During the nineteenth century, German scholars gathered arguments in favor of pseudonymous origin, and today most researchers treat the letter as non-Pauline, dating it between 70 and 100 CE. Some think the author was Onesimus, the runaway slave mentioned in Paul's letter to Philemon, who is then further identified with the Bishop of Ephesus bearing the name Onesimus (mentioned in Ignatius's letter to the Ephesians 1.3, 2.1, 6.2). 186

The *Oxford Companion* then summarizes arguments against Pauline authorship:

Style: long sentences, new vocabulary (compared to uncontested Pauline letters), well-known words with new meanings, missing Pauline terms and phrases. *Oxford Companion* concludes, though, after comparing diction to Pauline prayers in other letters as well as citations referred to, that "it is not astonishing that its style and vocabulary differ from Pauline prose usage" (186).

Historical reasons: a mutual relationship between Paul and the Ephesians is denied in 1.15, 3.23, and 4. 21, yet Acts (18.17-20.1, 17) indicates both short and long Pauline activity in Ephesus. Conclusion: letter is addressed not to Ephesus but an unknown city, Ephesus is the correct address, but Paul is not the author. *Oxford Companion* indicates the dispute can be resolved if one suggests Paul wrote only to former gentiles who had joined the church after Paul left Ephesus. Other historical argument include content as reflecting more an apostolic and church authority proclamation than Paul's early justification by faith. Gnostic invasions, it is argued, have invaded the language, but *Oxford Companion* Nag Hammadi documents show gnosticism should be dated no earlier than the second century CE. In support of Pauline authorship, the *Companion* points out that Paul was capable of learning, developing, and correcting himself and that no "plagiarist would...have dared to be so independent of earlier Pauline letters. 187

Literary dependence: Ephesians seems to rely heavily upon Colossians. The *Companion* explains, "The similarity between Ephesians and Colossians might have a simple reason: at about the same time of his life, Paul may have used the same general outline to address the Colossians in polemical terms and to send a peaceful message to the Ephesian church, a kind of encyclical to all the churches in Asia Minor" (187).

Theology: "Ecclesiology overshadows Christology, gnosticizing knowledge and cosmological speculations encroach upon the genuine existential faith; ... institution and tradition replace trust in grace and eschatological hope; ... biblical ethics have yielded to petit-bourgeois moralism" (187) Part of the argument is that Ephesians seems to be social with cosmic dimensions whereas other Pauline letters spoke of a personal encounter between God and the individual. Yet, the *Companion* counters, Paul has spoken of justification, reconciliation and solidarity of Jews and gentiles under grace, peace, mission, and the final liberation of the cosmos.

I tend to agree with the *Oxford Companion's* general conclusion: "Ephesians should be considered an authentic Pauline letter. Its irenic and embracing character distinguishes it among the more bellicose letters of Paul. It deserves to be called his testament" (187).

Stephen Carlson also argues for Paul's authorship:

It is important to recognize that there is a cumulative argument against Pauline authorship. If genuine, Ephesians would not be a typical Pauline letter; nevertheless, many of its concepts are not outside the ambit of his thinking. The fact remains that we have excellent evidence for its authenticity, so we should consider Ephesians to be yet another testament to Paul's versatility.

Arguments for non-Pauline authorship are summarized by *Oxford Companion* as four distinguishing traits:

1. Ephesians speaks of only one mystery: a secret that has been recently disclosed, the eternal will of God to save gentiles as well as Jews. "The liberation of individuals takes place within the framework of God's kingdom, in the victory of his love and righteousness over all injustice and misery" (188).
2. Ephesians is the magna carta of the one, holy apostolic, and catholic church. "God's love for Jews and gentiles, not the church, is the 'mystery of God,' 'mystery of Christ,' and 'mystery of the gospel'" (188).
3. The good and evil principalities and powers, and a devilish realm are antiquated language. "...the author of Ephesians probably means by these terms biological and psychological, social and political, cultural and religious forces that are unseen and yet encountered in human existence" (188).
4. Chapter five tends to require submissiveness. The *Companion* rightfully points out that mutual subordination in love has nothing to do with loss of honor and self-hood. Christ subordinated himself to the will of the Father.

Several positions for or against Paul's authorship have been advanced; following are a sampling of these:

1. Edgar Goodspeed's position is that Ephesians may be an introduction to Paul's collected letters: <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/goodspeed/ch14.html>

Jülicher long ago perceived that on most accounts the natural explanation of the purpose and aim of Ephesians was to serve as an introduction to a collection of Pauline letters. I had come to that position independently and find great satisfaction in his interest in it. It was in fact only what he considered its excessive use of Colossians that prevented him from adopting that explanation and led him to declare the problem of the origin of Ephesians still unsolved. But of course the extreme use of Colossians in Ephesians simply means that the writer of Ephesians has known Colossians longest and so must be an Asian Christian. This is the explanation of that excessive influence:

The collector of the letters, aware from his possession of Colossians-Laodiceans that Paul was a powerful writer of letters, informed by the Acts of his relations with other churches, and stimulated by its heroic picture of Paul, collects all the Pauline letters he can find with its aid and writes Ephesians as a general introduction, to introduce the collected letters to the churches. In doing so he makes use of all the Pauline letters

he has found, but of course he has known Colossians longest and is most pervaded by its language.

But if a name and an identity be demanded for the author of Ephesians, the name of Onesimus of Ephesus comes at once to the mind. The Pauline corpus came into being in the days when Onesimus and Polycarp seem to have been active in Christian work in Asia—Polycarp in Smyrna and Onesimus in Ephesus. Onesimus may have been the Laodicean Christian who brought Colossians-Philemon to Ephesus; who so likely to have cherished and pored over them as he? He may have been the collector of the Pauline corpus, of which he thus had the nucleus. And he may have been the writer of the great preface which we know as Ephesians, building thus a splendid monument to his great friend and teacher, who had saved him from slavery and paganism and opened before him a new life. One would like to think so. [1]

2. Catholic bishops apparently question the authorship of Paul:

Paul, who is designated as the sole author at Eph 1:1, is described in almost unparalleled terms with regard to the significant role he has in God's plan for bringing the Gentiles to faith in Christ (Eph 3:1-12). Yet at the time of writing he is clearly in prison (Eph 3:1; 4:1; 6:20), suffering afflictions (Eph 3:13). Traditionally this "Captivity Epistle" has, along with Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon, been dated to an imprisonment in Rome, likely in A. D. 61-63. Others appeal to an earlier imprisonment, perhaps in Caesarea (Act 23:27-27:2). Since the early nineteenth century, however, much of critical scholarship has considered the letter's style and use of words (especially when compared with Colossians), its concept of the church, and other points of doctrine put forward by the writer as grounds for serious doubt about authorship by Paul. The letter may then be the work of a secretary writing at the apostle's direction or of a later disciple who sought to develop Paul's ideas for a new situation around A.D. 80-100.

<http://www.nccbuscc.org/nab/bible/ephesians/intro.htm>

3. Daniel B. Wallace of Dallas Theological Seminary summarizes the traditional evidence of Paul's authorship as external evidence (Marcion, Clement of Rome, Hermas, Barnabas, Ignatius and Polycarp, Tertullian, Clement of Alexandria, and Origin), internal evidence (explicit statements, literary affinities, and theological consistency). He then cites three reasons against Paul's authorship as historical, linguistic/literary arguments, and theological discrepancies. He then responds to each argument:

<http://www.bible.org/docs/soapbox/ephotl.htm>

4. A. D. Howell-Smith emphasizes the doubtful authorship by Paul (*Jesus Not a Myth*, pp. 132-133):

If the Pauline authorship of Colossians is doubtful, that of Ephesians is still more so. In style it differs even more than the Epistle to the Colossians from the earlier Epistles attributed to Paul. Though it has stylistic peculiarities, as well as expressions, which differentiate it from Colossians, there are such close resemblances, in places, between the two as to suggest that Ephesians was written in imitation of the other work. The Christologies of both Epistles are similar. It is hard to believe that Paul wrote that the Church is "built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets" (Ephes. ii, 20); would one who had to fight so hard for his claim to apostleship against those who denied it have spoken in this impersonal way of the Apostles as a closed and sacred body? Still harder is it to regard as Pauline the statement that the "mystery which from all ages has been hid" - to wit, "that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs" of the Gospel of Christ - has been now revealed "unto (Christ's) holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit" (Ephes. iii, 5, 6, 9). The "holy apostles" are here represented as joint recipients of the same revelation, and Paul is merged in the group as having no special status of his own in the divine economy. That which Paul called "my Gospel" is no longer recognized as such, and the long struggle he had undergone to win for his Gentile converts spiritual equality with Jewish Christians has been quite forgotten.

<http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/ephesians.html>

5. B. W. Johnson remarks on the uncertainty of Paul's authorship:

The People's New Testament (1891):http://www.ccel.org/j/johnson_bw/pnt/PNT10-00.HT

It is not possible to determine the *date* of this Epistle with exactness. It was written at a time when Paul was a prisoner (6:20), and hence must have been written either at Cæsarea or at Rome. Meyer inclines to the first place, but the general consensus of opinion is that it belongs to the group of the Epistles which were sent forth from his Roman prison. Tychicus was the messenger to whom, on the same journey, were entrusted both this (6:21) and the Epistle to Colosse (Col. 4:7).

6. Bible Basic questions both the authorship and date of Ephesians:

The letter states that it is from Paul, writing from prison, however some commentators are not convinced due to its difference in style, different use of words (such as 'church'), and theological differences from other Pauline letters. Due to these controversies, the date of the authorship of this letter is not clear, although it was probably written before 95 A.D., perhaps as early as 62 A.D.. If it wasn't written by Paul himself, it was certainly written by a Jewish Christian who was a devoted admirer of Paul.

<http://netministries.org/Bbasics/BBEph.htm>

7. G.A. van den Bergh van Eysinga "[The Spuriousness of So-Called Pauline Epistles](#)"

Are the Letters of Paul Real Letters?

IN ORDER TO ANSWER this question we must first define what we mean by a letter. A letter is a medium for the mutual exchange of ideas between two persons, or in certain cases between the writer and a limited circle of readers; hence it is not intended for the public. Deissmann has already distinguished between the letter and the epistle, the latter being a literary production which is not really intended for the persons to whom it is addressed, but for the general public. In the case of a real correspondence the writer naturally reveals his own personality, and enters at once into the thoughts and feelings of the person addressed. Such a document, therefore, enables us to form some idea not only of the writer, but also to a certain extent of the readers. Cicero's letters to Atticus belong to this class; he shows himself in his true character. In his letters to his friends, on the other hand (*Ad Familiares*), he [63] reckons on other readers than trusted friends alone, and therefore they not without a certain amount of rhetorical embellishment. Towards the end of the first century A.D. we find the writing of letters a regular form of literary composition. In the schools of rhetoric letters dealing with some historical event, and written under some fictitious historical name (the so-called *suasoria*), were composed as exercises, and became a part of the literature of the period. Varro was the first to write scientific essays in the form of letters, and his example was followed by many others after him. The didactic letter came into existence; treatises on jurisprudence and medicine took the form of letters. The letter of exhortation we find especially favoured by the Stoics; Panaetius and Posidonius wrote ethical treatises in epistolary form; and Seneca's *Epistles*, in particular, may be described as a handbook of practical wisdom for everybody. The form of literature which may be described as the Letter of Edification was particularly in vogue with the Christians.

To write letters in another person's name was at that time just as common as to introduce well-known persons into narratives, and to put sayings and speeches into their mouths - like those of Jesus, for example, in the Gospels, or those of Peter and Paul in the Acts. In all this there is not the remotest intention of deceiving. Anyone who had anything to say by way of exhortation or edification wrote a letter, without troubling himself about deficiencies in the external form. Thus the Epistle to the Ephesians is without an address, that to the Hebrews without a suitable introduction, that of James without a proper conclusion; the First Epistle of John lacks [64] both introduction and conclusion.

At first no one thought of regarding these productions as actual letters written by the men whose names they bear. Gradually all this was changed. The desire for information, reverence for the authority of the written word, the formation of a canon - these are the factors that brought about the result that, from the time of Irenaeus (c. 180 A.D.) onward, the thirteen (or even fourteen) Pauline Epistles and the Catholic Epistles - nay, all the documents of early Christianity so far as they were accepted by the Church - passed for the work of the writers whose names they bore, and were also supposed to be intended for the readers who were named either at the beginning, or the end, or in the title, or by tradition. This applies also to letters which are universally admitted to be later compositions - as, for

example, Paul's Epistle to the Laodiceans, the Third Epistle to the Corinthians, the letter of Jesus to King Abgarus, and others.

Modern times brought a reaction against this attitude. The apocryphal letters were rejected immediately after the Reformation; later the genuineness of some of the writings of the Apostolic Fathers was also doubted; since Semler, many of the Pauline and Catholic letters were added to the list; the Tübingen School left little but the four principal letters. The Radical School has arrived at the conclusion that the so-called letters are not letters at all, thereby returning to the point of view of the time in which they were composed. The Muratori fragment, a list of New Testament books belonging to the end of the second century and named after the Italian scholar by whom it was discovered, tells us of Paul: [65] "Although the blessed apostle writes only to seven churches" - whose names follow - "nevertheless it is clear that one single Church was spread over the whole earth. And John, although in the Apocalypse he speaks to seven churches, nevertheless addresses all churches equally."

8. J. Peter Bercovitz, Ph.D in the [The Pauline Legacy](#) acknowledges the noble and thoughtful work of Ephesians but leaves open the question of Paul's authorship:

As post-Pauline Christianity was seeking to meet competing world views, with their speculations and rituals, the pseudonymous author of *Colossians* defends the Pauline tradition. The writer sets forth an eloquent and exalted view of Christ (Colossians 1:15-20), with references to

-  Christ's pre-existence (1:17);
-  His function as the agent of creation (1:16);
-  His divine nature ("in him all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell"), 1:19; and
-  His rôle in reconciling all things to himself (1:20).

The author views Paul's sufferings (and martyrdom, retrospectively) as completing "what is lacking in Christ's afflictions for the sake of his body, that is, the church" (1:24). If the author's language and style are not quite what Paul's were, this letter is nevertheless a noble and thoughtful work.

Ephesians incorporates significant portions of Colossians, and presents a kind of compendium of Paul's thought. The pseudonymous author rehearses some of Paul's favorite themes, such as human sinfulness and the gospel of grace (Ephesians 2:1-10). The emphasis upon the unity in Christ of gentile and Jew (2:11-22) gives an ecumenical tone to the work, at a time (perhaps 80-95 A.D.) when Jews were expelling Christians from synagogues, and Christian writers were comparing Pharisees to white-washed tombs (Matthew 23:27). In the opening address (Ephesians 1:1) some Greek manuscripts include the words, "To the saints who are **in Ephesus** and are faithful," while other manuscripts

have only, “to the saints who are also faithful;” from this fact we may conclude that this was originally a circular letter addressed perhaps to a group of churches in the province of Asia, with one copy addressed to Ephesus.

9. Robert Price The Evolution of the Pauline Canon

Finally, I observe that the idea of the Pauline collection serves as something of an allegory of reading (Paul de Man), or rather perhaps an allegory of writing, for the present paper. For one finds oneself in the role of Onesimus or Marcion, rounding up all the various theories on the origin of the corpus, collecting both the well-known and the obscure. One puts them together and finally writes one's own Laodiceans/Ephesians, this paper, to introduce one's collection to a wider audience.

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Date

As previously indicated, the authorship and date of Ephesians are both questioned: The *Oxford Companion* suggests a 61-63 date but then points to a date as early as the 50's. This uncertainty in date is reflected in most scholarly research:

1. Daniel B. Wallace settles for a date of about 60 CE: <http://www.bible.org/docs/soapbox/ephotl.htm>

This letter was sent while Paul was in prison in Rome (59-61 CE). Since the apostle gives no indication that he will be released soon (contra Philippians), it is likely that this was written before the end of his imprisonment. Further, it is obvious that it was sent along with the letter to the Colossians and the letter to Philemon. Once the occasion for the writing of Colossians/Philemon is established,²⁴ it can be reasonably supposed that all three letters were written sometime during the middle of Paul's imprisonment—hence, c. 60 CE. But more than that can be said here.

2. Matthew Henry merely says the letter was written while Paul was a prisoner in Rome:

** This epistle was written when St. Paul was a prisoner at

Rome.

3. The Preface to Ephesians from Web Early Christian Writings suggests a date of 80-100 CE. <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/ephesians.html>

Against Wallace, it is not the case that 1 Clement is familiar with Ephesians. The earliest author to show clear dependence upon Ephesians is Ignatius (Eph 12:1, Polyc 5:1). Kummel reasons (ibid., p. 366): "If, then, it is determined that Eph was written in the post-Pauline period, the fact that Ignatius knows it implies a date no later than the first decade of the second century. A more exact date might be determined if we could prove a literary dependence of I Peter on Eph, but in view of the common paranetic tradition this is not convincing. And since Eph seems to know the collected Pauline letters, an earlier date is not likely. The date of writing cannot be determined more closely than sometime between 80 and 100."

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Purpose

1. Goodspeed explains the purpose of the book of Ephesians as a rhapsody on Christian salvation written to remind people of their faith in a time when sects were appearing everywhere.

Ephesians is a great rhapsody on the worth of the Christian salvation. Like Hebrews it belongs to an age when men needed to reflect on the worth of their faith. The situation lying back of it is twofold: the sects are beginning to appear, and the Pauline letters have been discovered and collected. To introduce this collection to Christians everywhere, to remind apathetic Christians of the great values of their faith, and to check the rising tide of sect and schism Ephesians is written. <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/goodspeed/ch14.html>

2. Daniel B. Wallace explains the purpose for writing Ephesians as , partially, growing out of a need to address heresy:

While Paul was sitting in prison, contemplating his upcoming trial and potential work in the west, he began formulating some parting comments to make to the churches of Asia Minor. As he dialogued with his amanuensis over its contents, a rough draft of Ephesians was probably put together in outline form. The amanuensis then began to fill in the details.

