

Paul's Journeys



— 2nd Missionary Journey

Some Facts About Ephesus:

- the largest, most “important” city in Asia.
- perhaps 100,000 people or more.
- capital of the Roman province of Asia.
- driven by commerce & trade.
- large dredged port, in which the majority of all goods going to & from Rome passed through.
- very cosmopolitan & multi-cultural.
- large Jewish population.

1. Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus . . .

To the (people) in Christ Jesus . . .

Grace and peace to you from . . . Jesus Christ.

Point #1: Jesus Christ is the foundation of
everything that Paul is about to say!

Nature

The Church

IS

Christ

Purpose

The Church

DOES

Mission

Structures

The Church

ORGANIZES

Structure

And God placed all things under Christ's feet, and appointed him to be head to the church, which is his body and as such holds within it the fullness of him, who himself receives the entire fullness of God

Ephesians 1:23

For we are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10

Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. In him the whole building is joined together to become a holy temple in the Lord. And in him you too are being built to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

Ephesians 2:19-22

1. To the Gentiles:

“This is who you were!” (v.v. 11-12)

Remember that formerly you who are Gentiles by birth and called “uncircumcised” by the Jews – remember that at that time you were:

- Christless – separated from Christ
- Stakeless – excluded from citizenship in Israel
- Friendless – foreigners to the covenants of promise
- Hopeless – without hope
- Godless – without God in the world

2. To the Jews & Gentiles:

“This is what Christ has done!” (v.v.13-18)

But now in Christ Jesus, you (Gentiles) who were once far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ.

For he himself is our peace, who has made Jew & Gentile one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility . . . His purpose was to create in himself one new humanity out of the two, thus making peace, and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross by which he put to death their hostility.

The Result: A New Society!

“A Race of people that is raceless”

Bruce Milne

There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

Galatians 5:28

The Church is a race of people who are called out from every tribe, nation, gender & generation, and who exhibit the fullness of Christ by living together in equality, unity & harmony.

KEY:

- Equality – we are all equal in Jesus Christ.
Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God's people and members of God's household
- Unity – we are all together in Jesus Christ.
In Jesus the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord.
- Harmony – we are all at peace in Jesus Christ.
And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit.

As a follower of Jesus at First Baptist Church, do you struggle with:

- welcoming and worshipping with people from other nations?
- changes in music & liturgy on Sunday?
- how people dress for “church”?
- how the furniture & buildings are modified?

How will you go about protecting the equality, unity & harmony of Christ’s church in these things?

I wonder if anything is more urgent today, for the honour of Christ and for the spread of the gospel, than that the church should be, and should be seen to be, what by God's purpose and Christ's achievement it already is – a single new humanity, a model of human community, a family of reconciled brothers and sisters who love their Father and love each other, the evident dwelling place of God by his Spirit. Only then will the world believe in Christ as Peacemaker. Only then will God receive the glory due his name.

John Stott

