***Notes & Summary of “Ephesians: Paul and the Ephesians”***

***1) The Apostle Paul’s first visit to Ephesus***

**Acts 18:19-20**

**Priscilla, Aquila and Apollos**

19They arrived at Ephesus, where Paul left Priscilla and Aquila. He himself went into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. 20When they asked him to spend more time with them, he declined.

* *Ephesus was the center of pagan worship to a goddess Diana or Artemis. Diana was considered to be the protector goddess of the entire city. It seems the whole world were there to worship. This is one of the wonders of the ancient world that is now completely gone. This was a major city with a quarter of a million people in it. It was also a major seaport and it was a capital and a big political center. One estimation of how big is a city is how large is the amphitheater. Ephesus was one of the largest cities in the entire Roman Empire. It was a center for trade. It is also an important Christian Center.*
* *Why did Paul decline the offer to spend more time at the synagogue? He had future plans to get back to Jerusalem to attend a feast. He was stopping but had a destination in mind.*

**Acts 18:21**

21But as he left, he promised, “I will come back if it is God’s will.” Then he set sail from Ephesus.

* *Paul promises to return. He recognized the importance of Ephesus.*

***2) Initial reception on Paul’s second visit to Ephesus***

# Acts 18:24-28

24Meanwhile a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was a learned man, with a thorough knowledge of the Scriptures. 25He had been instructed in the way of the Lord, and he spoke with great fervor and taught about Jesus accurately, though he knew only the baptism of John. 26He began to speak boldly in the synagogue. When Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they invited him to their home and explained to him the way of God more adequately.

27When Apollos wanted to go to Achaia, the brothers and sisters encouraged him and wrote to the disciples there to welcome him. When he arrived, he was a great help to those who by grace had believed. 28For he vigorously refuted his Jewish opponents in public debate, proving from the Scriptures that Jesus was the Messiah.

# *God is using Apollos, Priscilla, and Aquila. Priscilla and Aquila had a ministry and it was not to bash or make Apollos feel bad because he didn’t have everything correct, they encouraged and corrected him of some of his misunderstandings and they did it in a loving way that encouraged him to keep preaching.*

# *Apollos knew only the baptism of John, so his understanding of Jesus and his ministry was limited. Priscilla and Aquila could take this young Christian and mentor and train him into the truths of the scripture.*

# *Paul planted the seeds of the Gospel. Apollos watered. But God gave the increase. This influence that Priscilla and Aquila had on Apollo gave him the ability to go on and nurture other Christians. The greatest compliment for a teacher is to see your student go beyond you.*

# *Apollos became an important leader in the church. He is a person who didn’t know yet about the baptism of Jesus was being called by God. He was being called by the Holy Spirit, impressed to move forward in sharing truth. Sometimes we may limit ourselves in doing the work of God or sharing just because we think we have limitations, including limitations in having a full understanding of Scripture. This is the proof that God is calling all, all those who are sincere, all those who have the desire to serve fully. He will bring others to help and instruct, but He can use any person who is sincere and desires sharing truth.*

**Acts 19:1-8**

### Paul in Ephesus

19 While Apollos was at Corinth, Paul took the road through the interior and arrived at Ephesus. There he found some disciples 2and asked them, “Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?”

They answered, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.”

3So Paul asked, “Then what baptism did you receive?”

“John’s baptism,” they replied.

4Paul said, “John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the one coming after him, that is, in Jesus.” 5On hearing this, they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus. 6When Paul placed his hands on them, the Holy Spirit came on them, and they spoke in tongues and prophesied. 7There were about twelve men in all.

8Paul entered the synagogue and spoke boldly there for three months, arguing persuasively about the kingdom of God.

* *Paul’s initial welcome was a bit confusing because he is coming back and there are some believers that are part of “the Way,” but they don’t have the full knowledge. It sounds like more work needs to be done. God can use people who don’t know everything because He is using these 12. They are clearly receptive because when he corrected them and told them that one baptism that they were involved in was only repentance, they needed the Holy Spirit, they were willing to accept that and then allow the Holy Spirit to lead them into further truth.*

**Acts 19:9-10**

# 9But some of them became obstinate; they refused to believe and publicly maligned the Way. So Paul left them. He took the disciples with him and had discussions daily in the lecture hall of Tyrannus. 10This went on for two years, so that all the Jews and Greeks who lived in the province of Asia heard the word of the Lord.

