

Ephesians



Spring Spiritual Formation 2020

WEEK ONE : Genre and Background




Genre: Epistle




Epistle means LETTER.

Characteristics of an Epistle:

1. Begins with a greeting indicating the AUTHOR and AUDIENCE.
2. PRAYER for the audience.
3. Final SALUTATIONS.



As we read an epistle, it is helpful to read it in one sitting as one would read a letter. This gives you the full picture.



Four questions to ask when reading an epistle:

(<https://studyingtheword.wordpress.com/2009/10/28/genre-epistle/>)

1. Who wrote it?
2. Who was it written to?
3. What prompted it to be written?
4. What is its message?



Who Wrote It?



PAUL

1. Paul was a JEW.
2. He was educated in...
 - a. the GREEK disciplines of rhetoric and literature
 - b. the PHARISAIC approach to Jewish law
3. Look at Paul's autobiography in Philippians 3:4-6
 - a. He was CIRCUMCISED.
 - b. He was a Jew from the tribe of BENJAMIN.

- c. He was a PHARISEE.
- d. He was a PERSECUTOR of the church.
- e. He FAULTLESSLY adhered to the Jewish law.



Who Was It Written To?



1. Gentile BELIEVERS in Ephesus
2. A letter CIRCULATED to several churches in Asia
3. Paul with the Ephesian church is found in Acts 18:18-21 and 19:1-41



What Prompted It To Be Written?



1. It is the most formal of Paul's letters
2. Paul wants to help the Ephesian Christians MATURE in their faith.



What Is Its Message?



Two clear segments:

1. Chapters 1-3 – Rich in DOCTRINE of who we are in Christ
2. Chapters 4-6 – How we should RESPOND to who we are in Christ

EPHESIANS

	Introduction (1:1-2)	Our Position in Christ Section 1: What God has done for us (1) Emphasis: sovereignty Section 2: What Christ has done in us (2:1-10) Emphasis: grace Section 3: What Christ has done between us (2:11-3:21) Emphasis: reconciliation CHAPTERS 1-3	Our Practice on Earth Section 1: Our new unity (4:1-16) Section 2: Our new walk (4:17-6:9) Section 3: Our new strength (6:10-20) CHAPTERS 4-6	Conclusion (6:21-24)
	Emphasis	Doctrinal: vertical relationship with God	Practical: horizontal relationship with others	
Core Phrase	"He chose us in Him," (1:4)		"Walk in a manner worthy of the calling," (4:1)	
Subjects	Declarations of heavenly truths (God's accomplishments)		Exhortations for earthly living (Christians' assignments)	
Prayers	Paul's prayer for Ephesians (1:15-23)	Paul's prayer for the whole church (3:14-21)	Christians' prayers for one another (6:18-20)	
Theme	The holy community God is creating and how it is to live out its calling			
Key Verses	1:9-10; 4:1-3			
Christ in Ephesians	Jesus is the source of spiritual blessing, the Cornerstone of the church, and the goal of spiritual maturity (1:3; 2:20; 4:11-16).			

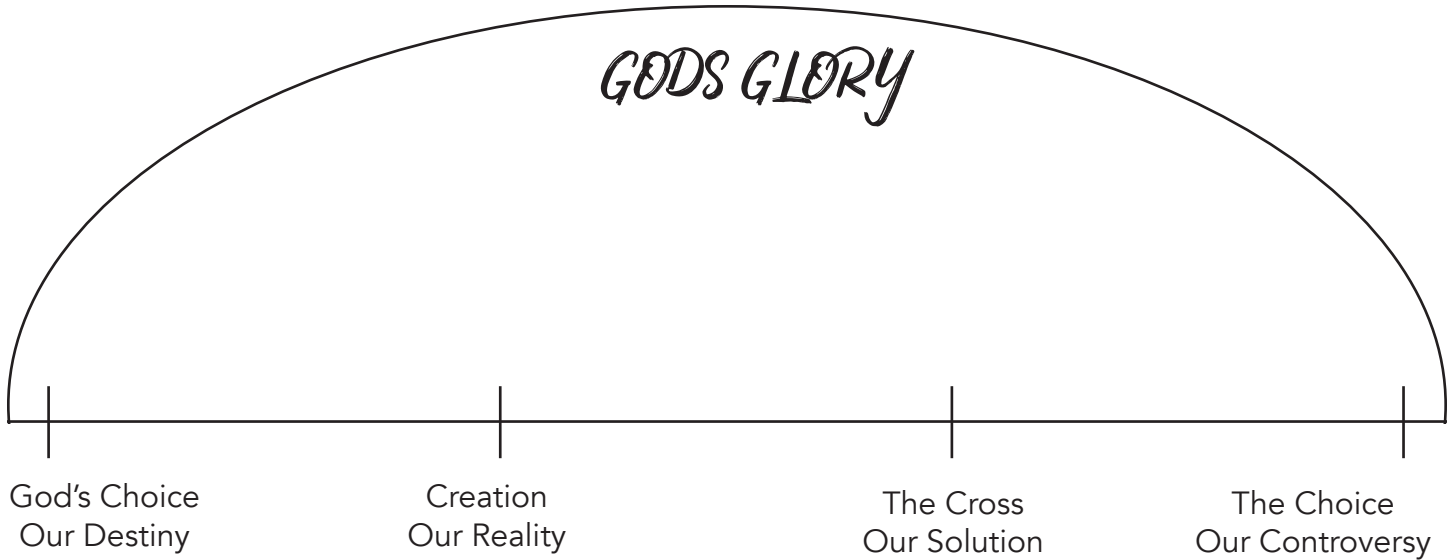
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Check This Out



You will find a fantastic overview of the book of Ephesians in the Bible Project Video of Ephesians. This is the link to that resource. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y71r-T98E2Q>



What do these verses say about God's purpose?

