

# Bird's Eye View of Ephesians

## The church as the body of Christ, the fullness of Christ

A look into the heart of God, the  
purpose of God, the will of God,  
from eternity past

# The first of the four books of the heart of the divine revelation

- Galatians
- Ephesians
- Philippians
- Colossians

# Galatians

- It is when we are rescued from the present, evil, religious age, from doing spiritual things without faith, that is, without contacting the Lord, that we are living in the reality of justification by faith
- Otherwise, we are merely good, religious, law keepers, with the shell of a good church life, but actually under a curse
- When we grow in life, from children or slaves to sons, and enjoy the freedom of sonship, we are in a position to know what has been in the Father's heart from eternity past

# Ephesians

- The mystery of Christ
- The church
- The mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure, which He purposed in Himself (1:9)
- God's eternal purpose
- Christ and the church
- The church, not from the point of view of 1 and 2 Corinthians and Galatians
- But from a heavenly point of view
- Every spiritual blessing is the heavenlies, not on this earth
- When we are free from the religious age (Galatians), we are able to enter into the heart of God, and enjoy what God has wrought for us in the heavenlies in Christ (Ephesians)

**Apostle Paul's  
Second Missionary Journey  
49 - 52 A.D.**



# Background of Ephesians

- During Paul's second journey, the apostles were forbidden by the Holy Spirit to speak the word in Asia (Acts 16:6).
- During Paul's second journey, he found Priscilla and Aquila and stayed with them in Corinth for at least a year and a half
- From Corinth, Paul and Priscilla and Aquila traveled to Ephesus, the capital city of Asia
- Paul preaches in the synagogue in Ephesus, and leaves shortly thereafter, even though he is pressed by others to stay (Acts 18:20)
- Priscilla and Aquila are left in Ephesus

**Apostle Paul's  
Third Missionary Journey  
53 - 58 A.D.**



# Arrival of Apollos in Ephesus

- Priscilla and Aquila's perfecting of Apollos
- Expounding the way of God to him more accurately



# Paul's return to Ephesus on his third journey – Acts 19

- Finds about 12 disciples who had never heard of the Holy Spirit
- Paul speaks boldly in the synagogue for 3 months
- Then in the school of Tyrannus for two years

# The dynamic change in the lives of the Ephesian believers

- Confession of the Ephesians
- The burning of books of magic
- The word of the Lord growing mightily
- A dramatic change in the living of the believers affected the economy, the livelihood of the silversmiths
- Ephesus, the headquarters of the worship of Artemis, the goddess of fertility
- The temple of Artemis was considered one of the seven wonders of the world at the time

# Paul leaves Ephesus for Macedonia and Achaia

# Paul backtracks on his way back to Jerusalem

- Paul bypasses Ephesus, but calls for the elders of Ephesus and spends time with them at Miletus
- He did not shrink from declaring to them all the counsel of God (Acts 20:27)
- In all, Paul spent a total of 3 years in Ephesus (Acts 20:31)

# Ephesians written probably during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome

- Approximately 64 AD., roughly 5-6 years after Paul's stay in Ephesus.
- Along with Philippians
- Colossians
- And Philemon

# A few interesting observations

- Ephesus and Colossae, both cities in Asia where the Holy Spirit had initially forbidden the apostles to go.
- Both epistles, to Ephesus and Colossae, are the deepest, one on the heart's desire of God, the Body of Christ, and the other on the preeminence and all-inclusiveness of Christ, the headship of Christ
- Ephesus is the one church where Paul spent the most amount of time, as recorded in Acts
- Ephesus is also the one church to whom Paul pours out his heart before his imprisonment (Acts 20)
- Ephesus is also perhaps the church where there was the most opposition, and the widest open door:
- But I will remain in Ephesus until Pentecost, for a door is opened to me, great and efficacious, and there are many opposers (1 Corinthians 16:9)

# The place of the church of Ephesus in the New Testament

- A crucial city, and a crucial church
- A church where Paul poured out his heart and soul
- A church that received the highest revelation
- A church that was ready to enter into the heart of God to touch the eternal purpose of God
- A church that enjoyed the benefit of the ministry of Paul
- Yet also a church that was prone to different teachings (1 Timothy)
- A church that is mentioned first among the seven churches in Revelation
- A church commended by the Lord, with works, labor, endurance, able to discern who are apostles and who are not, bearing all things
- Yet a church that will eventually lose her first love
- A church where John labored towards the end of the first century, about close to 30 years after Paul

# What God forbids initially, God opens up in the deepest way

- What God forbade initially, eventually became a vessel for the riches of the heart's desire of God to be poured out like no other book
- The highest, most profound revelation of the church as the fullness of Christ, the mystery of Christ, was reserved for later
- We may not be ready to receive such a revelation until God prepares us and equips our vessel to contain what He desires to dispense into us
- Galatians is needed first to unveil our need for Christ alone. The Holy Spirit might forbid further revelation until we are satisfied with Christ alone
- When we have Christ, then the Holy Spirit is ready to unveil what is on His heart:
- Ephesians





# Time of writing of the heart of the divine revelation

- Divine revelation takes time and patience
- Galatians, being the first book of the heart of the divine revelation, was written first, in the early years of Paul's ministry, perhaps around 54 AD, during Paul's one and a half year stay in Corinth, before his going to Ephesus, during his second journey
- Ephesians, Philippians and Colossians were written during Paul's first imprisonment in Rome, around 64 AD, 10 years later
- It took about 10 years for the heart of God's divine revelation to be completed

