

Ephesians 1 & 2 study

Lesson 1

Reading: Download the *Ephesians*, Evangelical Exegetical Commentary (PDF) by S. M. Baugh. Read pages 32-35 from the Introduction, the sections labeled, 'Recipients' and 'Theological Emphasis.'

Acts 18:18 through 19:41 (I use the ESV here, but whatever you prefer)

Lesson focus: This lesson is a preparation for a lifeCORE study in Ephesians 1 & 2. We begin by looking at the **back story and cultural situation in Ephesus** at the time. This will help us see why Paul writes on the themes and specific points of emphasis we find in the Letter to the Ephesians. Our first task is to get an overview of Paul's time in Ephesus, what he encountered while there and who he engaged in conversation. The next task is to become acquainted with the worship of Artemis (Greek) or Diana (Roman) in Ephesus. The discussion questions work through these two tasks.

Reasons for doing this study on Ephesians 1 & 2:

- a) These chapters are foundational to what it a Christian is.
- b) These chapters are foundational for what it means to understand what you have from God as a Christian.
- c) These chapters are foundational for getting the basics on the greatest gift of salvation you have as a Christian – that is, our Union with Christ.
- d) These chapters are foundational for seeing how the Story of Redemption is a long story, a planned story and a cosmic story.
- e) These chapters are foundational for the key points of the Gospel it gives and how we can use those in evangelism.

Discussion:

1. In Acts 18:18-23 we read that Paul “reasoned” with a group of people. Describe the group Paul talked with (see also 19:10)? Where did it talk with them?
2. In Acts 18:24-28 we read that Apollos was a Jew, a “eloquent man” and “competent in the Scriptures” and been “instructed in the way of the Lord.” How did this prepare him to speak “accurately” about Jesus?

How is his example of these combined traits important as a goal for us in Christian manhood?

3. In Acts 19:1-10 we see that Paul's return to Ephesus culminated in his talking about what key topic in relation to who Jesus is?

Why is that topic so vital to understanding the Story that the NT is unfolding?

...and how that topic is at the center of the Gospel along with Christ?

4. From Acts 19:11-20 we learn about the "miracles" which Paul did in Ephesus confirm the coming in of the Kingdom of Christ. How did these miracles both become a point of contention/competition with the leaders of Ephesus?

...and how did those miracles demonstrate that a greater power than the gods of the Greeks and Romans was in their midst?

5. Take a look at the Wikipedia article on the Temple of Artemis (https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Temple_of_Artemis) and also Acts 19:21-41, then list a few bullet points that explain the importance of Artemis to the region.

- a.
- b.
- c.
- d.
- e.
- f.
- g.

6. What similarities do you see between Artemis worship and our own culture?
...and how will this give us a clear back story to Ephesians 1 & 2?