

Introduction

Author:

1. The apostle Paul (Ephesians 1:1)

Recipients:

1. The saints who are at Ephesus and who are faithful in Christ Jesus.
2. The phrase “*in Ephesus*” (Eph 1:1) is not in a few manuscripts. This has caused some to think it was written to another congregation, or to a broader audience.
3. It is possible that this letter was intended for more than just the one congregation.
 - a. At least some of Paul’s letters were meant to be shared (Col 4:16).
 - b. Peter mentions Paul’s writings (2 Pet 3:15-16) which suggests that they were well known.

Theme:

The glorious church: God’s eternal purpose, His plan of redemption, fulfilled in Christ and the church.

Date/Place of writing:

1. Two main theories
 - a. From Rome, probably about AD 60-63.
 - b. From Caesarea probably about AD 58.

Relationship with other epistles:

1. One of four prison epistles:
 - a. Ephesians (3:1; 4:1)
 - b. Philippians (1:12-13)
 - c. Colossians (1:24; 4:10)
 - d. Philemon (1:1,13,23)

The church in Ephesus in the Bible:

1. Paul visited Ephesus near the end of his 2nd journey (Acts 18:18-21).
2. His main work at Ephesus was during his 3rd journey (Acts 19:1-20:1); probably about AD 54-55.
 - a. Taught in the synagogue for three months (Acts 19:8).
 - b. Taught (reasoned) at the school of Tyrannus (Acts 19:9)
 - c. Spent about three years total (Acts 20:31).
 - d. Based on the account in Acts, the church was a mixture of Jew and Gentile.
3. Paul gave a farewell message to the Ephesian elders at Miletus as he passed through on his way to Jerusalem He warned them of apostasy to come from within their own number (Acts 20:17-38).
4. Paul wrote his letter to the Ephesians.
5. Paul left Timothy at Ephesus to instruct certain men not to teach strange doctrines (1 Tim 1:3-4).
6. John wrote to the church in Ephesus, warning that they had left their first love. (Rev 2:1-7).

Study in Ephesians

How we know Ephesians belongs in the Bible:

As early as AD110-115 (Polycarp), references are made to a collection of Paul's writings (including Ephesians) in circulation. This may be what was referred to in 2 Peter 3:15-16.

Quotes and references from apostolic fathers, dating to the 2nd century, and possibly the late 1st century (Clement of Rome).

Ephesians is part of the Chester Beatty Papyrus p46: Dated late 2nd, early 3rd century: One of the oldest manuscript fragments known.

Marcion (the heretic); born about AD110. IN about AD144, he produced a limited canon of books he found acceptable to his doctrine. This included Ephesians (which he called Laodiceans). This indicates that Ephesians was already in use by that time.

Muratorian list (canon); generally dated about AD175 contains 13 letters of Paul, including Ephesians.

Outline:

- 1) Greeting (1:1-2)
 - 2) Doctrinal instruction (Chapters 1, 2, 3)
 - a) Blessings in Christ (1:3-14)
 - b) Prayer for enlightenment (1:15-19)
 - c) God's power demonstrated in Christ (1:20-21)
 - d) Christ head of the church (1:22-23)
 - e) God's great plan for our salvation; the riches of His grace (2:1-10)
 - f) The Gentiles, once aliens, now fellow-citizens (2:11-22)
 - g) Prayer for strength and power (3:1, 14-19)
 - h) *(Parenthetical comments)*
 - i) Paul's ministry to reveal the mystery of Christ (3:2-10)
 - ii) God's eternal purpose (3:11-13)
 - i) Giving glory to God (3:20-21)
 - 3) Practical application (Chapters 4, 5, 6)
 - a) Walk in a manner worthy of our calling (4:1-2)
 - b) Preserve the unity of the Spirit (4:3-16)
 - c) Lay aside the old self and put on the new (4:17-4:32)
 - d) Be imitators of God and walk in love (5:1-2)
 - e) Do not participate in the deeds of darkness (5:3-14)
 - f) Live wisely, understand the will of the Lord (5:15-20)
 - g) Be subject to one another (5:21-6:9)
 - i) Wives and husbands (5:22-33)
 - ii) Children and fathers (6:1-4)
 - iii) Slaves and masters (6:5-9)
 - h) Put on the whole armor of God (6:10-17)
 - i) Pray always (6:18-20)
 - 4) Closing remarks (6:21-24)
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