# *Why did they call this group “the Way”? Jesus called Himself the Way, the Truth, and the Light. They could have called themselves “The Jesus followers”. The Christian life is not a static experience, it is a journey.*

# *“The Way” paints Jesus as the Mediator, the link between heaven and Earth, the ladder, the connection with one hand on the throne and one hand here. When we follow Jesus we are on the Way.*

# *School of Tyrannus: It was next door to the synagogue.*

# *What makes it so strategically important in terms of Paul’s ministry in Ephesus? As with any educational institution, you study until you graduate and then you go somewhere. The schools during this age were a big center of influence and Paul chooses this place to share the word of God, wisely so because from this place he had influential and knowledgeable people to start sharing and spreading the message they had learned.*

# *What lesson can we learn from Paul? He goes to the synagogue, a few people are receptive but then people start speaking evil about him. Paul instead of confrontation or continuing there and making a mess, he simply chose to move the Believers to a different place, educate them in the gospel so that they could go out. There is a time to just step back and move away and not get into some argument or disgruntled discussion about what has happened. This move by Paul was a spirit-led one. We sometimes underestimate the influence and power of an educational institution. When Paul was instructed to go to the school of Tyrannus, it was a way that he could disseminate the gospel to the minds that are open to different types of religions but of course with the Spirit of the Lord working on Paul and the people they could be convinced that Jesus is the way not only in Ephesus but the world. Typically, people who go to a school are open to learn and they will graduate and they will go somewhere.*

# Acts 19:11-20

11God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, 12so that even handkerchiefs and aprons that had touched him were taken to the sick, and their illnesses were cured and the evil spirits left them.

13Some Jews who went around driving out evil spirits tried to invoke the name of the Lord Jesus over those who were demon-possessed. They would say, “In the name of the Jesus whom Paul preaches, I command you to come out.” 14Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest, were doing this. 15One day the evil spirit answered them, “Jesus I know, and Paul I know about, but who are you?” 16Then the man who had the evil spirit jumped on them and overpowered them all. He gave them such a beating that they ran out of the house naked and bleeding.

17When this became known to the Jews and Greeks living in Ephesus, they were all seized with fear, and the name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor. 18Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed what they had done. 19A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. 20In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power.

# *There are manifestations during this Teaching Ministry. What lessons impress us: The first is that God used this Apostle to accomplish so many things even to the extent that a handkerchief from Him could be used and through faith heal the sick. For Paul, this is a transformation from a former persecutor of Christians. Why does God do this? It is extraordinary that a little piece of cloth or shadow could bring healing. It was a spirit-led move and God knows what is needed in different parts of the world or different regions and so God allows these particular miracles to be worked in this particular City because He knew the impact it would have. It got the attention of a lot of people and through that God was able to work on their hearts. Paul was able to do these things because he has a connection with the Lord Jesus and the Holy Spirit is working in him. It is just like God to work this way. He is always relating to the people that are there and this was the epicenter of pagan worship magic and sorcery and these kind of things, so God works in that way to reach them. To the fisherman, it was fishing. To the farmer, it was grain. To the woman at the well, it is water. Here, they have been use to this sorcery and magic and now god is working through the Spirit and a handkerchief touches them to heal them. The magic of the seven sons of Sceva did not work. He is demonstrating the power is through a personal relationship with Christ. This leads to a reformation where they bring their books and burn them and they get converted. So there is a change in the lives of the people personally and their own spiritual walk.*

# Mark 16:17-18

17And these signs will accompany those who believe: In my name they will drive out demons; they will speak in new tongues; 18they will pick up snakes with their hands; and when they drink deadly poison, it will not hurt them at all; they will place their hands on sick people, and they will get well.”