Then, startling news from the east came: there was a new heresy in Colossae which was infecting the church there. At about the same time, Onesimus appeared before Paul with his confession of abandoning and robbing his owner, Philemon.²⁹

At this juncture, Paul decided several things: (1) write to the Colossians with appropriate warnings, though taking the material mostly from a letter which already addressed some of the very same issues in a larger perspective; (2) write to Philemon, urging him to take Onesimus back, as a freeman—and even to prepare a room for the apostle himself; (3) finish the letter to all the churches in Asia Minor and have it sent with the other two letters.

<http://www.bible.org/docs/soapbox/ephotl.htm>

3. Matthew Henry's Commentary

The design appears to be to strengthen the Ephesians in the faith of Christ, and to give exalted views of the love of God, and of the dignity and excellence of Christ, fortifying their minds against the scandal of the cross. He shows that they were saved by grace, and that however wretched they once were, they now had equal privileges with the Jews. He encourages them to persevere in their Christian calling, and urges them to walk in a manner becoming their profession, faithfully discharging the general and common duties of religion, and the special duties of particular relations.

4. B. W. White The People's New Testament

It was probably written to meet certain difficulties which were arising in the church. It was asked why the imperfections of Judaism and the errors of the Gentile religions existed so many ages before the Gospel was revealed? Was the Gospel an afterthought of God? Probably the leading thought is that, "The church of Jesus Christ, in which Jew and Gentile are made one, is a creation

of the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit, decreed from eternity, and destined for eternity." In [chapters 1-3](#), he shows the church was foreordained of God, that it had been redeemed, and that Jew and Gentile have been made one in Christ. In [chapters 4-6](#), the Apostle enters upon a practical application, enforcing unity, love, newness of life, walking in the strength of the Lord, and the armor of God. [186]

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Allen Turner <http://www.allanturner.com/eph.html>

Paul does not write this letter to the Ephesians to rebuke them for any irregularity of conduct, like he does the Corinthians, nor for any perversion of the gospel, as he does the Galatians. His letter was one of joyous praise for God's eternal purpose. As such, it would serve as an antidote to the pagan mystery religions which were all around them, and to the arguments of the Judaizers who would be using all their powers of persuasion to impress these former pagans, who had prided themselves as guardians of the great Temple of Diana, with the pomp and ceremony of Judaism, along with its Jerusalem Temple. But why, someone might ask, did God permit Judaism and the pagan mystery religions to exist so long before He revealed the gospel? Was the gospel simply an afterthought of God? Absolutely not! God was working out His eternal plan for the redemption of mankind in Christ Jesus. In fact, the leading thought of this letter is: "The church of Jesus Christ, in which Jew and Gentile are made one, is a creation of the Father, through the Son, in the Holy Spirit, decreed from eternity, and destined for eternity."

Themes

1, Daniel B. Wallace

The theme of Ephesians is "the Church, the Body of Christ." Put in a sentence, the theme is found in Eph 4:1-3—"The Church is to maintain the unity in practice which Christ has brought about positionally." Pragmatically stated, "Christians, get along with each other!"

<http://www.bible.org/docs/soapbox/ephotl.htm>

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Summary

From Goodspeed, a quick overview of Ephesians characterizes it as a summary of Pauline thought:

It is cast in that half-liturgical style so characteristic of the last decade of the first century; we see it in the canticles of Luke-Acts, in Revelation, Hebrews, I Peter, I Clement. The first and second chapters constitute a summary of Pauline Christianity in the form of a jubilate over the blessedness of the Christian salvation. Ephesians is like the overture of an opera, foreshadowing the melodies that are to follow. All these great aspects of Christian truth the reader was to find more fully dealt with in the letters themselves, which of course followed Ephesians. <http://www.earlychristianwritings.com/goodspeed/ch14.html>

Second-generation Christianity needed to be reminded of the great religious values it had inherited, as the Revelation and Hebrews show. Ephesians opens with a jubilant summary of Pauline thought, 1:3-14. The writer sets forth the supreme worth of Christianity, which his contemporaries were in danger of forgetting, 1:15-23. The Christian experience is nothing less than a new life through the mercy of God, 2:1-10. The death of Christ has opened to the Greeks a way to God, 2:11-22.

Paul in his writings has declared the Greeks' full rights in Christianity, 3:1-13, as they will see when they read his letters. In a prayerful appeal the writer sets forth the grandeur of the Christian's experience

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of Christ's love, and an exultant doxology marks the conclusion of the main part of the epistle, 3:14-21

Christians must be united against the sects, 4:1-15 There is but one body, one Spirit, one hope, one Lord one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all. We must not be blown about and swung around by every wind of doctrine through the trickery of men with their ingenuity in inventing error. Christians must live the new, upright life of purity, patience integrity, and forbearance, 4:17-5:2. They must give up their old sins and live in the new light, 5:3-21. The marriage relation is made the symbol of the union of Christ with the church, 5:22-33. Children, parents, slaves, and masters have their special duties as Christians, 6:1-9. They must all put on the Christian armor and carry on the Christian warfare, 6:10-20. The farewell, 6:21-24, mentions Tychicus, Paul's well-known messenger of Col. 4:7, Acts 20:4. This is a part of the Pauline disguise, like Timothy in Hebrews 13:23 and Silvanus and Mark in I Pet. 5:12, 13.

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3. Daniel B. Wallace <http://www.bible.org/docs/soapbox/epohl.htm>

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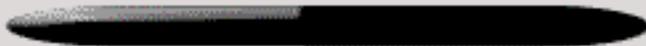
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Dr. Reggie Kidd

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King James Text

Ephesians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

Ephesians 1:2 Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

Ephesians 1:4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

Ephesians 1:5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

Ephesians 1:6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

Ephesians 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Ephesians 1:8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;

Ephesians 1:9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

Ephesians 1:10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

Ephesians 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

Ephesians 1:12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in

Christ.

Ephesians 1:13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

Ephesians 1:14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Ephesians 1:15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,

Ephesians 1:16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

Ephesians 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

Ephesians 1:18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

Ephesians 1:19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

Ephesians 1:20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,

Ephesians 1:21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

Ephesians 1:22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,

Ephesians 1:23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

Ephesians 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this

world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

Ephesians 2:3 Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

Ephesians 2:4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

Ephesians 2:5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

Ephesians 2:6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

Ephesians 2:7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

Ephesians 2:9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 2:11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

Ephesians 2:12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

Ephesians 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 2:14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

Ephesians 2:15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

Ephesians 2:16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

Ephesians 2:17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

Ephesians 2:18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

Ephesians 2:19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

Ephesians 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

Ephesians 2:21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

Ephesians 2:22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

Ephesians 3:1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

Ephesians 3:2 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

Ephesians 3:3 How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,

Ephesians 3:4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

Ephesians 3:5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

Ephesians 3:6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

Ephesians 3:7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

Ephesians 3:8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

Ephesians 3:9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

Ephesians 3:10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

Ephesians 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

Ephesians 3:12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

Ephesians 3:13 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

Ephesians 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Ephesians 3:15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

Ephesians 3:16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

Ephesians 3:17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

Ephesians 3:18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

Ephesians 3:19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Ephesians 3:20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

Ephesians 3:21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Ephesians 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

Ephesians 4:2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

Ephesians 4:3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:4 There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

Ephesians 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

Ephesians 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Ephesians 4:7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

Ephesians 4:8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

Ephesians 4:9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

Ephesians 4:10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

Ephesians 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

Ephesians 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

Ephesians 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

Ephesians 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

Ephesians 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

Ephesians 4:16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Ephesians 4:17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

Ephesians 4:18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

Ephesians 4:19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

Ephesians 4:20 But ye have not so learned Christ;

Ephesians 4:21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

Ephesians 4:22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

Ephesians 4:23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

Ephesians 4:24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

Ephesians 4:25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

Ephesians 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

Ephesians 4:27 Neither give place to the devil.

Ephesians 4:28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

Ephesians 4:29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

Ephesians 4:30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Ephesians 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

Ephesians 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

Ephesians 5:1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Ephesians 5:3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

Ephesians 5:4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

Ephesians 5:5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Ephesians 5:6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

Ephesians 5:7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

Ephesians 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

Ephesians 5:9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

Ephesians 5:10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

Ephesians 5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

Ephesians 5:12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

Ephesians 5:13 But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

Ephesians 5:14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

Ephesians 5:15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

Ephesians 5:16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Ephesians 5:17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

Ephesians 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

Ephesians 5:19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

Ephesians 5:20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

Ephesians 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

Ephesians 5:22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

Ephesians 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

Ephesians 5:24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Ephesians 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

Ephesians 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Ephesians 5:28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

Ephesians 5:29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

Ephesians 5:30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Ephesians 5:31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

Ephesians 5:32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Ephesians 5:33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

Ephesians 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

Ephesians 6:2 Honour thy father and mother; which is the first commandment with promise;

Ephesians 6:3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

Ephesians 6:4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Ephesians 6:5 Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to

the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

Ephesians 6:6 Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

Ephesians 6:7 With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:

Ephesians 6:8 Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

Ephesians 6:9 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Ephesians 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Ephesians 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Ephesians 6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Ephesians 6:14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

Ephesians 6:15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

Ephesians 6:16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

Ephesians 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Ephesians 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Ephesians 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,

Ephesians 6:20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Ephesians 6:21 But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:

Ephesians 6:22 Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts.

Ephesians 6:23 Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 6:24 Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

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[Interpretation 1](#)

[Eph 1:1](#) Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the saints that are at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus:

[Eph 1:2](#) Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

[Eph 1:3](#) Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly *places* in Christ:

[Eph 1:4](#) even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blemish before him in love:

[Eph 1:5](#) having foreordained us unto adoption as sons through Jesus Christ unto himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

[Eph 1:6](#) to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he freely bestowed on us in the Beloved:

[Eph 1:7](#) in whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace,

[Eph 1:8](#) which he made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence,

[Eph 1:9](#) making known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he purposed in him

[Eph 1:10](#) unto a dispensation of the fulness of the times, to sum up all things in Christ, the things in the heavens, and the things upon the earth; in him, *I say*,

[Eph 1:11](#) in whom also we were made a heritage, having been foreordained according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his will;

[Eph 1:12](#) to the end that we should be unto the praise of his glory, we who had before hoped in Christ:

[Eph 1:13](#) in whom ye also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation,-- in whom, having also believed, ye were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

[Eph 1:14](#) which is an earnest of our inheritance, unto the redemption of *God's* own possession, unto the praise of his glory.

Eph 1:15 For this cause I also, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which is among you, and the love which *ye show* toward all the saints,

Eph 1:16 cease not to give thanks for you, making mention *of you* in my prayers;

Eph 1:17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him;

Eph 1:18 having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

Eph 1:19 and what the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to that working of the strength of his might

Eph 1:20 which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and made him to sit at his right hand in the heavenly *places*,

Eph 1:21 far above all rule, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

Eph 1:22 and he put all things in subjection under his feet, and gave him to be head over all things to the church,

Eph 1:23 which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

A rectangular button with a dark, textured background and the word "Up" in a light, serif font.

This chapter easily divides into three parts: a salutation, spiritual blessings in Christ, and a prayer for wisdom and revelation. David Guzik in his introduction to chapter one of Ephesians says the following:

a. Paul's letter to the Ephesians has been called "the Queen of the Epistles," "the quintessence of Paulinism," "the divinest composition of man" and even "the Waterloo of commentators." Some say that Ephesians reads "like a commentary on the Pauline letters" and probably it has been best termed "the crown of Paulinism."

i. "It sums up in large measure the leading themes of the Pauline writings . . . But it does more than that; it carries the thought of the earlier letters forward to a new stage." (Bruce)

ii. "Among the Epistles bearing the name of St. Paul there is none greater than this, nor any with a character more entirely its own . . . There is a peculiar and sustained loftiness in its teaching which has deeply impressed the greatest minds and has earned for it the title of the 'Epistle of the Ascension.'" (Salmond)

iii. "If Romans is the purest expression of the gospel (as Luther said), then Ephesians is the most sublime and majestic expression of the gospel." (Lloyd-Jones)

iv. Lloyd-Jones also said of Ephesians: "It is difficult to speak of it in a controlled manner because of its greatness and because of its sublimity."

David Guzik

I talked about the question of authorship in my introduction; whoever the author is, certainly Ephesians summarizes Pauline themes in their mature development; it is truly great and, indeed, sublime, and the reader sees this in the very first chapter.

Salutation

1:1 From Paul,¹ an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints [in Ephesus],² the faithful³ in Christ Jesus. 1:2 Grace and peace to you ⁴ from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ!

According to salutation, the letter is from Paul, made an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God. Paul is not an eye-witness of the physical presence on Christ on earth in the form of Jesus. What he claims is essentially that he has been made an apostle directly as the will of God. If, in fact, Paul is the author of Ephesians, as the writer here acknowledges, he is an apostle to the saints in Ephesus. The Revised Standard Version begins in much the same way:

Eph 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God, to the saints that are at Ephesus, and the faithful in Christ Jesus:

Eph 1:2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

The *Net Bible* adds explanatory notes: these indicate the word "from" is added and that Marcion's canon list offers the letter to the Laodiceans:

1 tn (1:1) Grk "Paul." The word "from" is not in the Greek text, but has been supplied to indicate the sender of the letter.

2tc (1:1) The earliest and most important MSS omit "in Ephesus" (Ì46 Í * B* 6 1739 and apparently Marcion's list), yet the opening line of this epistle makes little sense without them ("to the saints who are and are faithful..."? or perhaps "to the saints who are also faithful," though with this sense the ou\sin [ousin] is redundant and the kaiv [kai] is treated somewhat unnaturally). What is interesting is Marcion's canon list which offers the letter to the Laodiceans among Paul's authentic epistles. This, coupled with some internal evidence that the writer did not know his audience personally (cf. 1:15; 3:2; absence of personal names throughout), suggests that Ephesians was an encyclical letter, intended for more than one audience. Does this mean that the shorter reading is to be preferred? Yes and no. A plausible scenario is as follows: Paul sent the letter from Rome, intending it first to go to Ephesus. At the same time, Colossians was dispatched. Going counterclockwise through Asia Minor, this letter would first come to Ephesus, the port of entry, then to Laodicea, then Colossae. Tychicus' instructions may well have been for each church to "fill in the blank" on the address line. The church at Ephesus would have certainly made the most copies, being Paul's home base for nearly three years. Hence, most of the surviving copies have "in Ephesus" in v. 1. But one might expect a hint of

evidence that Laodicea also made a few copies: both Marcion's list and Col 4:16 may well imply this. What is to account for the early Alexandrian evidence, then? These MSS were probably made from a very early copy, one reflecting the blank line before each church filled it in. Although it is of course only speculation (as is necessary in a historical investigation lacking some of the pieces to the puzzle), this scenario accounts for all of the data: (1) "in Ephesus" in most MSS; (2) Laodicea in Marcion's list and Col 4:16; (3) the lack of an addressee in the earliest witnesses; (4) why the earliest witnesses' reading must be rejected as too hard; and (5) why Paul seems not to know the readership. In sum, is "in Ephesus" original? Yes and no. Some address belongs there; ejn *Efevsw/ (en Efesw) is the predominant address; but several other churches also received this circular letter as their own. For this reason the phrase has been placed in single brackets in the translation.

The post-modern "yes and no" about Paul's authorship may be as much certainty as can be determined for the reader and invites an analysis outside the purpose of this introduction, although in the introduction itself, I did address authorship. The salutation extends grace and peace from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ::

Eph 1:2 Grace *be* to you, and peace, from God our Father, and *from* the Lord Jesus Christ.

The writer is clear about the relationship of saints or believers to God as Father and about the role of Jesus Christ: Lord. Note, the Jewish and Greek form is used in this translation "Jesus Christ."

The *Net Bible* points out a stylistic characteristic of Ephesians that some use as an argument for an author other than Paul; the unusually long sentences in Ephesians are not characteristic of his writing in other books:

5sn (1:3) Eph 1:3-14 comprises one long sentence in Greek, with three major sections. Each section ends with a note of praise for God (vv. 6, 11, 14), focusing on a different member of the Trinity. After an opening summary of all the saints' spiritual blessings (v. 3), the first section (vv. 4-6) offers up praise that the Father has chosen us in eternity past; the second section (vv. 7-11) offers up praise that the Son has redeemed us in the historical past (i.e., at the cross); the third section (vv. 12-14) offers up praise that the Holy Spirit has sealed us in our personal past, at the point of conversion.

Blessings in Christ

The organization above is a useful theological statement: Ephesians 1. 3-14 praises the Trinity: the Father has chosen us in eternity past, the Son has redeemed us in the historical past, and the Holy Spirit has sealed us in our personal past, at the point of conversion. Consider the Revised Standard Version:

Ephesians, chapter 1[1]: Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are also faithful in Christ Jesus: [2]: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and

the Lord Jesus Christ. [3]: 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, [4]: even as he **chose us in him before the foundation of the world**, that we should be holy and blameless before him. [5]: He destined us in love to be his sons through **Jesus Christ**, according to the purpose of his will, [6]: to the praise of his glorious grace which he freely bestowed on 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. [9]: For he has made known to us in all wisdom and insight the mystery of his will, according to his purpose which he set forth in Christ [10]: as a plan for the fulness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth. [11]: In him, according to the purpose of him who accomplishes all things according to the counsel of his will, [12]: we who first hoped in Christ have been destined and appointed to live for the praise of his glory. [13]: In him you also, who have heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and have believed in him, were **sealed with the promised Holy Spirit**, [14]: which is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

Daniel Wallace, in his introduction to Ephesians, also, sees this introduction as emphasizing the Trinity:

Immediately he launches into praise for God as a theological preface to the body of his letter (1:3-14): God is blessed and is to be praised because (1) the Father elected us in eternity past (1:3-6), the Son redeemed us in the historical past (1:7-12), and the Spirit sealed us in our personal and individual pasts (1:13-14). Thus Paul begins this letter with a reminder of the great things God has done for believers *individually* <http://www.bible.org/docs/soapbox/eph01.htm>

The full development of the Trinity is another reason some use for arguing this letter is by an author later than Paul, who used a more developed Christian theology.

