

NOTES

I. UNIT 14 - FOUR LETTERS FROM PAUL'S NEW "OFFICE" IN ROME — part 2

A. EPHESIANS: The "Queen of Epistles" Meets the "Queen of Heaven"

1. *"The saints who are in Ephesus..."* weren't *always* "saints"!
 - a. The "saints who are in Ephesus" are the result of Paul's ____-year ministry there during his second missionary journey (AD 52-55; Acts 19).
 - b. Ephesus served as a "radiating _____" from which the Story emanated to the surrounding cities of Hierapolis, Laodocia, Smyrna, Sardis, etc. (Acts 19:8-10).
 - c. His ministry here was significant enough to provoke a riot because of a drop in idol _____ in the city (cf. Acts 19:21-20:1).
 - d. The Ephesian believers appear to be people of passionate, yet practical _____ (e.g. public book burning; 19:19).
 - e. Paul is evacuated out of the city, travels through Macedonia and Greece, sails to Jerusalem and is imprisoned for ____ years in Caesarea and Rome (from which he writes this letter).
 - f. There are roughly ____ years between Paul's last encounter with them and this letter.
2. The City of Ephesus and What Put Her "On the Map"
 - a. In 550 BC the Temple of Artemis was completed, after _____ years of construction.
 - (1) It was the _____ building in the Greek world at the time.
 - (2) It was the first building of its size completely made of _____.
 - (3) Herodotus listed this temple as one of the Seven Wonders of the World (5th century BC).
 - (4) The temple area served as a _____ "savings and loan" for the city.
 - b. This explains the enormous backlash against Paul when the Story began to affect the _____ trade:

"And there is danger not only that this trade of ours may come into disrepute but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis may be counted as nothing, and that she may even be deposed from her magnificence, she whom all Asia and the world worship." Acts 19:27
 - c. Ephesus was the third largest city in the known world, with a population close to _____ people (Rome and Alexandria were larger).
 - d. Asia Minor was the _____ region in the Roman empire, and Ephesus was its leading city.
 - e. The theater where Paul could have lost his life seated over _____ people (Acts 19:28-34).
 - f. _____ is the "pastor" of this city by the time Paul first writes him in AD 64 (1 Tim 1:3), and perhaps even until Paul is executed in AD 67 (cf. 2 Tim 1:18;4:12).
 - g. _____ years later, when the Apostle John writes his letter to the "seven churches of Asia Minor," the Ephesian church isn't doing well:

"To the angel of the church in Ephesus write: The words of him who holds the seven stars in his right hand, who walks among the seven golden lampstands. 'I know your works, your toil and your patient endurance, and how

you cannot bear with those who are evil, but have tested those who call themselves apostles and are not, and found them to be false. I know you are enduring patiently and bearing up for my name's sake, and you have not grown weary. But I have this against you, that you have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent, and do the works you did at first. If not, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you repent. Yet this you have: you hate the works of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate.” Revelation 2:1-6

3. Postal Confusion: Who Were “the saints who are at Ephesus”?
 - a. There is overwhelming evidence that the residents of Ephesus were _____ the recipients of this letter:
 - (1) Paul gives no personal _____ like his other letters (cf. Phil 1:3-5).
 - (2) Paul only mentions one _____ besides himself, compared to his other letters (41 in Romans, 19 in 2 Timothy, and 11 in Colossians).
 - (3) He doesn’t _____ a single location-specific issue like all his other letters (cf. 1 Cor 7:1; Phil 4:2-3).
 - (4) He says he has “heard of their faith in Christ Jesus” (Eph 1:15).
 - b. Ephesus was his longest missionary “_____” on record, and people he had a very strong emotional attachment to:

“Now from Miletus he sent to Ephesus and called the elders of the church to come to him....And when he had said these things, he knelt down and prayed with them all. And there was much weeping on the part of all; they embraced Paul and kissed him, being sorrowful most of all because of the word he had spoken, that they would not see his face again. And they accompanied him to the ship.” Acts 20:17, 36-38
 - c. It is likely that this was either a “_____” letter for all the regional Gentile congregations surrounding the city.
4. “Ephesian 101” — Learning the Vocabulary of This Letter
 - a. This is Paul’s most exquisite and _____ discussion of The Story.
 - (1) The pronouns and verbs in this letter are all _____. This is *not* a letter to or about individuals, it is a letter to and about a group (especially the opening chapter).
 - (2) 21 times in the first four chapters, Paul speaks of a group that is “_____,” where all the aspects of the Story are (e.g. spiritual blessings, our election, adoption, forgiveness, inheritance, heavenly position, reconciliation).
 - (3) He moves from the cosmic and eternal to the local and personal aspects of the _____ (1:3-14).
 - (4) He uses his word “_____” 6x in this letter, opening and closing with it (1:9; 3:3,4,9; 5:32; 6:19).
 - (5) He speaks of Yahweh’s “_____” more than any other letter (1:2; 2:14,15,17; 4:3; 6:15,23).
 - (6) He speaks of the “_____” (Gk, *ekklesia*) as a spiritual reality more than any other letter (9x; 1:22; 3:10,21; 5:23-25,27,29,32).
 - (a) He says Christ’s relationship to it is a “_____” (5:25).
 - b. Paul’s exposes the Story as _____, not “Christian” or “Kosher”:

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- (1) **1:3-10; 3:1-9** – It Yahweh’s “eternal _____,” hidden for ages, full of lavish grace and spiritual riches
- (2) **1:9-10** – all things in heaven and on earth will be _____ back together, “summed up” (Gk, *anakephalaionai*) in Christ (shalom returns).
- (3) **1:15-23** – “_____” the fullness of the Story is impossible without revelation from God (just like Paul received!).
- (4) **2:11-15** – those “in Christ” are part of a new (Gk, *kainos*) _____.
- (5) **2:14-15** – the shalom of God is _____.
- (6) **2:19-22** – God is “_____” a place where He can dwell again; the “church” is His holy temple.

c. An Ephesian “Walkabout”: Living in the Grip of the Good News

- (1) Eight times in this letter, Paul refers to how the Ephesians “_____” (Gk, *peripateō*; 2:2,10; 4:1,17; 5:2,8,15).
- (2) He makes it very clear that they cannot be Story _____ but *not* “Story Dwellers.”
 - (a) Story Dwellers walk “_____” of the Story, working for shalom.
 - (b) Story Dwellers lives are characterized by sacrificial love and blessed _____.
 - (c) Story Dwellers’ “_____” is Christ.

B. The World *Before* the Letter: Being a Story Dweller in Our Age

- 1. I need to hold both “_____” of the Story before me at all times:
 - a. It is significant that Paul begins every one of his 13 letters the same, “_____ and peace (*shalom*)”
 - b. Paul’s admonished his listeners to *never* stop looking _____ in their place in the Story:

“...**remember** [present imperative] *that at one time you Gentiles in the flesh...were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world...*” **Ephesians 2:11-12**

“*Remember and do not forget how you provoked the LORD your God to wrath in the wilderness. From the day you came out of the land of Egypt until you came to this place, you have been rebellious against the LORD.*” **Deuteronomy 9:7**
- 2. I need to see my behavior in marriage, family and work in the context of the _____, not vice versa.
 - a. Paul’s practical admonitions in 5:22-6:9 have no meaning apart from _____:
 - b. The ministry of the Spirit is always in the direction of _____(4:3).
- 3. I need to ask myself, “What is *my* _____?”

“I therefore, a prisoner for the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you have been called, with all humility and gentleness, with patience, bearing with one another in love, eager to maintain the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. There is one body and one Spirit—just as you

were called to the one hope that belongs to your call—one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.” Ephesians 4:1-6

4. I need to remind myself that Satan’s ultimate _____ is the Story, not me.
5. I need to continually remind myself that I can not be a Story _____ if I am not a Story dweller:
 - a. Paul’s admonitions about “talk” (4:29-30; 5:4,19-20) are meaningless apart from those about “walk” (4:1,17;5:1, 8, 15).
6. I need to remind myself that the Story is still _____, even though it’s no longer a “mystery.”
 - a. Paul’s passion in his opening words is to root the Story in the mind of God, *not* to give an explanation about who’s “_____” and who’s “_____.”
 - b. Paul’s attitude as a _____ of the mystery was *always* one of brokenness and humility:

“To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,” Ephesians 3:8

“The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.” 1 Timothy 1:15

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