

ONE STORY | ONE SAVIOR - UNIT 7 | LESSON 14




Letters – The Promise Explained Through the KING’S Church

God is a PROMISE Completing God

JESUS as the 1) **PROMISED KING** has 2) **RESCUED** His people through His Perfect Law Keeping Life and Sacrificial, Substitutionary Death on the Cross, whereby 3) **DEFEATING** the enemy of sin and death, and is 4) **RESTORING** them to the PLACE OF REST where Heaven and Earth are rejoined and God reigns and abides 5) so that His people shall be with Him forever for their **JOY**.

You Are the Household of God Ephesians 2:19-22

¹⁹So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of **the household of God**, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹in whom the whole structure, being joined together, **grows into a holy temple in the Lord**. ²²In him you also are being **built together into a dwelling place for God** by the Spirit.

	<p>THE HEAD - To Know how God in Christ has saved you for His eternal glory. Q – Is everyone who believes equal within the local church, the Body of Christ?</p>
	<p>THE HEART - To Choose to believe the local church is vital to the Christian life. Q – Are you a part of the local church on a regular basis?</p>
	<p>THE HAND - To Pray for unity within the church of Jesus. Q – What are you doing to actively engage in this local church and to encourage others to attend?</p>

EMPHASIS

The **EMPHASIS** of this lesson is . . .

This Letter, along with Colossians, emphasizes the truth that the Church is the body (1:23; 2:16; 3:6; 4:4, 12, 16; 5:23, 30), household, temple, dwelling place for God of which Christ is the Head.

- God’s power builds it (1:3-14 – how he did it)
- God’s love drives it (3:14-21 – why he did it)

LITERARY CONTEXT

Taking a broad look at the Letter to the Ephesian Church.

1. AUTHOR

The author is clearly stated within the letter as Paul (Eph. 1:1; 3:1; cf. 3:7, 13; 4:1; 6:19-20).

2. WHEN?

The date of this letter must correspond with Paul's Roman imprisonment of Acts 28:16-31 (cf. 3:1; 4:1; 6:20), which is approximately AD 60, 61.

3. TO WHOM?

To the Church of Ephesus. **Multiple locations; one church.**

Fifty percent of Ephesians is represented in the book of Colossians. Ephesians expands Colossians.

- When you think of the capital city of Jerusalem in Israel, the capital city of Ephesus in Asia Minor, and the capital city of Rome in Italy, you can rightly conclude that these people were very diverse caused by distance, culture, ethnicity, society and economy. And **these differences not only caused occasion for division, but were also to be seen as occasion for celebration.** The power of the gospel is able to join people who are very diverse because of distance, culture, ethnicity, society, and economy and yet in Christ we are all one and together we are the household of God. That is amazing. And it is this incredible work of the gospel the Book of Ephesians celebrates and we are to celebrate as well.

4. FROM WHERE? [locate on a map]

Paul was apparently **a prisoner in Rome under house arrest** when he wrote this letter. It appears Ephesians has clearly a close connection with Colossians.

5. WHY?

Every local church struggles to bring together people of different cultures and experiences. This was no less true in the church of Ephesus. Paul shows how God in Christ unites all people who believe into one new body / man.

Fallen humanity build walls of separation; God builds a path of invitation. God is always tearing down the walls we are building up.

HISTORICAL CONTEXT

Paul wrote the Letter to the Ephesian church during Acts 22-28 while in Prison. He was in Ephesus in Acts 19, 20. It is important to note how the city of Ephesus was the location of the Temple to Diana [Artemis]. **The followers of Diana made idols with their hands. God, in contrast, makes His people into His Temple with His hands.** Every local church struggles in bringing together people of different cultures and experiences. This was no less true in the church of Ephesus. Paul shows how God in Christ unites all people who believe into one new body / man / family.

THEOLOGICAL CONTEXT

God is able to take two very diverse people groups [Jews and Gentiles] and make them into a household of faith (See Ephesians 2:19-22). Every local church is part of a grand and glorious inheritance that began in the Garden in Eden and reaches all the way to GOD DWELLING WITH US in Revelation 21 and 22.

STRUCTURE of the Letter to the Ephesian Church

1. Chapter 1 – The Salvation of Humanity
2. Chapter 2 – The Unity of the Family
3. Chapter 3 – The Glory of the Mystery

The consequence of God’s uniting work plays out in Chapters 4-6.

- Chapter 4 – **Therefore**, . . . [vv. 1, 8, 25] - UNITY
- Chapter 5 – **Therefore**, . . . [vv. 1, 7, 15] - LOVE
- Chapter 6 – **Therefore**, . . . [vv. 13, 14] - POSITION

Chapters 1-3

The local church is the **FULFILLMENT** of God’s Vision in Creating. The local church is the **Historic Garden** and the **Eschatological Temple**.

Chapters 4-6

This is what life in the Garden/Church looks like in the **“ALREADY / NOT YET.”**

CHAPTER 1A	
Chosen by the Father (v. 4)	To the Praise of His glorious grace (v. 6)
Redeemed by the Son (v. 7)	To the praise of His glory (v. 12)
Sealed by the Spirit (v. 13)	To the praise of His glory (v. 14)

Notice how the entire Trinity secures humanity’s salvation. Notice how each “stanza” ends with “To the praise of his glorious grace (vv. 6, 12, 14). Each of those statements emphasize God’s vision for the entire earth to be covered in the knowledge of His glory as the waters cover the sea (Isa. 11:9).

Notice the Emphasis on the word “Riches” in Ephesians (1:7, 18; 2:4, 7; 3:8, 16). Humanity’s depravity is no match for God’s generosity.

Notice also how the chapter ends (1:15-21) with Paul praying the church understands this glorious truth. Do you know just how much you have in Christ? Notice also how God takes two groups and makes them into one.

JESUS IN THE TEXT

In the local church, God is bringing heaven and earth together as He continues to push His Vision forward to fulfillment in Christ. As local churches multiply, God’s vision for His glory to cover the earth as the waters cover the sea is coming to fulfillment. The Local Church is the body of Christ. It is as the Local Church multiplies all the Nations of the world regardless of culture or color are made one in Christ.

APPLICATION

1. Individually - Where are you in the storyline of God? Do YOU know Jesus?
2. Corporately - We must never forget that as a community of faith we are showcasing God’s grace.

VISUALS | CRAFTS

1. Mr. Potato Head. Different parts, but the same body.
2. Have the kids build a house out of multi-colored Lego blocks. Different colors, not all one color, but same blocks.
3. Coloring sheet with house on sand (Temple of Diana) and house on rock (Temple of the LORD).
4. Building with Legos; building blocks / then tearing it apart. We build walls of separation and God builds paths of invitation.
5. Hanging a sheet on a clothesline separating the class. We separate; God unites.
6. [peanut allergies, -ugh!] Have the kids open up shelled peanuts. The church has within it the “peanut” of God’s presence and glory ☺. [any piece of candy with a different center will work as well ;-)] i.e. Rolos or Reese’s.

MEMORY VERSE

Ephesians 2:

¹⁹So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of **the household of God**, ²⁰built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone, ²¹in whom the whole structure, being joined together, **grows into a holy temple in the Lord**. ²²In him you also are being **built together into a dwelling place for God** by the Spirit.

RESOURCES