

EPHESIANS 2024

I Introduction and Greeting

1:1-2

1. Background

Acts 19+20

a. Paul, an apostle (*“One sent on a mission, a representative, commissioned by another for a task”*) **of Christ** (*“Messiah, Anointed One”*) **Jesus, by the will of God.**

- Paul was chosen/called by the Lord to a specific task. (Act 9:15; Gal 2:7)
- So what was an apostle?
 - * One didn't *choose* to be an apostle; they were *chosen*. (Mrk 3:13-19; Lke 6:13-16; Jhn 6:70; 13:18; 15:16; Act 1:1-2)
 - * As far as can be known from Scripture, they were all Jewish men.
 - * They were all Galileans (Act 1:11).
 - * They were witnesses of Jesus' public ministry and resurrection (Act 1:15-26)
 - * They were given a special authentication (Rom 15:17-22; 1 Cor 2:4-5; 2 Cor 12:12)
And they could be tested - see 2 Cor 11:13; 13:2-3; 1 Jhn 4:1; Rev 2:2 and...Act 20:28-31
- When and how did they serve?
 - * They seem to have had a foundational ministry for the church (Act 2:42-43; 3:15-16; 4:33/1:8; 5:12; Eph 2:20; 3:4-7)

And we each have a calling by the will of God.

1 Cor 9:24; Phil:3:12-16

b. To God's holy people (*“saints, set-apart ones”*) **in Ephesus, the faithful** (*“trustworthy, believing”*) **in Christ Jesus.**

- Believers in our Lord Jesus Christ are set apart for God by faith in Christ. (1 Pet 2:9-12)
- Believers are set apart for a purpose: “that you may declare the praises of Him who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.”

c. Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. To the Jewish greeting of “Shalom” (*“Peace”*) Paul adds, *grace* (*“kindness, favor”*).

- How can I, as a sinful being dare to approach my Creator?
- Because of Jesus our Lord (Rom 5:1-2)

Through the Lord Jesus, we have both God's grace and resulting peace.

d. The history:

- Ephesus in the 1st century had a population of roughly 200,000.
- It was sited on the shore of an inland harbor where it intersected major trade routes. It was the main market city of the region.
- It boasted theaters, temples (among them the great temple of Artemis, one of the “wonders of the world” at that time), as well as many other public works.
- Paul tried to go to the region but God prevented it (Acts 16:6).
- Paul made a quick visit and promised to return “if it was God's will” (Act 18:19-21)
- He was able to return, and for over two years ministered there and started a church.
- In Act 20:17-38 he said farewell to the leaders of the Ephesian church and gave them a warning about challenges that they would face in the future.

Paul remembered these people fondly and longed to see them continue to grow.

Are you willing to ask God to help you fulfill His calling in your life?

Are you available for whatever He has for you to do?

Are you willing to start right now where you are and go with what you know?