Matthew Henry summarizes the organization of this chapter in a similar way:

* A salutation, and an account of saving blessings, as prepared
in God's eternal election, as purchased by Christ's blood. (1-8)
And as conveyed in effectual calling: this is applied to the
believing Jews, and to the believing Gentiles. (9-14) The
apostle thanks God for their faith and love, and prays for the

continuance of their knowledge and hope, with respect to the heavenly inheritance, and to God's powerful working in them.

(15-23)

Theology in verses 4-14 introduces two concepts needing some exploration: "chosen and destined" and "adopted." The *Net Bible* explains these as follows:

13tn (1:5) Grk "by predestining." Verse 5 begins with an aorist participle dependent on the main verb in v. 4 ("chose").

sn (1:5) By predestining. The aorist participle may be translated either causally ("because he predestined," "having predestined") or instrumentally ("by predestining"). A causal nuance would suggest that God's predestination of certain individuals prompted his choice of them. An instrumental nuance would suggest that the means by which God's choice was accomplished was by predestination. The instrumental view is somewhat more likely in light of normal Greek syntax (i.e., an aorist participle following an aorist main verb is more likely to be instrumental than causal).

14tn (1:5) Grk "to himself" after "through Jesus Christ."

15sn (1:5) Adoption as his sons (Greek *uiJoquesivan*, *JuiJoquesian*) is different from spiritual birth as children. All true believers have been born as children of God and will be adopted as sons of God. The adoption is both a future reality, and in some sense, already true. To be adopted as a son means to have the full rights of an heir. Thus, although in the ancient world, only boys could be adopted as sons, in God's family all children--both male and female--are adopted.

God's will from the beginning is the universal salvation of humankind: it is God's will before even the foundation of the world that all are destined in love to be sons of Jesus Christ. This is certainly the Christian message that sets itself apart from ancient Judaism. John Darby in his *Synopsis* defines God's choosing humankind in the following way:

But there is another thing we have to note here. We are chosen in Him before the foundation of the world. Now this expression is not simply that of the sovereignty of God. If God chose some out of men now, it would be as sovereign as if before the world: but this shews that we belong in the counsels of God to a system set up by Him in Christ before the world existed, which is not of the world when it does exist, and exists after the fashion of this world has passed away. This is a very important aspect of the christian system. Responsibility came in (for man of course) with the creation of Adam in this world. Our place was given us in Christ before the world existed The development of all the characters of this responsibility went on up to the cross and there closed; innocent, a sinner without law, under law, and, when every way guilty, grace-God Himself comes into the world of sinners in goodness and finds hatred for His love. The world stood judged

and men lost, and this the individual now learns as to himself. But then redemption was accomplished, and the full purpose and counsel of God in the new creation in Christ risen, the last Adam, was brought out, "the mystery hidden from ages and generations," while the first man's responsibility was being tested. Compare 2 Timothy 1:9-11; Titus 1:2, where this truth is very distinctly brought out. <http://bible.crosswalk.com/Commentaries/DarbysSynopsisofNewTestament/>

Allen Turner in his synopsis of Ephesians links, appropriately, God's omniscience, foreknowledge, and predestination:

4. Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world. Before the foundation of the world, that is, in eternity before God created the universe (i.e., while He was "in the heavenly places"), the "God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," elected, selected, picked out, or chose (for this is the meaning of the Greek word *eklegomai*) "us" in Christ Jesus. This, of course, does not rule out the activities of the Son and Holy Spirit, but it does show that it was the Father who took the lead in the scheme of redemption. The "us" here are the faithful saints of verse 1, including Paul, and, by extension, all who at one time or another are *predestined* to become faithful saints. Contrary to what some think, the teaching of predestination is a Biblical subject. We will have more to say about this when we look at verse 5, but before we do so, we must learn the purpose of election. **That we should be holy and without blame before Him in love.** In other words, God, in His infinite wisdom, chose or elected those who would, *through* Christ, be holy and without blame before Him. This wonderful relationship between Redeemer and the redeemed would be one of mutual love.

5. Having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will. In connection with His having chosen before the foundation of the world those who would, through their relationship with Christ, be holy and blameless before Him, He is said to have *predestined* or *foreordained* certain ones ("we") who would be faithful saints to adoption as sons. But, how did He do this? He did it, the Scriptures tell us, by exercising His omniscience, particularly His foreknowledge (Romans 8:29,30; I Peter 1:2). Furthermore, the death of Jesus involved a similar combination of foreknowledge and predestination (Acts 2:23). Because God foreknew certain free will choices of men like Judas and Pilate, He could predestinate (arrange in advance) the death of Jesus Christ on the cross of Calvary. Thus, we conclude that God foreknows the future, even the contingent free will choices of human beings, and, therefore, can know not just the group of the saved generally (i.e., the corporate body or church), but the specific individuals who make up the church. This choosing and predestinating on God's behalf is not of individuals unconditionally. Instead, God's foreknowledge has permitted Him to select before the foundation of the world those who, of their own free will, would respond to God's grace in a positive way and allow themselves to be "conformed to the image of His Son" (Romans 8:29). In other words,

these verses are speaking of the *election* and *predestination* of individuals conditioned upon God's foreknowledge of their obedience to the gospel (cf. II Thessalonians 2:13-17).

http://www.allanturner.com/eph_1.html

Turner goes on to point out that God's eternal purpose has been to gather together in one all things in Christ, God's good pleasure from the beginning, to redeem humankind:

9. Having made known to us the mystery of His will. All this wisdom and spiritual insight comes from God's revealing to us the “mystery of His will,” which, according to verse 10, was God's eternal purpose to gather together in one all things *in Christ*.

According to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself. In verse 5, we were told that we were predestined “according to the good pleasure” of the Father's will. Again, we learn that in eternity it was the Father's good pleasure to set forth His plan to redeem fallen mankind through His only begotten Son, Jesus Christ.

10. That in the dispensation of the fullness of the times. In the Father's eternal plan, there was a specific period of time when He would send forth His Son, “born of a woman, born under the law, to redeem those who were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons” (Galatians 4:4,5). Here, and in verse 10, as in other places, the expression “fullness of times” or “last days” is often applied to the period of Christ's first coming (cf. Hebrews 1:2; I Peter 1:20). All the previous time periods reached their fullness when this dispensation (the Christian era) began. More specifically, ever since the death, burial, resurrection, and coronation of Jesus Christ, this dispensation of the fullness of times has been in effect. It will not end until the Lord returns and has executed judgment (I Corinthians 15:24,25). **He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth.** The plan was that all things would come under the authority of “the Christ of God.” Consequently, the resurrected Lord said *all authority* was given Him in heaven and earth (Matthew 28:18). And in Philippians 2:9-11, we learn that Christ Jesus has been given a “name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” —**Him**. That is, Jesus Christ, King of kings and Lord of lords.

For further study of adoption, one may want to look at reference verses supplied by *Nave's Topical Bible*:

(Exo.4v22-23)(Num.6v27)(Deut.14v1)(Deut.26v18)

(Deut.27v9)(Deut.28v10)(Deut.32v5-6)(2Sam.7v14)

(1Chr.22v10)(1Chr.28v6)(2Chr.7v14)(Prov.14v26)

(Isa.8v18)(Isa.43v6-7)(Isa.63v8,16)(Jer.3v19)

(Jer.31v9)(Jer.31v20)(Hos.1v9)(Hos.11v1)

(Matt.5v9)(Matt.5v45)(Matt.13v43)(Lk.6v35)

(Jn.1v12-13)(Jn.11v52)(Ac.15v17)(Rom.8v14-19)

(Rom.8v21,29)(Rom.9v8)(Rom.9v26)(2Cor.6v17)

(Gal.3v26,29)(Gal.4v5-7)(Eph.1v5)(Eph.2v19)

The *Oxford Companion* summarizes the first part of Ephesians one in the following way:

(a)1.3-14: God's love has been poured out as an abundant blessing; to through grace and forgiveness Jews and gentiles now praise God's glory (1.6, 12, 14). (b)1.15-23: Thanksgiving and intercession for the congregation issue in praise of God's power, which has raised Jesus Christ from death and made him the head over all things, especially over the church. 185

Prayer for Wisdom and Revelation

The writer concludes Ephesians 1 by a prayer for the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God, that the eyes of understanding would be enlightened, that the Ephesian believers might know the hope of God's calling, the exceeding greatness of God's power in Christ, raised from the dead, set in heavenly places above all principality, power, might, and dominion; God's eternal purpose is that every name and all things will be put under his feet and that Christ will be head over all things to the church:

Eph 1:15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,

Eph 1:16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

Eph 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

Eph 1:18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

Eph 1:19 And what *is* the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe,

according to the working of his mighty power,

[Eph 1:20](#) Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the heavenly *places*,

[Eph 1:21](#) Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

[Eph 1:22](#) And hath put all *things* under his feet, and gave him *to be* the head over all *things* to the church,

Allen Turner points out that everything is under the ultimate authority and control of Christ:

22. And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church. “All things” (i.e., *everything*) is under the ultimate authority and control of Christ. Therefore, it should not surprise us that Christ is also head over all things to the church, the called out body of the redeemed, “which He purchased with His own blood” (Acts 20:28). This body receives its instructions, its life, and its strength from Jesus Christ.

[Eph 1:23](#) Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

[Home](#)[Interpretation 2](#)

[Eph 2:1](#) And you *did he make alive*, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins,

[Eph 2:2](#) wherein ye once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience;

[Eph 2:3](#) among whom we also all once lived in the lust of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest:--

[Eph 2:4](#) but God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

[Eph 2:5](#) even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved),

[Eph 2:6](#) and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly *places*, in Christ Jesus:

[Eph 2:7](#) that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus:

[Eph 2:8](#) for by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God;

[Eph 2:9](#) not of works, that no man should glory.

[Eph 2:10](#) For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them.

[Eph 2:11](#) Wherefore remember, that once ye, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision, in the flesh, made by hands;

[Eph 2:12](#) that ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

[Eph 2:13](#) But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ.

[Eph 2:14](#) For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition,

[Eph 2:15](#) having abolished in the flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, *so* making peace;

[Eph 2:16](#) and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

[Eph 2:17](#) and he came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh:

[Eph 2:18](#) for through him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father.

[Eph 2:19](#) So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God,

[Eph 2:20](#) being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone;

[Eph 2:21](#) in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;

[Eph 2:22](#) in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.

One way of approaching Ephesians two is to see it structurally describing a series of "before" something and "after" states. The "before" in verse 1 is "dead through your trespasses and sins." The "after" is made alive. "Before," the writer says, "ye were dead through your trespasses and sins...[and] ...walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience." The writer says this "before" state was once the state of all: "we also once lived in the lust of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest." Then, "God, being rich in mercy, loved us" in the before state of being "dead through our trespasses." In the "after" state, "we...are made alive together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved)," raised up, made to sit in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

[Eph 2:1](#) And you *did he make alive*, when ye were dead through your trespasses and sins,

[Eph 2:2](#) wherein ye once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the powers of the air, of the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience;

[Eph 2:3](#) among whom we also all once lived in the lust of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest:--

[Eph 2:4](#) but God, being rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

[Eph 2:5](#) even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace have ye been saved),

[Eph 2:6](#) and raised us up with him, and made us to sit with him in the heavenly *places*, in Christ Jesus:

[Eph 2:7](#) that in the ages to come he might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus:

[Eph 2:8](#) for by grace have ye been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, *it is* the gift of God;

[Eph 2:9](#) not of works, that no man should glory.

[Eph 2:10](#) For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them.

Before	After
dead in trespasses and sins	made alive
walked according to the course of this world, the prince of the powers of the air, in a spirit of disobedience	loved by God, made alive with Christ, raised to sit in heavenly places, by grace saved through faith

The writer also explains why this transformation has occurred: "that in the ages to come he [God] might show the exceeding riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus... his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God afore prepared that we should walk in them." Note that the "afore prepared" echoes 1.4 that these were "chosen before the foundation of the world."

A second section of "before" and "after begins with Ephesians 11, where "before" is separated from Christ), and the "after" is brought near in the blood of Christ.

[Eph 2:11](#) Wherefore remember, that once ye, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called Circumcision, in the flesh, made by hands;

[Eph 2:12](#) that ye were at that time separate from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of the promise, having no hope and without God in the world.

Please note that the author addresses gentiles, the Uncircumcision, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel, strangers from the covenants of the promise. The before Christ is alienation, no hope, no God. The next section begins *but now*:

[Eph 2:13](#) But now in Christ Jesus ye that once were far off are made nigh in the blood of Christ.

[Eph 2:14](#) For he is our peace, who made both one, and brake down the middle wall of partition,

[Eph 2:15](#) having abolished in the flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, *so* making peace;

[Eph 2:16](#) and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

[Eph 2:17](#) and he came and preached peace to you that were far off, and peace to them that were nigh:

[Eph 2:18](#) for through him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father.

The gentiles who were alienated now in Christ Jesus are brought near "in the blood of Christ." Christ is the mediator who has broken "down the middle wall of partition." This middle wall of partition is the one dividing gentiles from Jews, the Circumcision, the commonwealth of Israel, the children of the covenants of promise. This Christ is a mediator of peace. The two have been made one. How was this accomplished? Christ in the flesh abolished enmity, "even the law of commandments contained in ordinances," to create in himself "of the two one new man, so making peace." How did he accomplish this? He reconciled "them both in one body onto God through the cross." The message Christ preached was that of peace to the gentiles, "you that were far off," and peace to the Jews, "to them that were night." The two have been joined in unity: "for through him we both have our access in one Spirit unto the Father."

Before	After
Jews and Gentiles (two)	one body
enmity	peace

The result of the transformation is that Jews and gentiles are no more strangers and so-journers but fellow-citizens "with the saints, and of the household of God." Both are built "upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets." Continuing the metaphor of foundational structure, the writer says Christ (recall before the foundation of the world) is the chief corner stone. Different buildings are being "fitly framed together" to grow (note the switch to an organic metaphor) into a holy temple, built together "for a habitation of God in the Spirit"

[Eph 2:19](#) So then ye are no more strangers and sojourners, but ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God,

[Eph 2:20](#) being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone;

[Eph 2:21](#) in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;

[Eph 2:22](#) in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.

The *Net Bible* offers yet another structural approach: new life individually and new life corporately:

New Life Individually

2:1 And although you were¹ dead² in your transgressions and sins, 2:2 in which³ you formerly lived⁴ according to this world's present path,⁵ according to the ruler of the kingdom⁶ of the air, the ruler of⁷ the spirit⁸ that is now energizing⁹ the sons of disobedience,¹⁰ 2:3 among whom¹¹ all of us¹² also¹³ formerly lived out our lives in the cravings of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath¹⁴ even as the rest...¹⁵

2:4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of his great love with which he loved us, 2:5 even though we were dead in transgressions, made us alive together with Christ--by grace you are saved!¹⁶-- 2:6 and he raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus, 2:7 to demonstrate in the coming ages¹⁷ the surpassing wealth of his grace in kindness toward¹⁸ us in Christ Jesus. 2:8 For by grace you are saved¹⁹ through faith,²⁰ and this is not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 2:9 it is not of works, so that no one can boast.²¹ 2:10 For we are his workmanship, having been created in Christ Jesus for good works that God prepared beforehand so we may do them.²²

The individual is dead in transgressions and sins, living according to the world, energized into disobedience, living in the cravings of flesh, indulging the desires of flesh and mind--by nature, children of wrath. Next, the writer brings these individuals together corporately:

New Life Corporately

2:11 Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh--who are called "uncircumcision" by the so-called "circumcision" that is performed in the body²³ by hands--2:12 that you were at that time without the Messiah,²⁴ alienated from the citizenship of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise,²⁵ having no hope and without God in the world. 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus you who used to be far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ.²⁶ 2:14 For he is our peace, the one who turned both groups into one²⁷ and who destroyed the middle wall of partition, the hostility, in his flesh, 2:15 when he nullified²⁸ the law of commandments in decrees. He did this to create in himself one new man out of two,²⁹ thus making peace, 2:16 and to reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by which the hostility has been killed.³⁰ 2:17 And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near, 2:18 so that³¹ through him we both have access in one Spirit to the Father. 2:19 So then you are no longer foreigners and non-citizens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of God's household, 2:20 because you have been built³² on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,³³ with Christ Jesus himself as³⁴ the cornerstone.³⁵ 2:21 In him³⁶ the whole building,³⁷ being joined together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord, 2:22 in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

The new, corporate life is built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets (new and old), with Jesus

Christ as the cornerstone. In Christ, the whole building, consisting of parts, is joined together and "grows" into a holy temple in the Lord, "a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."

Deserving attention is 2:15:

Eph 2:15 having abolished in the flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; that he might create in himself of the two one new man, *so* making peace;

and who destroyed the middle wall of partition, the hostility, in his flesh, 2:15 when he nullified²⁸ the law of commandments in decrees. (RSV)

The reader may wish to recall Romans 3:21-31:

Rom 3:21 But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets;

Rom 3:22 Even the righteousness of God *which is* by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference:

Rom 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

Rom 3:24 Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus:

Rom 3:25 Whom God hath set forth *to be* a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God;

Rom 3:26 To declare, *I say*, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

Rom 3:27 Where *is* boasting then? It is excluded. By what law? of works? Nay: but by the law of faith.

Rom 3:28 Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law.

Rom 3:29 *Is he* the God of the Jews only? *is he* not also of the Gentiles? Yes, of the Gentiles also:

Rom 3:30 Seeing *it is* one God, which shall justify the circumcision by faith, and

uncircumcision through faith.

