Ephesians

AUTHOR: Paul
TIME WRITTEN: A.D. 60-61 from Rome during Paul's 1st Roman imprisonment
POSITION IN THE BIBLE:
- 49th Book in the Bible
- 10th book in the New Testament
- 5th of 21 epistles
- 9th of Paul's 13 books
- 48 have preceded it. 17 to follow it.

CHAPTERS: 6
VERSES: 155
WORDS: 3,039
KEY WORD: Building Up the Body of Christ
TWO KEY PASSAGES:

1. **Ephesians 2:8-10** - "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,
   9 not of works, lest anyone should boast.
   10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."
2. **Ephesians 4:1-3** - "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,
   2 with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love,
   3 endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

KEY CHAPTER: Ephesians 6
OBSERVATIONS ABOUT EPHESIANS:

1. Ephesians is addressed to a group of Christians who are rich beyond measure in Jesus Christ, yet living as beggars, and only because they are ignorant of their wealth.
   a. Since they have yet to accept their wealth, they relegate themselves to living as spiritual paupers.
   b. Paul begins by describing in chapters 1-3 the contents of the Christian's heavenly bank account.
      1. Adoption
      2. Acceptance
      3. Redemption
      4. Forgiveness
      5. Wisdom
      6. Inheritance

7. The sea of the Holy Spirit
8. Life
9. Grace
10. Citizenship

NOTE: In short, every spiritual blessing

c. Drawing upon that huge spiritual endowment, the Christian has all the resources needed for living "to the praise of the glory of His grace" (**1:6**).

d. Chapters 4-6 resemble an orthopedic clinic, where the Christian learns a spiritual walk rooted in his spiritual wealth.

e. **Ephesians 2:10** well defines the two divisions mentioned.
   1. "For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus (1-3)
   2. "For good works . . .that we should walk in them (4-6)."

2. At the end of his second missionary journey, Paul visited Ephesus where he left Pricilla and Aquila (Acts 18:18-21).
   a. The city of Ephesus.
      1. This strategic city was the commercial center of Asia Minor.
      2. Heavy silting required a special canal to be maintained so that ships could each the harbor.
      3. Was a religious center.
         a. Famous for its magnificent temple of Diana (Roman name) or Artemis (Greek name).
         b. This temple was considered to be one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. Acts 19:35
         c. The practice of magic and the local economy were clearly related to the temple.
   b. Paul remained in Ephesus for nearly three years on his third missionary journey (Acts 18:23 - 19:41), at which time the Word of God was spread throughout the province of Asia.
      1. This long stay may have resulted in the establishing of the seven churches of Asia mentioned in Revelation 1:11 and Revelation 2-3.
         a. Ephesus. Revelation 2:1-7
         b. Smyrna. Revelation 2:8-11
         c. Pergamos. Revelation 2:12-17
         d. Thyatira. Revelation 2:18-29
         e. Sardis. Revelation 3:1-6
         f. Philadelphia. Revelation 3:7-13
         g. Laodicea. 3:14-22
      2. Paul's effective ministry began to hurt the traffic in magic and images, leading to an uproar in the huge Roman theater at Ephesus.
      3. Paul then left for Macedonia, but afterward met with the Ephesian elders at Miletus while he was on his wan to Jerusalem. Acts 20:17-38
   c. The "Prison Epistles."

1. Paul wrote the "Prison Epistles" (Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon) during the first Roman imprisonment.
2. These epistles all refer to his imprisonment.
   a. Ephesians 3:1; 4:1; 6:20
   b. Philippians 1:7, 13-14
   c. Colossians 4:3, 10, 18
   d. Philemon 9-10 13, 23
3. All four of these books fit well against the background in Acts 28:16-31
4. This is especially true of Paul's references to:
   a. The palace guard (governor's official residential guard) - Philippians 1:13
   b. Caesar's household." Philippians 4:22
5. Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon were written about the same time in A.D. 60-61.
6. Philippians was written in A.D. 62, not long before Paul's release.

