

# Studies in Ephesians

## “The Value of Studying this Book”

### *The Victor's Song*

We are overcomers and superconquerors, not victims or villains. “Greater is he that is in you than he that is in the world... [therefore] we are more than conquerors through him who loved us... [therefore] I can do all things through Christ who strengthens me.”

Paul is writing to a church that knew victory. The Ephesians came to Christ through the ministry of the apostle Paul as we read in Acts chapter eighteen to twenty. His ministry began with the issue of the Holy Spirit and his entire ministry demonstrated the power of the Holy Spirit. They had tasted and seen that the Lord is good. They tasted of the powers of the age to come, burning their fetishes and witchcrafts to become followers Jesus.

"Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas." \$500,000 value. (Acts 19:18-19)

They saw mighty miracles. "God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them." (Acts 19:11-12)

Ephesus was a city almost entirely given over to idolatry and the worship of devils. Their well-known goddess, Artemis (Diana) of the Ephesians, was a cult. The city of Ephesus was the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis and of her image, which allegedly fell from heaven. The conversions to Christianity put a dent in the silver business of Demetrius who stirred up a riot against Paul and Christians in general. It was this conflict with the devil that caused Paul great distress. Yet, in all his distress Christ was glorified and many came to know Jesus as their Savior.

The end of the story of the church at Ephesus is a sad one. In Revelation 2:1-7 we have the words of Jesus to seven churches in Asia. The first to be mentioned is the church at Ephesus, which was noble in their zeal for right doctrines, but who "LOST THEIR FIRST LOVE." Christ scolds the church for this omission. Anything that shares the love throne of your life other than Jesus is competition with our Savior. It is idolatry. The Lord warns the church of the serious consequences of losing our first love for him. It always and inevitably ends in defeat. He tells them that their candlestick will be removed. Their light - their testimony, their effect in the world will be extinguished. Within a few years the church of Ephesus, in fact, the entire city and its glory disappeared. The victor became the victim. Let us not follow the steps of the Ephesians. Had they heeded the doctrines, warnings, and tools of the letter to the Ephesians they would have remained victorious. May we ever follow the teachings of this letter.

This letter is the defining moment for the church to know “Who I am in Christ.” Watchman Nee defines Ephesians in three sets as, “**Sit, Walk, Stand.**” Nee takes an inspiring look at Ephesians, the book where he found the highest spiritual truths concerning the Christian life.

Summarizing the letter into three parts, you'll learn what it means to "sit" with Christ, "walk" as a Christian in the world, and "stand" up to Satan. We will follow that overall outline for the text before us.

## I. The Value of this Letter

**Acts 20:32** - Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified.”

**Rev 2:4** You have forsaken your first love. (*ie*) “This book will keep you from sin...”

### Quotes

1. John Mackay, former president of Princeton Seminary was 14 years old when he first read Ephesians and was saved in doing so. “greatest, maturest, most relevant for our times... This letter is pure music.”
2. Arimtage Robinson – “the crown of Paul’s writings
3. Wm Barclay – “The queen of the epistles”
4. Samuel Taylor Coleridge – “the divinest composition of man”
5. Another “The Grand Canyon of Scripture”
6. BF Westcott – 27 distinct doctrines

**Circular Letter** – Colossians 4:16 (missing Ephesians in some early manuscripts)

“After this letter has been read to you, see that it is also read in the church of the Laodiceans and that you in turn read the letter from Laodicea.” (*ie*) *Copied by hand*

**Similarities with Colossians** – 35 verses are essentially the same

One is theological (Eph) the other practical (Col)

**The Seven Churches** – Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamos, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodocea (Revelation 2-3) (*ie*) *Acts 17:11 The Bereans – ready mind, searched Script daily*

**Ephesus Passages** – Acts 18-20, **Rev 2:1-7 – LOST THEIR FIRST LOVE ! Acts 20:32**  
**Eph 5:26 “washing of water by the word”**

## II. Key Concepts – Sit, Walk, Stand

- 1) The Purposes of God – predestination, chosen, adopted, foreknown, sealed, blessed
- 2) Heavenly Realms – positional relationship with Christ in heaven. Seated with him
- 3) Spiritual Battle with Satan –
- 4) Powerful Prayers of Purpose – 1:15-23 and 3:14-21
- 5) Practical Walk - put off, put on, and put up with
  - a. The Church, the body of Christ
  - b. The Gifts
  - c. The Holy Spirit
  - d. The Old Self - Anger
  - e. Marriage –submission

## III. Verses To Memorize

- Ephesians 1:3-4 (1:3-14 or 15-23)  
Ephesians 2:8-9,10 (2:1-10)  
Ephesians 3:20-21 (3:14-21)  
Ephesians 4:30-32 (4:26-32)  
Ephesians 5:18-20 (5:25-33)  
Ephesians 6:10-12 (6:10-18)

## IV. Reading

(*anagnosis* means by accurate knowledge, owning, knowing again)

I Timothy 4:13 – “Until I come, devote yourself to the **public reading** (*anagnosis* means by accurate knowledge, owning, knowing again) of Scripture, to **preaching** (exhortation= *paraklesis*, exhortation, admonition, encouragement) and to **teaching**. (*didaskalia*, teaching for right doctrine, instruction, learning – I Tim 1:10 sound doctrine)”

Monday-Saturday, chapter a day 1-6 chapters for **12 weeks (to Thanksgiving)**

Read it **out loud** – rhythms

**Listen** to it being read – bathe in it, wash over me, washing of water by the word

## V. Exhortation

(exhortation= *paraklesis*, exhortation, admonition, encouragement)

Hebrews 5:11-18 (Milk and Meat) and Hebrews 11:25 (Hiding from the Body)

Small Group Bible Study – 3 to 8 people (Online Group, dialogue)

Interaction – One Another Passages

## VI. Doctrine

(*didaskalia*, teaching for right doctrine, instruction, learning – I Tim 1:10 sound doctrine)

### **2 Timothy 2:15**

*“Do your best (study, haste, diligence, “do due diligence”) to present yourself to God as one approved, a workman who does not need to be ashamed and who correctly handles the word of truth.”*

27 Great Doctrines – Predestination, Holy Spirit, Spiritual Warfare, Gifts, Marriage

In-depth Reading – Sovereignty of God (John Piper, RC Sproul, AW Pink)

*“Much of the trouble in the Church today is due to the fact that we are so subjective, so interested in ourselves, so egocentric. That is the peculiar error of this present century. Having forgotten God, and having become so interested in ourselves, we become miserable and wretched, and spend our time in ‘shallows and in miseries’. The message of the Bible from beginning to end is designed to bring us back to God, to humble us before God, and to enable us to see our true relationship to Him. And that is the great theme of this Epistle; it holds us face to face with God, and what God is, and what God has done; it emphasizes throughout the glory and the greatness of God.” D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones p 13*

*“We are at once face to face with the Sovereignty of God. ... How little have we heard of them in this present century with our morbid, pre-occupied subjectivism! How little have we been told about the glory, the greatness, the majesty and the sovereignty of God! Our forefathers delighted in these terms; these were the terms of the Protestant Reformers, the terms of the Puritans and the Covenanters. They delighted to spend time contemplating the attributes of God.” D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones p 14*