Rom 3:31 Do we then make void the law through faith? God forbid: yea, we establish the law.

The temptation all too often is to stress the law as nullified, abolished. A note in the *Net Bible* translates nullified as rendered inoperative: "28tn (2:15) Or "rendered inoperative." Romans makes clear what the process is: the law is established, and it is one law of faith: "one God, ...shall justify the circumcision by faith, and uncircumcision through faith." The writer then asks, "Do we make void the law through faith?" and answers: "God forbid: yea, we establish the law." What the writer is saying is that it has always been one law: the law of faith in God. What is abolished is the law of works, externality rather than internality. The Oxford Companion worries through the tangled way in which the Greek *nomos* identifies Torah with law and the way Paul in which Paul uses the term both positively and negatively (422 ff). Positively, the law addresses ethics and authority and decent community life and the standard for behavior; negatively, the law equals the "old aeon" of "sin, flesh, and death" opposed to Christ's death, resurrection, and imminent parousia. The Gospels, written later than Paul's epistles, build upon a negative attitude toward the law. The Hebrew word Torah, translated as law, refers to teaching and instruction, God's demands upon the Israelite people. In the RSV, Ephesians 2.15, what is nullified is "the law of commandments in decrees." In the KJV, it is the "law of commandments contained in the ordinances." The *Companion* identifies statutes, ordinances, and commandments as terms "belonging to the legal sphere" and referring "to specific practices and enactment." In New Testament views, "'the Law' received widely divergent treatment" in the "charged and changing context" where a new religious movement sought to "define and eventually to distinguish itself from Greek-speaking synagogue communities" (423). The unity intended the writer of Ephesians summarizes in chapter five:

Eph 4:4 *There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;*

Eph 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

Eph 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

One will recall that Jesus in Mark reduced the law to two parts:

Mar 12:29 And Jesus answered him, *The first of all the commandments is, Hear, O Israel; The Lord our God is one Lord:*

Mar 12:30 *And thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind, and with all thy strength: this is the first commandment.*

Mar 12:31 *And the second is like, namely this, Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself.
There is none other commandment greater than these.*

In Romans, the righteousness of God is manifest by the Law and the prophets and by Jesus Christ. The one law is faith in God.

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[Interpretation 3](#)

[Eph 3:1](#) For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus in behalf of you Gentiles,--

[Eph 3:2](#) if so be that ye have heard of the dispensation of that grace of God which was given me to you-ward;

[Eph 3:3](#) how that by revelation was made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote before in few words,

[Eph 3:4](#) whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ;

[Eph 3:5](#) which in other generation was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;

[Eph 3:6](#) *to wit*, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,

[Eph 3:7](#) whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of that grace of God which was given me according to the working of his power.

[Eph 3:8](#) Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

[Eph 3:9](#) and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God who created all things;

[Eph 3:10](#) to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly *places* might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God,

[Eph 3:11](#) according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

[Eph 3:12](#) in whom we have boldness and access in confidence through our faith in him.

[Eph 3:13](#) Wherefore I ask that ye may not faint at my tribulations for you, which are your glory.

[Eph 3:14](#) For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father,

[Eph 3:15](#) from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named,

[Eph 3:16](#) that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man;

[Eph 3:17](#) that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

[Eph 3:18](#) may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,

[Eph 3:19](#) and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God.

[Eph 3:20](#) Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

[Eph 3:21](#) unto him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen.


 Up

The *Oxford Companion to the Bible* structures Ephesians in three parts:

1. God's great work is completed through Jesus Christ and his Spirit (chapters 1-2)
2. The publication and continuation of God's work (3.1-4.16).
3. The testimony of daily life.

Chapter three is summarized in the following way:

To Paul and other apostles before him it was revealed that Jews and gentiles are common heirs of God's fulfilled promises. The suffering of the apostle in prison, for the sake of this message, is reason for joy, not despair. (b)3.14-21: In his prayer, Paul asks the Father for Christ's presence in every heart, and for increased appreciation of the love bestowed through Christ. 186

This two-part structure is generally understood by most readers.

Transitionally, the writer of Ephesians links the beginning of chapter three back to the arguments of chapter two: "[Eph 3:1](#) For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus in behalf of you Gentiles,--" What is this cause? It is that Jews and gentiles might be reconciled: "[Eph 2:16](#) and might reconcile them both in one body unto God through the cross." This unifying of God's universal people, the writer refers to as the mystery made known by revelation:

[Eph 3:2](#) if so be that ye have heard of the dispensation of that grace of God which was given me to you-ward;

[Eph 3:3](#) how that by revelation was made known unto me the mystery, as I wrote before in few words,

[Eph 3:4](#) whereby, when ye read, ye can perceive my understanding in the mystery of Christ;

[Eph 3:5](#) which in other generation was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;

[Eph 3:6](#) to wit, that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,

The dispensation of the grace of God, the writer says, is give "you-ward" but "in other generation was not made known unto the sons of men, as it hath now been revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit." And what is that mystery: "that the Gentiles are fellow-heirs, and fellow-members of the body, and fellow-partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the Gospel.

The writer of Ephesians next acknowledges that by revelation the responsibility and mission for making the mystery of Christ known to the gentiles is the author's:

Eph 3:7 whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of that grace of God which was given me according to the working of his power.

Eph 3:8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, was this grace given, to preach unto the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

Eph 3:9 and to make all men see what is the dispensation of the mystery which for ages hath been hid in God who created all things;

Eph 3:10 to the intent that now unto the principalities and the powers in the heavenly *places* might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God,

Eph 3:11 according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

Eph 3:12 in whom we have boldness and access in confidence through our faith in him.

If the author is Paul, as many have good reason for accepting, then his is a ministry in grace, and he is less than the least of all the saints. If someone other than Paul wrote this, one would wonder why the writer humbled Paul in this way. God, creator of all things, has made the writer the minister of the dispensation of the mystery hidden for ages to the end that "the principalities and the powers in the heavenly places might be made known through the church the manifold wisdom of God." God's purpose is one and eternal: "purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord," the mediator through whom we (Jew and gentile) have access through faith. The writer explains that any tribulation associated with the mission has been willingly undertaken, that the writer has willingly subordinated himself to the Father for "whom every family in heaven and on earth is named":

Eph 3:13 Wherefore I ask that ye may not faint at my tribulations for you, which are your glory.

Eph 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father,

Eph 3:15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named.

The last section of Ephesians 3 is a prayer:

Eph 3:16 that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, that ye may be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inward man;

Eph 3:17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

Eph 3:18 may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth,

Eph 3:19 and to know the love of Christ which passeth knowledge, that ye may be filled unto all the fulness of God.

Eph 3:20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

Eph 3:21 unto him *be* the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen.

The prayer is that God through his Spirit would strengthen the saints of Ephesus "in the inward man" in order that Christ might dwell in their hearts through faith; that they be rooted and grounded in love, apprehending the length, width, height, and depth and love of Christ that passeth knowledge; that they be filled with the fullness of God. The prayer concludes by acknowledge that God is "able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think." Unto God, then, "be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus unto all generations for ever and ever. Amen."

Daniel Wallace has outlined chapter three of Ephesians in the following way:

E. Paul's Relation to the Mystery of this New Spiritual Community (3:1-13)

1. The Content of the Mystery Revealed to Paul (3:1-7)

2. The Wisdom of the Mystery Revealed to Angelic Beings (3:8-13)

F. Prayer for Love: To Maintain the Church's Practical Unity (3:14-21)

1. The Content of the Prayer (3:14-19)

2. The Immensity of God's Resources (3:20-21)

This is the same structure I have just describes: Paul's relation to the mystery revealed and a prayer for love to maintain the church's practical unity. <http://www.bible.org/docs/soapbox/epohl.htm>

The reader may want to note the similarity of Ephesians three to Colossians three:

19

For it pleased the Father that in him should all fulness dwell;

20

And, having made peace through the blood of his cross, by him to reconcile all things unto himself; by him, I say, whether they be things in earth, or things in heaven.

21

And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled

22

In the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unproveable in his sight:

23

If ye continue in the faith grounded and settled, and be not moved away from the hope of the gospel, which ye have heard, and which was preached to every creature which is under heaven; whereof I Paul am made a minister;

24

Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church:

25

Whereof I am made a minister, according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfil the word of God;

26

Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints:

27

To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory:

28

Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus:

29

Whereunto I also labour, striving according to his working, which worketh in me mightily.

Here, too, the reconciliation of "all things" is by Christ, this time, not just Jews and gentiles but "things in heaven" and "things in earth." The writer is made a minister, "according to the dispensation of God which is given to me for you, to fulfill the word of God." Again, the mystery, "hid for ages and from generations," is now made manifest to the saints and among the gentiles.

The *Net Bible* also divides Ephesians three into two main parts: the writer's relation to divine mystery and a prayer for strengthened love:

Paul's Relationship to the Divine Mystery

3:1 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles-- 3:2 If indeed¹ you have heard of the stewardship² of God's grace that was given to me for you, 3:3 that³ by revelation the divine secret⁴ was made known to me, as I wrote before briefly.⁵ 3:4 When reading this,⁶ you will be able to⁷ understand my insight into this secret⁸ of Christ. 3:5 Now this secret⁹ was not disclosed to mankind¹⁰ in former¹¹ generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by¹² the Spirit, 3:6 namely, that through the gospel¹³ the Gentiles are fellow heirs, fellow members¹⁴ of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus. 3:7 I became a servant of this gospel¹⁵ according to the gift of God's grace that was given to me by¹⁶ the exercise of his power.¹⁷ 3:8 To me--less than the least of all the saints¹⁸--this grace was given,¹⁹ to proclaim to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ 3:9 and to enlighten²⁰ everyone about the divine secret's plan²¹--a secret that has been hidden for ages²² in the God who has created all things. 3:10 The purpose of this enlightenment is that²³ through the church the multifaceted wisdom²⁴ of God should now be disclosed to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly realms. 3:11 This was according to²⁵ the eternal purpose that he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord, 3:12 in whom we have boldness and confident access²⁶ to God²⁷ because of²⁸ Christ's²⁹ faithfulness.³⁰ 3:13 For this reason I ask you³¹ not to lose heart because of what I am suffering for you,³² which³³ is your glory.³⁴

Prayer for Strengthened Love

3:14 For this reason³⁵ I bow my knees before the Father, 3:15 from³⁶ whom every family³⁷ in heaven and on the earth is named. 3:16 I pray that³⁸ according to the wealth of his glory he may grant you to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner man, 3:17 that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith, so that, by being rooted and grounded in love, 3:18 you may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the

breadth and length and height and depth,³⁹ 3:19 and thus to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge, so that you may be filled up to⁴⁰ all the fullness of God.

3:20 Now to him who by the power that is working within us⁴¹ is able to do far beyond⁴² all that we ask or think, 3:21 to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.

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[Interpretation 4](#)

[Eph 4:1](#) I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called,

[Eph 4:2](#) with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

[Eph 4:3](#) giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

[Eph 4:4](#) *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling;

[Eph 4:5](#) one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

[Eph 4:6](#) one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.

[Eph 4:7](#) But unto each one of us was the grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

[Eph 4:8](#) Wherefore he saith, When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, And gave gifts unto men.

[Eph 4:9](#) (Now this, He ascended, what is it but that he also descended into the lower parts of the earth?

[Eph 4:10](#) He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)

[Eph 4:11](#) And he gave some *to be* apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

[Eph 4:12](#) for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ:

[Eph 4:13](#) till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

[Eph 4:14](#) that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error;

[Eph 4:15](#) but speaking truth in love, we may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, *even* Christ;

Eph 4:16 from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in *due* measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love.

Eph 4:17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind,

Eph 4:18 being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart;

Eph 4:19 who being past feeling gave themselves up to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

Eph 4:20 But ye did not so learn Christ;

Eph 4:21 if so be that ye heard him, and were taught in him, even as truth is in Jesus:

Eph 4:22 that ye put away, as concerning your former manner of life, the old man, that waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit;

Eph 4:23 and that ye be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

Eph 4:24 and put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.

Eph 4:25 Wherefore, putting away falsehood, speak ye truth each one with his neighbor: for we are members one of another.

Eph 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

Eph 4:27 neither give place to the devil.

Eph 4:28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need.

Eph 4:29 Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying as the need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear.

Eph 4:30 And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption.

Eph 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and railing, be put away from you, with all malice:

[Eph 4:32](#) and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you.


 A rectangular button with a textured, metallic appearance and the word "Home" centered in a simple, sans-serif font.

The *Oxford Companion* provides a succinct summary of Ephesians four in the following way:

(4.1-16) A call to unity prepares the way for an outline of the constitution of the universal church. The one and only God (Deuteronomy 6.4) has now revealed himself as Spirit, Lord (Jesus), and Father. The exalted Lord provides the church with diverse gifts to maintain its unity. The diversity of the members of his body supports its harmony. (4.17-32) The only way to affirm God's full revelation in Christ is to make a radical break with non-Christian behavior and to put on Christ.

The writer's first call is that the believers 'walk worthy of the calling wherewith ye were called,' and goes on to qualify that with "keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." The writer then explains that through his ascension, Christ has led captivity captive and gave gifts; he says that he who ascended is the same one who descended into the lower parts of the earth. The writer then outlines what the gifts are and their purpose for building up the body of Christ. That body is built in unity, fitly framed and built in love. As members of that body, believers are to break with old behaviors, and the writer addresses again two ways: the "before" and "after" structure.

The writer, identifying himself as a prisoners, beseeches believers to walk worthily of their calling:

[Eph 4:1](#) I therefore, the prisoner in the Lord, beseech you to walk worthily of the calling wherewith ye were called,

[Eph 4:2](#) with all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

[Eph 4:3](#) giving diligence to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

[Eph 4:4](#) *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as also ye were called in one hope of your calling;

[Eph 4:5](#) one Lord, one faith, one baptism,

[Eph 4:6](#) one God and Father of all, who is over all, and through all, and in all.

Walking worthily demands lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, forbearing one another in love, and giving diligence to keeping the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Then comes the unifying proclamation: "There is one body, and one Spirit,... one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all..."

Next, the writer of Ephesians explains that to each one grace has been given: "[Eph 4:7](#) But unto each one of us was the grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Then follows three verses on ascension/descension theology:

[Eph 4:8](#) Wherefore he saith, When he ascended on high, he led captivity captive, And gave gifts unto men.

[Eph 4:9](#) (Now this, He ascended, what is it but that he also descended into the lower parts of the earth?

[Eph 4:10](#) He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.)

Christ is the one who has ascended and led captivity captive and given gifts; that same one descended, and "He that descended is the same also that ascended far above all the heavens" for the purpose of filling all things. What the descension means has endured several interpretations:

8sn (4:9) The phrase the lower parts of the earth has been variously interpreted: (1) The traditional view understands this as a reference to the underworld (hell), where Jesus is thought to have descended in the three days between his death and resurrection. In this case, of the earth would be a partitive genitive. (2) A second option is to translate the phrase to the lower parts, the earth. Many recent scholars hold this view and argue that it is a reference to the incarnation. In this case of the earth would be a genitive of apposition. (3) A third option, which also sees the phrase of the earth as a genitive of apposition, is that the descent in the passage occurs after the ascent rather than before it, and refers to the descent of the Spirit at Pentecost (cf. Acts 4:11-16). Support for this latter view is found in the intertestamental and rabbinic use of Ps 68:18 (quoted in v. 8), which is consistently and solely interpreted as a reference to Moses' ascent of Mt. Sinai to "capture" the words of the law. The probability, therefore, is that Paul's comments here reflect a polemic against the interpretation of this passage in certain circles as a reference to Moses. See W. H. Harris, *The Descent of Christ*.

The writer in context here certainly refers to Christ as the one ascending and descending, and if Christ is also Jesus, then it refers to the incarnation.

Through the ascension has come grace and gifts: [Eph 4:7](#) But unto each one of us was the grace given according to the measure of the gift of Christ." The primary gift is the gift of Christ, and subordinate to

that are derivative gifts: "[Eph 4:11](#) And he gave some *to be* apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers." These roles hold in common one purpose: the building up of the body of Christ.

[Eph 4:12](#) for the perfecting of the saints, unto the work of ministering, unto the building up of the body of Christ:

[Eph 4:13](#) till we all attain unto the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

[Eph 4:14](#) that we may be no longer children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, in craftiness, after the wiles of error;

[Eph 4:15](#) but speaking truth in love, we may grow up in all things into him, who is the head, *even* Christ;

[Eph 4:16](#) from whom all the body fitly framed and knit together through that which every joint supplieth, according to the working in *due* measure of each several part, maketh the increase of the body unto the building up of itself in love.

All are to mature into the "unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a fullgrown man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." The writer uses the organic full-grown man suggested in Ephesians two:

[Eph 2:20](#) being built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the chief corner stone;

[Eph 2:21](#) in whom each several building, fitly framed together, groweth into a holy temple in the Lord;

[Eph 2:22](#) in whom ye also are builded together for a habitation of God in the Spirit.

In Ephesians three, the organic metaphor is also used: "[Eph 3:17](#) that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; to the end that ye, being rooted and grounded in love" The purpose is clear: the body of Christ, the church, is an evolving, growing and maturing entity: coming into being is a holy temple in the Lord, a habitation for God in the Spirit. Rooted and grounded in love for the common purpose of building a habitation for God, believers are to behave maturely, no longer being "tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine. One remembers Nicodemus's consternation in John 3 and the reply of Jesus:

[Joh 3:5](#) Jesus answered, *Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God.*

Joh 3:6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit.

Joh 3:7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, Ye must be born again.

Joh 3:8 The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh, and whither it goeth: so is every one that is born of the Spirit.

The wind blows, lists, and one hears it but cannot tell its origin or destiny; the metaphor is a natural one for the unseen, invisible power of the Spirit. The same metaphor interestingly is used for wind of doctrine; here, though, the wind takes on impact: tossing to and fro and carrying about. Certainly, in controversies about the law and grace, Moses and Jesus, the early believers are caught up in the highly charged psychological, social, political, cultural, and religious forces impacting them.