3. Just as a side note, The only letters that greet specific people are Romans and Colossians, and they were addressed to churches Paul had not visited.
4. Paul's important phrase "in Christ" (or its equivalent appears about thirty-five times in Ephesians, and that is more than any other book in the New Testament.
5. Ephesians was not written to correct specific errors in a local congregation, but to prevent problems in the church as a whole by encouraging the body of Christ to maturity in Him.
6. The Ephesian letter is well known for its:
   a. List of seven ones in 4:4-6
      1. One body. (Church) v. 4
      2. One Spirit. (Holy Spirit) v. 4
      3. One hope. v. 4
      4. One Lord. (Jesus Christ) v. 5
      5. One faith v. 5
      6. One baptism. v. 5
      7. One God. v 6
   b. Comparing the love of a husband for his wife to Christ loving His bride—the church. Ephesians 5
   c. Children obeying their parents in the Lord. Ephesians 6
   d. The Armor of God. Ephesians 6:10-17
      a. Gird "your waist with truth. " v. 14
      b. "Put on the breastplate of righteousness." v. 14
      c. Feet shod with the "preparation of the gospel of peace." v. 15
      d. "The shield of faith." v. 16
      e. "The helmet of salvation." v. 17
      f. "The sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God." v. 17

7. **Ephesians 6:20** - For which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak." And well does Paul do that in this great book.

SUMMARY OF EPHESIANS

INTRODUCTION:

A. Paul wrote the Ephesian letter to:
   1. Make Christians more aware of their position in Christ.
   2. And, to motivate them to draw upon their spiritual source in daily living: "Walk worthy of the vocation with which you were called" (**4:1**).

B. The first half of Ephesians lists the Christian's heavenly possessions:
   1. And precious possession they are:
      a. Adoption.
      b. Redemption.
      c. Inheritance.
      d. Power.
      e. Life.
      f. Grace.
      g. Citizenship.
      h. The love of Christ.
   2. There are not imperatives in chapters 1-3 which focuses on divine gifts.

C. Chapters 4-6 include thirty-five directives in the last half of Ephesians that speak of the Christian's responsibility to conduct himself according to God's will.

D. So, Ephesians begins in heaven, but concludes in the home and other relationships of daily life.

E. There are two major sections in the book:
   1. The Position of the Christian. (1:1 - 3:21)
   2. The Practice of the Christian (7-10)

THE POSITION OF THE CHRISTIAN. (1:1 - 3:21)

A. After a two-verse prologue, in one long Greek sentence (1:3-14), Paul extols the triune God for the riches of redemption.
   1. These verses:
      a. Praise God for choosing us. 1:3-6
      b. Praise the Son for redeeming us. 1:7-12
      c. The Spirit for sealing us. 1:13-14
   2. Each member of the Godhead has a role in or salvation.

B. Before continuing, Paul offers the first of two very significant prayers (1:15-23; 3;14-21)

1. In the first prayer he asks that the readers receive illumination so that they may come to perceive what is, in fact, true.
   a. Next, Paul describes the power of God's grace by contrasting their former condition with their present spiritual life in Christ (2:1-10).
      1. This redemption includes Jews , yet also extends to those Gentiles who previously were "strangers from the covenants of promise" (**2:12**).
      2. In Christ, the two for the first time have become members of one body" (2:11-22).
      3. The truth that Gentiles would become "fellow heirs of the same body" (3:6) was formerly a mystery (not yet revealed) that has now been revealed (3:1-13).
2. Paul's second prayer (3:14-21) expresses his desire that the readers be strengthened with the power of the Spirit and fully apprehend the love of Christ.

THE PRACTICE OF THE CHRISTIAN. (4:1 - 6:20)

A. The pivotal verse of the book of Ephesians is **Ephesians 4:1** because it draws a sharp line between the doctrinal and the practical sections or divisions of this book. "I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to **walk worthy of the calling with which you were called**."
   1. There is a cause-and-effect relationship between chapters 1-3 and 4-6 because of the spiritual walk of a Christian must be rooted in his spiritual wealth.
   2. As Paul emphasized in the book of Romans, behavior does not determine blessing; instead blessing should determine behavior.

B. Because of the unity of all Christians (Jew and Gentile) in the body of Christ, growth and maturity come from "the effective working by which every part does its share" (**4:16**)
   1. The involves the exercise of spiritual gifts in love.
   2. Paul exhorts the readers to "put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man" (**4:22**) and "put on the new man" (**4:24**) that will be manifested by a walk of integrity in the midst of all people.
   3. They are also to maintain a walk of holiness as children of light (5:1-21).
   4. Every relationship (wives, husbands, children, parents, slaves, and masters) must be transformed by their new life in Christ (5:22 - 6:9)
   5. Paul's colorful description of the spiritual warfare and the armor of God (6:10-20) is followed by a word about Tychicus and then a benediction (6:21-24).