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C0415 -- April 14, 2004 -- Ephesians 1:1a -- Ephesus: Prologue

Ephesians: Prologue

Last time: City and Background of Ephesus. They were a local group of believers in the central city of Asia.

Economy: Harbor and Cayster River

It had a huge harbor early in its history and a large shipping business. In addition it had a highway that connected Ephesus overland to the Mesopotamian valley. So, there were basically two major trade routes. Since moving produce by land was slow and tedious the best way to move produce was through shipping. And thus Ephesus was a key player. However, they started having a major problem with the harbor. See, there was a river that flowed into the harbor called the Cayster and the problem was that this river kept pulling off the side of the mountains and highlands causing massive amounts of silt to build up in the harbor. It became such a problem that the Roman Army Engineers tried to dig it out but the project went sour and the economy was gradually declining. At the time of the NT this harbor was really having problems, to the point of an economic recession, and so the townspeople of Ephesus began to supplement the shipping business by living off of the Temple of Diana.

Economy: Temple of Diana

The way they did this was by the selling of silver idols of Artemis/Diana to tourists along the Arcadiana Way. So, the economy was under threat and the people were on edge as to their economic prosperity. This is when Paul came in preaching the gospel in the school of Tyrannus for about 2 ½ years. And it's obvious from the riot that resulted that he was having a major impact with the gospel. One man and the gospel crippled the economy of a major city (350,000). The riot was so big that 25,000 people flooded to the theatre to see Paul put on trial for destroying the silversmiths business. The city had a great temple, one of the 7 Wonders of the

World, the Temple of Artemis. And blasphemous religious activities and prostitution flooded the temple.

Demonism

The city was also the center of demonism and occultism and Paul's ministry had a dramatic effect on the Libraries collection of Magic and Occultic books. The value of the books burned was 50,000 drachmas which was equivalent to 50,000 silver pieces. One drachma was a day's wages in that day. If you do the math that's 8,300 years of work.

Evangelism

We also saw an amazing way in which the Holy Spirit evangelized Ephesus. The Holy Spirit held Paul back, he didn't let him enter in even though Paul was at the door. Why not? We gave three reasons. And you may be wondering why the Lord is not letting you evangelize someone in your life right now or getting you involved in some ministry? There were three reasons: 1) God had higher priorities elsewhere at that time, maybe the Lord has some other work for you to do somewhere else for the time being, 2) Paul was not ready spiritually, spiritually he wouldn't have been able to discern the proper method of dealing with what he was going to run into there (namely, a large number of Gentile believers who had absolutely no OT background. Paul had to deal with how to ground these believers and he wasn't prepared spiritually for the task until later). Perhaps the Lord has to prepare you spiritually for whatever task your just itching to do, and 3) the people there in Ephesus were on negative volition and God never respects negative volition, perhaps those you want to evangelize or minister to are not ready to respond and God has to get them ready. So, just relax, stay in the will of God, keep studying your Bible and God will let you loose when He's ready. But the point to ponder is that an open door does not always mean go in.

So, here Paul is writing an epistle that brings in truths that Paul has not mentioned much in prior writings, for example "the mystery", something totally unrevealed in the OT. Here Paul expands on this new teaching like he never has before. Paul preached in Ephesus for 2 ½ years and he taught 5-6 hours a day from 12 noon to 6pm. He preached so much that Paul could conclude two things: 1) All of Asia heard the word of God (Acts 19:10) and 2) Paul could conclude that he taught the "whole counsel of God" (Acts 20:27). Now, do you know what that means? It means Paul

didn't just teach on one topic or even 10 topics, but in 2 years he taught the entirety of God's word. This is significant because today people get upset when the word is taught for 1 hour. They get all bent out of shape and can't concentrate that long or some other excuse and it's easy to explain. It's because we've dumbed ourselves down. We've taught ourselves how to watch TV for 13 hours a day and now it's almost impossible to concentrate on doctrine for more than about 15 minutes. So, the Bible teaching across the US is so weak today and that's a reflection of their failure to train the mind. Christians today are essentially non-intellectual. They take a non-intellectual approach to the Bible and yet Paul, as we'll see was a giant intellectual. Christians have destroyed their minds so that the only thing they can handle is a 20 minute sermonette for Christianettes. And the result is our nation is falling apart spiritually.

Lord's Evaluation of Ephesus

Finally, we find out in the book of Revelation (2:1-7) that the Church in Ephesus was still around but that they were beginning to compromise the truth, they were beginning to water down doctrine and thus apostatize. The key word there was "test", they were testing teachers to determine if they were false teachers but they were beginning to slack off and this was an indication that they had left their "first love". First love there was Bible doctrine. They had once loved bible doctrine but now they were finding other loves and the Lord was exhorting them to get back to their love of Bible doctrine. Apparently this church didn't respond positively to the exhortation because today there is no Ephesian Church. It's totally in ruins.

Now let's move on to the text of the Epistle of the Ephesians.

I. The Calling of the Church (1:1-3:21)

A. Prologue (1:1-2)

Greek Text: 1:1. Pau/loj avpo,stoloj Cristou/ VIhsou/ dia. qelh,matoj qeou/ toi/j a`gi,oij toi/j ou=sin Îevn VEfe,sw|Ð kai. pistoi/j evn Cristw/| VIhsou/(**1:2** ca,rij u`mi/n kai. eivrh,nh avpo. qeou/ patro.j h`mw/n kai. kuri,ou VIhsou/ Cristou/Å

Translation: 1:1. Paul an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God to the saints who are [in Ephesus] that is, believers in Christ Jesus, **1:2** grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Commentary: In the prologue the author, recipients, destination and a greeting are given.

Now let's look at Ephesians and see about these 4 parts.

AUTHOR

1:1. Pau/loj, "Paul". The author identifies himself. He mentions himself by name again in 3:1 ("I Paul, the prisoner of Christ [Jesus], for the sake of you Gentiles"). In the Latin Paul means "little". As intimated in 3:1, Paul was his Gentile name and Saul his Hebrew. Saul was the one who had breathed death threats against believers in Christ Jesus (Acts 7:58; 8:1, 3; **9:1**). In fact Saul was instrumental in carrying out Jesus' commission of Acts 1:8 (cf. Acts 1:8; 8:1-2). He is called by his Hebrew name 15 times in the NT (Acts 7:58; 8:1, 3; 9:1, 8, 11, 22, 24; 11:25, 30; 12:25; 13:1f, 7, **9**). Even after Saul became a believer on the Damascus road he continued to use the name Saul because he was within Israel and his ministry was to Hebrews (cf. Acts **9:22**). Once Saul was set apart for the ministry to the Gentiles (Acts 13:1, **2-9**) he went by Paul, his Gentile name.

WHO WAS THIS PAUL?

AS TO CITIZENSHIP

First of all Paul was middle upper class. The tendency today is to think of Christianity as something for low class, non-thinking people. But Paul was not lower class, he was middle-to-upper class, illustrating that Christianity is for everyone, of every class. Paul was a Jew of Tarsus and he was a Roman Citizen. Because he was a Jew he was not a naturally born Roman Citizen. However Paul claims he was born a citizen of Rome in Acts 22:28. How is this possible? Rome granted citizenship in that day on the basis of two things: 1) if you led a successful military expedition for Rome then you would be re-paid by the bestowing of full citizenship or 2) because the family was prominent. We come to the deduction that Paul's family was of high prominence in Tarsus. And thus, Paul could be said to be born a Roman Citizen because of His family's prominence. Second, Paul is said to be a Citizen of Tarsus (Acts 21:39). When one was a citizen of a city in Rome he was considered either an *inhabitant* or a *citizen*. Those who were *inhabitants* were of the lower class and those who were *citizens* were of the higher class. So, obviously Paul was stating that he was of the higher class.

AS TO EDUCATION

He was well-educated, he had studied and studied and studied. In fact, he studied under the great Gamaliel (Acts 22:3). Gamaliel was not called a Rabbi “my teacher” but Rabban “our teacher”. He was 1 of only 7 men to ever receive the title Rabban in Pharisaism. He was a *Doctor of the Law* which meant two things. First, he had special knowledge along the lines of Moses’ writings and second he was able to interpret the Torah in accordance with the Mishnah. It was the *Doctors of the Law* who Jesus was interacting with in the temple when he was 12 years old. Gamaliel was of the highest possible learning and Paul was his #1 student. That’s how powerful of a bible student Paul was BEFORE his conversion. And this intense study served Paul well AFTER he became a believer. This shows how important study of the word is to the Christian life. Too often we are weak in preparation as ministers of the Gospel. We emphasize that the word needs to go forth but our preparation is shoddy. It’s fantastic that the man God used was a well-trained academic, he knew several languages, he knew history, he had a cosmopolitan background, went to school in Jerusalem (the best schools). He was a true genius Peter tells us in 2 Peter 3:15-16. This is an important passage in terms of the canon of the NT writings. This passage shows, contrary to modern thought that somehow centuries later people decided what books were really God’s books that Paul’s writings were accepted when they were written and not centuries later. When the writings were written they instantly became a part of the canon whether men recognized them or not. God’s words became canonized the moment they were recorded by human authors in history and not a second later. (READ 2 Peter 3:15-16). The other apostles had to sit down and study Paul’s writings because Paul was a genius unlike the other apostles. Paul was far more advanced than the other apostles intellectually. This verse is significant because whereas most of the uses of the term “Scripture” in the NT are referring to the OT Scriptures this usage here is referring to the NT Scriptures indicating that NT writings were already considered canonical during the 1st century and they did not become canonized, as some say, as late as the 3rd or 4th centuries under some human authority. The apostles considered their writings as inspired and on the same plane as the OT writings. Paul was not some goof that came along and created the NT documents, he was a highly-educated man.

PAUL EXPECTED ALL BELIEVERS TO KNOW WHAT HE KNEW

Yet, we are going to see an amazing thing in the book of Ephesians. We're going to see that Paul expected the believers of his time to understand everything that he understood. Now that is a concept that is very much maligned today. Now the attitude of 95% of the believers in the pews today is to try and get through as little doctrine as possible so I can identify with some local church. Or I can say the right vocabulary around the right people. But Paul insists that the believer understand just as much as he understands doctrinally. For example, READ Eph. 3:14-18. Don't let me hear some people saying, well yes it's true but that's too advanced and you have to go to seminary to understand that and all the rest of it. Now, that's HVP and obviously it's anti-biblical because v. 18-19 Paul expects you to understand everything. The word of God is given to be studied and understood. And you can just ignore those groups or peoples who malign Christians that take in what they consider too much Bible doctrine, acting as if it's not spiritual to take in Bible doctrine or that we're over-thinking it because we're so into the grammar and history behind the thing. That's absolutely wrong. You can never get too much Bible doctrine, never, never, never! You can study and study and study for the rest of your life and there's still more, I can PROVE that you can know this book because Paul prayed this prayer under Divine Inspiration. Of course you can't understand it on your own. Rather believers have been given the ability to understand it. They've been given the illuminating ministry of the Holy Spirit and that brings understanding. But it takes hours and hours of study. Paul taught 2 years, 5 hours a day, 365 days a year, that's 3,650 hours of Bible doctrine in 2 years. Now figure up how many hours of doctrine you've had in the last 2 years and then maybe you'll realize why you may not know as much as Paul and the Ephesians did.

PAUL'S OFFICE

avpo,stoloj Cristou/ Vihsou/, "apostle of Christ Jesus" (also cf. Eph 2:20 and 4:11). The term "apostle" was used in classical Greek primarily of ships being "sent out for military or cargo expeditions." It would therefore strike a familiar cord with the Ephesians who were very familiar with seafaring language due to the harbor there. In the LXX it is used of Ahijah who was commissioned to deliver a divine message to the wife of King Jeroboam (READ 1 Kings 14:1-6). In the NT "it always denotes a man who is sent, and sent with full authority". It was a legal term and was used of one who is lawfully charged to represent the person and cause of another. In this case Paul is representing the person and cause of Christ Jesus, not his own cause. The sender is always greater than the one sent. But the one sent is to be treated as the sender. And an attack on the messenger is considered an attack on the sender.

So, if you reject Paul’s writings then you are rejecting Christ Jesus because this is His message. In the NT the office of apostle is limited to those who were commissioned personally by the Lord Jesus Christ Himself. And a personal commissioning by the Lord implies “seeing” the Lord.

However, there is still the question of what category of apostle did Paul qualify for? Today there is much confusion over the gifts of the Spirit and authoritative offices. But the Bible never confuses spiritual gifts with offices. At least three things distinguish spiritual gifts from authoritative offices.

	Offices	Spiritual Gifts
Requirements	Must meet Scriptural Qualifications	None
Time of Reception	After Salvation at time of Appointment	Spiritual Birth
Permanency	Temporal or Permanent	Permanent

In Ephesians 1:1 Paul gives to himself the title of apostle, this is not the gift of apostle but the office of apostle. In the NT spiritual gifts are never used as titles, only offices are used as titles. However, there are three categories of apostles in the NT. What category of apostle does Paul fit into?

First, there was the **office of the 12**. In light of Judas’ betrayal of Jesus the 12 were reduced to 11 and had need to replace Judas. The requirements for this apostolic office are divinely given through Peter in READ **Acts 1:21-22** 4 qualifications

- 1) He must be a man
 - 2) The man must have been with the 12 apostles through the entire ministry of Jesus
 - 3) Beginning with the baptism of John (Mark 1:15, see verse 16 the choosing of the first apostle)
 - 4) Until the ascension (so he had to come from the 120 who were present in Acts
- 1)

Obviously Paul does not meet this qualification because he did not meet the Lord until Acts 9, about 7 years later. Nevertheless, some scholars still believe Paul was

God's choice to be the 12th disciple and that the apostles would have known this if they had waited for the Holy Spirit. Further it is leveled that the method of casting lots to choose the 12th apostle is unbiblical (Acts 1:26). However, these scholars forget that at this time the apostles were living under the Dispensation of the Law. Casting lots was common in the OT (Lev. 16:8; Josh. 14:2; Neh. 10:34; 11:1). It was a divinely approved method of discerning God's will (Prov. 16:33). The names were written on two stones then placed in a vessel. The vessel was shaken and then one rock was chosen. The rock that was chosen was God's choice; in this case the lot fell to Matthias. This is the last time this method is used in the Bible. This is because with the coming of the Holy Spirit a new dispensation began and this method is no longer necessary. Now we have the indwelling Holy Spirit and His guidance is the divinely approved method of making choices. But the apostles did not have that guidance yet. This method of casting lots is sanctioned in Acts 6:2 showing Matthias was now counted among them. He also fulfilled the prophecy given in the Psalms (69:25; 109:8; cf. Acts 1:20). Matt. 19:28 shows that 12 apostles must sit on 12 thrones and Rev. 21:14 shows that the 12 foundations of the New Jerusalem will have the names of the 12 written upon them. Matthias is the 12th and his name will be on the 12th foundation of the New Jerusalem, not Paul.

The second category is an **office** composed of **eyewitness of the resurrected Christ**. Many meet the scriptural qualifications for this office (James, the 500, Paul, cf. 1 Cor. 15:6-8, probably Barnabas, Acts 13:2; 1 Cor. 9:6, Apollos, 1 Cor. 4:6, 9, Epaphroditus, Phil. 2:25, Titus, 2 Cor. 8:23, and possibly Andronicus and Junias, Rom. 16:7). Paul certainly saw himself in this category of apostle and not of "the 12". He links his office of apostle with seeing the Lord in 1 Cor. 9:1, "Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen the Lord?"

The third category is composed of those who were given the **spiritual gift of apostle**. Those who were given the gift of apostle are never given the title "apostle" in the NT and they do not carry the authority of the apostolic office. "The danger is to equate this gift with the office (i.e., ones who had been with Jesus and seen his resurrection body) with an attempt to exert the same authority as those in the NT who qualified for the apostolic office" (Hoehner, *Ephesians*, p. 547).

In this context Paul has the second category of apostle in mind, being an eyewitness of the resurrected Lord. If Paul is an officially delegated apostle then who sent him? This is answered by the genitive **Cristou/ Vhsou** "Christ Jesus". This genitive indicates "possession" but also more than that because it is coupled with the word

“apostle”. This coupling indicates that the genitive carries not only the idea that Paul is owned by Jesus Christ but also that he is a fully authorized ambassador sent by Him (cf. **Gal. 1:1**). Here we intersect the Doctrines of Inspiration and Inerrancy of Scripture. Let’s review the doctrine under 3 points.

- 1) Plenary Verbal Inspiration – (READ 2 Tim 3:16-17) – God-breathed
 - a. Plenary – full and complete. Bible is final authority not only in matters of faith but in any subject which the Bible addresses (e.g. science)
 - b. Verbal – (READ 2 Pt. 1:20-21) emphasizes the words themselves are the words God chose to use.
 - c. Style – human element in inspiration. The writers style and characteristics were respected by God. God never erases volition, He protects human volition.
- 2) Inerrancy – there is no false fact or statement in the original autographs. This applies to the originals and not to copies. We have no original autographs so why defend Inerrancy?
 - a. The Character of God
 - b. If the originals were not inerrant then we have no basis for lower textual criticism which is trying to restore the original text.
- 3) Infallibility – means unfailing accuracy. The bible is unfailingly accurate in every topic to which it speaks. It is therefore trustworthy.

Paul provides the human element but Christ Jesus the divine. Paul provides the style, Christ Jesus the content. Paul is just a messenger but he is a Divinely authorized messenger with a Divinely inspired message. The one who sent the message is Christ Jesus.

Another role of the apostle was to found and build up churches. Thus, the apostle had a missionary element to his function. Jesus founded the Church (Matt. 16:18) and the apostles were to build on Him (Eph. 2:20). This involves planting churches and Paul was instrumental in planting many churches throughout Asia Minor. Interestingly he would not go where this was already being done by another (Rom. 15:20). The office of apostle then is one who “was an official delegate of Jesus Christ commissioned for the specific tasks of proclaiming authoritatively the message in oral and written form and of establishing and the building up of churches.” The gift of apostle only extends to the establishing and building up of churches.

	Office of Apostle	Gift of Apostle
Functions	Delegated by Jesus Christ Authoritative Oral Messages Authoritative Written Messages Established and Built Up Churches	Provided by Holy Spirit Established and Built Up Churches

AGENCY

dia. qelh,matoj qeou “by the will of God”. The preposition **dia** with the genitive denotes “agency” or the “cause”. Paul is an apostle because of God’s will and not his own or another human will. This is expressed more explicitly in READ Gal. 1:1. Paul always proclaimed that his conversion (Gal. 1:15) and his new life were of God (Gal. 1:23-24). Now he proclaims that his apostleship is also of God (cf. Gal. 1:1, 16). In other words, the reason behind why Paul is an apostle is because of it was God’s will that Paul be an apostle.

2 WILLS OF GOD: GENERAL AND SPECIFIC

This introduces us to the fact that there are 2 wills of God for you: God’s general will for you and then God’s Specific will for you. First, there is the General Will of God; you know this, this is the moral and ethical standards given in Scripture to all believers without discrimination. Second, there is the Specific Will of God, and this is to you personally; God made you, He knows you, and He’s given you a specific task in life that He wants you to accomplish. He’s picked out a plan for your life. Whatever that is it’s God’s Specific Will for your life. Now, the HS, according to His will, gives to each believer at least 1 spiritual gift, and it’s given by Divine Sovereignty (1 Cor. 12:11). This means that God has a plan for your life. **DRAW TOP AND BOTTOM CIRCLES.** So, when we look at this diagram from the time that you believe in Christ He puts you in union with Christ. But there’s also the bottom circle and that has to do with fellowship/communion with God. There are two ways you can get out of fellowship. First, get out of God’s General Will for all believers. Second, get out of God’s Specific Will for your life. **NOW DRAW 2 CONCENTRIC CIRCLES (INNER CIRCLE IS FOR ALL BELIEVERS AND IS THE GENERAL WILL OF GOD; OUTER CIRCLE IS FOR YOU AND IT**

IS THE SPECIFIC WILL OF GOD FOR YOUR LIFE). So, here's where this gets important. Most believers, when they get out of fellowship with God tend to think in terms of this inner circle, some ethical or moral thing they've done against God, but what they forget is about this outer sphere that should ever be expanding and growing as one comes to see more clearly God's specific will for his life. What about that circle? God may have some plan for you, He may want you to go to a lunch meeting, He may want you to go to some school, He may want you to take some job; if you didn't do it then it's just as bad as committing some ethical or moral sin. And yet the average Christian thinks only of confessing one type and thinking the other type isn't the same. Oh no, there's no difference at all, both get you out of fellowship. This is why there can be Christians who can go out there and say someone that commits murder or rape, like David for example and then come along and say, "oh well, David can't be a Christian, Christians don't act like that." And these believers get so worried because David is so out of it in terms of the General Will of God. But don't forget that David was much more attuned to God's Specific Will of God for his life than most Christians. God wanted Him to be King and He was but David usually fell out of fellowship in terms of the General Will of God; he was usually in fellowship in terms of God's Specific Will for his life. But, that's why God didn't overly condemn David. At least David stayed in it in terms of God's Specific Will for his life and yet today we've got Christians who are in fellowship regarding the General Will for believers but could care less about God's Specific Will for their life. They just go about following the commands but could care less whether God wants them to be a pastor-teacher, God wants them to be a soldier, God wants them to teach elementary school, God wants them to be a deacon, they don't care. I'll tell you that those folks are just as out of fellowship as those who committed some moral or ethical sin. This is a concept you've got to shift in your thinking. The tendency is to think on the moral and ethical plane in terms of sin and getting out of fellowship, but this is one of those things where you've got to shift your thinking to the DVP and realize that it's just as serious to get out of the plan of God for your life as it is to commit some moral sin.

Now, Paul has just told you what God's will is for his life. God has given him the office of apostleship and Paul didn't ask for it or anything God just plopped it on him. It was by the agency and grace of God. Now, when you became a believer God gave you some spiritual gift and I hope you know what it is, if not I suggest you try some things out and see if you can identify the gift he's given you. Paul clearly knows what God's will is for his life, it's to be an apostle. Paul's recognition of God's specific will for his life shows he's stable. Now,

THE RECIPIENTS

toi/j a`gi,ojj toi/j ou=sin Îevn VEfe,sw|Ð, “to the saints who are in Ephesus”. The recipients of the letter are called “saints”. The word means “to set apart”. The basic idea is that which is set apart to God or to His service. It does not mean without sin because these “saints” here are latter admonished not to live as those who were not saints (Eph. 4:25-32). The Bible does not teach perfectionism but it does call all believers saints. The reason we are to abstain from living ungodly is because we are temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 6:15-20), not because of any inherent holiness in us. The point is that “since we are saints we ought to live as saints”. Or, put another way, live consistent with who you are in Christ. This is positional truth or what I like to call Phase 1 of Salvation (Positional). REVIEW PHASE 1, 2, AND 3. The moment you believe in the Lord Jesus Christ you are placed in this top circle. You didn’t put yourself in the top circle and so you can’t take yourself out. We’ve got a lot of people out there who believe in loss of salvation and that they can commit some sin that’s greater than the grace of God. Who do you think you are anyway? That you can commit some sin that’s greater than God’s grace. I don’t care what you do you can never commit some sin that separates you from God in terms of loss of salvation

DESTINATION

Îevn VEfe,sw|Ð, “in Ephesus”. Textual problem.

VEfe,sw is probably in the original. All supposed problems are easily surmountable (see. P. 140 in Hoehner). Further, the title *PROS EFESIOUS* is in every manuscript including those that omit the phrase **evn VEfe,sw** in v. 1. Further weakness to the omission is that there is little to no manuscript support in Western, Byzantine, and other sources. It seems limited to the Alexandrian manuscripts which may indicate a scribal error. The attempt to claim it is an encyclical letter by claiming that the original had a lacunae (“gap) for the church to fill in its name as follows **toi/j a`gi,ojj toi/j ou=sin _____ kai. pistoi/j evn Cristw/| VIhsou** has no manuscript support at all. Further, if no lacunae was there and **evn VEfe,sw** omitted as many suppose then the reading would be very odd if not impossible, saying “to the saints who are, that is, believers in Christ Jesus”. Additionally, if there were a lacunae originally then why not leave the preposition **evn** so that the church would know where to fill in their name? Again, no manuscripts have the preposition **evn**

by itself. Further, no manuscripts have ever been found that have any city name besides “Ephesus”. Though much ink has been wasted on this matter, the conclusion is that the letter is specifically addressed “to the saints in Ephesus”, having a general application to all saints. Whether the letter is local or encyclical has no serious bearing on the interpretation of the mighty epistle.

Besides the three important Alexandrian manuscripts that lack **evn VEfe,sw** there are other internal objections made against Ephesus as the intended destination.

These are as follows:

- 1) The author had only heard of their faith and love (1:15),
- 2) he had to claim his commissioning by God as missionary to the Gentiles (3:2),
- 3) he did not address concrete problems, and alluded to some strange teachings of the Ephesians which he had not heard (4:20-22).
- 4) Paul doesn't mention any individuals by name in a church he had taught for 2 ½ years.

However, these objections are easily surmountable.

- 1) It is possible that he is referring to what he had heard of their faith and love since leaving them (1:15).
- 2) Chapter 3:2 must be closely connected with 3:13 which would bolster his teaching that they were not to fret over his imprisonment because he was an apostle commissioned to the Gentiles. He was not introducing himself but reminding them of his mission to the Gentiles.
- 3) He does address the specific problem of love both in doctrine and in application among believers, particularly Jewish and Gentile believers. In 4:21-22 Paul is not saying that the teaching was strange to him but that they were to live out what they heard, they were not to estrange their lives from doctrine.
- 4) The fact that no individuals are mentioned could be due to the fact that Paul knew so many individuals there because of his 3 year ministry there that he did not want to single any one out or leave out new believers that had arrived after his ministry.

EXPLANATION

kai. pistoi/j evn Cristw/| VIhsou/ (“that is, believers in Christ Jesus.” Lack of the definite article before **pistoi/j** (*pistois*) makes it hard to translate. This construction is absolutely unique to Scripture. Paul uses similar but never identical constructions (cf. Col. 1:2 and Rom. 1:1). The **kai** could be translated as “and” rendering “saints who are in Ephesus *and* faithful in Christ Jesus” signifying two groups; the “saints” in Ephesus and the “faithful”. But this dichotomy does not have any support from Paul’s other writings. Rather, what is meant is one group with two appellations. Thus, the **kai** is to be taken as epexegetical or explicative, indicating that the two adjectives refer to the same group and should be translated “that is” (also cf. similar construction in Col. 1:2). **pistoi/j** (*pistois*) could be translated in the passive or active sense. If in the passive then it would be translated “faithful”, if in the active “believers”. The active sense seems to fit better with the context. Thus, the epexegetical **kai** with the **pistoi/j** is explanatory of “saints” and should be translated as “saints who are at Ephesus, that is, believers in Christ Jesus.” It would then indicate that they were not OT saints. Remember we talked about the mighty Apollos last week, who was still living as an OT saint. He was the guy Priscilla and Aquila found while in Ephesus (Acts 18:24-28). Contrary to Apollos these saints were believers “in Christ Jesus”. Same story for the 12 men Paul had found in Ephesus during his second missionary journey who knew only of the baptism of John (Acts 19:1-7), these saints were believers in Christ Jesus.

It is unlikely that Paul wanted to distinguish two classes among the Christians, i.e. a “faithful” group from another larger or smaller group that is “holy.” Such a distinction would be unparalleled in the Pauline letters. Even the wild Corinthians are called “sanctified” and “perfect” (1 Cor. 1:2; 2:6). While occasionally Paul presupposes a sharp division between “those outside” and “those inside,” between “the unbelieving” and “the faithful,” he has no room for half- or three-quarter Christians. It is probable that here the Greek conjunction “and” has the meaning of “namely.” It serves the purpose of explication and may therefore occasionally be omitted in translation if its intent is preserved.¹

Because of the single article **toi/j** before **a`gi,oij** (*agiois*) the prepositional phrase **evn Cristw/| VIhsou** (*in Christ Jesus*) refers to both the **pistoi/j** (*pistois*) and **a`gi,oij** (*agiois*) and not to the **pistoi/j** (*pistois*) only. Thus, it is not that the “believers” are “in Christ Jesus” and the “saints” are not. It is rather that both the “believers” and the “saints” are “in Christ Jesus”. The prepositional phrase **evn Cristw/| VIhsou** is used seven times in Ephesians (1:1; 2:6, 7, 10, 13; 3:6, 21). Here

it means “incorporation”, that is, the union of believers to Christ. It does not refer to believing Christ but by believing Christ one is put “in Christ”. Christ is the Greek word **Cristo,j** which comes from the Hebrew word *mashiach* meaning “Messiah” or “anointed one”. “Christ” is not really Jesus’ last name. It is really a title as Peter emphasized on Pentecost, “God has made Him both Lord and Christ-- this Jesus whom you crucified.” Because of the interchangeability of Jesus Christ and Christ Jesus there is no difference in the word order. The fact that Christ is a title is indicated by the fact that the angel told both Joseph and Mary to name their Son “Jesus” not “Jesus Christ” (Matt. 1:21; Luke 1:31). It is because the name Jesus and the title Christ are so closely related in Scripture that many have thought Christ was His last name but actually it is not. Believers are therefore united with Christ Jesus who provided salvation.

ⁱ Wallace, Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics, 282.

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