As mature members of the body of Christ, individuals are to walk worthily of their calling, to avoid old ways of formerly walking and to embrace new ways learned in Christ:

Eph 4:17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the vanity of their mind,

Eph 4:18 being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardening of their heart;

Eph 4:19 who being past feeling gave themselves up to lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

Eph 4:20 But ye did not so learn Christ;

Eph 4:21 if so be that ye heard him, and were taught in him, even as truth is in Jesus:

Eph 4:22 that ye put away, as concerning your former manner of life, the old man, that waxeth corrupt after the lusts of deceit;

Eph 4:23 and that ye be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

Eph 4:24 and put on the new man, that after God hath been created in righteousness and holiness of truth.

One way is the way of vanity, darkened understanding, alienation from God, ignorance and hardness of heart, lasciviousness, uncleanness and greediness, corruption and lusts of deceit; the other way is the way of Jesus which demands putting away the former manner of life and being "renewed in the spirit of

your mind," created in righteousness and holiness of truth. The new way demands reforming old behaviors:

Eph 4:25 Wherefore, putting away falsehood, speak ye truth each one with his neighbor: for we are members one of another.

Eph 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

Eph 4:27 neither give place to the devil.

Eph 4:28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing that is good, that he may have whereof to give to him that hath need.

Eph 4:29 Let no corrupt speech proceed out of your mouth, but such as is good for edifying as the need may be, that it may give grace to them that hear.

Eph 4:30 And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, in whom ye were sealed unto the day of redemption.

Eph 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamor, and railing, be put away from you, with all malice:

Eph 4:32 and be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving each other, even as God also in Christ forgave you.

Old behaviors include falsehood, anger and sin, obedience to the devil, stealing, corrupt speech, grieving the Holy Spirit of God, bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor and railing, and malice; the new way is that of truth, unity, work that is good, giving to those with need, kindness, tender-heartedness, and forgiveness after the example of Christ. Reviewing this list of two ways, all of us will recognize ourselves and understand, the old is never completely distant from us and the new is a work in process.

Matthew Henry provides commentary upon Ephesians five not unlike, in emphasis, the above points, but the reader may enjoy the practical application.

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[Interpretation 5](#)

[Eph 5:1](#) Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children;

[Eph 5:2](#) and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell.

[Eph 5:3](#) But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as becometh saints;

[Eph 5:4](#) nor filthiness, nor foolish talking, or jesting, which are not befitting: but rather giving of thanks.

[Eph 5:5](#) For this ye know of a surety, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

[Eph 5:6](#) Let no man deceive you with empty words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience.

[Eph 5:7](#) Be not ye therefore partakers with them;

[Eph 5:8](#) For ye were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord: walk as children of light

[Eph 5:9](#) (for the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth),

[Eph 5:10](#) proving what is well-pleasing unto the Lord;

[Eph 5:11](#) and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather even reprove them;

[Eph 5:12](#) for the things which are done by them in secret it is a shame even to speak of.

[Eph 5:13](#) But all things when they are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for everything that is made manifest is light.

[Eph 5:14](#) Wherefore *he* saith, Awake, thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall shine upon thee.

[Eph 5:15](#) Look therefore carefully how ye walk, not as unwise, but as wise;

[Eph 5:16](#) redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

[Eph 5:17](#) Wherefore be ye not foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

[Eph 5:18](#) And be not drunken with wine, wherein is riot, but be filled with the Spirit;

[Eph 5:19](#) speaking one to another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord;

[Eph 5:20](#) giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father;

[Eph 5:21](#) subjecting yourselves one to another in the fear of Christ.

[Eph 5:22](#) Wives, *be in subjection* unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

[Eph 5:23](#) For the husband is the head of the wife, and Christ also is the head of the church, *being* himself the saviour of the body.

[Eph 5:24](#) But as the church is subject to Christ, so *let* the wives also *be* to their husbands in everything.

[Eph 5:25](#) Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself up for it;

[Eph 5:26](#) that he might sanctify it, having cleansed it by the washing of water with the word,

[Eph 5:27](#) that he might present the church to himself a glorious *church*, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

[Eph 5:28](#) Even so ought husbands also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his own wife loveth himself:

[Eph 5:29](#) for no man ever hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as Christ also the church;

[Eph 5:30](#) because we are members of his body.

[Eph 5:31](#) For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh.

[Eph 5:32](#) This mystery is great: but I speak in regard of Christ and of the church.

[Eph 5:33](#) Nevertheless do ye also severally love each one his own wife even as himself; and *let* the wife *see* that she fear her husband.

Chapter five reminds the children of God of their duties. Daniel B. Wallace outlines this chapter in the following way:

C. The Believer's Relation to Unbelievers (5:1-14)

1. Do Not Conform to their Sinfulness (5:1-7)
2. Confront them with the Gospel (5:8-14)

D. The Believer's Relation to the Spirit (5:15-6:9)

1. The Admonition for Spirit-Filling (5:15-21)
2. The Test of Spirit-Filling: The Believer's Relation to the Extended Family (5:22-6:9)
 - a. Wives and Husbands (5:22-33)
 - b. Children and Parents (6:1-4)
 - c. Slaves and Masters (6:5-9)

Overview: The reader will recall that chapter four lays out the ideal for unity within the church and addresses two ways of living: as children of light and as children of darkness. The children of God, of course, are to walk in the light. The writer instructs the children of God that they are to imitate God, as beloved children, and to walk in love following the example of Christ, who sacrificed himself for humankind. This is followed by an "avoid" list of not-to-do activities. The children of God are to walk in the light, and that light is goodness, righteousness, and truth; the light, in fact, manifests all human activities, revealing them for what they are. Pleasing God requires separation from disobedience and darkness; the children of God are to be wise, to redeem time, to understand the will of God, to be Spirit-filled, and this is evidenced in joy, the speaking of psalms, hymns, spirited songs, melody, and the giving of thanks. The unity of the church that the writer has spoken of in chapter four results when individuals subject themselves to each other. Following this, the writer then talks about the relationship of wives and husbands, children and parents, masters and slaves. What readers must understand is that "right" relationship with other individuals evolves from a "right" relationship with God. This "right" relationship with God and others creates the ideal unity for children of light. Understanding this, one will not misread the subjection of wives to husbands, children to parents, or slaves to masters as intending spineless submission to another who is not himself/herself practicing goodness, righteousness, and truth.

The key then to understanding Ephesians 5 is to understand what it means to be followers of God:

Follow the Leader

-  Be Imitators of God (5:1)
-  There Should Be No Hint of Sexual Impurity (5:3,4)
-  Live as Children of Light and Find Out What Pleases the Lord (5:8-10)
-  Have Nothing To Do with the Fruitless Deeds of Darkness (5:11)
-  Make the Most of Your Time (5:15-17)
-  Do Not Be Drunk but be Filled with the Spirit (5:18)
-  Edify One Another with Speech and Song (5:19,20)
-  Submit to One Another in Various Relationships (5:21-6:9)

Analysis: The writer of Ephesians opens in the imperative:

Eph 5:1 Be ye therefore imitators of God, as beloved children;

Eph 5:2 and walk in love, even as Christ also loved you, and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for an odor of a sweet smell.

If the writer is Paul, he admonishes ethical conduct in which the children of light walk in love after the example of Christ. Christ, he reminds us, gave himself up as an offering and a sacrifice to God. In I. Corinthians, Christ is the Passover, connecting his sacrifice to deliverance from death: 1Co 5:7 "Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us. Hebrews connects this sacrifice to a "once and for all" sacrifice: Heb 10:1 "For the law having a shadow of good things to come, *and* not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect.

Not questioned in Ephesians 5.1 is the relationship of God and believers: they are children, and as children, a similitude to the Father must exist. Furthermore, the Christology is developed: Christ's death was an offering to God on behalf of humankind. The sweet odor is clearly a parallel reference to older Jewish practices:

Lev 4:31 And he shall take away all the fat thereof, as the fat is taken away from off the sacrifice of peace offerings; and the priest shall burn *it* upon the altar for a sweet savour unto the LORD; and the priest shall make an atonement for him, and it shall be forgiven him.

Imitators of God (mimhtai tou qeou). This old word from **mimeomai** Paul boldly uses. If we are to be like God, we must imitate him.

An offering and a sacrifice to God (prosporan kai qusian twi qewi). Accusative in apposition with **eauton** a ransom (**lutron**) as Christ himself said (Matthew 20:28), Christ's own view of his atoning death. **For an odour of a sweet smell (eif osmhn euwdiaß).** Same words in Philippians 4:18 from Leviticus 4:31 (of the expiatory offering). Paul often presents Christ's death as a propitiation (Romans 3:25) as in 1 John 2:2.

Once reminded of right relationship with God and fellow human beings, the writer now urges from the imitators of God an observance of ethical principles forbidding certain kinds of apparently common practices within the culture:

Eph 5:3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as becometh saints;

Eph 5:4 nor filthiness, nor foolish talking, or jesting, which are not befitting: but rather giving of thanks.

Eph 5:5 For this ye know of a surety, that no fornicator, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Eph 5:6 Let no man deceive you with empty words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the sons of disobedience.

Eph 5:7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them;

One can simply list clearly wrong behaviors: fornication, uncleanness, covetousness, filthiness, foolish talking, jesting, and empty words. The reader recalls that Ephesus is the site for the temple of Diana:

Ephesus

the capital of proconsular Asia, which was the western part of Asia Minor. It was colonized principally from Athens. In the time of the Romans it bore the title of "the first and greatest metropolis of Asia." It was distinguished for the Temple of Diana (q.v.), who there had her chief shrine; and for its theatre, which was the largest in the world, capable of containing 50,000 spectators. It was, like all ancient theatres, open to the sky. Here were exhibited the fights of wild beasts and of men with beasts. (Comp. 1 Cor. 4:9; 9:24, 25; 15:32.)

People traveled to Ephesus from many parts of the world, bringing with them offerings for the goddess and participating in the fertility rites. These pagan practices became a temptation for many Jews and new converts to Christianity. The above wrong behaviors clearly have a cause-effect relationship; the effect of being excluded from the kingdom of Christ and God is caused by the behaviors, and the wrath of God

comes as a result of disobedience:

Eph 5:5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

Eph 5:6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

Children of God are clearly told:

Eph 5:7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

The next section of chapter five then outlines two ways: the way of light and the way of darkness:

Eph 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

Eph 5:9 (For the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

Eph 5:10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

Eph 5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove *them*.

Eph 5:12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

Eph 5:13 But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

Eph 5:14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

Eph 5:15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

Light	Darkness
goodness, righteousness, truth	secret things done
wise	foolish

The children of light are to walk circumspectly in the light provided by Christ. The list continues:

Eph 5:16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Eph 5:17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord *is*.

Eph 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

Eph 5:19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

Eph 5:20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

Redeeming time	Participating in evil
understanding the will of G	Unwise
spirit-filled	drunk with wine
making melody, giving thanks	

The final verses of Ephesians chapter five address the ideal unity that should evidence itself in the lives of believers:

Eph 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

Eph 5:22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

Eph 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

Eph 5:24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let* the wives *be* to their own husbands in every thing.

Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

Eph 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

Eph 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Eph 5:28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

Eph 5:29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

Eph 5:30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

Eph 5:31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

Eph 5:32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Eph 5:33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife *see* that she reverence *her* husband.

Far too often, these verses have been used to suggest submission of one sex to another. We are to imitate God, to walk in love as Christ walked in love and gave himself a sacrifice for us. Husbands are admonished to love their wives as they love their own bodies; he that loveth his wife loveth himself. Further, both husband and wife are to submit to one another in the fear of God. Only under this ideal unity is the wife to subordinate herself to the husband, as onto the Lord. Only in this ideal unity is the husband to be the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church "and gave himself for it." Only under this ideal unity is the wife to be subject to the husband as the church is subject to Christ. Christ gave himself for the church that he might sanctify and clean it, that he might present it to himself gloriously without blemish and holy. If husbands love their wives as they love their own bodies, they will nourish and cherish the wives. Then, the writer tells us the mystery of unity: "we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones." The writer specifically draws out the analogy: "This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church." This is the mystery of unity revealed in Christ of Ephesians three. Within this mysterious unity, the husband loves his wife even as himself, and the wife sees that she reverences the husband. In chapter six, the writer extends this unity in relationship to children and parents, masters and slaves. Markus K. Barth in the *Oxford Companion* rightfully points out that the marriage metaphor in Ephesians "must not serve to substantiate male superiority; rather, it promotes the partnership of those married" (189). The writer in Ephesians speaks "of the interrelationship of equally free partners under the unifying lordship of Christ."

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[Eph 6:1](#) Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

[Eph 6:2](#) Honor thy father and mother (which is the first commandment with promise),

[Eph 6:3](#) that it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

[Eph 6:4](#) And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but nurture them in the chastening and admonition of the Lord.

[Eph 6:5](#) Servants, be obedient unto them that according to the flesh are your masters, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

[Eph 6:6](#) not in the way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers; but as servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

[Eph 6:7](#) with good will doing service, as unto the Lord, and not unto men:

[Eph 6:8](#) knowing that whatsoever good thing each one doeth, the same shall he receive again from the Lord, whether *he be* bond or free.

[Eph 6:9](#) And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, and forbear threatening: knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no respect of persons with him.

[Eph 6:10](#) Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of his might.

[Eph 6:11](#) Put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

[Eph 6:12](#) For our wrestling is not against flesh and blood, but against the principalities, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the spiritual *hosts* of wickedness in the heavenly *places*.

[Eph 6:13](#) Wherefore take up the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and, having done all, to stand.

[Eph 6:14](#) Stand therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

Eph 6:15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

Eph 6:16 withal taking up the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil *one*.

Eph 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Eph 6:18 with all prayer and supplication praying at all seasons in the Spirit, and watching thereunto in all perseverance and supplication for all the saints,

Eph 6:19 And on my behalf, that utterance may be given unto me in opening my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel,

Eph 6:20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Eph 6:21 But that ye also may know my affairs, how I do, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:

Eph 6:22 whom I have sent unto you for this very purpose, that ye may know our state, and that he may comfort your hearts.

Eph 6:23 Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Eph 6:24 Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ with *a love* incorruptible.


 A rectangular button with a dark, textured background and the word "Up" in a light, serif font.

Structurally, Ephesians six addresses relationship and spiritual warfare. It first continues what chapter five began: the ideal, willing subordination of the self to the other extends to the relationship between children and parents, servants and masters. Willing subordination is not spineless submission, and nowhere in a relationship founded in love will one discover the more powerful (husbands, parents, masters) forcing the weaker (wives, children, and servants) into submission. This simply is not the character of God-imitators. The final section concludes by describing how believers must arm themselves against powerful invisible forces. Some of these forces are clearly those threatening the development of the early church.

In Ephesians five, the writer has admonished believers to live in love and to walk in the light:

Eph 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour

.....

Eph 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

Eph 5:9 (For the fruit of the Spirit *is* in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

Eph 5:10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

On this foundation of love, a Christian marriage is one where two become one flesh:

Eph 5:31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

How this happens, the writer concludes is a great mystery; believers are one in the spirit:

Eph 5:30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

The reader may think of Galatians 3.28:

Gal 3:28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus.

As I pointed out in my interpretation of chapter five, Godly behavior within a marriage and within a church derives from a right relationship with God and a right relationship with the "other" whether wife, children, or servants. In chapter five, the subject is the ideal unity to be achieved between husband and wife; in chapter six, the relationship is between children and parents, masters and servants. The model extends far beyond individuals, though, for the writer addresses the relationship of the church to Christ. It is interesting how the writer extends his metaphor. Believers are followers or children of God (1). These children are children of light (8). These children of light willingly submit one to another: "[Eph 5:21](#) Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. (21). From this unity of believers, the writer then addresses man and woman in the marital relationship:

[Eph 5:22](#) Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

[Eph 5:23](#) For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

The husband is the head of the wife; Christ is the head of the church, the savior of the body.

[Eph 5:24](#) Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let the wives be* to their own husbands in every thing.

As the church is subject unto Christ, so also are wives to be subject to their husbands. The metaphor of marriage next becomes an analogy:

[Eph 5:24](#) Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so *let the wives be* to their own husbands in every thing.

[Eph 5:25](#) Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

[Eph 5:26](#) That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

[Eph 5:27](#) That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Finally, both metaphor and analogy are couched in mystery:

[Eph 5:31](#) For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

[Eph 5:32](#) This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Christ willingly unites spirit with flesh, the two becoming one, and that is the exemplary model upon which Christian partners unite in marriage. The writer is concerned, not just with individuals in marriage, but the Christian community as well. The ecclesiology describes a universal catholic church:

Eph 1:9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

Eph 1:10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; *even* in him:

The reader will recall that Ephesians two spoke of the mystery of reconciliation between Jews and gentiles:

Eph 2:11 Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

Eph 2:12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

Eph 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

Eph 2:14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition *between us*;

Eph 2:15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, *even* the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, *so* making peace;

Eph 2:16 And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

Eph 2:17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

Eph 2:18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

In the service of this unity, the writer of Ephesians willingly bows himself: "**Eph 3:14** For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." The writer's prayer for all believers is strength within the spiritual self:

Eph 3:16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

Eph 3:17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

Eph 3:18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what *is* the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

Eph 3:19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Eph 3:20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

Eph 3:21 Unto him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Ephesians, if anything, proclaims a gospel of unity:

Eph 4:3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Eph 4:4 *There is* one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

Eph 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who *is* above all, and through all, and in you all.

Ephesians 6.10-20 uses military imagery to depict how believers are to equip themselves for their roles in effecting God's kingdom:

Eph 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Eph 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in

high *places*.

