



# Ephesus

## Week 1: The Mystery of The Church

### 01. INTRODUCTION

---

Hello there, My name is \_\_\_\_\_ and I want to welcome. I am so excited to kick off our new series called Ephesus: Ancient Wisdom for the Modern Church. Together over the next 6 weeks we will be walking through the entire book of Ephesians and learning about who we are in Christ and who we are together as a local church.

### 02. TRANSITION TO MESSAGE

---

**Context:** The church in Ephesus was founded by the apostle Paul during his second missionary journey, around AD 52. He spent several years in Ephesus, preaching the gospel and establishing the church. [The book of Acts records that many people in Ephesus were converted to Christianity, including both Jews and Gentiles \(Acts 19:1-20\).](#)

Paul wrote the letter to the Ephesians while he was in prison in Rome, around AD 60-62. The purpose of the letter was to encourage believers in Ephesus and surrounding areas to live out their faith in Christ. [The letter emphasizes the unity of believers in Christ and provides practical instructions for Christian living.](#)

The city of Ephesus was a hub of pagan worship, but the church that Paul founded there was a light in the darkness, a witness to the power of the gospel to transform lives and communities.

## Transition:

About 35 years after Paul wrote the book of Ephesians, the apostle John would have an encounter with Jesus that would result in the book of Revelation, and in it, Jesus is issuing his own warning to the church of Ephesus.

Why was this necessary? Because the People of Ephesus were just like you and me. They were forgetful, they were drifting, and they needed to be adjusted. Here's what Jesus said to them.

**Revelation 2:1-5** "Write to the angel <sup>(or Elder)</sup> of the **church in Ephesus**: Thus says the one who holds the seven stars in his right hand and who walks among the seven golden lampstands: <sup>2</sup>I know your works, your labor, and your endurance, and that you cannot tolerate evil people. You have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and you have found them to be liars. <sup>3</sup>I know that you have persevered and endured hardships for the sake of my name, and you have not grown weary. <sup>4</sup>But I have this against you: You have abandoned the love you had at first. <sup>5</sup>**Remember** then how far you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. Otherwise, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent.

So Jesus is telling them to look backwards, to remember, to repent, to return, so that they can remain. And in that we find the big idea for us today. As culture continues to drift, as many Christians continue to drift.

**Big idea:** **We must return to Christ and His Plan for the Church.**

As we study Paul's letter to the church at Ephesus, we will see that he was establishing what we would now call orthodoxy. He was instructing the church on who they were in Christ, acknowledging where they came from but calling them to something different, to something better. In his words to them, we find incredibly helpful words for us.

## 03. MESSAGE

---

**A few things to keep in mind as we dig into this book:**

**Emphasize** – This letter is written to the church in Ephesus. Understanding Context in scripture. Basics of Hermeneutics – what was intended meaning by author and reception by original audience.

**Three primary groups of people in the Bible** – Jew, Gentile & The Church. Ephesians highlights that faith is personal but it isn't private. Issues of western individualism/post modernism and its impact on hermeneutics.

**Tips for reading the Bible:** as a story about God, Intent of author in culture. The bible was written for us, but it wasn't written to us. It was written to a certain group of people in a certain historical context, and yet it is alive and active and authoritative for us today. But, to understand it well, we have to understand what it meant to those reading it, what was the authors intent. That context matter, but we can't lose sight of the fact that The Bible is eternal, if it needed to be said then, it needs to be said now.

**Let's break down Chapter 1:**

### **The Mystery of The Church**

**Please stand for the reading of God's word.**

#### **Ephesians 1:1–23 (CSB)**

<sup>1</sup>Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will: To the faithful saints in Christ Jesus at Ephesus.

<sup>2</sup>Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

<sup>3</sup>Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavens in Christ.

<sup>4</sup>For he chose us in him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in love before him.

<sup>5</sup>He predestined us to be adopted as sons through Jesus Christ for himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

<sup>6</sup>to the praise of his glorious grace that he lavished on us in the Beloved One.

<sup>7</sup>In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace

<sup>8</sup>that he richly poured out on us with all wisdom and understanding.

<sup>9</sup>He made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he purposed in Christ  
<sup>10</sup>as a plan for the right time—to bring everything together in Christ, both things in heaven and things on earth in him.  
<sup>11</sup>In him we have also received an inheritance, because we were predestined according to the plan of the one who works out everything in agreement with the purpose of his will,  
<sup>12</sup>so that we who had already put our hope in Christ might bring praise to his glory.  
<sup>13</sup>In him you also were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed.  
<sup>14</sup>The Holy Spirit is the down payment of our inheritance, until the redemption of the possession, to the praise of his glory.  
<sup>15</sup>This is why, since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints,  
<sup>16</sup>I never stop giving thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers.  
<sup>17</sup>I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, would give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.  
<sup>18</sup>I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what is the wealth of his glorious inheritance in the saints,  
<sup>19</sup>and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the mighty working of his strength.  
<sup>20</sup>He exercised this power in Christ by raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavens—  
<sup>21</sup>far above every ruler and authority, power and dominion, and every title given, not only in this age but also in the one to come.  
<sup>22</sup>And **he subjected everything under his feet** and appointed him as head over everything for the church,  
<sup>23</sup>which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way.

### 1. In Christ, we are chosen.

#### **Ephesians 1:3-4**

<sup>3</sup>Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with *every spiritual blessing* in the heavens in Christ. <sup>4</sup>For he *chose us* in him, *before the foundation of the world*, to be holy and blameless in love before him.

