



World Christian Fellowship

www.wcflondon.com
wcflondon@gmail.com

Seven Churches

Ephesus Church- Formation and Growth

The only New Testament church of which two inspired writers and Lord Himself wrote.

Luke writes from the vantage point of history in Acts.

Paul writes from the vantage point of testimony in Ephesians.

Jesus writes from the vantage point of eternity in Revelation Chapter 2.

The only New Testament church of which had the best of its leaders.

Paul oversaw its beginnings,

Aquila and Priscilla were teaching,

Apollos was taught,

Timothy continued its development, and

John directed in its maturing.

As Paul was earnestly heading to Jerusalem by Pentecost, he decided to call the elders to meet with him at Miletus.

The church of Ephesus was uppermost in his mind inasmuch as he had put his whole heart and strength in the training of this pivotal church.

Acts 20:1-5,

Paul has left the area of Ephesus in distress, passed through Troas, expecting to find Titus and is exercised over not finding him there, then settles at Macedonia for a brief ministry there.

Acts 20:13-16, Paul travels to Miletus.

Acts 20:17-38 Paul meets Ephesians Leaders. At Miletus which 30 miles away from there.

These 22 verses we can learn the following four things that make up the foundation of the Ephesian church.

1. Leadership, 20:17-19
2. Gospel (content), 20:21,24-27
3. Teaching (method), 20:20,27,32
4. Purity 20:28-31

Paul is the central figure here and we see the following about him as he and his ministry.

This is the only place in the book of Acts Paul makes a speech to Christians.

V 18-21, Paul's conduct

4 Way ministry by Paul.

1. God,
2. Church,
3. Lost,
4. Self

V 22-24, Paul's conviction

V 25-27, Paul's commitment

Leaders are very important.

Hosea 4:9,

Isaiah 9:14-16,

Jeremiah 5:31,

Ezekiel 22:26,

V 28-35, Paul's charge

1 Timothy 4:12,

The leaders must first take heed to themselves and have a jealous eye upon all the motions of their own souls.

The elders must minister as the Spirit gives opportunity, some to one part, others to another.

In doing all the parts of the shepherd's office, they must feed the church of God.

They must watch not giving way to spiritual sloth and slumber, but must stir up themselves to their business, and closely attend it.

Leaders must understand that they have many eyes upon them, some to take example, others to pick quarrels.

The special interest Paul exhibited in planting this church.

- 1) faithful watchman—watch and remember,
- 2) public preaching diligently applied—taught you publicly and from house to house,
- 3) constant in ministry—warned everyone night and day,
- 4) ceased not although some rejected and some received,
- 5) labour accompanied with affection—with tears.

V 36-38, Paul's compassion

Joint prayer.

Reverence in praying

Reminding them to pray

Parting prayer

The elements of the foundation laid in the church at Ephesus.

1. A Godly Leadership.

Not only Paul, Timothy, and John, but evidently spiritual-minded church elders. There were lay people who responded to the Christ-centered ministry of the apostle Paul.

Marks of the leader Paul was are revealed in Acts 20 are,

- Compassion,
- Conviction,
- Commitment,
- Composure, and
- Courage.

2. A Gospel Message.

Acts 20:21,

Testifying to the Jews, and also to the Greeks repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ,

3. A Genuine Ministry.

Paul is open about his labours in their midst, serving the Lord with all humility.

with many tears, and

free from the blood of all men.

Acts 20:19, & 26.

4. A Grave Warning.

Take heed therefore to yourselves,

While many today omit this from their ministry, Paul emphasizes the terrible prospect of wolves coming in to devour and false prophets arising from their midst to carry them away from Christ.

Paul was a faithful minister, not a positive gospel minister.

5. A Glad Prospect.

Acts 20:32,

What better comfort than to be left in the hands of God.
“Saints in the hands of a loving God!”

6. A Graceful Parting.

When a man’s ministry is done, he should be in a position to part gracefully.

It is hard for a church to lose its pastor, but when that time comes, let it be done in the spirit of God.

Apostle Paul writes this glorious wonderful letter called Ephesians.

