



Walking Thru The Bible

EPHESIANS

Introduction

No book of the Bible exalts Christ and His church to the great extent that Ephesians does. God's eternal purpose is unveiled in this rich epistle of six vibrant chapters. If there is one verse that truly blends all of the thoughts together it is 3:21 –

"Unto God be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end, Amen."

The book of Ephesians has six great chapters sharing with us vital information on the church. Notice this simple outline of the contents:

- Chapter 1 The church as the fulness of Christ
- Chapter 2 Reconciled to God in the church
- Chapter 3 Glorifying God through the church
- Chapter 4 The Oneness of the church
- Chapter 5 The Bride of Christ
- Chapter 6 The Army of the Lord!

CHAPTER 1 of Ephesians tells us that *all* spiritual blessings are **in Christ**. We learn that sinners are redeemed through the blood of Jesus (1:3; 1:7). In Eph. 1:20-23 we learn of the necessity of the church. Christ is head over all things to the church (this eliminates the Pope, latter day "prophets" and all hierarchy). Many sectarian notions and denominational doctrines are ruined by clear-cut statements found in chapter one of Ephesians. Since Christ purchased the church with His own blood (Acts 20:28) it is **essential** for us to be in that which the blood bought.

CHAPTER 2 tells us of the tragic position those outside of the Lord find themselves in. Notice these points in chapter 2:

- (1) Dead in trespasses and sins
- (2) Without hope and without God
- (3) Unreconciled and separated from God

As one preacher said: "They are hopeless, helpless and hapless in this world and in the one to come." But:

- God's grace is **in Christ** (2 Tim. 2:10)
- Salvation is **in Christ** (Acts 4:12)

And Gal. 3:27 tells us that the way to get into the Lord is through

baptism (Col. 2:12; Rom. 6:3-5).

The church of the Lord is a spiritual relationship with the Redeemer that transcends geography. Being rooted in Christ means that we are part of the pillar and ground of Truth.

CHAPTER 3 tells us of the glorious *nature* of Christ's church. This spiritual body of the Savior holds a high and lofty place in God's eternal purpose because of its relationship to Jesus. He is the: *Builder* (Matt. 16:18); *Purchaser* (Acts 20:28); *Head* (Eph. 5:23); *Savior* (Eph. 5:24); *Foundation* (1 Cor. 3:11); *Captain* (Hebrews 2:10); and *King* (John 18:36).

The Lord's church will succeed because of its divine founder, the divine book (the Bible), and its heavenly goal. There are those who teach that the church was a substitute for the kingdom due to the rejection of the kingdom by the Jews. However, Ephesians 3:9-11 carefully records the fact that God purposed from eternity that the church would be established and that through the church the *manifold wisdom of God* would be made known to powers in heavenly places.

CHAPTER 4 of this fascinating book sets forth seven points in heaven's platform for unity. The book is written in the decade of the 60's when animosity between Jews and Gentiles is building up greatly [resulting in the Roman-Jewish war AD 67-70], and what a struggle it must have been to keep down racial friction in the church and so in this chapter Paul stresses the UNITY of ALL the disciples in Christ! There was:

- One Body -- not one Jewish church and one Gentile church!
- One Spirit -- both the Jews and Gentile guided the same way
- One Hope -- their aspirations were the same
- One Lord -- both Jews and Gentiles the *same* Savior
- One Faith -- their doctrine of faith and practice was the same
- One Baptism --all Jewish and Gentile disciples were baptized the same way (burial) for the same purpose (remission of sins) into the same Body.
- One God -- they both believed in and worshiped the same God!

Some would teach that of these 7 only one (baptism) is non-essential. But that is arbitrary choosing due to sectarian thinking. Some would say: "There are many faiths"-- but the Bible sanctions only *one*. And, Romans 10:17 lets us know that ***"faith comes by hearing the word of God."*** Others argue that there are many churches pleasing to heaven but Paul's identification of Christ's church as **the** body (1:22-23) rules out denominationalism.