## “He Chose Us”

We have to remember that there is a natural existence and supernatural existence. Before God created the natural world, the spiritual one already existed, but he had something even better in mind than all of the angels and heavenly beings. He had humanity in mind. And he chose us as humans to be the pinnacle of his creation and the pinnacle of his representation.

He not only chose us as a species, but *to those who believe*, **he chose to make us holy and blameless in Christ and in love**.

And all of this, as we will see in the chapters that unfold, was a part of an eternal mystery, again, since foundation of world. Hidden in the heart of God. If Satan and the powers of darkness would have known and understood the plan for humans making up the body of Christ, they never would have crucified Christ.

Let me show it to you:

### **1 Corinthians 2:6–8**

<sup>6</sup>We do, however, speak a wisdom among the mature, but not a wisdom of this age, or of the rulers of this age, who are coming to nothing.

<sup>7</sup>On the contrary, we speak God’s hidden wisdom in a mystery, a wisdom God predestined before the ages for our glory.

<sup>8</sup>None of the rulers of this age knew this wisdom, because if they had known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory.

When this talks about “**Every Spiritual Blessing**” it’s important to understand that the blessings we see unfold in the rest of the chapter **compose a unit, a whole, not just individual blessings**. In other words, the blessings **together express the full scope** of God’s **redemptive activity**. All of these things are for all of God’s people.

- Adoption
- Grace
- Redemption
- Forgiveness
- Knowledge
- Inheritance
- The seal of the Spirit
- Eternity

**Thoughts** – God doesn't make mistakes. The Bible is one story about God's complete plan.

John 1 – The word was with God and all who call upon His name. He equips the called, he doesn't call the equipped.

## 2. In Christ, We are family.

**Ephesians 1:5-6** He predestined us to be adopted as sons through Jesus Christ for himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, <sup>6</sup> to the praise of his glorious grace that he lavished on us in the Beloved One.

**John 3** – Spirit is thicker than blood. In Christ neither Jew or Greek, passage. No caste system, no slave or free, rich or poor, black or white.

**The lie of prioritizing diversity – root word division.** Divide and conquer. Image bearers of God – made in his image different but it isn't how we are different but how we are the same.

As we will see going through this book, the point isn't to celebrate all the differences we have. We acknowledge our differences, but we celebrate our oneness in Christ.

Hired hand vs. son or daughter.

## 3. In Christ, We are Forgiven.

**Ephesians 1:7-10** In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace <sup>8</sup> that he richly poured out on us with all wisdom and understanding. <sup>9</sup> He made known to us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure that he purposed in Christ <sup>10</sup> as a plan for the right time—to bring everything together in Christ, both things in heaven and things on earth in him.

**Thoughts:** The finished work on the cross – “It is finished” Past – Present & Future. Idea of Justification. The Past is the past. He paid the penalty for sin.

**2 Corinthians 5:17** Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has passed away, and see, the new has come!

I can't know if anyone is saved or not, that's between you and God, but if I've known the old you, I want to see the new you.

#### **4. In Christ, We have Hope.**

**Ephesians 1:11-12** In him we have also received an inheritance, because we were predestined according to the plan of the one who works out everything in agreement with the purpose of his will, <sup>12</sup> so that we who had already put our hope in Christ might bring praise to his glory.

We have eternal hope that everything will be worked out in the end. As we look across the landscape of society and see so many wrongs, so many challenges that seem insurmountable. The hope of the Gospel is that one day everything will be brought into agreement with the purposes of his will and fore his glory.

I know the nations rage right now, but look at what the Prophet Micah has to say about that:

#### **Micah 4:3**

He will settle disputes among many peoples and provide arbitration for strong nations that are far away. They will beat their swords into plows and their spears into pruning knives. Nation will not take up the sword against nation, and they will never again train for war.

#### **5. In Christ, We Are Sealed by the Holy Spirit.**

**Ephesians 1:13-14** In him you also were sealed with the promised

Holy Spirit when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed. <sup>14</sup> The Holy Spirit is the down payment of our inheritance, until the redemption of the possession, to the praise of his glory.

Idea of Sanctification. The now and the not yet. We get a taste of what is to come by walking with the Holy Spirit, every day.

## 6. In Christ, we can access wisdom & revelation.

**Ephesians 1:15-17** This is why, since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, <sup>16</sup> I never stop giving thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. <sup>17</sup> I pray that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, would give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him.

Revelation > Information. I know what the news says, but what did God say? Our faith must be active. Seek and knock – persistent.

## 7. In Christ, we can access God's Power.

**Ephesians 1:18-19** I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened so that you may know what is the hope of his calling, what is the wealth of his glorious inheritance in the saints, <sup>19</sup> and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the mighty working of his strength.

You can't overestimate how much you need the power of God. The powers of darkness are real. The power of the flesh is real. But his power is greater. And greater is he that is in you, than he that is in the world (1 John 4:4 abbreviated)

## 8. In Christ, we have overcome the world.

**Ephesians 1:20-23** He exercised this power in Christ by raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavens— <sup>21</sup> far above every ruler and authority, power and dominion, and every title given, not only in this age but also in the one to come. <sup>22</sup> And **he**



**subjected everything under his feet** and appointed him as head over everything for the church, <sup>23</sup> which is his body, the fullness of the one who fills all things in every way.

There is no power greater, no power stronger, no hope more sure, no authority more supreme... Everything means everything. And everything is under his feet. He is the head, but we are his body. We walk in his grace, in his truth, in his anointing and in his power.

He is building his church, and through us. And the gates of hell will never prevail!

## **04. CLOSING & PRAYER**

---

If you watch enough of these home makeover shows, you realize they can rebuild any house.

**Let's Pray**