

EPHESIANS

Ephesians is part of a four-letter collection called the “_____ [a] Epistles” of Paul. The other three are Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon. Why are they called “Prison Epistles”? After Paul’s arrest in Jerusalem (Acts 21:27ff), he was ultimately transported to _____ [b] where his case could be heard by the emperor (a right Paul had as a Roman citizen). In Rome he was permitted to live by himself with the soldier who guarded him. For _____ [c] years he remained under house arrest (Acts 28:30). It was during this time that Paul wrote these four letters. This would mean that these letters were written around 61/62 AD.

THE CITY OF EPHESUS

Ephesus was located on the _____ [d] coast of _____ [e] Minor (modern Turkey). Today it’s only a collection of uninhabited, impressive ruins. Even though Ephesus is uninhabited today, in Paul’s day it was the most important city of western Asia Minor and a major center of political, economic, and religious activity. Ephesus became part of the Roman province of Asia almost 200 years before Paul arrived there, and by Paul’s day the population of Ephesus was at least 250,000 people. One of the most iconic and visited historical ruins in the world today is the massive _____ [f] at Ephesus which held _____ [g] people. It was into this theater that the rioting mob ran when they protested the rise of Christianity and the neglect of the worship of the goddess Artemis (Acts 19:29). In front of the theater was the main business street of the city. Here were numerous shops, and so it’s possible that Paul had a tentmaking shop here (Acts 20:34).

Ephesus was prosperous for a couple of reasons. First, it was situated at the intersection of major _____ [h] running east-west and north-south. It was also the regions first _____ [i] of entry for seafaring vessels in Paul’s day, though the port has now silted up and the modern location of Ephesus is some way inland. The convergence of the major land routes and the seaport granted Ephesus a robust market. The second reason for Ephesus’ prosperity had to do with _____ [j] life. The city boasted an enormous pagan _____ [k] which was one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. It was dedicated to the Greek fertility goddess _____ [l], also known by the Romans as _____ [m]. The temple was about 450 feet long and 225 feet wide. It had 127 columns that were 60 feet tall. People came from all over in March-April for the festival of Artemis. The massive shrine brought a huge income to local businessmen (see Acts 19:23-30).

THE CHURCH IN EPHEBUS

According to Luke (in the book of Acts), Paul first arrived in Ephesus during his _____[n] missionary journey. He didn't stay long, but while he was there, he entered the synagogue and "reasoned with the Jews" (Acts 18:19). Some of them asked him to stay longer but that wasn't possible. Paul did, however, leave in Ephesus a Jewish husband-and-wife team—Priscilla and Aquila—whom he had lived and worked with in Corinth (Acts 18:1-3). Paul promised the Ephesians that, if it were God's will, he'd soon return to see them again (Acts 18:20-21). It was in Ephesus, after Paul had left, that Priscilla and Aquila heard _____[o] preach and detected (and corrected) his deficient understanding of Christian baptism (Acts 18:24-28). After Apollos learned "the way of God more accurately," he left Ephesus to begin ministering in _____[p].

After Paul spent some time back home reporting what God had done in Asia Minor, he set off on his _____[q] missionary journey. After passing through the region of Galatia (Acts 18:23), he headed to again toward Ephesus (Acts 19:1). According to the account in Acts 19-20, Paul's ministry in Ephesus was long and fruitful (he said "_____ [r] years" in Acts 20:31), but it also had its share of controversy and conflict. Here are the major events associated with Paul's ministry in Ephesus as described in the book of Acts:

- He encountered a group of "disciples" that he soon discovered had not received the Holy Spirit because they were only familiar with _____[s] baptism. Paul taught them, baptized them, and laid his hands on them and they received the Spirit (Acts 19:1-7).
- He spent three months reasoning with the Jews in the synagogue, persuading them about the _____[t] of God (Acts 19:8).
- He spent _____[u] years in the "school of Tyrannus," daily teaching the Word of God to Jews and Gentiles from all over the province of Asia (Acts 19:9-10).
- He performed extraordinary _____[v] by God's power, including healing the sick and casting out demons (Acts 19:11-12).
- His reputation as a miracle worker even affected Jewish exorcists, who unsuccessfully attempted to use Paul's methods for casting out _____[w] (Acts 19:13-17).
- His preaching fueled the repentance of former _____[x], who burned their books of _____[y] valued in the millions of dollars (Acts 19:18-20).
- He incurred the wrath of Demetrius, a silversmith, who had been losing business because people were no longer buying his miniature _____[z] of Artemis, goddess of Ephesus (Acts 19:23-27).

- His preaching stirred up a _____[aa] which culminated in his departure for Macedonia and Greece (Acts 19:28-20:2).

After Paul left for Macedonia and Greece, there's no record that he ever visited Ephesus again. However, as he made the journey home at the end of his third missionary journey, he stopped in the nearby town of Miletus and he summoned the _____[bb] of the church in Ephesus to him. There he said farewell and encouraged them to remain faithful in their work as _____[cc] of God's people (Acts 20:17-38). It ended with an emotional, tear-filled good-bye. It was the last time they saw their spiritual father in person. But it wasn't the last time they heard from Paul. A few years later, while under house arrest in Rome waiting for Caesar to hear his appeal, Paul penned the letter of _____[dd].

OVERVIEW OF EPHESIANS

In this letter Paul doesn't _____[ee] anyone, _____[ff] any twisted theology, or _____[gg] himself against the attacks of his critics. Instead, it seems that Paul's aim is to enlarge the mind of his readers. He wants them to fully appreciate their standing in Christ, and he wants them to fully appreciate the practical implications of what it means to be in Christ.