Our Blessings in Christ

Ephesians Chapters 1 & 2

We are in Christ	1:1
We are blessed in Christ	1:3
We are chosen in Christ	1:4
We are adopted by Christ	1:5
We are redeemed by Christ	1:7
We are centred in Christ	1:10
We are heirs in Christ	1:11
We are glorified in Christ	1:12
We are sealed in Christ	1:13
We are people of faith in Christ	1:15
We are given wisdom in Christ	1:17
We are provided with hope in Christ	1:18
We are given power in Christ	1:19
We are quickened in Christ	2:5,6
We are in heavenly places in Christ	2:6
We are saved by grace in Christ	2:8,9
We are created unto good works in Christ	2:10
We are made nigh by the blood of Christ	2:13
We are given access through Christ	2:18
We are growing together in Christ	2:21

This is the Ephesus to which Timothy is sent but he is sent here not to enjoy a cushy post in ministry. Ephesus has become a mess.

Good churches can go bad. Surprisingly, sinners show up.

Wonderful beginnings can end up in terrible catastrophes.

We cannot isolate our Christian lives from the world in which we make our living. This culture seeps into the church, just as it seeped into the Ephesian church.

We don't know the exact nature of what went wrong with the Ephesian church, nothing is spelled out exactly.

What is clear is that the religion of the culture had invaded the gospel of Jesus Christ and was threatening to destroy it.

Paul's two letters to Timothy give us glimpses of what was happening.

Paul tells Timothy to deal with "certain persons" who are obsessed with "religion" but apparently want nothing to do with God. Here is a sampling of phrases that describe the "religious" activities of these people:

- Putting high value on myths and endless genealogies which promote speculations (1 Timothy 1:4)

- Engaging in vain discussion (1:6)
- Giving heed to deceitful spirits and doctrines of demons (4:1)
- Being guided by the hypocrisy of liars (4:2)
- Forbidding marriage and enjoining abstinence from foods (4:3)
- Majoring in godless and silly myths (4:7)
- Craving for controversy and for disputes about words (6:4)
- Imagining that godliness is a means of gain (6:5)
- 2 Timothy:
 - Participating in godless chatter (2:16)
 - Holding that the resurrection is past already (2:18)
 - Senseless controversies (2:23)
 - Wandering into myths (4:4).

We don't know with any precision what the "godless chatter" was in Ephesus.

This culture seeps into the church through the pores of our congregations:

- a religion without commitment,
- spirituality without content,
- aspiration and talk and longing,
- fulfilment and needs,
- but not much concern about God.

The gospel that Jesus brought, and that Paul preached is not first of all about us, but it is about God.

It is about the God who created us and wills to save us. Jesus who gave himself for us and wants us to deny ourselves and follow him wherever he leads us, including the cross.

The Holy Spirit who descends upon us in order to reproduce the resurrection in our ordinary lives.

None of this involves fulfilling our needs as we define them.

Our needs are sin-needs. These needs get our own way, to be self-important, to be in control of our own lives.

The wonderful Ephesian church that had begun so robustly, with such a sense of new life, discovering the revealed truth in the Scriptures and the presence of God in their lives by the Holy Spirit — this Christ-centred, Holy Spirit-created church was disintegrating into feelings, combinations of ideas, discussion groups, and interest gatherings.

The overriding concern in the Pastoral Epistles is in "healthy" or "sound" teaching. Four times in these two letters we find concern for the "health" of teaching or words.

1 Timothy 1:10,

1 Timothy 6:3,

2 Timothy 1:13,

2 Timothy 4:3,

Timeline of Ephesus Church:

A.D 52 Sprouting (Acts 18:19)

A.D. 54-56 Revival and Beginning (Acts 19)

A.D. 57 Nurturing (Acts 20)

A.D. 62 Watering (Letter to Ephesians)

Timothy was sent as Pastor. Paul wrote to 1 and 2 Timothy

A.D. 66 Producing (John 19:26-27) Apostle John took Mother of Jesus Mary to live there.

Apostle John wrote 1, 2 and 3 John

A.D. 96 Jesus writes the letter to Ephesus.

A.D. 200 Dead.