

Dear Church (Part 1)
To Whom It May Concern
Pastor Bill Bowers
April 30, 2017

Sermon Notes

EPHESUS THE CITY

- **A Port City**
- **An Ethnic City**
- **A Religious City**
- **An Entertainment City**

CHALLENGE: Read the book of Ephesians once a week!

1. **First, Ephesians deepens our understanding of the gospel.**
2. **Second, Ephesians magnifies the importance of the church**
3. **Third, Ephesians has changed lives forever.**
4. **Fourth, Ephesians may also be the “most contemporary” letter in the New Testament.**
5. **Fifth, Ephesians provides grace-filled encouragement.**
6. **And sixth, Ephesians offers practical answers to basic questions about the Christian life.**

OUR MISSION STATEMENT: *We exist to connect with God and with each other through intentional relationships. Discipleship is the core of our ministries.*

“This letter is from Paul, chosen by the will of God to be an apostle of Christ Jesus. I am writing to God’s holy people in Ephesus who are faithful followers of Christ Jesus.” Verse 1 NLT

Grace=God’s free undeserved mercy and favor.

Peace= This is the result of God’s lavished grace on us. Peace is the benefit of being made right with God. “untroubled, undisturbed, well being” Cramer

1. “He has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly realms.” Verse 3
2. “Before the creation of the world God chose you.” Verse 4
3. “God adopted us!” It gave him great pleasure. Verse 5
4. “He purchased our freedom” Verse 7
5. “He forgiven us of our sins” Verse 7
6. “He showered his kindness” Verse 8
7. Revealed to us the mystery of his will Verse 9-10
8. “We have an inheritance.” Verse 11
9. “He identified you as his own” or “You have been sealed” Verse 13
10. “You have a guarantee of the Holy Spirit.” Verse 14

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HomeGroup and Personal Study Questions

- Considering the introduction of our series and what you may have discovered through your own research, describe what you understand about the relevance of the Letter to the Ephesians to us today. In what way will you try to apply the teaching in this letter to your daily life? Will you incorporate your studies in a group? Will you share accountability with someone?
- The first half of the Ephesians letter deals with doctrine and theology of the Christian faith. How does this appeal to you? What do you think about the deep study of Scripture and gaining an understanding about the “mysteries” of God’s plan for salvation and man?
- Our local church mission statement proclaims, “Discipleship is the core of our ministries.” Can you state, in specific terms, what this means to you? In what way(s) are you earnestly pursuing discipleship (becoming like Christ in every way—see also Eph. 4:13) in your own life? Are you eager to learn more about your faith and endeavor to become more like Jesus?
- This letter offers specific and very practical steps to becoming more like Christ (chapters 4-6). Are you prepared to engage and respond to these steps? Pastor Bill has suggested that one step he is asking of the congregation is reading the entire letter (6 chapters) at least once per week throughout the series. Will you commit to this suggestion? You might try reading from multiple translations (you can find multiple free translations www.biblegateway.com)
- You might consider obtaining a composition notebook for this teaching series. We will work through this Letter to the Ephesians over 18 weeks and you might find it beneficial to keep your sermon outlines, study questions, notes, and observations together in one place. This series has much promise of deepening our understanding and maturing our faith as individuals and as a worshiping community. We hope you will journey through this teaching with us.