Ephesians has _____[hh] main divisions or sections. The first section (chapters 1-3) is primarily _____[ii], and the second section (chapters 4-6) is primarily _____[jj]. In other words, the first section reveals the exalted position and identity that we have in Christ by grace through faith, and the second section instructs us on how to live in light of the new identity we have in Christ. The whole letter can then be further divided into _____[kk] segments—the first two constitute the doctrinal part, and the last three, the practical part.

The Foundation of Faith (Eph 1:1-2:10)

This first segment reveals important foundational facts about what God has done for us. First, it emphasizes that God the _____[ll] is the _____[mm] or origin of every blessing that we enjoy. He initiated everything. God Himself is the subject of almost every main verb in Ephesians 1:3-14. He “has blessed us.” He “chose us.” He “predestined us to adoption” as sons.” He “freely bestowed on us His grace.” He “lavished” His grace on us. He “works all things after the counsel of His will.” Paul then goes on to identify the location of every spiritual blessings—IN _____[nn]. _____[oo] dominates Paul's mind and fills his vision. It's through Jesus that God's new society—His _____[pp]—has come into being and receives blessings. All past, present, and future blessings are found “in Him.” When we were dead

in our sins and trespasses, God made us alive together with Christ.

The Results of God's Grace (Eph 2:11-3:21)

The result of God's grace isn't just that we've been reconciled to Him, but that we've also been reconciled to each _____[qq]. God saved us and put all of us together in a newly formed body called the _____[rr]. This part of God's plan was a profound mystery that was kept secret in ages past but was made known to the New Testament apostles and prophets. In this new era—the _____[ss] age—Jews and Gentiles both will be saved in the same _____[tt] through the same gospel.

Walking and Growing (Eph 4:1-32)

Having constructed a solid doctrinal foundation in chapters 1-3, Paul sets forth the practical application in chapters 4-6. In light of being in Christ and a saved part of His new community, the church, we must _____[uu] in a manner _____[vv] of our calling. We must put off the old self and live by the new self. This includes living in humility, gentleness, patience, unity, peace and hope. And how do we grow like this? One important way is through the ministry of the _____[ww]. We are instructed, inspired, challenged, corrected, and directed through the ministries of the many people that God has put in the church.

Following and Submitting (Eph 5:1-6:9)

This segment continues to describe the life of someone who is in Christ. We cannot indulge the impulses of the _____[xx]. To overcome those impulses, we must yield to the work of the Holy _____[yy] in our lives. When the Holy Spirit empowers the believer, it shows up through sincere _____[zz], and in our _____[aaa] relationships as we seek to honor God's plan for the family structure, and in the workplace as we seek to honor God's plan for society.

Clashing and Conquering (Eph 6:10-20)

Paul concludes his letter to the Ephesians with the vivid language of spiritual _____[bbb]. As believers walk with Christ, we'll meet resistance from the enemy of our souls—the _____[ccc]. However, we have _____[ddd] that God has provided for use against the devil's temptations and attacks. So, Paul urges us to stand firm against Satan's attacks. He exhorts us to _____[eee] and petition as part of our spiritual arsenal and strategy. And he exhorts prayer for one another for boldly proclaiming the gospel. With these spiritual weapons, we can be _____[fff].

LESSONS FROM EPHESIANS

- God has created an order that you are to follow for success in your _____[ggg] life.
- God has given us all the _____[hhh] we need to fight Satan.
- The foundation of the church is the _____[iii] (2:19-20)
- The only _____[jjj] that matters is “in Christ” (2:11-18)
- We embrace all those in Christ as cherished _____[kkk]
- What matters is _____[lll] the Scriptures, not how we _____[mmm] about it (3:1-5)
- We must make Jesus a permanent _____[nnn] in our hearts and not a tolerated _____[ooo] (3:17)
- We must submit to the Spirit’s _____[ppp] more and more in every decision of life (3:16-17)
- All are _____[qqq] to serve and _____[rrr] to serve (4:7, 12)
- Spirit-filled Christians are always full of _____[sss] (5:18-20)
- Our spiritual _____[ttt] belongs to the Lord (6:10-12)

KEY PASSAGES FROM EPHESIANS

- Ephesians 1:22-23
- Ephesians 2:8-10
- Ephesians 4:26
- Ephesians 5:18, 25
- Ephesians 6:12
- Ephesians 6:11

FILL-IN-THE-BLANK ANSWER KEY

[a] Prison	[ss] church
[b] Rome	[tt] body
[c] two	[uu] walk
[d] west	[vv] worthy
[e] Asia	[ww] church
[f] theater	[xx] flesh
[g] 25,000	[yy] Spirit
[h] roads	[zz] worship
[i] port	[aaa] family
[j] religious	[bbb] warfare
[k] temple	[ccc] devil
[l] Artemis	[ddd] weapons
[m] Diana	[eee] prayer
[n] second	[fff] victorious
[o] Apollos	[ggg] family
[p] Corinth	[hhh] tools
[q] third	[iii] Scripture
[r] three	[jjj] identity
[s] John's	[kkk] equals
[t] kingdom	[lll] understanding
[u] two	[mmm] feel
[v] miracles	[nnn] resident
[w] demons	[ooo] visitor
[x] sorcerers	[ppp] will
[y] magic	[qqq] equipped
[z] idols	[rrr] expected
[aa] riot	[sss] thanks
[bb] elders	[ttt] battle
[cc] overseers	
[dd] Ephesians	
[ee] scold	
[ff] correct	
[gg] defend	
[hh] two	
[ii] doctrinal	
[jj] practical	
[kk] five	
[ll] Father	
[mm] source	
[nn] CHRIST	
[oo] Jesus	
[pp] church	
[qq] other	
[rr] church	