

“Let the Church be the Church”
A Series of Studies in Ephesians
[edited and posted by Bob Young, adapted from materials from Truitt Adair]

Lesson #1: Calling

Introduction

Let the church be the church. Why? Because God’s glory is in the church!

An effective outline of Ephesians is in *Studies in Ephesians* by R. C. Bell.

The Calling of the Church, 1-3: God’s Gracious Work

The Conduct of the Church, 4-5: Man’s Grateful Work

The Conflict of the Church, 6: Satan’s Malicious Work

Outline and Overview

God’s Purpose in the Church, 1

God’s purpose in redemption, 3-14

God’s purpose in relationship, 14-23

God’s purpose: to help us find our place and our purpose in the purpose of God

God’s Promise to the Church, 2

Assurance of connecting with God: God has promised grace, 1-10 (saved from, by, for)

Community for connecting with one another: God has promised reconciliation, 11-22

God’s promise: assurance that God’s purpose can be fulfilled in our lives

God’s Power in the church, 3

Know God’s Power: God’s power in knowing the Gospel, 1-13

Know God’s Love: God’s power in knowing the Godhead, 14-19

Know God’s Abundance: God’s power in recognizing his Glory in us in the Church for all generations, 20-21

God’s power: enables us to participate in God’s purpose as he works in us

Conclusion

We have been called for a divine purpose. Through God’s purpose, power, and promises we can find our place in his eternal plan.

God’s purpose must become our priority.

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Lesson #2: Conduct

Introduction

Ephesians 4:1 bases the plea for Christian conduct (4:1-6:9) on the high calling of the church in chapters 1-3. Therefore means because of what you know about the church.

Therefore....

- Walk worthy
- As gifted persons
- As part of the body
- Not as the Gentiles
- Imitating God
- Living submissive lives

The instructions of chapters 4-5 reflect who we are, to whom we belong, and what we believe. Our high calling requires Christian conduct.

“Church that will not influence its world will be influenced by its world.”

Outline and Overview

The unity of the church, 4:1-16

- Attitudes of unity, 1-3
- Agreements which unify, 4-6
- Gifts for unity, 7-13 [unity depends especially on how leaders use their gifts in the body]
- Growth from unity, 14-16

The character of the church, 4:17-5:20

- Rejection of former ways leads to renewal, 4:17-24
- Result of renewal, 4:25-32
- A new way of life, 5:1-20

The submission of the church, 5:21-6:9

- The principle stated, 21
- The principle applied
 - Marriage, 5:22-33
 - Parenting, 6:1-4
 - Employment, 6:5-9

Conclusion

Aristides (125 A.D.) wrote to Hadrian, Roman Emperor:

“The Christians know and trust God...They love one another...if anyone among them is needy, and they do not have enough food to spare, they fast two or three days that they may supply him with necessary food...Because of them there flows forth all the beauty there is in this world...Truly this is a new people and there is something divine in them.”

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Lesson #3: Conflict

Introduction

God has called his people to relationship with him through redemption in Christ. These people, redeemed by his blood, are called to live according to God's purpose. A unified people, armed with a focused purpose for existence, pose a great threat to Satan. The attempts of Satan to thwart God's purpose in his people set the stage for a very real spiritual conflict. Ephesians 6:10-19 tells us of three things necessary for us to have any hope of winning the struggle against such a formidable spiritual force.

Outline and Overview

We must be aware of the conflict and our enemy, 10-12

Our enemy is Satan, not the people who are his victims (2 Cor. 4:4).

Our enemy is powerful and determined (1 Pet. 5:8; Rev. 12:1-12)

Our enemy wages a battle that is spiritual but real (2 Cor. 10:3-6)

We must have a strong and effective defense, 11-17

Eph. 6:11 speaks of the full armor of God

Our defense requires truth, righteousness, gospel of peace, faith, salvation

All of these come from God (strong in the Lord--10; armor of God--11-13)

We must employ an aggressive offense, 17-19

Christ built his church to batter down the gates of Hades and defeat the enemy (Mt 16:18)

The victorious church is God's showcase for his plan to defeat Satan (Eph 3:10-11)

We have two powerful weapons to defeat Satan (2 Cor. 6:7)

Word of God, 6:17

Prayer, 6:18-19

Conclusion

If the church were viewed as an ocean-going vessel, would you view her as a luxury cruise liner or a well-armed battleship? Is the church like the love boat or a battleship?