

Ephesians-

Although not nearly the longest of Paul's epistles, Ephesians is generally conceded to be the profoundest. There is a grandeur of conception about it, a majesty and dignity, a richness and fullness which are peculiar to it.

The first half of the epistle, covering chapters 1, 2, and 3 is *doctrinal*. The second half, covering 4, 5, and 6, is *practical*. Part one, the doctrinal part, is about the believer's *wealth* in Christ. Part two, the practical part, is about the believer's *walk* in Christ.

“...So, then, we see at once that Ephesians is the epistle of *OUR WEALTH AND OUR WALK IN CHRIST*.”

—J. Baxter Sidlow, *Explore the Book*.

Helpful Study Links:

Additional Commentary: (Great Resource!)

http://preceptaustin.org/ephesians_commentaries.htm

Sermon Links:

“The Treasure of Grace” by Charles Spurgeon

<http://www.biblebb.com/files/spurgeon/0295.HTM>

“Members of Christ” by Charles Spurgeon

<http://www.biblebb.com/files/spurgeon/MEMOF.TXT>

“EPHESIANS: The Calling Of The Saints” by Ray C. Stedman

<http://www.pbc.org/library/files/html/0250.html>



Author: Paul (1:1; 3:1)

Time: Ephesians is one of Paul’s “Prison Epistles” (the name given collectively to Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon—because Paul wrote them while he was in prison). The letter is dated to the period AD 60–63, corresponding to the time of Paul’s first Roman imprisonment (cf. Acts 28:16–31).



Theme: The Christian life, the church described! This is one of the most beautiful and succinct descriptions of the Christian life in the Bible. It is laid out perfectly.

The first three chapters describe the “position” of the Christian life—or all that God has done for us. For example, there are no commands in the first three chapters—it is all about what God has done for us. These chapters list the believer’s heavenly possessions in Christ Jesus: adoption, redemption, inheritance, power, life, grace, citizenship, and the love of Christ.

The last three chapters describe our response to God’s work in our life. There are over thirty-five commands or directives for us to respond with. Thus these chapters describe the practice of the Christian life.

The flow of the book is a vital lesson in itself; in that, we must begin with what God has done for us and our response should be what follows.



Keys: The theme of love is stressed in Ephesians. The verb form of “love” (agapaō) is used 9 times in Ephesians, whereas Paul used it only 23 times in all his other letters. Paul used the noun (agapē, “love”) 10 times in Ephesians compared with 65 times in his other epistles. Therefore, of the 107 times Paul used the verb or noun “love,” 19 are in Ephesians. Thus more than one-sixth of his references to “love” appear in this small epistle to the Ephesians. This letter begins with love (Eph. 1:4, 6) and ends with love (6:23-24).

"In whom also we have obtained an inheritance."

Ephesians 1:11

taken from *Morning and Evening*

by Charles H. Spurgeon

When Jesus gave himself for us, he gave us all the rights and privileges which went with himself; so that now, although as eternal God, he has essential rights to which no creature may venture to pretend, yet as Jesus, the Mediator, the federal head of the covenant of grace, he has no heritage apart from us. All the glorious consequences of his obedience unto death are the joint riches of all who are in him, and on whose behalf he accomplished the divine will. See, he enters into glory, but not for himself alone, for it is written, "Whither the Forerunner is for us entered." Heb. 6:20. Does he stand in the presence of God?-"He appears in the presence of God for us." Heb. 9:24. Consider this, believer. You have no right to heaven in yourself: your right lies in Christ. If you are pardoned, it is through his blood; if you are justified, it is through his righteousness; if you are sanctified, it is because he is made of God unto you sanctification; if you shall be kept from falling, it will be because you are preserved in Christ Jesus; and if you are perfected at the last, it will be because you are complete in him. Thus Jesus is magnified-for all is in him and by him; thus the inheritance is made certain to us-for it is obtained in him; thus each blessing is the sweeter, and even heaven itself the brighter, because it is Jesus our Beloved "in whom" we have obtained all. Where is the man who shall estimate our divine portion? Weigh the riches of Christ in scales, and his treasure in balances, and then think to count the treasures which belong to the saints. Reach the bottom of Christ's sea of joy, and then hope to understand the bliss which God hath prepared for them that love him. Overleap the boundaries of Christ's possessions, and then dream of a limit to the fair inheritance of the elect. "All things are yours, for ye are Christ's and Christ is God's."

"Grow up into him in all things."

Ephesians 4:15

taken from *Morning and Evening*

by Charles H. Spurgeon

Many Christians remain stunted and dwarfed in spiritual things, so as to present the same appearance year after year. No up-springing of advanced and refined feeling is manifest in them. They exist but do not "grow up into him in all things." But should we rest content with being in the "green blade," when we might advance to "the ear," and eventually ripen into the "full corn in the ear?" Should we be satisfied to believe in Christ, and to say, "I am safe," without wishing to know in our own experience more of the fulness which is to be found in him. It should not be so; we should, as good traders in heaven's market, covet to be enriched in the knowledge of Jesus. It is all very well to keep other men's vineyards, but we must not neglect our own spiritual growth and ripening. Why should it always be winter time in our hearts? We must have our seed time, it is true, but O for a spring time-yea, a summer season, which shall give promise of an early harvest. If we would ripen in grace, we must live near to Jesus-in his presence-ripened by the sunshine of his smiles. We must hold sweet communion with him. We must leave the distant view of his face and come near, as John did, and pillow our head on his breast; then shall we find ourselves advancing in holiness, in love, in faith, in hope-yea, in every precious gift. As the sun rises first on mountain-tops and gilds them with his light, and presents one of the most charming sights to the eye of the traveller; so is it one of the most delightful contemplations in the world to mark the glow of the Spirit's light on the head of some saint, who has risen up in spiritual stature, like Saul, above his fellows, till, like a mighty Alp, snow-capped, he reflects first among the chosen, the beams of the Sun of Righteousness, and bears the sheen of his effulgence high aloft for all to see, and seeing it, to glorify his Father which is in heaven.

"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church."

Ephesians 5:25

taken from *Morning and Evening*

by Charles H. Spurgeon

What a golden example Christ gives to his disciples! Few masters could venture to say, "If you would practise my teaching, imitate my life;" but as the life of Jesus is the exact transcript of perfect virtue, he can point to himself as the paragon of holiness, as well as the teacher of it. The Christian should take nothing short of Christ for his model. Under no circumstances ought we to be content unless we reflect the grace which was in him. As a husband, the Christian is to look upon the portrait of Christ Jesus, and he is to paint according to that copy. The true Christian is to be such a husband as Christ was to his church. The love of a husband is special. The Lord Jesus cherishes for the church a peculiar affection, which is set upon her above the rest of mankind: "I pray for them, I pray not for the world." The elect church is the favourite of heaven, the treasure of Christ, the crown of his head, the bracelet of his arm, the breastplate of his heart, the very centre and core of his love. A husband should love his wife with a constant love, for thus Jesus loves his church. He does not vary in his affection. He may change in his display of affection, but the affection itself is still the same. A husband should love his wife with an enduring love, for nothing "shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." A true husband loves his wife with a hearty love, fervent and intense. It is not mere lip-service. Ah! beloved, what more could Christ have done in proof of his love than he has done? Jesus has a delighted love towards his spouse: He prizes her affection, and delights in her with sweet complacency. Believer, you wonder at Jesus' love; you admire it-are you imitating it? In your domestic relationships is the rule and measure of your love-"even as Christ loved the church?"