

EPHESIANS CHAPTER 2

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Mother of God Community

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Background

Ephesus played a vital role in the spread of Christianity. Starting in the first century A.D., notable Christians such as Saint Paul and Saint John visited and rebuked the cults of Artemis, winning many Christian converts in the process.

Mary, the mother of Jesus, is thought to have spent her last years in Ephesus with Saint John. Her house and John's tomb can be visited there today.

Ephesus is mentioned multiple times in the New Testament, and the biblical book of Ephesians, written around 60 A.D., is thought to be a letter from Paul to Ephesian Christians.

Not every Ephesian was open to Paul's Christian message. Chapter 19 in the Book of Acts tells of a riot started by a man named Demetrius. Demetrius made silver coins featuring the likeness of Artemis.

Tired of Paul's attacks on the goddess he worshipped, and worried that the spread of Christianity would ruin his trade, Demetrius plotted a riot and enticed a large crowd to turn against Paul and his disciples. Ephesian officials, however, protected Paul and his followers and eventually Christianity became the city's official religion.

Paul spent 3 years in Ephesus. He met 12 believers while there and Baptized them in the Holy Spirit.

Verses cited from Ephesians Chapter 2

1 And you he made alive, when you were dead through the trespasses and sins

2 in which you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience.

3 Among these we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, following the desires of body and mind, and so we were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of mankind.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, out of the great love with which he loved us,

5 even when we were dead through our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

6 and raised us up with him, and made us sit with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,

7 that in the coming ages he might show the immeasurable riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.

8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and this is not your own doing, it is the gift of God--

9 not because of works, lest any man should boast.

10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

19 So then you are no longer strangers and sojourners, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,

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Notes

The *Grace* of Christ Jesus breaks down the wall between God and Humanity – this age and the age to come – between time and eternity

Grace is God doing for us that which we cannot do for ourselves

Actual Grace – a supernatural “kick in the pants” to get the will and intellect moving to seek out and keep sanctifying grace.

Sanctifying Grace – super natural life. Makes the soul fit for heaven.

Verse 4 God loved us

Verse 5 God quickens us – makes us alive

Verse 6 God raises us – seats us in heavenly places

Verse 7 The immeasurable riches of His Grace in kindness in the ages to come.

Now *faith* is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen.

Hebrews 11:1

- ✓ We are His work-man-ship. Created in Christ.
- ✓ We do God’s purpose. He fashions a masterpiece of us through His work-man-ship.
- ✓ God’s design – prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.
- ✓ You don’t have to invent or dream up our purpose.
- ✓ Our reference point - Seated in heavenly places.
- ✓ Start in the spiritual realm and focus on pleasing God.

Discussion Questions

1. **What has God done to make you fit for eternal life with Him?**
2. **What in your life is due only to God’s presence and goodness?**
3. **How is it you are created for good works but are not saved by good works?**
4. **Where has God’s grace entered your life? Do you have a sense of the work to which God is calling you?**