

The Fullness of Christ: Studies in Ephesians (1-13-19)

INTRODUCTION TO EPHESIANS

I. THE FULLNESS OF CHRIST

- A. God desires to do a great work among us. His plan for us is nothing less than the fullness of Christ (Eph. 4:13). Q: God wants to do a great work among us. Will we open to it?

Eph. 4:13 till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

II. STUDIES IN THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

- A. Ephesians is important for understanding our identity in Christ, how we are to live that out in everyday life, and how we think about and overcome struggles in life.
- B. Ephesians is sometimes referred to as the “Alps of the New Testament.” (The high mountains in Europe). It gives us a sweeping view of God’s plan from before the foundations of the world to the monumental work of Jesus in bringing all things together under Him as the head. It speaks of the warfare in the heavenlies and our victory as revealed in our daily life and walk in faith.
- C. Ephesus was Paul's missions base, his base of operations for the Gospel going to all of Asia Minor. Paul stayed here for 3 years. It's the first church that Jesus addresses as he writes to the seven churches Revelation 2:1. 75% of NT written to or from Asia Minor

III. PAUL, AN APOSTLE OF JESUS CHRIST

***Eph. 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,
To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:***

- A. Jesus was an Apostle sent by God (Luke 4:18-19). Paul has been sent by Jesus. The Message is the same.
1. Has the flashiness of the American brand of Christianity produced the depth of spiritual life and transformation and the display of the power of God that we see in the Bible?
 2. When God’s Kingdom manifests on the earth, we see revivals or riots and oftentimes both as we see in the Gospels and in the book of Ephesians
- B. Jesus came declaring the Good News of the Kingdom of God. He demonstrated the Kingdom by His words and works and in His death, burial, and resurrection, opened a way for us to enter into the Kingdom, come under God’s rule and reign today.

1. The fullness of the Kingdom would not happen immediately. God's plan to bless all the nations of the world would be initiated through Israel, but then it would go to the Nations before

Now as they heard these things, He spoke another parable, because He was near Jerusalem and because they thought the kingdom of God would appear immediately.
(Luke 19:11)

And they will fall by the edge of the sword, and be led away captive into all nations. And Jerusalem will be trampled by Gentiles until the times of the Gentiles are fulfilled.
(Luke 21:24)

- a. We are living right now in the season of the outpouring of the Holy Spirit. Jesus will be witnessed with power in the nations and then He will return to restore the Kingdom to Israel.

Therefore, when they had come together, they asked Him, saying, "Lord, will You at this time restore the kingdom to Israel?"⁷ ***And He said to them, "It is not for you to know times or seasons which the Father has put in His own authority. ⁸ But you shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you; and you shall be witnesses to Me in Jerusalem, and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth."*** (Acts 1:6-8)

- C. Paul proclaimed the Gospel of the Kingdom that Jesus declared. Acts begins with Jesus teaching about the Kingdom (Acts 1:3) and ends with Paul doing the same (28:31). Luke, the author of Luke and Acts, was a traveling companion of Paul.
Preaching the kingdom of God and teaching the things which concern the Lord Jesus Christ with all confidence, no one forbidding him. (Acts 28:31)
- D. The Gospel of the Kingdom is not just about individual forgiveness of sin. It's about God's entire plan of coming from heaven to Earth. It's about God's rule and reign. It starts with Israel and goes to the Nations.

IV. EPHEBUS

- A. The City: Ephesus was an important seaport city of the Roman province of Asia (Asia Minor - Greek name: Anatolia - where the continents of Asia and Europe meet), what is now the western portion of the nation of Turkey.
- B. It was the third largest city of the Roman world (Rome, Antioch, Ephesus ~200,000). It was a very wealthy city and was the intersection of several major trade routes. One of the famous landmarks is the 25,000-seat Greco-Roman theater that has been excavated
- C. The temple of Artemis (One of the Seven Wonders of the World) was located there (Also known by her Latin name: Diana of the Ephesians). Artisans made their living by selling idols representing the female goddess.