

EPHESIANS

1. INTRODUCTION

a. Ephesus elsewhere in scripture:

- **Acts 16:6-9.** Paul seems to have used the strategy of starting gospel outreach in urban centers. He went to large, regionally important cities (Pisidian Antioch, Perga, Ephesus, Thessalonica, Berea, Athens, Corinth etc.) and sought to establish churches there as well as fan out from there to the outlying areas. See Col 4:16 - Colossians roughly parallels Ephesians and the letter for them was to be read to the church in Laodicea.
- **Act 16:6-10** Paul desired to enter the province of Asia but was kept by God from doing so.
- **Act 18:18-22** Paul dropped Priscilla and Aquila off in Ephesus, preached in a synagogue and departed for Judea with the promise to return oof God willed it.
- **Act 19** Paul began a two-year ministry in Ephesus.
 - * God authenticated Paul's message through miracles.
 - * God made the holiness of Jesus evident to everyone there (19:13-20).
 - * God had allowed the church to experience opposition (19:23-40, 1 Cor 16:9) and the work was going forward.
- In Rev 2:1-7 although God criticizes the church in Ephesus for growing cold in their love (They had left their first love) He also commends them for many things.

b. Read 1:1-2 and answer the following questions:

- What made Paul an apostle?
- What does it say about who were / could be apostles?
 - * Acts 1:1-11

 - * Act 1:12-26 What was the criteria for such apostleship?
- How many apostles were there? This might take you a short bit: See Luke 9 and 10, Gal 14:14, Rom 16:7, 1 Cor 15:3-7.
- What things were the sign/mark of an apostle? 2 Cor 12:12 13:3; Rev 2:2b

- What authority did they have? Act 8:18-19, 9:32-43, 13:6-12; 2 Cor 13:10.

2. How does Paul describe the Ephesian believers?

a. What is a "saint," and how does someone become one?

b. To the Jewish greeting of "Peace," Paul adds the word "Grace." What is grace. Look it up and define it.

c. How do grace and peace go together?

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b. Read 1:1-2 and answer the following questions:

- **What made Paul an apostle?**
- **What does it say about who were / could be apostles?**
 - * **Acts 1:1-11.** He chose them (vs 2), they were men (vs 11, 21) and they all seem to have been Jews.
 - * **Act 1:12-26 What was the criteria for such apostleship?** In this passage Peter, led by the Holy Spirit, seeks to replace one of the 12 (Judas). It is an apostolic ministry (vs 25). The criteria was: A man who had been with us (other apostles) beginning with John's Baptism (John the Baptist's baptism of Jesus) and until Jesus' ascension (See 1:9). This person was to join them as a witness of Jesus' resurrection.
- **How many apostles were there? This might take you a short bit: See Luke 9 and 10, Act 14:14, Rom 16:7, 1 Cor 15:3-7.**
 - * **Luke 9:1-9** The 12 were sent out with authority to drive out demons, cure diseases, preach the kingdom and heal the sick.
 - * **Luke 10:1-12, 17-24** 72 (Some manuscripts say 70) were sent out in pairs to every town where Jesus was about to go. They (as in chapter 9:3-5) were to depend completely on God's provision). They were to heal the sick (10:9) This who listened to them listened to Jesus (10:16). When they returned they rejoiced in that even the demons submitted to them in Jesus' name (Trying this didn't work well for unbelievers - Act 19:11-16).
 - * **Act 14:14** Barnabas and Paul are recorded as being apostles.
 - * **Rom 16:7** In Paul's closing greeting he greets Andronicus and Junias. Men related to him, who had been imprisoned with him and who were "men of mark/note" among the apostles.
 - * **1 Cor 15:3-7** Here Paul passes on as a priority, the people who had seen the risen Christ. Note that he appeared to Peter, then to the 12 (Obviously minus Judas. The apostles replaced him. Act 1:12-26), then to over 500 "brothers" at one time, then to James, then all the apostles and lastly, to Paul.

To summarize, they numbered at least 70 (and possibly 72). There seems to have been a Leadership structure. We read of the three (Peter, James and John) in Matt 17:1,26:37; Mk 5:37, 9:2, 14:33; Lk 8:51, 9:28, Gal 2:9, and Paul, Barnabas and others also apostles.

- **What things were the sign/mark of an apostle? 2 Cor 12:12 13:3; Rev 2:2b**
 - * **2 Cor 12:12** Signs (a mark, token, miracle) that authenticated / confirmed the authenticity of the message/messenger (See Act 2:22). Wonders (supernatural Work that caused the observer to be in awe, to take note. It indicates something out of the ordinary, something super - natural). Miracles (a work of might/power that showed God's power (See Act 3:12-16).
 - * **2 Cor 13:1-3** The Corinthians had been demanding proof that Christ had been speaking through Paul.
 - * **Rev 2:2b** The Ephesian believer had tested false apostles' claims and found them false. It would be informative to know how they did this.

- **What authority did they have? Act 8:18-19, 9:32-43, 13:6-12; 2 Cor 13:10.**
 - * **Act 8:18-19** Through the apostles God bestowed the Holy Spirit to the Samaritans.
 - * **Act 9:32-43** Peter was used by God to heal Aeneas and raise Dorcas from the dead. Look at Act 2:43, 4:33 (where the emphasis may be more on the power of their witness than the power of God expressed through miracles) and Act 5:12. The outpouring of God's Spirit shown in the miracles seem to have come through the apostles.
 - * **Act 13:6-12** Paul, filled with the Holy Spirit pronounced judgment on a false prophet and attendant of the Roman Official. God struck him blind.
 - * **2 Cor 13:10** While Paul could use his authority to disciple erring believers, he preferred to exercise it in building them up.

2. How does Paul describe the Ephesian believers?

- a. **What is a "saint," and how does someone become one?** A saint is someone who is set apart for God. The term is used to describe those who by faith are set apart for God. It describes our "belonging" to Him and our inclusion in His family. We become God's set apart people through faith/trust in the Lord Jesus as our Savior.

- b. **To the Jewish greeting of "Peace," Paul adds the word "Grace." What is grace. Look it up and define it.** Grace is a word in the Old and New Testaments that describes God's extension of kindness, favor and blessing to people. It cannot be earned or deserved.

- c. **How do grace and peace go together?** Because those who have trusted in Christ are saved from the penalty of their sins and have been adopted into God's family, they have peace with God where formerly they were His enemies (Rom 5:1-11, Eph 2:11-17). Praise Him!

For next week, read Ephesians through once and then from Chapter 1:3-14 try to answer the following questions:

1. How many times in verses 3-14 do the terms "in Christ, in Him, through Christ, in the Beloved One" etc.
 - a. What do you think is the point being made here?
 - b. How essential is the Lord Jesus to salvation/blessing?
 - c. Make a list of things that are true of us because of/through Christ.

2. What has God chosen believers status to be (judicially) in His presence? (vs vs4)

3. What is the believers destiny? (Vs 5)

4. From verses 7-10
 - a. Define “redemption.”

 - b. Define “forgiveness.”

 - c. How is the term “mystery” used here? (Vs 9). For further info see Eph 3:2-6.

 - d. How do you understand the term, the “fullness of time?” (See also Gal 4:4, Heb 9:26)

5. Next week we will discuss the tension between election and human choice / responsibility but for now,
 - a. Who are the “elect?” What does that word mean?

 - b. How were the Ephesian believers included in this number? (Vs 13)
 - What is the progression given in this text?
 - What does it mean to be sealed by the Holy Spirit? Do a little digging if you can.

What does it mean to you to be redeemed? Forgiven? Included in God’s family? Counted holy and blameless by God?