Eph 6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

Eph 6:15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

Eph 6:16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

Eph 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Eph 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

God's soldiers arm themselves with truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, the word of God, and prayer. Too much has been made, perhaps, of the spiritual warfare and not enough of the writer's completely turning Roman warfare on its head. The only battle fought with truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, the word of God and prayer is the one of unity against disunity. What prevents achieving total unity is the lack spiritual strength.

Warren Doud describes the armor identified by Ephesians 10-20 as taken from the writer's close relationship to the Roman Praetorian Guard. <http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics/armor.html> He explains how the writer Paul gained close-hand experience of the dress:

The apostle Paul had a lifelong contact with the Roman army. He was a Roman citizen and very patriotic; and his admiration of the fighting forces of Rome was great.

The Roman army was at its peak of efficiency during the early Christian era. It served as police and frontier guard over all of Europe, the borders with Asia, and North Africa. Paul had many dealings with Roman legionnaires.

- A Roman soldier delivered Paul from the mob in Ephesus.
- Roman soldiers saved his life when the mob in Jerusalem wanted to kill him in the temple area.
- The Roman soldiers were able to deliver Paul out of Jerusalem from the hands of the religious leaders who wanted him dead, and they brought him safely to Caesarea.
- It was Roman soldiers who escorted Paul on the trip from Caesarea to Rome, the voyage on which Paul suffered shipwreck.
- Roman soldiers delivered Paul to the Roman garrison of the Praetorian Guard for his imprisonment.

He next explains how the various pieces of equipment are used:

the whole armor of God... (panoplia). The hastati, the princeps, and the triarii all wore the same basic armor.

having your loins girt about ...aorist middle participle of (peridzunumi), "to put around".

The Roman soldier put around his waist a very wide belt which was the holder for a lot of equipment. There was a loop, for example, for the scabbard for the machaira sword. Other loops held ropes and a rations sack. When the legions conquered a city, the soldiers would empty out the ration sack to make room for gold, jewelry, and other loot they picked up.

There were loops on the belt for darts. The belt was tied in several places to stay in place, so that no matter how the soldier moved about, fell down, climbed hills, etc., the belt was always in place with weapons at the ready. There were designs stitched into the belt which designated various campaigns in which the veteran had fought. Instead of campaign medals or ribbons, the soldier would weave into the belt something he had taken during the battle.

with truth... (aleitheia), refers to truth taught accurately. This is the belt of the Christian soldier.

and having on.. "having put on" the breastplate of righteousness.

the breastplate... (thoraka) [Engl. cognate "thorax"]. This was attached to the belt and provided protection for the upper torso, front and back.

the breastplate... (thoraka) [Engl. cognate "thorax"]. This was attached to the belt and provided protection for the upper torso, front and back.

In the ancient world, breastplates were of layers of cloth, sometimes with metal greaves attached. The Greeks introduced a bronze breastplate, with bronze plates covering vital

areas or the torso, held together with leather or cloth connections. Some Samaritans noticed that horses' hooves, cattle horns, etc., were made of very hard material, so they began to use horn sewed to cloth to protect from blows.

The Romans had the ideas for armor design which provided light weight combined with ease of movement and protection from blows. The best type was called the *qwrac stadia*V (thorax stadias), or "breastplate which stands by itself". This breastplate was attached to the belt by leather thongs passed through rings on the bottom to keep it solidly attached. It was anchored to the belt, and it was above the belt. Note: the belt had to be put on first, then the breastplate.

of righteousness... The righteousness of God is basic protection for the believer. The belt of truth combined with the breastplate of righteousness is the basis for the edification of the Christian.

And your feet shod ..."to bind with sandals". The sandal was the GI boondocker for the Roman army. This is a reference to the foot soldier slogging it out. The infantryman fights with the least glamor and the highest casualties.

While the Greek soldier wore greaves to protect his ankles, the Roman soldier wore a heavy soled sandal which had metal studs on the bottom for good footing on uneven or slippery ground. This shoe was known in Latin as the *caligula*, so the foot soldier was called *caligatus*. Officers wore different footgear.

the shield of faith ... (*thureos*).

The Romans had a long, rectangular, knees-to-chin shield which protected from arrows and spears and could be knelt behind during an arrow barrage. It was quite a bit heavier and clumsier than the smaller Greek circular shield; but there was a series of exercises, a manual of arms, designed to give the soldier flexibility and strength in the use of the shield. Groups of soldier who were besieging a town could form close together and hold their shields over their heads to make a huge *testudo*, or "turtle", to protect the group from missiles.

the helmet of salvation ... (*perikephalaia*), literally "something placed around the head", so, in the military, "helmet".

The Romans had the best helmet of the ancient world. Many other nations used helmets of cloth wrappings, animal hides or bones, or hooves, etc. The Roman helmet had chinstrap, visor, and came down to cover the back and sides of the neck. Officers' helmets had a ridge on top on which was mounted plumage or some sort of brush, depending on the rank.

The parts of the Roman helmet were: a lining of leather, softened for comfort and good fit; the helmet itself which was a bronze casque for the soldier, or iron alloy for officers; a

metal crest for the plume; and a chinstrap. The highest ranking officers had gold and silver alloy helmets for parade dress.

and the sword of the Spirit ... the macaira (machaira) mentioned before. The word machaira was chosen here, and in Heb. 4:12, by the Holy Spirit during inspiration.

There were many types of swords used in the ancient world:

The romphaia was a broadsword used mostly by the Gauls of Julius Caesar's time. It was used with both hands, was six to eight feet long, sometimes with one edge, sometimes two, and used to hack off limbs and heads. The "barbarian" soldiers made great slicing sweeps with the broadsword, leaving himself open for thrusts of the machaira.

The Persians used the zephos, a thrusting weapon with a point, rounded like a pencil, but with no cutting edge.

In the akinakes sword, the emphasis was on the handle and the ornate decoration. It was actually a dress sword and was not considered a serious combat weapon. The dolon was a sword hidden in a cane or riding crop and used mostly by assassins.

The machaira is described by Vegetius in his Military Instructions to the Romans. "They likewise taught not to cut, but to thrust, with the sword. For the Romans not only made jest of those who fought with the edge of a weapon, but always found them an easy conquest. A stroke with the edge, though made with ever so much force, seldom kills, as the vital parts of the body are defended both by bones and armor. On the contrary, a stab, although it penetrates only a few inches, is usually fatal. Besides, in the attitude of striking [with the broadsword], it is impossible to avoid exposing the right arm and side. On the other hand, the body is covered when a thrust is given, and the enemy receives the point before he sees the sword."

The user of the machaira is always covered, always protected, always on balance, and always ready for defense or attack.

Matthew Henry in his commentary agrees that Paul learned about Roman armor from being under the charge of the praetorian prefect:

11-13. Put on the whole armor of God. The ancient soldier was not equipped for war until he had put on his armor. Paul was at that time a prisoner, probably living near the praetorian camp in Rome, as he was by the Roman customs under the charge of the praetorian prefect.

14-16. Stand therefore . . . girt. He next gives the armor that must be worn. The Roman soldier wore a girdle, breast-plate, shoes with iron nails, a helmet to protect his head, and carried a great shield on his left arm which was thrown in front of his body. His weapon was the sword. It was with the sword, not the spear as other nations, that the Romans conquered the world. And these represent parts of the Christian's spiritual armor. **About with truth.** The girdle kept the armor in [205] place and supported the sword. So truth holds the Christian armor and supports the sword of the Spirit. **Breast-plate of righteousness.** The breast-plate was over the lungs and heart. If Christ's righteousness is over our hearts they can hardly suffer harm. **15. And your feet shod.** Not with shoes, but **with the preparation** to carry the gospel of peace, to be a messenger of good tidings ([Isaiah 52:7](#)). **16. Above all, taking the shield of faith.** The Roman oblong shield, four and a half feet long, covered the whole body, and was a protection of itself. So faith, the faith that fully trusts in God and never doubts, is the best of all defenses. It will quench, stop, put out all the doubts, whisperings and evil suggestions of the wicked. **Fiery darts.** These were missiles hurled by the hand, and very dangerous unless stopped by the shield.

17. Take the helmet of salvation. The Roman soldier wore on his head a metallic cap to protect it from blows, called a helmet. [Isaiah 59:17](#) says: "He put a helmet of salvation on his head." See also [1 Thess. 5:8](#). Salvation, the consciousness that we have a Savior "able to save unto the uttermost," gives the Christian soldier courage for the conflict. **And the sword of the Spirit.** The armor before described is to protect; the sword to assail. It is the Christian soldier who is to wield the sword of the Spirit. That is, the Spirit conquers through him. The word is **the word of God**. Thus Peter conquered on Pentecost, and Paul in his labors. Thus always and everywhere. The Christian soldier filled with the Spirit must "preach the word." See [Heb. 4:12](#).

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Catholic Encyclopedia Epistle to the Ephesians

Book consists of two distinct parts, separated by a doxology (3.20).

Part One: Address

Ephesians 1. 3-14

-  Blessings bestowed upon all the faithful
-  Eternal plan, previously secret but now manifest, for all to be united under one head
-  Those receiving gospel, made participants of plan
-  Writer assures the converted that he gives thanks and prays for them

Ephesians 1.3, 14

-  Writer asks for complete knowledge in the hope of converts' calling
-  Writer asks they be fully aware of their inheritance and the greatness of God in guaranteeing the inheritance
-  God's power manifests itself in Christ, readers, and the community of salvation

Ephesians 1. 16-2.20

Jews and Gentiles form one body, one house, one temple of which Christ is the cornerstone, and the apostles and prophets are the foundation.

Ephesians 3. 1-3

Paul is chosen to preach to the Gentiles this mystery of God, hidden from all eternity and not revealed to the angels; gentiles are coheirs with the Jews, constitute the same body, and are joint partakers in the same promises.

Ephesians 3. 14-19

Writer prays for readers the perfection of the Christian state and the complete knowledge of of Divine charity, continuing the same prayer (1.16)

Part Two Moral



Readers show themselves worthy of their vocation

Labor to preserve the unity--one spirit, one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God

Diversity of ministries, but offices of apostles and prophets are instituted by Christ (4. 2-16)

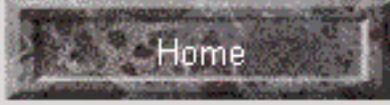
Avoid vices of immodesty and covetousness

Duties of husbands and wives likened to that of Christ with the Church

Duties of children and servants (5.21-6.9)

Put on the whole armour of God (6. 10-20)

Epilogue 6. 21-24 Tychicus sent to give good news of the writer and the writer wishes them peace, charity, and grace.

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[A Study Guide by Mark Copeland](#)

[Allen Turner on Ephesians](#)

[B. W. Johnson Commentary on Ephesians](#)

[Bible Commentaries by David Guzik](#)

[Bible Study Tools from Crosswalk](#)

[Bible Versions and Audio of Ephesians \(You should go to Bible Gateway and key in Ephesians in passage search.](#)

[Blue Letter Bible Ephesians](#)

[Brief History of Ephesus](#)

[Catholic Bishops](#)

[Chowan College Paul's Letters](#)

Contains maps as well as details Paul's background, conversion, and journeys.

[Daniel B. Wallace http://www.bible.org/docs/soapbox/epohl.htm](http://www.bible.org/docs/soapbox/epohl.htm)

[Darby's Synopsis of the Bible](#)

[Early Christian Writings](#)

[Ephesian Study Guide with Virtual Tour of Ephesus](#)

[Ephesians](#)

[Ephesians Study Page](#)

[Ephesus History](#)

[Geneva Study Bible](#)

He describes and proves how Paul changed what Jesus had taught, how Paul's ideology serves the establishment instead of the people, and how this became Christianity's official doctrine. On the other hand Manfred Davidmann shows that the Talmud (especially the Mishnah) tells how Hillel changed Judaism in the same way, to what it is today.

<http://asiaminor.freesevers.com/sevenchurches.html>
<http://bible.gospelcom.net/cgi-bin/bg?language=english>
<http://www.accradio.com/Library/New%20Testament/Ephesians.htm>
http://www.ccel.org/j/johnson_bw/pnt/PNT10.HTM
<http://www.thewordoflifeministry.org/books/eph.htm>
[Ignatius to the Ephesians](#)

Introduction to Ephesians

[Isaac Aluochier](#)

[Jamie, Fausset, Brown Commentary on the whole Bible](#)

[Jenee Woodard Links on Paul](#)

[John Gill's Exposition of the Bible](#)

Links

[Map of Missionary Journeys](#)

[Map of the Seven Churches of Asia](#)

[New Testament Gateway Paul the Apostle](#)

On-line and off-line Resources for the study of Ephesians

[Origin of Christianity and Judaism](#) Manfred Davidmann

Outstanding are the sections on Paul and the Gospels: Manfred Davidmann shows that Paul's ideology was first opposed and that successive gospel writers then changed the record in Paul's favour, and how they did it.

[Peter Richardson "The Historical Paul"](#)

[Resources for the Study of Ephesians](#)

Robert M. Price [The Evolution of the Pauline Canon](#)

[Robertson's Word Links](#)

Sermons on Ephesians

[Sources for the Study of Ephesians](#)

[St. Paul Apostle to the Gentiles](#)

[St. Paul the Apostle](#)

[The Birth of the Christian Religion](#) [The Jesus Mysteries Page](#)

The Dead Sea Scrolls, within the context of the findings reported here, become much more meaningful. In turn, the knowledge gained from them is part of the pattern of events recorded here for the first time.

[The Evolution of the Pauline Canon](#) Robert Price

This site contains links to studies and works portraying Paul as forsaking the Torah.

[The Paul Page](#)

[Tyndale on Ephesians](#)

Wayne A. Meeks [Paul's Mission and Letters](#)

What you find here is scientific analysis of facts established by the methods of biblical archaeology.

Home

Matthew McGee's Map

Very viewable. Scroll past chronologies.

Four Missionary Journeys

Journey 1 Journey 2 Journey 3 Journey 4

Journey 1



Description of Cities from Easton's Bible Dictionary

Seleucia

the sea-port of Antioch, near the mouth of the Orontes. Paul and his companions sailed from this port on their first missionary journey (Acts 13:4). This city was built by Seleucus Nicator, the "king of Syria." It is said of him that "few princes have ever lived with so great a passion for the building of cities. He is reputed to have built in all nine Seleucias, sixteen Antiochs, and six Laodiceas." Seleucia became a city of great importance, and was made a "free city" by Pompey. It is now a small village, called el-Kalusi.

Paphos

the capital of the island of Cyprus, and therefore the residence of the Roman governor. It was visited by Paul and Barnabas on their first missionary tour (Acts 13:6). It is new Paphos which is here meant. It lay on the west coast of the island, about 8 miles north of old Paphos. Its modern name is Baffa.

Lystra

a town of Lycaonia, in Asia Minor, in a wild district and among a rude population. Here Paul preached the gospel after he had been driven by persecution from Iconium (Acts 14:2-7). Here also he healed a lame man (8), and thus so impressed the ignorant and superstitious people that they took him for Mercury, because he was the "chief speaker," and his companion Barnabas for Jupiter, probably in consequence of his stately, venerable appearance; and were proceeding to offer sacrifices to them (13), when Paul earnestly addressed them and turned their attention to the true source of all blessings. But soon after, through the influence of the Jews from Antioch in Pisidia and Iconium, they stoned Paul and left him for dead (14:19). On recovering, Paul left for Derbe; but soon returned again, through Lystra, encouraging the disciples there to steadfastness. He in all likelihood visited this city again on his third missionary tour (Acts 18:23). Timothy, who was probably born here (2 Tim. 3:10, 11), was no doubt one of those who were on this occasion witnesses of Paul's persecution and his courage in Lystra.

Derbe

a small town on the eastern part of the upland plain of Lycaonia, about 20 miles from Lystra. Paul passed through Derbe

on his route from Cilicia to Iconium, on his second missionary journey (Acts 16:1), and probably also on his third journey (18:23; 19:1). On his first journey (14:20, 21) he came to Derbe from the other side; i.e., from Iconium. It was the native place of Gaius, one of Paul's companions (20:4). He did not here suffer persecution (2 Tim. 3:11).

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Journey 2



Seleucia

the sea-port of Antioch, near the mouth of the Orontes. Paul and his companions sailed from this port on their first missionary journey (Acts 13:4). This city was built by Seleucus Nicator, the "king of Syria." It is said of him that "few princes have ever lived with so great a passion for the building of cities. He is reputed to have built in all nine Seleucias, sixteen Antiochs, and six Laodiceas." Seleucia became a city of great importance, and was made a "free city" by Pompey. It is now a small village, called el-Kalusi.

Tarsus

the chief city of Cilicia. It was distinguished for its wealth and for its schools of learning, in which it rivalled, nay, excelled even Athens and Alexandria, and hence was spoken of as "no mean city." It was the native place of the Apostle Paul (Acts 21:39). It stood on the banks of the river Cydnus, about 12 miles north of the Mediterranean. It is said to have been

founded by Sardanapalus, king of Assyria. It is now a filthy, ruinous Turkish town, called Tersous. (See PAUL)

Derbe

a small town on the eastern part of the upland plain of Lycaonia, about 20 miles from Lystra. Paul passed through Derbe on his route from Cilicia to Iconium, on his second missionary journey (Acts 16:1), and probably also on his third journey (18:23; 19:1). On his first journey (14:20, 21) he came to Derbe from the other side; i.e., from Iconium. It was the native place of Gaius, one of Paul's companions (20:4). He did not here suffer persecution (2 Tim. 3:11).

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Neapolis

new city, a town in Thrace at which Paul first landed in Europe (Acts 16:11). It was the sea-port of the inland town of Philippi, which was distant about 10 miles. From this port Paul embarked on his last journey to Jerusalem (Acts 20:6). It is identified with the modern Turco-Grecian Kavalla.

Berea

a city of Macedonia to which Paul with Silas and Timotheus went when persecuted at Thessalonica (Acts 17:10, 13), and from which

also he was compelled to withdraw, when he fled to the sea-coast and thence sailed to Athens (14, 15). Sopater, one of Paul's companions belonged to this city, and his conversion probably took place at this time (Acts 20:4). It is now called Verria.