# Mark 16:20

20Then the disciples went out and preached everywhere, and the Lord worked with them and confirmed his word by the signs that accompanied it.

# *This is confirmation that the truth they are proclaiming or that Paul is proclaiming about Jesus is true and also Apollos Aquila, and Pricilla.*

***3) Organized Opposition***

* *If Ephesus was a center of occult activity because these are false gods, magic, the enemy is not going to sit passively by. There will come a satanic challenge to the ministry of the Apostle.*

# Acts 19:23-34

**The Riot in Ephesus**

23About that time there arose a great disturbance about the Way. 24A silversmith named Demetrius, who made silver shrines of Artemis, brought in a lot of business for the craftsmen there. 25He called them together, along with the workers in related trades, and said: “You know, my friends, that we receive a good income from this business. 26And you see and hear how this fellow Paul has convinced and led astray large numbers of people here in Ephesus and in practically the whole province of Asia. He says that gods made by human hands are no gods at all. 27There is danger not only that our trade will lose its good name, but also that the temple of the great goddess Artemis will be discredited; and the goddess herself, who is worshiped throughout the province of Asia and the world, will be robbed of her divine majesty.”

28When they heard this, they were furious and began shouting: “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!” 29Soon the whole city was in an uproar. The people seized Gaius and Aristarchus, Paul’s traveling companions from Macedonia, and all of them rushed into the theater together. 30Paul wanted to appear before the crowd, but the disciples would not let him. 31Even some of the officials of the province, friends of Paul, sent him a message begging him not to venture into the theater.

32The assembly was in confusion: Some were shouting one thing, some another. Most of the people did not even know why they were there. 33The Jews in the crowd pushed Alexander to the front, and they shouted instructions to him. He motioned for silence in order to make a defense before the people. 34But when they realized he was a Jew, they all shouted in unison for about two hours: “Great is Artemis of the Ephesians!”

# *It reminds one of how Jesus, when He was on trial and persecuted, as the crowd started yelled “crucify Him.” This is one of Satan’s means of trying to prevent the work of God from occurring. But, God uses the very same means to spread His Word. There was mass hysteria and some did not even know what the riot was about. It happens today where people are acting violently and they don’t even know really why.*

# *But God will step in. What is so amazing about God is that without intervention it looks like this is the end*

**Acts 19:35-41**

35The city clerk quieted the crowd and said: “Fellow Ephesians, doesn’t all the world know that the city of Ephesus is the guardian of the temple of the great Artemis and of her image, which fell from heaven? 36Therefore, since these facts are undeniable, you ought to calm down and not do anything rash. 37You have brought these men here, though they have neither robbed temples nor blasphemed our goddess. 38If, then, Demetrius and his fellow craftsmen have a grievance against anybody, the courts are open and there are proconsuls. They can press charges. 39If there is anything further you want to bring up, it must be settled in a legal assembly. 40As it is, we are in danger of being charged with rioting because of what happened today. In that case we would not be able to account for this commotion, since there is no reason for it.” 41After he had said this, he dismissed the assembly.

* *Is this just fortunate or is the Holy Spirit guiding this city clerk. God can use “evil” and turn it in a way that just magnifies His name. God uses this no-name city clerk to speak some sense in the crowd around one topic and the topic is about the Way, so even though they came for the wrong reasons with some of them having no idea why they were there, after they left they knew why they were there. Jesus again manifested His power through the city clerk.*
* *The English interpretation of the word clerk sells short of who this man was. He was the city translator, he was a scribe, he was the mediator of the city, the go between the government and the people. God may have people in government all over, high-ranking officials holding the powers of Satan in check through these people.*

***4) Final visit with the Ephesian elders (AD 57)***

# Acts 20:17-36

17From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. 18When they arrived, he said to them: “You know how I lived the whole time I was with you, from the first day I came into the province of Asia. 19I served the Lord with great humility and with tears and in the midst of severe testing by the plots of my Jewish opponents. 20You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. 21I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.

