

Lesson 1

FORWARD

The lessons in this manual were derived from studies in home Bible classes. They were used for oral discussions where circumstances allowed departures from the material to search out background information on subjects with which some were not familiar. We realize that some who take this course will also need to stop at times and search the Scriptures for better understanding of the words and doctrines of the epistle, to find what was happening before the epistle was written, and to compare and contrast teachings concerning Israel and the Church which is the Body of Christ.

It may help to know that we have written this study from the point of view that:

1. The epistle entitled Ephesians was written by Paul after God set Israel's hope and calling aside and sent His Salvation (Christ) to the Gentiles. (Acts 28:28)
2. It was written initially to saints who had heard and believed the Mystery, that message preached by Paul after Israel's hope was set aside.
3. That we who have heard and believed that message may consider this epistle to and for us also.
4. That the epistle to the Colossians, which was sent out by Paul at the same time as Ephesians, will agree in doctrine with Ephesians. That Colossians may shed additional light on some portions in Ephesians.

INTRODUCTION

“Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for Whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, And be found in Him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith: *That I may know Him*, and the power of His resurrection, and the fellowship of His sufferings, being made conformable to His death.”
Philippians 3:8-10

The Apostle Paul probably knew Christ better than most saints when he penned the words above. Still he said that he wanted *to know Him*. He longed to know Him intimately, in greater depth and closeness. Those today, who also long to know Christ in a closer relationship, will learn of Him only through reading, understanding, and internalizing the Scriptures.

In order to understand the Scriptures rightly we believe that the following things must be kept in view:

A. DISTINGUISH BETWEEN INTERPRETATION AND APPLICATION OF SCRIPTURE

Interpretation of Scripture takes note of who is speaking, to whom he speaks, at what chronological time he speaks, and what is the near and distant context. There is only one interpretation of Scripture and that is what God meant by His words considered in the objective way mentioned above.

Application of Scripture may be made after one has determined the interpretation of the passage. We may then recognize situations that are similar to the one we have read about in Scripture. We may apply the principles that were found in the Scripture portion to the situation that is similar. For example, Isaiah 53:6 reads, "**All we like sheep have gone astray.**" This was spoken by Isaiah, who wrote concerning Judah and Jerusalem (Isa.1: 1) at a time when they had forsaken Jehovah and His plan for them. This is the interpretation. We may realize our similar situation and we may apply these words to ourselves. We may say that we too are like sheep who have gone astray from God's plan for us. This is making an application of Scripture. There can be many applications of a passage.

B. DISTINGUISH BETWEEN DOCTRINAL TRUTH AND DISPENSATIONAL TRUTH

Doctrinal Truth includes all that the Scriptures reveal about the Being and Attributes of God and all that God alone has done and said since Creation. It is truth that is not limited to one period and administration of God.

For example, "**God is love**" is Doctrinal Truth.

"**...in Adam all die**" is Doctrinal Truth.

These statements are truth from Genesis to Revelation and for all people.

Dispensational Truth takes note of God's plan of the ages and notes the changes that He has introduced since Creation. It distinguishes God's different callings and the Scriptures that pertain to each.

For example:

Genesis 1 to 12 concerns Adam and the nations that came out of him. God's purpose for them was that they, "**Be fruitful, and multiply, and replenish (fill) the earth, and subdue it.**" (Gen.1: 28)

Genesis 12 to Acts 28:28 concerns one nation, Israel, and those that would be blessed through her. God chose and called Israel to become a kingdom of priests and bless the nations on earth. (Ex.19: 6; 1Pet.2: 9)

The epistles written after Acts 28:28, concern God's purpose for the Church which is the Body of Christ. God chose and is calling out the Body of Christ to be a witness to principalities and powers in heavenly places. (Eph. 3:10)

Dispensational truth keeps separate those Scriptures that pertain to one purpose from those that pertain to a different purpose. The promises and instructions to each are kept to their particular people.

C. RIGHTLY DIVIDE THE SCRIPTURES, DISTINGUISH THE THINGS THAT DIFFER

For example, although both of the following statements are true, they were spoken at different times, to different People and they concern different callings and purposes. They must be divided and understood in their rightful places.

