

God's Amazing Book

Journey Through the New Testament

BUILDING THE BODY OF CHRIST

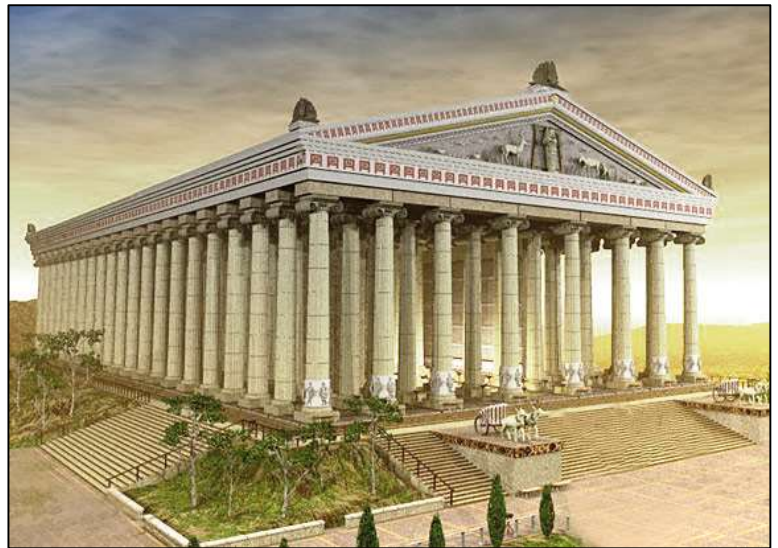
A Quick Look at the Letter to the Church of Ephesus

Of all God's wonders in His natural creation, which He has given me to see, none seems more wonderful than the Grand Canyon... Ephesians is the Grand Canyon of Scripture. – Ruth Paxson

Ephesians – carefully, reverently, prayerfully considered – will change our lives. It is not so much a question of what we will do with the epistle, but what it will do with us. – R. Kent Hughes

Purpose

- a. In Ephesians, Paul reflects primarily on two major themes:
 1. Christ—Christ is the exalted Lord of the church and the whole creation. This is related to the work of the Spirit who continues the earthly ministry of Christ. The Spirit is mentioned 13 times in 6 chapters.
 2. Church—Ephesians addresses at length the privileges and responsibilities of believers in the Christian community.
- b. Unlike many of the other Pauline epistles, Ephesians does not address specific problems in a particular church. Indeed, this letter addresses a church experiencing remarkable peace and unity.
- c. “This document in large measure sums up the leading themes of the Pauline letters, and sets forth the cosmic implications of Paul’s ministry as apostle to the Gentiles” (F. F. Bruce, *Paul: Apostle of the Heart Set Free*). Jew and Gentile are now one new people of God with all barriers being broken down. In the body of Christ there is no respect (prejudice) of persons. Ephesians, therefore, contains a timely message of our day as well when sexual, racial, social, and cultural biases are still present. In Christ there is an equity of position and privileges!



Picture above: The Temple of Artemis, also known as the Temple of Diana, was a Greek temple dedicated to the goddess Artemis (identified with Diana, a Roman goddess).

Fast Facts on Ephesians

Written by? Apostle Paul

Written to whom?
Christians in Ephesus

Written when? c. 60 – 63

Written where? Rome
(Paul’s first Roman imprisonment)

FASCINATING FACTS:

1. The church at Ephesus is the only church to receive a letter from more than one New Testament writer, as John also addressed them (see Revelation 2:1-7).
2. The church at Ephesus had many well-known preachers, including Paul, Apollos, Timothy and John.
3. Over half of all the verses are repeated in Colossians with some slight variations (the “Twin Epistles”).
4. Ephesians 1:3-14 constitutes the longest sentence in Greek found anywhere in Scripture.
5. In Ephesians, the personality of the Holy Spirit is emphasized (1:13; 2:18; 3:5; 4:30; 5:18; 6:17).
6. In Ephesians, the terms “in Christ” and “in Him” are used fifteen times.
7. Tradition says that after Paul died, John made his headquarters there, and then eventually died there.
8. Tradition also states that Mary, the mother of Jesus, died and was buried there.

THINGS TO REMEMBER:

1. Two “spiritual barbells” to build your “spiritual body”: 1) What I Believe, and 2) How I Live.
2. Spiritual growth is a lot like physical growth: 1) “Spiritual Food”: Word of God (not Christian music, Christian magazines, Church, Christian friends) – Nothing builds the body like the Bible. Everything else is supplementary. 2) “Exercise”: Resisting Temptation, Enduring Trials, Serving Others, Telling others about Christ. 3) “Rest”: Worship. Physically, we need sleep, rest, and times of vacation to recharge physically. Spiritually, we need worship to recharge spiritually. 4) “Time”: A lifetime, not just a change of behavior (like crash diets).
3. Jesus’ church is not a sanctuary or a building. It is you and me who have given our lives to Him. He is the head. We are the body. We are the church. We use the church building, but we are the church!

1:1-2 Introduction	KNOW 1:18		REMEMBER 2:11		DO NOT LOSE HEART 3:13		WALK WORTHY 4:1			PUT ON 6:11	
	Christian Blessings		Christian Salvation		Christian Family		Christian Conduct			Christian Armor	
1:3-14 A Doxology	1:15-23 Prayer for Wisdom	2:1-10 Personal Salvation	2:11-22 Corporate Salvation	3:1-14 Mystery of the Church	3:14-21 Prayer for Knowledge	4:1-16 Mission of the Church	4:17-5:20 My Personal Walk	5:21-6:9 Domestic Responsibility	6:10-20 Spiritual Battle	6:21-24 Conclusion	
Our Position in Christ						Therefore		Our Practice in Christ			
"I pray that you may know your resources in Christ"						→		"I pray that you may live consistent with your faith in Christ"			
WE ARE IN CHRIST						CHRIST IS IN US					
THE WORK OF GOD						THE WALK OF THE CHRISTIAN					
Heavenly blessings						Earthly walk					

Chart source: Dr. Daniel Akin