

Easy As 1-2-3



Introduction to Ephesians ¹

It's As Easy As 1-2-3

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Overall Understanding

Introduction to Ephesians²

The following is a summary of our Detailed Study Notes.

I. Historical Setting

Ephesians was written by Paul by inspiration of the Holy Spirit while he was a prisoner in Rome around 60 A.D. Paul had visited the area around 53 A.D. and had left Priscilla and Aquila to continue the work there. From 54-56 A.D., Paul spent three years preaching the gospel there. It is believed that this letter was meant to be circulated among the believers in the area of Ephesus, the capital of the Roman province of Asia, which today is part of Turkey.

II Ministry in Ephesus According to the Book of Acts

A. APOLLOS Acts 18:24-28

1 Apollos was a powerful preacher of the Scriptures, which at the time were the Old Testament. He only knew of the baptism of John. Either he wasn't aware that Jesus had died and risen, or that he didn't know about the baptism of the Holy Spirit

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recorded in Acts 2.

3 Apollos, already well-versed in Scriptures, but needing a little more information, then went to the disciples in Achaia (who were encouraged by Priscilla and Aquila to receive him). This information added to Apollos' effectiveness. It says that Apollos "greatly helped those who had believed through grace; for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ" (Acts 18:27-28).

B. Other Uninformed Disciples in Ephesus Acts 19:1-2

C. PAUL'S MINISTRY IN EPHESUS CONTINUES Acts 19:8-10

1 Paul ministered for three months in the Jewish synagogue attempting to persuade the Jews that Jesus was the Messiah. When they rejected the message, he took those who had become disciples to the school of Tyrannus, who was a Greek Philosopher.
2 Paul taught there daily for two years, and all of Asia heard the word of the Lord, not through Paul alone, but because the people went out and spread the word.

D. EXTRAORDINARY MIRACLES Acts 19:11-20

1. God performed extraordinary miracles by the hand of Paul in
2. Believers began disclosing the magic they'd been practicing before conversion, and they started the practice of burning their books and objects of magic in the sight of all.
3. With the unusual miracles God was doing through Paul, the story retold of people trying to use Jesus' name who weren't believers, the sincere forsaking of magic, and the sharing of the word of the Lord (which is the gospel), the population of believers was growing mightily. It is believed that there may have been 100,000 believers in Ephesus at the end of Paul's stay there in a region of 300,000 people (1 in 3 people were believers).

E. GREAT OPPOSITION IN EPHESUS Acts 19:21-41

When the enterprise of selling images of Diana was negatively affected by the number of people who were forsaking the worship of her, some businessmen rose up against Paul and those who worked with him. There was a city riot. Paul wanted to go talk to the people, but the believers would not let him. Finally, after two hours of chanting, "Great is Diana of the Ephesians," a city clerk calmed the people, telling them that they could go to the courts to accuse Paul, but they could not take action in an unlawful assembly. He sent everyone home. In this way, Paul and his companions were saved from martyrdom.

III Paul's Final Words to the Elders from Ephesus

Ephesians 20:20

How I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house.

Acts 20:24

But I do not consider my life of any account as dear to myself, so that I may finish my course and the ministry which I received from the Lord Jesus, to testify solemnly of the gospel of the grace of God.

Acts 20:25

And indeed, now I know that you all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, will see my face no more.

Acts 20:26-27

Therefore I testify to you this day that I am innocent of the blood of all men. ²⁷ For I have not shunned to declare to you the whole counsel of God.

Acts 20:32

“So now, brethren, I commend you to God and to the word of His grace, which is able to build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.

B PAUL SET A GODLY EXAMPLE for the people of Ephesus. He served them with humility and proclaimed the entire gospel to them. He didn't ask for the possessions of others.

C PAUL'S INSTRUCTION TO THE ELDERS Acts 20:28

Shepherd the church of God, which He purchased with His blood.

D PAUL'S WARNING TO THE ELDERS Ephesians 20:28-31

Paul warns the Ephesians that false savage wolves would come in among them, not sparing the flock. Even from among them, men would rise up, speaking perverse things, to draw away the disciples after themselves.

E THE LOVE BETWEEN PAUL AND THE ELDERS

Ephesians 20:36-38

And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. ³⁷ Then they all wept freely, and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, ³⁸ sorrowing most of all for the words which he spoke, that they would see his face no more. And they accompanied him to the ship.

IV Christ's Message to the Ephesians in Revelation 95 A.D. (about twenty years later) In Revelation 4:1-6 Jesus said to the Ephesians that He had something against them: They had left their first love." Some have used this to say that we should not compromise our zeal and good works for the Lord. But the Ephesians were very diligent.

A THE EPHESIANS WERE NOT LACKING IN ZEAL and apparently took Paul's warning seriously about false workers entering the church.

1 They had good works.

2 They toiled.

3 They had perseverance (patient endurance). This is said twice.

4 They could not tolerate evil people.

5 They put the false apostle to the test.

6 They endured for the sake of Jesus name.

7 They did not grow weary.

8 They hated the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which GOD HATES.

B JESUS CORRECTED THE EPHESIANS FOR ONE THING.

Revelation 2:4-5 They had left the love they first knew. They were doing everything "right," but had left their first love with Him. This can happen to those who base their righteousness on their works instead of their faith in His love for them.

1 John 4:10

In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.

In the book of Ephesians, Paul will encourage them/us to be "rooted and grounded in love" and to "know the love of God which passes knowledge."

In chapters 1-3, he presents the glories of the gospel. In chapters 4-5, he explains the applications of these truths.

We hope you will enjoy this study.