" **Blessed are the meek for they shall inherit the earth.**" (Matthew 5: 5)

" **Even when we were dead in sins, (God) hath quickened us together with Christ...And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.**"

D. DISTINGUISH THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN "STATE" AND "STANDING"

The *standing* of a saint is that position he has been freely given because he is In Christ. Members of the Body of Christ have been given the righteousness of Christ and a position with Him in heavenly places.

That is their standing.

The *state* of a saint is the condition of his walk-life while living on earth. We may walk worthy or walk unworthy of our standing in Christ.

E. DISTINGUISH THE DIFFERENCE BETWEEN GOD'S GIFTS AND HIS REWARDS

We must distinguish those portions of Scripture whose subject is a free gift of God from those Scriptures whose subject is a reward that one may earn.

For example:

Resurrection "life" and salvation are *gifts* from God to those who have been identified in Christ's death and resurrection.

"It is a faithful saying: 'For if we be dead with Him, we shall also live with Him.' " 2 Timothy 2:11

Rewards from God are payment for faithful service.

"If we suffer (endure), we shall also reign with Him." 2 Timothy 2:12

EPHESIANS LESSON 1

CHAPTER 1 Read 1-14

- 1a. Who was the writer of Ephesians? His name in Greek means "little one."
- b. By what name was he called before? Acts 13:9
- c. What do these two names suggest about Him? 1 Sam.9: 2; 10:20-24

2. "Apostle " is from the Greek "apo" (away) plus "stello" (send). It is one who is sent away, as on a mission. He represents and speaks with the power and authority of his sender. What evidence of apostleship is seen in the apostles of Christ?
 - a. Jn.15: 27
 - b. Lk.6: 13
 - c. Ac.1: 8; Mr.16: 20
 - d. Ac.1: 21-25

3. How do the following references show that Paul was an apostle?
 - a. Ac.26: 16,17
 - b. Ac.22: 14,15
 - c. Gal.1: 11,12
 - d. 2Cor.12: 11,12

- e. Eph.3: 1-3
4. a. Who was the greatest apostle on earth? Heb.3: 1,2
- b. What evidence of an apostle was seen in His life? Jn.17: 3,8; Mt.28: 18
5. Paul was made an apostle after Christ ascended. Were any others appointed then? If so, name some. See Ac.14: 14; Ro.16: 7; Eph.4: 10-12
6. "Saint" is the translation of the Greek word "hagios," meaning holy or set apart to God. One is not a saint because of his own purity but because God set him apart as His own possession. However, because he is God's, he should live a pure life.
The order of the Greek in verse 1 suggests this epistle is addressed to *faithful saints*.
What would be the difference between a saint and a faithful saint?
7. Why can we say that this letter is for us also? 1:13
8. The meaning of the name "Christ" is "Messiah" which means "anointed." It is the name of that glorious One in Whom are all God's plans and through Whom they will be fulfilled.
"Jesus" is the name of God in flesh, in his humility, with his glory laid aside. It is associated with the shame He endured.
Though the KJV reads "Jesus Christ," in verse one, the Greek is "Christ Jesus."
Since the first name is given emphasis, what is being emphasized about Him here?
9. Did Paul know the Lord in his glory or in his humanity? Acts 26:15
10. Why should we take careful note of the names and titles given to Christ?
11. "Peace" was the greeting common among Jews. "Grace" was the greeting common among the Gentiles. Paul's greeting in verse 2 indicates it is addressed to whom?
12. The word "blessed" in verse 3 is from the Greek "eulogeo," eu (well) plus logos (word, speak). It means TO SPEAK WELL OF, EULOGIZE, or PRAISE. "Blessing" in the same verse is a similar word meaning BENEFIT, or GIFT. Write verse 3 using those meanings and discover God's grace to us.

13. Who is spoken well of (praised) in Ro.1: 25 and 9:5?

14a. Describe the blessings promised to Israel in the following verses.

1. Gen.15: 18; Heb.11: 16; Micah 4:1-4; Deut.28:2-8

2. Ex.19: 6

3. 2 Kings 8:19; Jer.33: 17,18

4. Ro.9: 4,5

b. How do they differ from those mentioned in Ephesians 1:3?

15a. In whom are these in Ephesians blessed? V3

b. With whom will those of Israel's hope be blessed? Gen. 12:1-3; Gal. 3:9