

New Series (Letters): Series Slide

- Ephesus: The Church that Shook things Up
- Explain Letters (Brand/Make) and Ephesians (Series/Model)
- Ephesians is one of 13 letters that Paul wrote that are included in the New Testament

Open Illustration: The Bigger Picture

- Story within a story

Like this story, the book of Ephesians is a story within a much larger story.

- The Church in Ephesus needed to be reminded of who they were as believers in Jesus

Big verses/passages that come right out of this little letter:

1:7

2:4-5

2:8-10

3:17-19 (start with "I pray that you,"

3:20-21

4:1-3

4:11-13 (big part of how the Lord called us to build out TWF)

4:29

5:13

6:10-17

6:18

- Paul wrote this letter to remind them of who they are in Christ, and then how they were to walk this new life in Christ out.

Big Idea: The Church Shakes Culture

- When we are truly alive, we act and react in a way that Shakes and Changes our surroundings.
- Some of us are going to be shaken through this series...there's some stuff that might just fall off of some of us.

Ephesians 1:1-2

Story of "Welcome to The Warehouse, Saints!"

Verse 3

- Talk through the blessing of being a Christian, a Follower of Jesus!

Ephesians

So, let's look at some pieces of the puzzle that get us into this book:

Intro:

Paul wrote this letter...

Who was Paul?

- An apostle (which means that he was an eye witness of Jesus ministry)
- we first meet him in Acts ch 7, but his name is Saul at that point and he's more of a villain. He's standing over Stephen (first martyr) giving approval.
 - Now, before you go hating on him, know that he was protecting "God" and the religion of his day. What he'd always been taught, his perspective on what and who God was, and Jesus had jacked that all up.
- Paul is radically saved in Acts ch 9, when Jesus literally confronts him on the road. He's headed to persecute more Christians, and Jesus stops him in his tracks.
 - He spends a significant amount of time (AD 32-45) learning about Jesus and everything changes.
 - God broke some stuff off of Paul and he was never the same again.
- He begins going all around the region teaching about Jesus and ends up becoming the first Christian missionary.
 - First Missionary Journey (c AD 46-48): Traveled with Barnabas to Cyprus and Asia Minor ([show Pic](#))

He visits Ephesus on his 2nd missionary journey (AD 49-52) ([show pic](#))

- Look at where Ephesus is on the map.
 - Italy is a little further past the top left corner of this map.
- He's arrested (the first of maybe 7 times) during this journey because he cast a demon out of a girl and the people that profited off of her (fortune telling) did not like that their money was dried up.

Big Idea: The Church Shakes Things Up

It's the 3rd journey that he spent the most time in Ephesus (AD 53-57) ([Show pic](#))

Acts 19:8-12

- After this journey, he is arrested, again. This time he spent a couple years in jail and this is where he wrote Ephesians (and possibly Colossians)
- Acts 19/20 is where we see the church start
 - 12 disciples Baptised in Jesus name

So, what is this city called Ephesus?

- What was Ephesus?
 - A port city
 - A lot like Crete (Titus)
 - Multi-religious melting pot
 - The temple of Artemis was there
 - (Sound familiar?)
 - Why does that name sound so familiar?
 - Here's why that is important today.
 - Artemis was the patron deity of Ephesus
 - She was the Greek goddess of the hunt, wilderness, and the moon.
 - She was considered the twin of Apollo, born to Zeus and Leto.
 - She was the older one and the story goes that she was born first so that she could help her mother deliver her brother.

Why is all of this important?

- Because we look at places in the bible and we sometimes dismiss them as ancient and maybe even not real.
 - But they were real places, with real people, and people are going to people today a lot like they did then.
- Acts 19 talks about a Riot that breaks out
 - Any ideas why that happened?
 - Because the Church in Ephesus was KNOWN for standing for what they believed in.
 - So much so that the culture began to shift away from a lot of the idols that they worshiped.
 - So, when the craftsmen and that made idols to Artemis and the traders that sold them started losing money, enough was enough.

We are a multi-religious culture.

Nashville is the Athens of the South

- We have a replica temple in our city called the Parthenon and inside that structure is a 42 foot statue of the goddess Athena.
- We may be in the buckle of the bible belt, but there are a TON of similarities between this city that we are going to learn about and the region that we call home.

We NEED verses like Ephesians 1:1-2 to remind us of who we are.

We NEED verse 3 to hit our hearts, so that we can take steps to shake the culture we are in!

Re-read Ephesians 1:1-3

Church, this is who you are. This is what has been done for you.

Illustration: Grace from lunch with Steve

Close in prayer.