

EPHESIANS

An Epistle for The One Holy Church

Getting Ready for Paul's Letter to the Ephesians

Today: Using the Book of Acts to orient ourselves

Next Week: What you need to know about *the* Ephesians before reading Paul's letter

Using the Book of Acts to Orient Ourselves

What does the Greek word "epistle" mean?

Are they intended for us or are we reading someone else's mail?

The questions of where, when, and why this Epistle is written can be answer from which book?

What does Acts Teach Us about Paul's Relationship to the Church in Ephesus

Acts 18:19-23 – Paul briefly stops there near the end of his 2nd Missionary Journey

Who does he leave behind in Ephesus?

Acts 18:24-28 – Apollos "converted" by Priscilla and Aquila and becomes a teacher in the church

Acts 19:1-7 – Paul's arrival in Ephesus, the "Pentecost" of John the Baptist's disciples

What didn't these disciples have?

Is John's baptism Christian baptism?

Acts 19:8-10 – Paul stays in Ephesus longer than anywhere else

How long was it?

Acts 19:11-20 – the Sons of Sceva

Acts 19:21-22- Paul prepares to leave by sending Timothy and Erastus ahead

Acts 19:23-41- The Silversmith Riot breaks out

Can you keep track of all the players and actions? You may want to review this later

Acts 20:1 – Paul leaves Ephesus after the uproar, heads to Macedonia with two Asians

Who were the two local boys who went with him? (Very Important for later)

Acts 20:13-16 – The return journey to Jerusalem has Paul passing by Ephesus

Why might Paul land at Miletus and avoid Ephesus?

Acts 20:17-38- Paul summons the Ephesian Presbyters/Elders (pastors) and gives them instructions that he could not give in his hasty departure back in 20:1

What are some highlights of this parting message to the Ephesian Pastors?

Is that the End of Acts and the Ephesians? NO WAY

Acts 21:1-26 – Paul returns to Jerusalem, visits James the Bishop and Elders, reports on the journey

Acts 21:27-36 – This is KEY to understanding the letter of Ephesians

- v.27 – Jews from Asia – these are the Ephesian Jews who tormented him all over

What three important Jewish things did they accuse Paul of teaching against?

Who had they seen with Paul? Where do they assume they went?

Paul is arrested, sent to Caesarea where he is imprisoned for several years before his transfer to Rome that ends the Book of Acts.

- Many scholars have thought that Ephesians is written from this Roman imprisonment

- Bo Reicke and recently Thomas Winger have argued convincingly that it is actually the time he is in Caesarea, shortly after the arrest

These investigators reveal:

Paul sends **Tychicus** (probably with Onesimus the runaway slave) carrying three letters for that region: *Ephesians & Colossians/Philemon* (Eph. 6:17, Col 4:7). This is confirmed in 2 Timothy where Paul says “*I have sent Tychicus to Ephesus*” (4:12). He would’ve carried it through the Maeander Valley to the City of Ephesus. One additional note is that Timothy is listed as a co-author of *Colossians*, but not *Ephesians*, suggesting Paul wrote *Ephesians* after sending Timothy to work in Troas (2 Tim. 4:13). This would account for a lot of the “overlap” in these two letters. Furthermore, Tychicus is no longer listed as a travel companion of Paul when he is transferred to Rome (Luke is with him, as is Aristarchus (a main figure for Philemon/Colossians)).