In the next section -- vs. 7-16-- careful Bible students learn of the purpose of miracles in the first century. Not only did such phenomena **"confirm the word"** (Mark 16:20; Heb. 2:1-4) the miraculous also caused the church to become full-grown *when* the solid unity of truth ("unity of the faith") was revealed. Every wind of doctrine could be challenged properly when the Scriptures were completed as the Spirit revealed to the apostles **"all truth"** (John 16:13; 17:17).

CHAPTER 5 Redemption becomes a key word tying together the rich challenge of the first part of the book with the pulsating closing thoughts. Here is one point for each chapter:

- (1) Redeemed by His blood
- (2) Redeemed by His cross
- (3) Redeemed through His church
- (4) Redemption demands purity
- (5) Redemption demands separation
- (5) Redemption brings opposition.

The first part of chapter 5 reminds us forcefully that we follow the Lord and not the flesh. No filthiness, jesting, fornication, covetousness, vanity, disobedience, or fellowship with darkness can be tolerated.

The last section of chapter 5 tells the message of submission. It is a story of Christ and the church illustrated by the husband-wife relationship in marriage.

CHAPTER 6 deals with a valuable, and yet, often overlooked lesson. Children must obey their parents if God's plan for the home is effectively followed. The rampant rise of rebellion around the world can be traced to parents who allowed their offspring to disregard proper respect for authority.

The major lesson of the final stanza of Ephesians has to do with the militant nature of Christ's church-- His army! Our spiritual warfare against the hosts of sin is powerful. The one weapon to be used is the **sword of the Spirit**-- the Word of God! We battle against Satan and Sin. There is no furlough or week-end pass. Soldiers of Christ are always on guard and on duty against emissaries of evil. The panoply of the Christian as a soldier of Jesus includes, *truth, righteousness, peace, faith, prayer and the proper use of the Scriptures*, our sword.

Paul, an ambassador in bonds bids the Ephesians farewell in his familiar benediction of peace, grace and love.

The book is a rare gem of deep vibrant passages exalting Christ and His Church in the eternal purpose of God!

The One Baptism

Ephesians 4:5

Introduction:

1. Notice the passage in the context of the book. UNITY is the key word of Ephesians; how that the Jews and Gentiles are ONE in Christ.
2. Remember the historical background of the decade in which Ephesians was written. There was a growing animosity between the Jews and Gentiles world-wide. It must have been a gigantic task in keep this friction out of the church.
3. Therefore this book stands to remind both Jews and Gentiles that we are ONE in Christ and that there is:
(1 One Body (2 One Spirit (3 One Hope (4 One Lord
(5 One Faith (6 One Baptism (7 One God

I. "BAPTISMS" in the Bible

1. The Baptism of Moses -- 1 Cor. 10:1-2
2. The Baptism of John -- Mark 1:1-5
Apollon and disciples in Acts 18:24-24 & 19:1-5
3. The Baptism of Suffering -- Matthew 20:20-23
Figurative of an overwhelming in suffering and pain.
4. The Baptism of "Fire and the Holy Spirit" -- Matt. 3:10-12
 - a. Many fail to understand these are NOT the same thing.
 - b. Notice the context of "baptism with fire" vs. 11-12
 - 1) Baptism with "Fire" was a "threat" Jo.15:6; Heb.6:8
 - 2) Baptism with the "Holy Ghost" a promise (Luke 24:49; Acts 1:4-8; 2:33).
5. NONE of these was the ONE BAPTISM--
 - a. One Baptism for ALL BELIEVERS still in force when Paul wrote Ephesians in AD 62 was that baptism Jesus commanded in Matthew 28:19-20; Mark 16:15-16.

II. "ONE BAPTISM"

1. What was the significance to the Jews and the Gentiles who received this letter? They were ALL baptized:
 - (1 upon believing the same truth -- John 8:24
 - (2 on making the same confession -- Rom 10:9-10
 - (3 baptized the same way -- Col 2:12
 - (4 for the same purpose -- Acts 2:38
 - (5 into the same relationship with Christ-- Gal. 3:27-28
2. The "ONE BAPTISM" for all believers today MUST be the same "one baptism" that Jews and Gentiles accepted in becoming Christians in the first century.

CONCLUSION: Is there "One Faith" today?