Corinth

a Grecian city, on the isthmus which joins the Peloponnesus to the mainland of Greece. It is about 48 miles west of Athens. The ancient city was destroyed by the Romans (B.C. 146), and that mentioned in the New Testament was quite a new city, having been rebuilt about a century afterwards and peopled by a colony of freedmen from Rome. It became under the Romans the seat of government for Southern Greece or Achaia (Acts 18:12-16). It was noted for its wealth, and for the luxurious and immoral and vicious habits of the people. It had a large mixed population of Romans, Greeks, and Jews. When Paul first visited the city (A.D. 51 or 52), Gallio, the brother of Seneca, was proconsul. Here Paul resided for eighteen months (18:1-18). Here he first became acquainted with Aquila and Priscilla, and soon after his departure Apollos came to it from Ephesus. After an interval he visited it a second time, and remained for three months (20:3). During this second visit his Epistle to the Romans was written (probably A.D. 55). Although there were many Jewish converts at Corinth, yet the Gentile element prevailed in the church there.

Some have argued from 2 Cor. 12:14; 13:1, that Paul visited Corinth a third time (i.e., that on some unrecorded occasion he visited the city between what are usually called the first and second visits). But the passages referred to only indicate Paul's intention to visit Corinth (comp. 1 Cor. 16:5, where the Greek present tense denotes an intention), an intention which was in some way frustrated. We can hardly suppose that such a visit could have been made by the apostle without more distinct reference to it.

Ephesus

the capital of proconsular Asia, which was the western part of Asia Minor. It was colonized principally from Athens. In the time of the Romans it bore the title of "the first and greatest metropolis of Asia." It was distinguished for the Temple of Diana (q.v.), who there had her chief shrine; and for its theatre, which was the largest in the world, capable of containing 50,000 spectators. It was, like all ancient theatres,

open to the sky. Here were exhibited the fights of wild beasts and of men with beasts. (Comp. 1 Cor. 4:9; 9:24, 25; 15:32.)

Many Jews took up their residence in this city, and here the seeds of the gospel were sown immediately after Pentecost (Acts 2:9; 6:9). At the close of his second missionary journey (about A.D. 51), when Paul was returning from Greece to Syria (18:18-21), he first visited this city. He remained, however, for only a short time, as he was hastening to keep the feast, probably of Pentecost, at Jerusalem; but he left Aquila and Priscilla behind him to carry on the work of spreading the gospel.

During his third missionary journey Paul reached Ephesus from the "upper coasts" (Acts 19:1), i.e., from the inland parts of Asia Minor, and tarried here for about three years; and so successful and abundant were his labours that "all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks" (19:10). Probably during this period the seven churches of the Apocalypse were founded, not by Paul's personal labours, but by missionaries whom he may have sent out from Ephesus, and by the influence of converts returning to their homes.

On his return from his journey, Paul touched at Miletus, some 30 miles south of Ephesus (Acts 20:15), and sending for the presbyters of Ephesus to meet him there, he delivered to them that touching farewell charge which is recorded in Acts 20:18-35. Ephesus is not again mentioned till near the close of Paul's life, when he writes to Timothy exhorting him to "abide still at Ephesus" (1 Tim. 1:3).

Two of Paul's companions, Trophimus and Tychicus, were probably natives of Ephesus (Acts 20:4; 21:29; 2 Tim. 4:12). In his second epistle to Timothy, Paul speaks of Onesiphorus as having served him in many things at Ephesus (2 Tim. 1:18). He also "sent Tychicus to Ephesus" (4:12), probably to attend to the interests of the church there. Ephesus is twice mentioned in the Apocalypse (1:11; 2:1).

The apostle John, according to tradition, spent many years in Ephesus, where he died and was buried.

A part of the site of this once famous city is now occupied by a small Turkish village, Ayasaluk, which is regarded as a

corruption of the two Greek words, *hagios theologos*; i.e., "the holy divine."

Antipatris

a city built by Herod the Great, and called by this name in honour of his father, Antipater. It lay between Caesarea and Lydda, two miles inland, on the great Roman road from Caesarea to Jerusalem. To this place Paul was brought by night (Acts 23:31) on his way to Caesarea, from which it was distant 28 miles. It is identified with the modern, Ras-el-Ain, where rise the springs of Aujeh, the largest springs in Palestine.

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Third Journey



Antioch

(1.) In Syria, on the river Orontes, about 16 miles from the

Mediterranean, and some 300 miles north of Jerusalem. It was the metropolis of Syria, and afterwards became the capital of the Roman province in Asia. It ranked third, after Rome and Alexandria, in point of importance, of the cities of the Roman empire. It was called the "first city of the East." Christianity was early introduced into it (Acts 11:19, 21, 24), and the name "Christian" was first applied here to its professors (Acts 11:26). It is intimately connected with the early history of the gospel (Acts 6:5; 11:19, 27, 28, 30; 12:25; 15:22-35; Gal. 2:11, 12). It was the great central point whence missionaries to the Gentiles were sent forth. It was the birth-place of the famous Christian father Chrysostom, who died A.D. 407. It bears the modern name of Antakia, and is now a miserable, decaying Turkish town. Like Philippi, it was raised to the rank of a Roman colony. Such colonies were ruled by "praetors" (R.V. marg., Acts 16:20, 21).

(2.) In the extreme north of Pisidia; was visited by Paul and Barnabas on the first missionary journey (Acts 13:14). Here they found a synagogue and many proselytes. They met with great success in preaching the gospel, but the Jews stirred up a violent opposition against them, and they were obliged to leave the place. On his return, Paul again visited Antioch for the purpose of confirming the disciples (Acts 14:21). It has been identified with the modern Yalobatch, lying to the east of Ephesus.

Ephesus

the capital of proconsular Asia, which was the western part of Asia Minor. It was colonized principally from Athens. In the time of the Romans it bore the title of "the first and greatest metropolis of Asia." It was distinguished for the Temple of Diana (q.v.), who there had her chief shrine; and for its theatre, which was the largest in the world, capable of containing 50,000 spectators. It was, like all ancient theatres, open to the sky. Here were exhibited the fights of wild beasts and of men with beasts. (Comp. 1 Cor. 4:9; 9:24, 25; 15:32.)

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Apollonia

a city of Macedonia between Amphipolis and Thessalonica, from which it was distant about 36 miles. Paul and Silas passed

through it on their way to Thessalonica (Acts 17:1).

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Corinth

a Grecian city, on the isthmus which joins the Peloponnesus to the mainland of Greece. It is about 48 miles west of Athens. The ancient city was destroyed by the Romans (B.C. 146), and that mentioned in the New Testament was quite a new city, having been rebuilt about a century afterwards and peopled by a colony of freedmen from Rome. It became under the Romans the seat of government for Southern Greece or Achaia (Acts 18:12-16). It was noted for its wealth, and for the luxurious and immoral and vicious habits of the people. It had a large mixed population of Romans, Greeks, and Jews. When Paul first visited the city (A.D. 51 or 52), Gallio, the brother of Seneca, was proconsul. Here Paul resided for eighteen months (18:1-18). Here he first became acquainted with Aquila and Priscilla, and soon after his departure Apollos came to it from Ephesus. After an interval he visited it a second time, and remained for three months (20:3). During this second visit his Epistle to the Romans was written (probably A.D. 55). Although there were many Jewish converts at Corinth, yet the Gentile element prevailed in the church there.

Some have argued from 2 Cor. 12:14; 13:1, that Paul visited Corinth a third time (i.e., that on some unrecorded occasion he visited the city between what are usually called the first and second visits). But the passages referred to only indicate Paul's intention to visit Corinth (comp. 1 Cor. 16:5, where the Greek present tense denotes an intention), an intention which was in some way frustrated. We can hardly suppose that such a visit could have been made by the apostle without more distinct reference to it.

Athens

the capital of Attica, the most celebrated city of the ancient world, the seat of Greek literature and art during the golden

period of Grecian history. Its inhabitants were fond of novelty (Acts 17:21), and were remarkable for their zeal in the worship of the gods. It was a sarcastic saying of the Roman satirist that it was "easier to find a god at Athens than a man."

On his second missionary journey Paul visited this city (Acts 17:15; comp. 1 Thess. 3:1), and delivered in the Areopagus his famous speech (17:22-31). The altar of which Paul there speaks as dedicated "to the [properly "an"] unknown God" (23) was probably one of several which bore the same inscription. It is supposed that they originated in the practice of letting loose a flock of sheep and goats in the streets of Athens on the occasion of a plague, and of offering them up in sacrifice, at the spot where they lay down, "to the god concerned."

Cnidus

a town and harbour on the extreme south-west of the peninsula of Doris in Asia Minor. Paul sailed past it on his voyage to Rome after leaving Myra (Acts 27:7).

Caesarea

(Palestinae), a city on the shore of the Mediterranean, on the great road from Tyre to Egypt, about 70 miles northwest of Jerusalem, at the northern extremity of the plain of Sharon. It was built by Herod the Great (B.C. 10), who named it after Caesar Augustus, hence called Caesarea Sebaste (Gr. Sebastos = "Augustus"), on the site of an old town called "Strato's Tower." It was the capital of the Roman province of Judaea, the seat of the governors or procurators, and the headquarters of the Roman troops. It was the great Gentile city of Palestine, with a spacious artificial harbour. It was adorned with many buildings of great splendour, after the manner of the Roman cities of the West. Here Cornelius the centurion was converted through the instrumentality of Peter (Acts 10:1, 24), and thus for the first time the door of faith was opened to the Gentiles. Philip the evangelist resided here with his four daughters (21:8). From this place Saul sailed for his native Tarsus when forced to flee from Jerusalem (9:30), and here he landed when returning from his second missionary journey (18:22). He remained as a prisoner here for two years before his voyage to Rome (Acts 24:27; 25:1, 4, 6, 13). Here on a "set day," when games were celebrated in the theatre in honour of the emperor Claudius, Herod Agrippa I. appeared among the people in great pomp, and in the midst of the

idolatrous homage paid to him was suddenly smitten by an angel, and carried out a dying man. He was "eaten of worms" (12:19-23), thus perishing by the same loathsome disease as his grandfather, Herod the Great. It still retains its ancient name Kaiseriye, but is now desolate. "The present inhabitants of the ruins are snakes, scorpions, lizards, wild boars, and jackals." It is described as the most desolate city of all Palestine.

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Journey 4



Antipatris

a city built by Herod the Great, and called by this name in honour of his father, Antipater. It lay between Caesarea and Lydda, two miles inland, on the great Roman road from Caesarea to Jerusalem. To this place Paul was brought by night (Acts 23:31) on his way to Caesarea, from which it was distant 28

miles. It is identified with the modern, Ras-el-Ain, where rise the springs of Aujeh, the largest springs in Palestine.

Sidon

fishing; fishery, Gen. 10:15, 19 (A.V. marg., Tzidon; R.V., Zidon); Matt. 11:21, 22; Luke 6:17. (See ZIDON)

Cnidus

a town and harbour on the extreme south-west of the peninsula of Doris in Asia Minor. Paul sailed past it on his voyage to Rome after leaving Myra (Acts 27:7).

Fair Havens

a harbour in the south of Crete, some 5 miles to the east of which was the town of Lasea (Acts 27:8). Here the ship of Alexandria in which Paul and his companions sailed was detained a considerable time waiting for a favourable wind. Contrary to Paul's advice, the master of the ship determined to prosecute the voyage, as the harbour was deemed incommodious for wintering in (9-12). The result was that, after a stormy voyage, the vessel was finally wrecked on the coast of Malta (27:40-44).

Syracuse

a city on the south-east coast of Sicily, where Paul landed and remained three days when on his way to Rome (Acts 28:12). It was distinguished for its magnitude and splendour. It is now a small town of some 13,000 inhabitants.

Rhegium

breach, a town in the south of Italy, on the Strait of Messina, at which Paul touched on his way to Rome (Acts 28:13). It is now called Rheggio.

Puteoli

a city on the coast of Campania, on the north shore of a bay running north from the Bay of Naples, at which Paul landed on his way to Rome, from which it was distant 170 miles. Here he tarried for seven days (Acts 28:13, 14). This was the great emporium for the Alexandrian corn ships. Here Paul and his companions began their journey, by the "Appian Way," to Rome. It is now called Pozzuoli. The remains of a huge amphitheatre, and of the quay at which Paul landed, may still be seen here.

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Home





Mediterranean Sea


 A rectangular button with a textured, metallic appearance and the word "Home" centered in a simple font.

Wayne A. Meeks [Paul's Mission and Letters](#)

<http://www.ccel.org/fathers/NPNF2-03/Theodoretus/Letters/t63.htm#t63.htm.2>

CHAPTER V.

Paul,(4) formerly called Saul, an apostle outside the number of the twelve apostles, was of the tribe of Benjamin and the town of Giscalis(6) in Judea. When this was taken by the Romans he removed with his parents to Tarsus in Cilicia. Sent by them to Jerusalem to study law he was educated by Gamaliel a most learned man whom Luke mentions. But after he had been present at the death of the martyr Stephen and had received letters from the high priest of the temple for the persecution of those who believed in Christ, he proceeded to Damascus, where constrained to faith by a revelation, as it is written in the Acts of the apostles, he was transformed from a persecutor into an elect vessel. As Sergius Paulus Proconsul of Cyprus was the first to believe on his preaching, he took his name from him because he had subdued him to faith in Christ, and having been joined by Barnabas, after traversing many cities, he returned to Jerusalem and was ordained apostle to the Gentiles by Peter, James and John. And because a full account of his life is given in the Acts of the Apostles, I only say this, that the twenty-fifth year after our Lord's passion, that is the second of Nero, at the time when Fetus Procurator of Judea succeeded Felix, he was sent bound to Rome, and remaining for two years in free custody, disputed daily with the Jews

concerning the advent of Christ. It ought to be said that at the first defence, the power of Nero having not yet been confirmed, nor his wickedness broken forth to such a degree as the histories relate concerning him, Paul was dismissed by Nero, that the gospel of Christ might be preached also in the West. As he himself writes in the second epistle to Timothy, at the time when he was about to be put to death dictating his epistle as he did while in chains; "At my first defence no one took my part, but all forsook me: may it not be laid to their account. But the Lord stood by(1) me and strengthened me; that through me the message might be fully proclaimed and that all the Gentiles might hear, and I was delivered out of the mouth of the lion"(2)-- clearly indicating Nero as lion on account of his cruelty. And directly following he says "The Lord delivered me from the month of the lion" and again shortly "The Lord delivered me(3) from every evil work and saved me unto his heavenly kingdom,"(4) for indeed he felt within himself that his martyrdom was near at hand, for in the same epistle he announced "for I am already being offered and the time of my departure is at hand."(5) He then, in the fourteenth year of Nero on the same day with Peter, was beheaded at Rome for Christ's sake and was buried in the Ostian

way, the twenty-seventh year after our Lord's passion. He wrote nine epistles to seven churches: To the Romans one, To the Corinthians two, To the Galatians one, To the Ephesians one, To the Philippians one, To the Colossians one, To the Thessalonians two; and besides these to his disciples, To Timothy two, To Titus one, To Philemon one. The epistle which is called the Epistle to the Hebrews is not considered his, on account of its difference from the others in style and language, but it is reckoned, either according to Tertullian to be the work of Barnabas, or according to others, to be by Luke the Evangelist or Clement afterwards bishop of the church at Rome, who, they say, arranged and adorned the ideas of Paul in his own language, though to be sure, since Paul was writing to Hebrews and was in disrepute among them he may have omitted his name from the salvation on this account. He being a Hebrew wrote Hebrew, that is his own tongue and most fluently while the things which were eloquently written in Hebrew were more eloquently turned into Greek @ and this is the reason why it seems to differ from other epistles of Paul. Some read one also to(2) the Laodiceans but it is rejected by everyone.

The Apostle Paul <http://www.realtime.net/~wdoud/topics/paul.html>

(The following are word for word excerpts from the above source.)

--educated by his mother until the age of five.

--From age five to ten he studied with his father in the Hebrew scriptures and traditional writings.

--At the same time, being a Roman citizen and living in a Greek and Roman environment, he received a thorough education in the Greek language, history, and culture.

--sent to Jerusalem at about the age of ten to attend the rabbinical school of Gamaliel, who was the son of Simeon the son of Hillel. Gamaliel was a most eminent rabbi who was mentioned both in the Talmud and in the New Testament (Acts 5:24-40; 22:3). Gamaliel was called Rabban - one of only seven teachers so called. He was a Pharisee, but he rose above party prejudice. He composed a prayer against the Christian "heretics". He lived and died a Jew.

-- Herod was dead, and the Romans had complete control of Judea, hence, there was Roman money, language, and culture. The Jews, therefore, were inclined to cling more closely to their religion as the center of unity. [Refer to the topic: Judean History]

-- as a Roman, Tarsian, Hebrew, and culturally Greek, he knew of the many distortions of the life of his society. As a nation becomes unhealthy, development is halted. Societies errors as to the nature of God and the true relation of God to man prevented nations from getting rid of their besetting evil.

--After a considerable stay at Antioch after his second missionary journey, Paul departed and went over all the country of Galatia and Phrygia in order to strengthen the disciples (Acts 18:23). During this time, he also gave directions for the collection for the poor in Jerusalem.

-- came to Ephesus, probably in about 53 A.D. He found there twelve disciples of Apollos who had only

received John's baptism and were not aware of the Holy Spirit and Church Age mysteries.

--He taught three months in the synagogue in Ephesus. In the face of opposition, he took his classes to the school of one, Tyrannus, where he taught daily for two years. Exorcists were converted and books of magic were burned by the new converts. He paid a visit to Corinth, then returned to Ephesus where he wrote 1 Corinthians.

