

BIB 271 Church Epistles

Lesson 8 Ephesians

Intro. Probably the biggest distinction that needs to be made in approaching the book of Ephesians is to determine the correct definition of the term church. The two most common explanations are that it is referring to the church solely as an organization or that it is referring to the church as an organism.

If you were going to explain the church as an organization, you would expect this letter would discuss the mechanical and physical makeup of such an institution. To explain the church as an organism you would expect this letter would refer to the principles regarding the spiritual makeup of such an entity. While I certainly would not disagree that both concepts of the church are dealt with in the New Testament, it appears clearly that this epistle is defining the organism and spiritual relationship of such an entity.

Theme: God's ultimate and eternal purpose to bring glory to Himself by the redemption of His church through the death of His Son.

Key verse: 3:21 1:10 is good too.

This book, as many of Paul's epistles do, divides very clearly into two major divisions: chapters 1-3 being doctrinal and chapters 4-6 being devotional. In this instance, he gives us the doctrinal realities of how God is going to fulfill that ultimate purpose. In the devotional portion he emphasizes how that truth should affect our lifestyle as we live out that purpose in our daily lives. Another popular division is the Wealth, Walk, and Warfare of a Christian.

I. The Announcement (Revelation) of that Purpose

A. 1-14 His purpose possessed - Predestinated purpose: The great doctrine of election. That God has an election according to grace.

Key verses: 9 - 11

1. 1-2 Salutation
2. 3-6 His purpose - The Father's Contribution
3. 7-12 His plan - The Son's Contribution
4. 13-14 His process - The Holy Spirit's Contribution

B. 15-23 His purpose perceived - Powerful purpose: Paul prayed that they would understand and embrace this purpose in their lives, he didn't try to cram it in their heads.

Key verses: 18-19

1. 15-16 The occasion of his prayer - hearing of the faith and love
2. 17-21 The object of his prayer - 3 fold - what is the hope of His calling, what the riches of the glory of His inheritance, what the exceeding greatness of His power
3. 22-23 The outlook of his prayer - exaltation of Christ

Note: the length of these sentences. Verses 3-6 Verses 7-12 verses 15-23 to express a complete thought.

II. The Accomplishment of that Purpose - The work of God

A. 1-10 The Work of God in Regeneration (of the Spirit)

Key verses: 1 & 10

B. 11-22 The Work of God in Reconciliation - Making Jew and Gentiles one body

Key verses: 14-16 to the discussion about which church he is referring to.

Note: he portrays the church as a family, a building, and as a nation v. 19

III. The Advancement (Understanding) of that Purpose

A. 1-12 Paul's ministry of preaching - The mystery is now revealed

Key verses: 9 & 11

B. 13-21 Paul's ministry of prayer - for their understanding of the mystery

Key verse: 18

Note: Again that the sentences run from verses 1-7 and 8-12

Trans. This is the key transition of the book. Once you have seen the revelation of that purpose. You see how the purpose is accomplished and you now understand that purpose, how should I live and apply this to my daily life. Walk worthy of that purpose to which you are called. Romans 8:28 I Thes. 2:12 Philippians 3:13-14 Colossians 1:10

IV. The Agreement (Unity) of that Purpose

A. 1-16 Edification of the body - The building up of this body

Key verses: 1 & 12-13

B. 17-32 Expectation of the body - The walk in accordance with that purpose

Key verse: 17

V. The Application (Living) of that Purpose

The main objection we have to this as Baptists is that of having all of these other churches part of His bride, body, and church. This chapter focuses upon who is genuinely a part of this body.

A. 1-16 The contrast of our walk - difference of light and darkness. Key verses: 8

B. 17-21 The control of our walk - Spirit or flesh Key verse: 18

C. 22-6:9 The compass of our walk - This purpose and the living it out in our lives should be realized in every relationship in our life. Our marriages, our children, our jobs. Our marriages are a living picture of that relationship between Christ and His church.

VI. The Antagonism (Opposition) of that Purpose - Our warfare. There is an spiritual warfare battling over this purpose.

A. 10-12 Our Warfare Key verse: 12

B. 13-20 Our Weapons Key verse: 13

C. 21-24 Conclusion

1. This is the "Father's business". God Himself has chosen this as the purpose to devote Himself too and shall we make light of it?

2. To live your life fulfilling your own purpose is rebellion against God. It is greater than the rebellion of this unregenerate world against God because it is a sin against light and love.