

Ephesians Notes

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Story of how Paul came to Ephesus - Acts 19

Ephesus - was a huge city and was the epicenter of worship for most of the Greek and Roman gods.

- For over 2 years Paul had a very effective missionary presence and many came to faith.
- Years later after being imprisoned by the Romans, Paul writes this letter.

Chapters 1-3 The Gospel Story

Chapter 1:3-14 Opening Poem - Jewish style

Praise God for what He has done - a covenant family (see [Genesis 12:1-3](#))

God's purpose was to unify all things in heaven and earth under Jesus the messiah ([1:10](#))

WE... - ethnic Jews in the family of Abraham

YOU all heard...- Gentiles - non Jews brought into family by the work of the Holy Spirit

- Referring to events told in Acts 2 both Jew and Non-Jew brought together by God's Spirit
- Just like God promised to Abraham long ago

Poem Begins with God the Father, then about Jesus the Son, then in the end the Spirit - all three work together in Paul telling the power of the Gospel

Chapter 1:15-23 Prayer

Prays that these followers of Jesus personally experience the Power that raised Jesus from the dead and placed him as the exalted king of the whole world.

Paul elaborates on some key ideas from the poem from Chapter 1:

Chapter 2:1-10 God's Grace

Begins by retelling the story of how non-Jewish Christians came to know Jesus

Before hearing about Jesus they were:

- physically alive, but spiritually dead
- trapped in a purposeless life of selfishness and sin
- deceived by dark spiritual forces of evil

BUT Amazingly:

God in His great love and grace

- Saved them
- Forgave all of their sins
- Joined their lives to Jesus' resurrection life, brought them back to life as well

Now through Jesus:

- New Humans
- New Purpose and Tasks God has before them

Not only shown Grace, but invited into a new family...access to new family

Chapter 2:11-22 Multi-Ethnic Family

Before hearing about Jesus, Non-Jewish people were not only cut off from God, but also His covenant people. The people were cut off from the family of Abraham for a practical reason:

The commands of the Sinai covenant acted much like a barrier that kept non-Jewish people away, but in Jesus:

- the laws of the Torah has been fulfilled

- the barrier is now removed
- the two ethnic groups have become as Paul puts it, the new unified humanity that lives in peace ([2:15](#))

Chapter 3 Paul's Unique Role as Messenger to Non-Jews

Even though he is in Prison, he is thanking God for the chance of seeing this covenant family grow so large

May you be strengthened by God's Spirit and grasp the Love of Christ

“Therefore” ([4:17](#))

Paul shifts gears and starts challenging the reader to respond to the Gospel story by how they live their own life story.

Chapters 4-6 Our Story

Chapter 4:1-16

They are **One** ([4:4-6](#)):

Body

Spirit

Hope

Lord

Faith

Baptism

God/Father

Unity is not the same thing as uniformity ([4:11](#)):

- Apostle
- Teacher
- Prophet
- Pastor
- Evangelist

All empowered by the one Holy Spirit, each using their unique talents and passions to serve and to love each other and build up the church:

- 1) The New Temple
- 2) New Humanity with Jesus as the Head

Chapters 4:17-6:9

Take off old humanity and put on New Humanity

<u>TAKE OFF</u>	<u>PUT ON</u>
Lies	Truth
Anger	Peace
Theft	Generosity
Gossip	Encourage
Revenge	Forgiveness
Promiscuity	Self-control
Drunk	God's Spirit

Signs of the Spirit's Influence:

- 1) Singing together
- 2) Singing alone

Interesting that the first thing that Paul thinks of about how the Spirit works in the lives of people is singing and music.

- 3) Being Thankful - for everything

Paul's Christian Marriage Hold expansion on 4th point:

- 4) **Elevating Other - Jesus' followers will place themselves underneath others and others be more important than themselves**

And So...

- **Wife (who follows Jesus) - called to respect and allow her husband to become responsible for her**
- **Husband - love his wife and use his responsibility to lay down his selfish agenda and to prioritize his wife's well-being above his own.**

It's the above kind of marriage that is re-enacting the Gospel story!

- **Husband** - Jesus' love and self-sacrifice
- **Wife** - the church which allows Jesus to love her and make her new

Same relationship with:

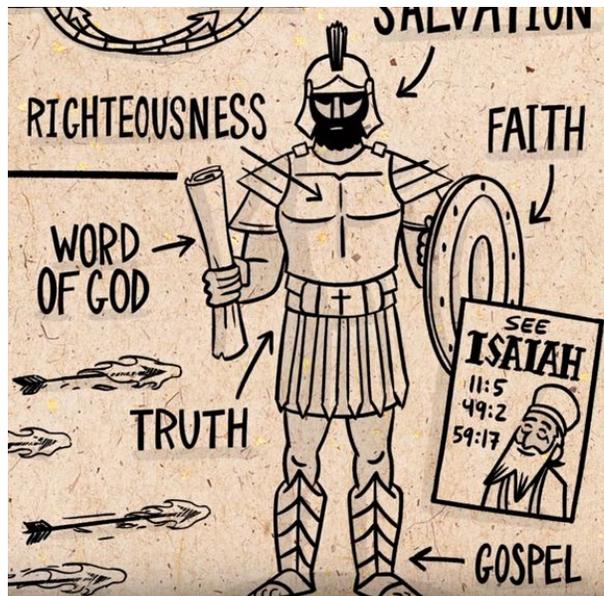
Children-----Parents

Slaves----- Masters

Chapter 6:10-24 The Armor of God

Paul reminds these Christians of the reality of Spiritual Evil

Beings and forces that will try to undermine the Unity of Jesus' people and to compromise their new humanity



Paul challenges them to Stand Firm, and to put on this metaphorical set of body armor described in detail:

From the book of Isaiah-

Depicting the messianic King

(see Isaiah [11:5](#), [49:2](#), [59:17](#))

Now as his followers of the messiah, we need to make the messiah's attributes our own since we make up Jesus' body.

Practically Paul wants Christians to begin to form habits:
Proactively using prayer
The Scriptures
Our relationships with each other

To help us grow and mature as followers of Jesus.

Paul summarizes the whole Gospel story and how it should reshape every part of our life story!