

WHO I AM
Ephesians Part 1
Jeff Wall

REVIEW:

R-remember People are Lost
E-xpress the Love of Christ
A-pply the Proper Meds
C-hallenge them to Follow
H-elp them Understand

Jesus' 2 Messages:

Message #1: You're a sinner; you're in trouble.

Message #2: God loves sinners and has sent a Savior on their behalf.

Sermon On the Mount

Matthew Chapter 5 verse 17: "Do not think that I have come to abolish the law or the prophets."

Verse 20: "For I tell you that unless you're righteousness [right kind of living] surpasses that of the Pharisees and the teachers of the law, you will certainly not enter the kingdom of Heaven."

- Well, for the average person, game over. "Okay, I don't have enough time to be that good. I have to go to work. I have to clean stalls. I'm a shepherd.
- Jesus is saying, "It's bad, isn't it? I mean, it's way worse than you thought."

And while that is settling in, he gives them some specific examples.

- verse 21: "You have heard that it was said to the people long ago [and he refers to the Old Testament] 'Do not murder.'" Jesus says this: "But I tell you that anyone who is angry with his brother will be subject to judgment." "Oh yeah, you'll be judged for your anger."
- Verse 27, "You've heard it said, 'Do not commit adultery.'" "But I tell you anyone who looks at a woman lustfully has already committed adultery with her in his heart."
- Verse 31: "It has been said, 'Anyone who divorces his wife must give her a certificate of divorce.'"
- verse 32: "But I tell you anyone who divorces his wife except for marital unfaithfulness causes her to become an adulteress."

"Oh, give me a break!" He's not finished: "And anyone who marries the divorced woman commits adultery."

- Verse 43, "You have heard that it was said, 'Love your neighbor and hate your enemy,' but I tell you love your enemies and pray for those who persecute you."

"Jesus, I don't even pray for my neighbors. I don't really pray for anybody. You're telling me God expects me to pray for my enemies and pray for the people who persecute me? That's the standard?"

Hello. That's what it takes to be righteous? Good grief! There's nobody righteous but God."

Jesus smiles and says, "I know. That's my point."

- Nobody's going to get in on his own merit and his own righteousness because God is far more righteous than you gave him credit for originally."

THE WAY IT WORKS:

THE WOMAN CAUGHT IN THE ACT OF ADULTRY
THE PRODIGAL SON

The moral of the story -- the sooner you and I embrace our sinfulness, the sooner you and I are candidates for God's grace. The sooner you and I embrace our sinfulness, the sooner we have an opportunity to meet our Savior.

Ephesians 1:1-3

I. THE PEOPLE

Paul... an Apostle

An Apostle is “a messenger sent with a commission”
“an authorized spokesman for Jesus Christ.”

The Ephesians ... SAINTS!

“American Heritage Dictionary

(1) (a) (Theology) A person officially recognized, especially by canonization, as being entitled to public veneration and capable of interceding for people on earth. (b) A person who has died and gone to heaven. (2) An extremely virtuous person.

Words used to describe believers in the book of Acts

- Saint (Acts 26:10)
- Disciple (Acts 6:1)
- Christian (Acts 11:26)
- The Nazarenes (Acts 24:5)
- Followers of the way (Acts 9:1)

EPHESUS

- Ephesus was built as a trade city. The ruin of its harbor had made it by Paul’s day into a “temple and tourist” city.
- Ephesus was Paul’s “-est” church
 1. LONG est stay (3 ½ years)
 2. GREAT est impact (All of Asia heard)
 3. DEEPEST est love (Acts 20)
 4. STRONG est criticism (The silversmiths riot)

In Ephesus “an easygoing Christianity could never have survived. It could not have conquered and trained the world...” Sir William Ramsey

“And what value was there in fighting wild beasts – those men of Ephesus – if it was only for what I gain in this life down here?”

1 Cor. 15:32 (TLB)

“You have patience and have suffered troubles for my name and have not given up. Revelation 2:3-5 (NCV)

II. THE PRAYER

Paul begins ALL 13 of his letters with a prayer for grace and peace. That means THIS IS IMPORTANT!

GRACE: Grace is God's undeserved gift. I didn't deserve it but He gave it to me. Ray Steadman says "Grace is all of God's power and all of God's love and all of God's wonder available to you."

PEACE: Peace really does mean the battle's over. It means our battle with worry can be over because God has given us peace in Jesus Christ.

III. PRAISE

Who is the richest person in the world?

The believer in Jesus Christ.

"Blessed in the heavenly realms"

"EVERY spiritual blessing"

Not some... your share of ... or even most spiritual blessings. EVERY ONE! Just in case you don't think He's serious, God turned up the volume on this in the next 11 verses.

"And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with Him in the heavenly realms in Christ Jesus." Eph 2:6 (NIV)

"From the fullness of His grace we have all received one blessing after another."

John 1:16 (NIV)

"I pray that the faith you share may make you understand every blessing we have in Christ."

Philemon 1:6 (NCV)

Attitudes that keep Christians from enjoying their riches in Christ.

- Puritanism... confusing having less with being more spiritual
- Materialism - confusing material riches and spiritual riches.
- Selfishness – failing to see our riches as opportunities to serve others
- Comparison - looking at what others have rather than at what God has given me