

Grace and Peace

Ephesians 1.1–2

Don Ruhl • Savage Street, Grants Pass, Oregon • January 19, In the year of our Lord Christ, 2020

Prelude:

I. Ephesus

A. In what modern nation is Ephesus located?

1. It is in what would be Turkey today.
2. As we read the Book of Ephesians,
 - a) picture it as written to a church in Turkey.
 - b) Somehow the Book does not match what I think of as Turkey.

B. For one thing, today

1. Turkey is 82% Muslim, and
2. only 2% Christian.
 - a) What happened?
 - b) Truly, what happened in all of the Middle-East because
 - (1) at one time Christianity dominated it?
 - (2) Why does Islam dominate it now?

II. Turkey's connections to early Christianity are great.

A. Not only did Paul write to the church at Ephesus, but

1. he also wrote to Colossae and
2. to the churches of Galatia, and
 - a) Paul was born in Turkey.
 - b) So was Timothy.

B. John was exiled on Patmos,

1. which is just off the coast from Ephesus.
2. John received the Revelation just off the coast of Turkey, close to Ephesus!

C. When the Lord repopulated the world again,

1. He did it from Turkey.
2. Remember that Noah's ark landed in the mountains of Ararat.

III. Paul was not the first preacher at Ephesus, but

- A. Apollos or Aquila and Priscilla were already there.
- B. Acts 18 shows all three at Ephesus before Paul arrived:

24 Now a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man and mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. 25 This man had been instructed in the way of the Lord; and being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things of the Lord, though he knew only the baptism of John. 26 So he began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Aquila and Priscilla heard him, they took him aside and explained to him the way of God more accurately. 27 And when he desired to cross to Achaia, the brethren wrote, exhorting the disciples to receive him; and when he arrived, he greatly helped those who had believed through grace; 28 for he vigorously refuted the Jews publicly, showing from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Christ.

– Acts 18.24–28

IV. When Paul arrived he only found 12 disciples and

- A. Apollos had already left.
- B. Acts 19 shows what happened during Paul's ministry there.
 1. He was there initially for three months, but
 2. extended his stay and was there for three years (Acts 20.31).
- C. Acts 20.16–37 shows his interaction with the elders.
 1. Also, Paul wrote First Timothy while Timothy was in Ephesus.
 2. Jesus had John write a letter to the church at Ephesus in Revelation 2.1–7.
- D. Paul did not write the Ephesian letter to correct a problem, but
 1. simply to show the beauty of the church,
 2. something that the many Christians today,
 - a) who see no need for the church,

- b) need to see about the church.
- E. Part of God’s promise to Abraham, included the church because
- 1. the promise was
 - a) that God would bless all the families of the earth (Gen 12.3),
 - b) that God would bless all the nations of the earth (Gen 22.18).
 - 2. Ephesians 2.11–3.7 show the church including all people in the blessings.

Persuasion:

I. The Opening

1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

– Ephesians 1.1–2

II. Paul

A. He was an apostle of Jesus Christ,

B. meaning that what he wrote

- 1. had the full authority of Jesus Christ because
- 2. Paul had been made an apostle by the will of God.
 - a) How you do know that he was an apostle?
 - b) Left to himself, Paul tried to smash the church out of existence,
 - (1) not make it bigger and better.
 - (2) He became the promotor that he did because of the will of God.

III. The Saints

A. What are saints?

B. They are the faithful in Christ Jesus.

- 1. The message of the Book of Ephesians is for Christians.
- 2. The people of the world would not understand or appreciate its message.

- a) Saint means sanctified.
- b) What does it mean to be faithful in Christ Jesus?
 - (1) Do we measure that by attendance.
 - (2) If you are a growing Christian,
 - (a) you will be present when the church assembles, but
 - (b) there is more.
 - i) Faithfulness generally means loyalty.
 - ii) Saints are the people who are loyal to Jesus Christ.

IV. Grace and Peace

A. This is typical of what Paul wanted upon those to whom he wrote.

B. We need grace that we might have peace.

- 1. However, they were saints in Christ Jesus because
- 2. they had already received grace and peace from the Father and Christ.
 - a) Why then did Paul write: “Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ”?
 - b) Is God’s grace only about our initial salvation?
 - (1) Do we not need grace every moment?
 - (2) Therefore, his greeting wished upon the readers
 - (a) the highest blessing.
 - (b) We might say, “Have a nice day,” but
 - i) what Paul said to these brethren far surpassed that.
 - ii) Let us be aware of our need for grace and peace daily.

Exhortation:

- I. Live what you are.
 - A. You are a saint.
 - B. Live as one.

- II. Be faithful in Christ Jesus for the blessings of the Book of Ephesians are yours.
- III. Be a child of grace and of peace.
 - A. May people see God's grace and peace in you
 - B. by being a graceful and peaceful person.