- Ephesians 1:10
- Ephesians 1:12
- Ephesians 1:14
- Ephesians 2:7
- Ephesians 2:10

God's ultimate purpose is HIS GLORY.



We cannot deny that God made a choice. What do these verses say?

- Ephesians 1:4 - before He made the world
- Ephesians 1:5 - decided in advance
- Ephesians 1:11 - chose us in advance
- Ephesians 2:10 - planned long ago

It is clear that God chose the "elect".



ALL men and women are dead in sins. What do these verses say?

- Ephesians 2:1-3

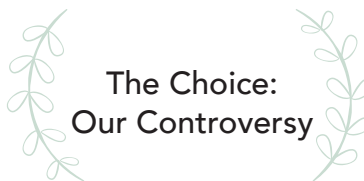
All are subject to God's anger.



Jesus did ALL the work! What do these verses say?

- Ephesians 1:5 - He adopted. He brought us to Himself.
- Ephesians 1:6 - He poured out His grace.
- Ephesians 1:7 - He purchased our freedom.
- Ephesians 1:8 - He showed His kindness.
- Ephesians 1:11 - He chose us.
- Ephesians 2:5 - He gave His life.
- Ephesians 2:8 - He gave us grace and faith.
- Ephesians 2:13 - He united and brought near.
- Ephesians 2:14 - He broke down the wall of hostility.
- Ephesians 2:15 - He ended the system of the law.

It is only by His grace and the work of Jesus Christ that we are saved from our reality.



Here is where we find some controversy among believers. But we can all agree with Ephesians 2:18.
Because of the life and work of Christ, we can now come.

What does Romans 9:14-24 tell us?

BOTTOM LINE:

**God's glory is central.
God chose His people.
We can and must respond.**

EPH. 1-2

GOD'S PLAN

- 1. He chose Jews & Gentiles
- 2. Who were dead in sin
- 3. And provided reconciliation through Christ's sacrifice,
- 4. And now, we can choose.

Provides

EPH. 3

OUR BENEFIT

- 1. Endless treasures and blessings
- 2. bold, confident access
- 3. Power of the Holy Spirit
- 4. Strength & fullness of life.

GODS GLORY

EPH. 4-6

OUR RESPONSE

A life worthy of our calling.

- 1. Must be done in community.
- 2. This community is the local church.
- 3. Upgrade your wardrobe.

Producing (Therefor)

John Piper says that God's Glory is the "going public of His holiness." Check out this great article by John Piper. <https://www.desiringgod.org/interviews/what-is-gods-glory--2>

Lifestyle Checklist

Don't forget Ephesians 2:15. God brought an end to the Law. So we follow this checklist as a RESPONSE to God's gift and NOT TO EARN any part of His gift.

DO:

- Be humble.
- Be gentle.
- Be patient with one another.
- Make allowances for others' faults.
- Be in unity with believers.
- Be at peace with believers.
- God's work.
- Build up the church.
- Be mature in the Lord.
- Measure up to Christ's standard.
- Be discerning.
- Be honest.
- Use your gifts.
- Throw off your old self.
- Put on the new self.

(truly righteous and holy)

- Work hard.
- Give generously.
- Be kind.
- Be tenderhearted.
- Forgive.

DON'T:

- Be hopelessly confused.
- Have a darkened mind.
- Wander from the life God gives.
- Close your mind.
- Be shameless.
- Live for lustful pleasure.
- Be eager to practice impurity.
- Tell lies.
- Let anger control you.
- Steal.
- Use foul language.
- Use abusive language.
- Be bitter.
- Do evil behavior.



Bird's
Eye
View



- Ephesians 1:1 - Written to believers
- Ephesians 1:3 - Blessed with every spiritual blessing
- Ephesians 1:14 - Purchased with Christ's blood
- Ephesians 2:1 - We were once dead to sin.
- Ephesians 2:3 - Subject to God's anger
- Ephesians 2:14 - Christ brought peace, breaking down the wall of hostility and ending the system of the law.
- Ephesians 3:6 - God's plan - we share in riches as His children
- Ephesians 3:10 - God's purpose - the church to display His wisdom
- Ephesians 4:1 - THEREFORE, live a life worthy of your calling
- Ephesians 4:2-32 - Instructions for living - not legalism but a response



Now
What?



- The bottomline is that we should imitate God. (5:1)
- Jesus Christ set the bar. (5:2)
- Because He paid the price, those who believe are heirs to His righteousness.
- Don't be fooled by those who excuse the sins of sexual imorality, greed, obscene stories and coarse jokes.
- Submission is "where the rubber meets the road."
 - Who?
 - To one another out of reverence for Christ (v. 21)
 - Wives as to the Lord like the church is to Christ
 - Husbands as Christ to the church
 - Children to parents because you belong to God
 - Fathers teach your children what comes from the Lord
 - Slaves serve as you would serve Christ.
 - Masters likewise...you answer to God.
 - The common threads:
 - Submission is about Christ. Remember our ultimate purpose is to glorify God.
 - We do not submit because it is deserved by man.
 - We do not submit based on someone's actions.
 - How do we balance submission so that we are not a "door mat"?
 - We raise the bar to Christ. (5:2)
 - We imitate God (5:1)
 - Can one really be a "door mat" if she is aware of someone's behavior and is committed to a different standard?
- This is all very difficult, but we are equipped with the Armor of God. (6:10-24)