--Paul left for Troas and Macedonia because of the danger in Ephesus from the silversmiths and craftsmen who made articles for the worship of Diana. (See Topic: Ephesus) He sailed to Macedonia to meet Titus, landed at Neapolis and went to Philippi where he was "comforted by Titus." He sent Titus to Corinth with the second Corinthian letter and instructions for completing the collection there for needy Christians.

--Paul traveled through Macedonia and finally arrived at Corinth himself, staying there about three months and writing Romans. He took ship for Miletus where he met for a few days with Ephesian elders. He then sailed (island hopping to Coos, Rhodes, and Patara) to Tyre. From Tyre he sailed to Ptolemais and reached Caesarea.

--Paul was warned not to visit Jerusalem. He went anyway and was warmly received by the brethren. He had an interview with James and the elders. A charge was brought against him by the Sanhedrin that "he taught all the Jews among the Gentiles to forsake Moses, saying that they ought not to circumcise their sons, neither to walk after their customs."

--Jews from Asia stirred up the people against him, charging him with bringing Greeks into the Temple. --Roman soldiers took Paul to the governor's castle for interrogation by scourging, at which time Paul claimed his Roman citizenship.

--There arose a conspiracy among forty Jews to assassinate Paul, but Paul's nephew brought him a warning of the plot. The Romans decided to send him to Caesarea to Felix, the procurator (governor) of Judea (Acts 22:21ff).

--Felix kept Paul a prisoner in Caesarea (under loose house arrest) for two years until the arrival of Festus, the new governor. Festus wanted Paul taken back to Jerusalem, but Paul was aware of the danger there and uttered the Latin word *Caesarem apello!* -- "I appeal to Caesar!" Festus was thus obliged to make arrangements for Paul to travel to Rome under escort.

--King Agrippa II, with his sister, Berenice, came to visit Festus, the new governor. Festus pleaded ignorance of Jewish law, so Paul made his testimony before Agrippa, with the greatest of pomp and ceremony. This episode was one of the greatest defenses of the gospel ever recorded. Agrippa said, "Almost you persuade me ..."

--Festus decided then that Paul was innocent or wrongdoing, and he would have let him go free if he had not appealed to Caesar.

--Paul's escort on the trip to Rome was a platoon of Roman soldiers under Julius, a centurion of the Augustan Cohort. They sailed in a coasting vessel to Adramyttium and Sidon. Paul was given liberty. The next port was Myra, from which they took ship to Italy.

--They sailed to Crete, stayed at the port of Fair Havens for one month, sailed for Phoenix, and were driven on the rocks at Malta where they stayed for three months. From Malta they sailed in the vessel "Castor and Pollux" to Syracuse (Sicily) and Rhegium, the port city of the Italian province of Puteoli. From there they went to Rome on the Appian Way.

--In Rome Paul dwelled in his own hired house under the supervision of a Prefect of the Praetorian Guard. He was permitted to hold meetings, and he met with Jewish elders, winning some of them to Christ. This period lasted two years, during which he wrote Philemon, Colossians, Ephesians, and Philippians.

--He was acquitted by Nero, so he was free to travel and did so. His visits were to Crete and to Asia Minor; and it is widely thought that he traveled in Spain on a missionary journey. He is thought to have been arrested again in Ephesus and taken again to Rome from there, but this time treated as a malefactor, with his friends deserting him (except for Luke and Onesiphorus). There was persecution in Rome at this time, and a campaign of terror by Nero against the Christians. Paul was condemned and executed in Rome.

Archeology and Paul

A Synoptic Life of Paul Philip Pendleton

Jeffrey Sheler Reassessing Apostle Paul

A scholarly quest. Today, in a batch of recent books and articles, critics and admirers alike have sought to penetrate what some contend are flawed interpretations and deliberate distortions of Paul's teachings. Just as some have tried for centuries to uncover a "Jesus of history" unadorned by church tradition, many scholars now have taken up a Quest for the Historical Paul. Among the more provocative theories that have emerged from these studies:

-  As a Christian missionary and theologian, Paul knew little and cared less about the life and teachings of Jesus of Nazareth. More important in Paul's mind was the death and Resurrection of the exalted Christ who appeared to him in a mystical vision.
-  Paul was intensely apocalyptic and believed that Christ's Second Coming was imminent. Consequently, he did not intend his sometimes stern judgments on doctrinal matters and on issues of gender and sexuality to become church dogma applied, as it has been, for nearly 2,000 years.

- Although an apostle to the gentiles, Paul remained thoroughly Jewish in his outlook and saw the Christian movement as a means of expanding and reforming traditional Judaism. He had no thought of starting a new religion.
- For all of his energy and influence, Paul wrote only a fraction of the New Testament letters that tradition ascribes to him, and even some of those were subsequently altered by others to reflect later developments in church theology.

As might be expected, these claims are passionately debated. In some quarters, the quest for a new and improved Paul is denounced as an ideological attack on the Bible and Christian tradition. "Paul in the 20th century has been used and abused as much as in the first," says N. T. Wright, a New Testament scholar and dean of the Lichfield Cathedral in Staffordshire, England. Yet there is wide recognition among scholars of every stripe that to discover fresh insights into the life of the Apostle is to draw closer to the roots of Christianity.

A Chart of Paul's Life

Paul's Contribution James Tabor

Beyond this there is little one can say. I think the texts I examined in the previous chapter can shed light on Paul's experience. Broadly speaking he presents a Hellenistic way of salvation--a particular scheme of apotheosis, or "immortalization," with certain apocalyptic peculiarities. The broad contours of his religious experiences--epiphany, the reception of oracles, visions, the journey to heaven, secret revelations--these are all well known to us, especially from the Greek magical papyri, the Hermetic texts and various forms of esoteric Judaism of the period. Add to that his specific expectations regarding his mission to the Gentiles, the conversion of Israel, and the imminent parousia of Jesus as cosmic Lord, and you have it--his own particular vision and version of that most general Hellenistic (and human) hope--escape from mortality. And yet it is those very apocalyptic "particulars" that make Paul really Paul. His was not a scheme of salvation for any place or for all time. Although he has endured and been appropriated in many different ways over the centuries, from the standpoint of the history of Judaism, he belongs in those crucial years of hope and promise, before the terrible days of August, 70 C.E., when many such dreams came to an end. For Paul the "appointed time" of the End had drawn very near (1 Cor. 7:26, 29, 31). How near, it is difficult to say, but he wrote that in the early 50's C.E.. If he, like others in the movement before 70 C.E., expected the fulfillment of Daniel 11 and 12, with the "desolating sacrilege" set up in the Temple at Jerusalem, then events such as Gaius' attempt to have his statue placed there (41 C.E.) would have fueled

his apocalyptic speculations. Apparently his plans to go to Spain never worked out, due to his arrest under Nero (Rom. 15:28), so his grand hope of bringing the bulk of Israel to accept Jesus as Messiah through his Gentile mission became more and more hopeless. By 70 C.E. it was becoming increasingly difficult to maintain any immediate hope for the "redemption of Israel." Others could pick up the pieces in various ways, as Jacob Neusner and his students have demonstrated so clearly, but Paul was gone and what emerged in his name, even in the short decades after 70 C.E., was the beginning of a new and very different story.

B.W. Johnson Introduction to the Epistles of Paul

Good introduction to life ending with chronology of life and of epistles.

Conversion	A. D.	37.
First Visit to Jerusalem after Conversion	"	40.
Second Visit to Jerusalem	"	44.
Beginning of First Missionary Journey	"	45.
Council at Jerusalem (Third Visit)	"	50.
Second Missionary Journey Begun	"	51.
Fourth Visit to Jerusalem	"	54.
Third Missionary Journey Begun	"	54.
Fifth and Last Visit to Jerusalem	"	58.
Imprisonment at Cæsarea	"	58-60.
Voyage to Rome	"	60, 61.
First Imprisonment in Rome	"	61-63.
Release from Imprisonment	"	63.
Second Imprisonment. Date Uncertain, from	"	65 to 67.
Martyrdom.	" " "	65 to 68.

Robert Eisenman Paul as Herodian

Though these matters are hardly capable of proof, and we have, in fact, proved nothing, still no other explanations better explain the combination of points we raise. One thing cannot be denied, Paul's Herodian connections make the manner of his sudden appearances and disappearances, his various miraculous escapes, his early power in Jerusalem, his Roman citizenship, his easy relations with kings and governors, and the venue and terms of his primary missionary activities comprehensible in a manner no other reconstruction even approaches. When it comes to linking the thrust of these testimonies and allusions to the political *Sitz im Leben* of later Qumran sectarian texts and that Lying Spouter so prominent in them, much good sense can be achieved, but such a discussion is perforce beyond the scope of this study.

The Apostle Paul by Alfred Firmin Loisy

But the main interest of his career is to be sought elsewhere. Thanks to the meagre information preserved for us in the Book of Acts and completed by authentic elements in the Epistles, we are able to form some idea of the way Christianity spread itself between the years 30 and 60, from the East to the West; we see it rejected at its birth by Judaism, and yet making headway everywhere by the help of Judaism, in spite of Judaism and at the expense of Judaism. We may think of it as a train of powder winding into every part of the Roman empire where Judaism had found a footing. Most assuredly the career of Paul is a remarkable sample of this astonishing propaganda. But no more than a sample, and very far from epitomizing or representing the whole movement. Official Judaism, which supported the Sadducees side by side with the Pharisees, and tolerated the Essenes, repudiated Christianity, with violence and from the very first, as treason, as apostasy. It did so because the Christians in claiming Jesus as the Lord Christ and making him an object of worship, with salvation depending on faith in Jesus alone, insulted the Law and destroyed it. Of this new religion Paul was one of the initiators but by no means the only one, nor the first. The Christian propaganda had other agents, some known to us and many more unknown, who laboured in the pagan world under the same conditions as Paul, undeterred by the minor differences among them, all of them more than suspect in the eyes of Judaism, all destined to speedy condemnation by the imperial authority of Rome.

Paul at Ephesus

2. FROM CORINTH TO JERUSALEM

His work in Corinth nearly done, Paul, in company with Aquila and Priscilla, embarked for Ephesus, probably in the fall of the year 52, but immediately left his two companions in that city, being anxious to revisit the communities he had founded in Galatia. [23] Perhaps he had been warned that a great effort was

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in preparation to detach them from his Gospel. While he was absent on this business there arrived at Ephesus a disciple named Apollos, native of Alexandria, a learned and eloquent

man well versed in the Scriptures, who got a hearing in the synagogue. [24] The editor of Acts seems much concerned to prevent Apollos from being regarded as the original founder of Ephesian Christianity which, in point of fact, he seems to have been. For the anecdote about the twelve disciples, found by Paul at Ephesus on his return, [25] who were unacquainted with the baptism of the Spirit must refer — if it has any historical reality — to converts made by Apollos, here fictitiously presented, along with Apollos himself, as Christians insufficiently taught and in need of further instruction — Apollos by Aquila and Priscilla and the twelve disciples by Paul himself. This distinction has probably no greater weight than the similar story by the same editor about the converts made by Philip in Samaria who, though baptized, had not received the Holy Spirit, of which we are invited to think the Jerusalem apostles were the depositaries. [26] To transform Apollos and the twelve disciples into disciples of John converted at Ephesus into disciples of the Christ, as most critics and some mythologues are eager to do, is a somewhat risky procedure. The facts are simply that Apollos, having set the evangelization of Ephesus well on foot, decided to go on to Corinth, and that "the brethren," among whom doubtless were chiefly Aquila and Priscilla, furnished him with a letter of recommendation to the community (xviii, zy). [27] At Corinth his success was as brilliant as at Ephesus and his reputation soon began to outshine that of Paul.

There may be significance in the fact that Apollos, who has had such good success at Ephesus in the absence of Paul, disappears before Paul's arrival there; and the same will happen at Corinth, whence Apollos will again depart before Paul comes back. We may suspect, but without committing ourselves to risky conclusions, that the two teachers thought it wiser not to meet on the field of their missionary activity, and that their friends encouraged them, or at least encouraged Apollos, in that precaution. On returning to Ephesus as soon as Paul was ready to quit that city for Corinth, Apollos appears to have been extremely reserved (i Cor. xvi, 12). He cannot be represented

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as holding entirely with the Judaizers, but neither was he exactly on the line of Paul from the hellenic-Christian point of view. We should regard him as a teacher less jealous for his own doctrines and apostolic privilege than Paul was, and ready, like Paul and the others, to go wherever he could find an open door. His position may have been similar to that of Barnabas, inclining to hellenism, but in good relations with the old believers in Palestine; in Corinth we shall find his partisans associating with Peter's on lines somewhat opposed to Paul. He was probably urged to go to Corinth by friends he had made in Ephesus, perhaps even by Aquila and Priscilla, who knew the many advantages of the Corinthian field. Moreover, notwithstanding their relations with Paul, Aquila and Priscilla were of the same way of thinking as Apollos in regard to the common Christianity.

In this connexion it should be noted that Silas (Sylvanus), who was still with Paul at Corinth, having borne him company all the way from Antioch, is now no longer at his side. As a companion of Paul he makes no further appearance and tradition puts him later

at the side of Peter (i Peter v, 12). It was at Corinth that the two apostolic labourers took their separate ways, perhaps in consequence of some personal coolness. The source of Acts can hardly have failed to leave a record of their separation, which the editor would be very careful to omit. To remain for long the companion of Paul a docile temper was necessary, like that of the good Timothy. Luke was not always at his side; however deeply he may have been attached to his person he does not seem to have been as closely associated with his ministry.

Meanwhile Paul returned to Ephesus and preached in the synagogue for three months on end. But a lively opposition declaring itself and the Jews scoffing openly at the faith he was offering them, he carried his teaching elsewhere, and continued it for two years [28] in a room he had hired from a certain Tyrranus, where he taught daily, thus exchanging, so to say, the pulpit of the preacher for the platform of the public lecturer. From all of which we may infer that a wide currency attended this teaching, to us so extraordinary in its contents and yet indisputably successful to a degree which baffles our reason. The angry opposition

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it awakened, of which the detailed manifestations escape us, [29] was commensurate with the success. But, as happened in the case of Corinth, the Ephesus mission was fraught with consequence not only for the development of the Ephesian community, which owed its beginnings to Apollos, but for the evangelization of other towns in that region.

Having taught at Ephesus for two years under these conditions, Paul formed a project which, with his past achievements in view, should not strike us as too ambitious, that of carrying the Gospel to Rome, but not until he had gone to Jerusalem with the collection he would first take up from the groups of believers in Macedonia and Achaia, as well as from those he was now forming in Asia. [30] These collections were to some extent imitated from those regularly made among the Jews for the support of the temple worship; and that no doubt is the reason why the editor of Acts is perseveringly silent on the subject. [31]

Manfred Davidmann The Origin of Christianity

<http://www.solbaram.org/articles/origin.html>

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Summary

In ORIGIN OF CHRISTIANITY and JUDAISM, Manfred Davidmann proves what Jesus really taught: The social laws of the Torah have to be

followed. These social laws guarantee equality, social justice and security, and a good life for all members of the community. These laws protect people from exploitation, oppression and enslavement through need. Early Christians, being mostly Jews, followed these laws.

Manfred Davidmann then proves how these essential social laws of the Torah were bypassed and ceased to be observed, in Judaism and in Christianity at the same time.

He describes and proves how Paul changed what Jesus had taught, how Paul's ideology serves the establishment instead of the people, and how this became Christianity's official doctrine. On the other hand Manfred Davidmann shows that the Talmud (especially the Mishnah) tells how Hillel changed Judaism in the same way, to what it is today.

The Dead Sea Scrolls, within the context of the findings reported here, become much more meaningful. In turn, the knowledge gained from them is part of the pattern of events recorded here for the first time.

What you find here is scientific analysis of facts established by the methods of biblical archaeology.

Outstanding are the sections on Paul and the Gospels: Manfred Davidmann shows that Paul's ideology was first opposed and that successive gospel writers then changed the record in Paul's favour, and how they did it.

This is What Actually Happened

1. The Jewish people are taught to observe, and observe, the laws of the Torah (Pentateuch, the five books of Moses).

The Torah's social laws and its social system provide the only known basis for a fair and equitable society: for the existence of communities in which people trust one another, co-operate with each other for the common good, have freedom from oppression, have spiritual and material independence, have a good life.

2. Subjection of the people by foreign (Hellenistic, Seleucid) dictatorship which believes in and supports slavery, oppression through need, exploitation of the working population by their masters (rulers).

It aims to wipe out belief in and application of the social laws of the Torah. Brutal persecution of the people.

The Maccabean uprising frees the people and re-establishes observance of

the social laws of the Torah.

One of the Maccabean brothers leads the uprising. On his death the next brother assumes command. Simeon, the third brother to command, is appointed Ethnarch (Ruler), High Priest, Commander. All power thus centred in one person.

3. During the five generations after that of Simeon, that is during the Maccabean dynasty, the secular rulers gained control of the religious hierarchy and of what was being taught. There was discontent and opposition, but what was taught became increasingly establishment-orientated, serving an oppressing and exploiting establishment. The social laws ceased to be applied as a comprehensive system, as a way of life.

4. A remnant of Jews kept alive the knowledge of the law of Moses. They gained motivation, numbers and strength by rallying round and following the teachings of Jesus (Teacher of Righteousness) - Qumran community, Early Church - in spite of opposition from the religious establishment.

5. Paul (The Liar) infiltrates the movement and changes its teachings into a new religion, into a new establishment-orientated religion "which came to have less and less to do with its supposed founder (Jesus)." {27}

6. The Talmud records the confrontation between Paul's and Jesus' teachings as a confrontation between the teachings of Hillel (Paul) and Shammai (Jesus).

7. The establishment later misrepresented what is there, subtly changing its meaning much as was done by subsequent gospel writers.

For example the Talmud shows that the law never did follow Hillel, that the law was not as taught by the establishment. Yet the establishment today still presents Hillel as one of the wisest of the sages and maintains that the law follows his teachings.