22“And now, compelled by the Spirit, I am going to Jerusalem, not knowing what will happen to me there. 23I only know that in every city the Holy Spirit warns me that prison and hardships are facing me. 24However, I consider my life worth nothing to me; my only aim is to finish the race and complete the task the Lord Jesus has given me—the task of testifying to the good news of God’s grace.

25“Now I know that none of you among whom I have gone about preaching the kingdom will ever see me again. 26Therefore, I declare to you today that I am innocent of the blood of any of you. 27For I have not hesitated to proclaim to you the whole will of God. 28Keep watch over yourselves and all the flock of which the Holy Spirit has made you overseers. Be shepherds of the church of God, which he bought with his own blood. 29I know that after I leave, savage wolves will come in among you and will not spare the flock. 30Even from your own number men will arise and distort the truth in order to draw away disciples after them. 31So be on your guard! Remember that for three years I never stopped warning each of you night and day with tears.

32“Now I commit you to God and to the word of his grace, which can build you up and give you an inheritance among all those who are sanctified. 33I have not coveted anyone’s silver or gold or clothing. 34You yourselves know that these hands of mine have supplied my own needs and the needs of my companions. 35In everything I did, I showed you that by this kind of hard work we must help the weak, remembering the words the Lord Jesus himself said: ‘It is more blessed to give than to receive.’ ”

36When Paul had finished speaking, he knelt down with all of them and prayed.

**Acts 20:37-38**

37They all wept as they embraced him and kissed him. 38What grieved them most was his statement that they would never see his face again. Then they accompanied him to the ship.

* *Why did they respond this way? The people had a personal relationship with Paul. They saw a genuine interest in their well-being, the genuine burden that he wanted them to be saved and them not seeing him again was very emotional. For the people, they saw and sensed the love of God which is poured into our hearts by the Holy Spirit.*

***5) Letters to the Ephesians (AD 62 from prison in Rome)***

# *What impresses you about the book of Ephesians?*

# *Christian unity, preserving the unity in the church, and making sure we stick to the word of God so that both inside and outside all the deception that will come attacking the church will not prevail. Unity is unity of the spirit and the bonds of Peace.*

# *The Christ-centered focus of the book. Every chapter and verse Christ is there all throughout Ephesians.*

# *There are some images of the church that Paul uses which ties in with unity.*

# *Chapter 2, access for everyone in the world is provided to Salvation.*

# *Chapter 6: the Army*

# *The bride*

# *The body of Christ and the emphasis on their gifts and the importance of using them and sharing the body of Christ.*

# *Why is it so important for us today to study this letter?*

# *It is the Christ-centered nature of the book. The message from Paul is to follow Christ.*

# *He encompassed everything of Christian Living. To be open to others Jews and Gentiles; how to live and in harmony not only as a body of Christ but also in your home: he encompassed everything about the Gospel. It is very practical and helps us understand what is expected from us as Christians in this world not just for Ephesus but also in our time today.*

# *Putting the books of Ephesians and Revelations together making Jesus your first love.*

# *In our polarized world this message is to help us to focus in what matters the most which is Christ. The call to Christian Unity is more relevant than ever before.*

# Ephesians 1:3-14

### Praise for Spiritual Blessings in Christ

3Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ. 4For he chose us in him before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his sight. In love 5he predestined us for adoption to sonship through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will— 6to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves. 7In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with the riches of God’s grace 8that he lavished on us. With all wisdom and understanding, 9he made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, 10to be put into effect when the times reach their fulfillment—to bring unity to all things in heaven and on earth under Christ.

11In him we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, 12in order that we, who were the first to put our hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory. 13And you also were included in Christ when you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation. When you believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, 14who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession—to the praise of his glory.

# Ephesians 1:1-2

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,

To God’s holy people in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus:

2Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

# Ephesians 6:21-24

### Final Greetings

21Tychicus, the dear brother and faithful servant in the Lord, will tell you everything, so that you also may know how I am and what I am doing. 22I am sending him to you for this very purpose, that you may know how we are, and that he may encourage you.

23Peace to the brothers and sisters, and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 24Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love.

# Ephesians 3:13

# 13I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory.