

Ephesians: The Purpose and Plan of God
The Importance of Teaching the Whole Counsel of God's Word
February 7th & 8th, 2015

Acts 20:17-38

These were Paul's last personal words to the Ephesian Elders.

Paul was fully committed to serving the Lord and God's people while in Ephesus.

- ❖ He served "...with all humility and with tears and with trials..." *Acts 20:19*

f "tears"

2 Corinthians 2:4 "For I wrote to you out of much affliction and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to cause you pain but to let you know the abundant love that I have for you."

Philippians 3:18 "For many, of whom I have often told you and now tell you even with tears, walk as enemies of the cross of Christ."

f "trials"

1 Corinthians 15:30-34

2 Corinthians 11:24-28

Paul was fully committed to teach the whole counsel of God. *Acts 20:27*

- ❖ He did not "shrink" from declaring God's Word.

*Shrink: (Greek) "to withdraw oneself, to cower, to conceal"*¹

Hebrews 10:38 "but my righteous one shall live by faith, and if he shrinks back, my soul has no pleasure in him."

1 John 2:28 "And now, little children, abide in Him, so that when He appears we may have confidence and not shrink from Him in shame at His coming."

- ❖ He taught what was "profitable."

Paul taught God's Word in public and house to house.

- ❖ He declared the gospel to the Jews in synagogues. *Acts 19:8*
- ❖ He declared the gospel to the Gentiles in the hall of Tyrannus. *Acts 19:9*
- ❖ He taught house to house.

Romans 16:5 "Greet also the church in their house. ..."

1 Corinthians 16:19 "The churches of Asia send you greetings. Aquila and Prisca, together with the church in their house, send you hearty greetings in the Lord."

Colossians 4:15 "Give my greetings to the brothers at Laodicea, and to Nympha and the church in her house."

Philemon 1:2 "and Apphia our sister and Archippus our fellow soldier, and the church in your house:"

Paul taught about the kingdom of God. Acts 20:25

- ❖ To live in the kingdom required “*repentance toward God.*”

Mark 1:15 “and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.’”

Luke 24:46-47 “and [Jesus] said to them, ‘Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.’”

f Repentance means to change one’s mind or purpose, and always, in the New Testament, involving a change for the better.²

Acts 3:19-20 “Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord, ...”

- ❖ To live in the kingdom required “*faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.*”

- ♦ Faith is primarily a firm persuasion, a conviction based upon hearing (Rom.10:17) and is always used, in the New Testament, in relationship to an invisible God. (Heb.11:1)²

- ♦ We are justified by faith.

Galatians 2:16 “yet we know that a person is not justified by works of the law but through faith in Jesus Christ, so we also have believed in Christ Jesus, in order to be justified by faith in Christ and not by works of the law, because by works of the law no one will be justified.”

- ♦ We are to stand firm in our faith.

1 Corinthians 16:13 “Be watchful, stand firm in the faith, act like men, be strong.”

- ♦ We are to live by faith.

Galatians 2:20 “I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me.”

Paul commended the Ephesian elders to God and to the Word of His grace. Acts 20:32

- ❖ Grace: God coming to our aide!

Ephesians 2:8 “For by grace you have been saved through faith. And this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God,”

- ❖ God’s Word builds us up. *1 Peter 1:22-2:5*

- ❖ God’s Word gives us an inheritance among all God’s people who are being sanctified and growing in the knowledge of His grace!

2 Peter 3:18 “But grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. To Him be the glory both now and to the day of eternity. Amen.”

**The whole counsel of God’s Word reveals the whole character of God
and the whole plan and purpose He has for us!**

Endnotes:

¹Robertson , A.T. Word pictures in the New Testament. Nashville: Holman Reference, 2000.

²Definition taken from ... Vine, W.E. Vine’s Expository Dictionary of Old & New Testament Words. Nashville: T. Nelson Publishers, 1997.

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