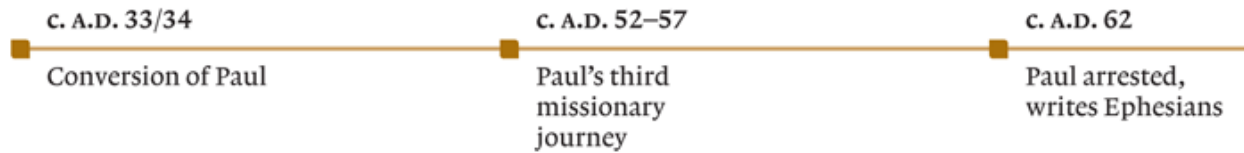


Introduction to Ephesians

Timeline



Author, Date, and Recipients

The apostle Paul wrote this letter to the churches in Ephesus and the surrounding region c. A.D. 62 while imprisoned in Rome ([Acts 28](#)). During this time he also wrote [Colossians](#) and [Philemon](#). All three letters were sent with Tychicus and Onesimus.

Theme

There are three main themes of [Ephesians](#): (1) Christ has reconciled all creation to himself and to God; (2) Christ has united people from all nations to himself and to one another in his church; and (3) Christians must live as new people.

Purpose

[Ephesians](#) offers general instruction in the truths of God's redemptive work in Christ; the unity of the church among diverse peoples; and proper conduct in the church, the home, and the world.

Key Themes

- I. All people are by nature spiritually dead. They disobey God's law and are ruled by Satan ([1:7](#); [2:1-3](#), [5](#), [11-12](#)).
- II. God predestined his people to redemption and holiness in Christ ([1:3-14](#); [2:4](#), [8-9](#)).
- III. God's rich mercy in Christ has saved sinners. This free gift is by grace through faith alone ([1:7-8](#); [2:4-14](#)).
- IV. Jesus' saving work was part of redeeming a fallen creation for God. For this he deserves glory, honor, and authority in this age and the next ([1:15-23](#); [3:1-13](#)).
- V. Jesus unites Jews and Gentiles into his one body, the church, as a new creation ([1:23](#); [2:10-22](#); [3:1-21](#); [4:1-6](#)).
- VI. Christ's people are saved to new lives of holiness in thought, word, and deed. They must reject their old, sinful lifestyles ([4:1-3](#), [17-32](#); [5:1-20](#)).
- VII. Holiness in life includes submission to proper authorities, in home and family life, and those in authority must care for those in submission to them ([5:21-6:9](#)).
- VIII. Jesus has given powerful gifts to his church. These bring unity, maturity, and defense against the devil and his allies ([4:7-16](#); [6:10-19](#)).

Outline

- I. Introduction (1:1–14)
- II. Paul's Prayer of Thanksgiving (1:15–23)
- III. Salvation by Grace through Faith (2:1–10)
- IV. Unity and the Peace of Christ (2:11–22)
- V. Revelation of the Gospel Mystery (3:1–13)
- VI. Paul's Prayer for Strength and Insight (3:14–21)
- VII. Unity of the Body of Christ (4:1–16)
- VIII. Paul's Testimony (4:17–24)
- IX. Encouragement for a Holy Lifestyle (4:25–32)
- X. New Life in Love (5:1–20)
- XI. Submission to One Another (5:21–6:9)
- XII. The Whole Armor of God (6:10–20)
- XIII. Conclusion (6:21–24)

The Setting of Ephesians

c. A.D. 62

Ephesus was a wealthy port city in the Roman province of Asia. It was a center of learning and was near several key land routes. Paul probably wrote his letter to the Ephesians while under house arrest in Rome ([Acts 28](#)).