# Ephesians is a book in the heavenlies

- From God's view point, not from ours
- Different from Romans which begins with man's condition before God, and God's judgment
- Ephesians with God's speaking of what He has accomplished for us, in Christ
- It is not so much what God has accomplished for me, to save me and resucue me, though that is very much there
- Rather, it what God has accomplished in Christ, for His purpose, for His sake, from His angle, because it pleases Him, according to His will
- Everything that God has accomplished for us is with His goal or objective in view, not our immediate benefit

# Not what I want, or what I need, according to our thought

- Many times, we come to God, needing mercy, forgiveness, compassion, for our failures, our wretchedness, our weakness, our inability to follow Him, our backsliding, our unfaithfulness
- We come to God as beggars, as unworthy, shameful, looking for crumbs
- Ephesians takes us out of that realm, from beggars to kings
- It is not that we beg God for forgiveness.
- It is not that we have been redeemed, but that we have redemption
- We have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies in Christ

# It is not what I can do, but what I become

- Sometimes, our Christian lives are filled with doing things, good things, good practices
- For example, I need to praise the Lord in the meetings
- I need to pray
- I need to read the Bible
- I need to overcome
- Ephesians brings us out of that realm to a realm where we have been blessed in Christ
- It is not so much that I need to praise, but rather that my life is a praise
- I become who I am because I have been put in Christ

# Key words

- In Christ
- In Him
- In Himself
- To Himself
- Before Him
- In whom
- In the Beloved
- Thirteen times

# Key words

- Revelation
- A spirit of wisdom and revelation (1:17)

# Chosen in Him by the Father

- For a purpose:
- To be holy and without blemish before Him in love



# Predestinated by the Father

- For a purpose: unto sonship
- According to the good pleasure of His will
- To the praise of the glory of His grace
- With which He graced us in the Beloved
- The grace we enjoy today is not a pill that we need to get us through the day, but a person given to us as the Beloved, which is making us His sons to be a praise to His glory
- This is according to His good pleasure

# We have redemption in the Son

- Not just that I have been redeemed
- But I have redemption in Him
- The forgiveness of offenses
- According to the riches of His grace

Making known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure

- Redemption is a process by which we can know the mystery of God's will
- Redemption is not viewed here as something for my personal benefit, but rather as a process to be brought into the mystery of God's will, what God really wants
- The Son's redemption speaks forth the accomplishment of the Father's purpose

# To head up all things in Christ

- Unto the economy of the fullness of the times, to head up all things in Christ, in Him
- The Father's choosing and predestinating, the Son's redemption, are with the purpose to head up everything in Christ
- Apart from Christ, nothing is headed up

# To be designated as an inheritance

- The Son's redemption, and the Father's predestinating, is not to make us feel good, or to give us victory or power, to have more faith, to cause us to live better Christian lives
- But rather for us to be designated as God's inheritance
- We look at look at ourselves and see sinners, weak, unfaithful, backsliding people
- God looks at us in Christ and sees an inheritance, a possession that He can inherit
- God looks at us as a praise of His glory

# The Holy Spirit's sealing

- Based on the Father's choosing and predestinating, and based on the Son's redemption, God is so excited in what He sees that He quickly puts His stamp or His mark on us, so we can belong to no one else but Him
- In this process, our cooperation is needed
- Therefore Paul says in 1:13, « In whom you also, having heard the word of the truth, the gospel of your salvation, in Him also believing... »

# The Holy Spirit as our inheritance, as a pledge

- God gives us His Holy Spirit as the pledge, or foretaste, of our inheritance
- So that we can enjoy Him until He fully redeems us as His acquired possession
- Yet the emphasis here is on the fact that the Holy Spirit has sealed us with His own stamp, His own image, and made us His acquired possession
- Nothing, not our sin, our weakness, our failures, have any right to take rob us from God

# Paul's first prayer

- The high revelation of God concerning what is on His heart requires prayer
- Specific prayer, not general prayer
- Prayer for the saints, thanksgiving for the saints (1:16)
- For a spirit of wisdom and revelation
- In the full knowledge of Him
- The prayer is not to overcome sin or our flesh, or our natural man
- Rather the prayer is to know Him in four aspects
- These four kinds of knowing are related to each other in a progressive way



# To know the hope of His calling

- All that God has called us into in the previous verses, has a hope, a destination, a fulfillment, a completion
- Everything God gives to and does in us has a hope
- We are not people without hope
- Nothing that God calls us into is not without a hope or a fulfillment

# The riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints

- The hope of His calling causes us to know the saints
- What is in the saints
- The riches of the glory of His inheritance
- There is something in the saints that God will inherit
- This is the expression of all the riches of who He is worked into the saints
- Do I see the saints in this way?
- Do I just see problems, weaknesses, disappointments, failures?
- Or do I see the kind of inheritance that God sees?
- Do I see the saints as a glory?

# The surpassing greatness of His power towards us who believe

- When I know the hope of my calling, and the riches of the glory of God's inheritance in the saints, I can know the resurrection power toward us
- I can know God's operation
- Not only do I know why I am here (the hope of my calling), not only do I know who the saints are (God's inheritance), but I know God's operation in this universe, the purpose and reason.
- His operation is towards us, that is, it is transmitted or given to us

# And the operation of the might of His strength

- This operation is the resurrection power and the ascension power
- When we know this power, we know that nothing can damage God's inheritance
- There is no power, no authority, no lordship, no name that is able to overcome God's operation and God's purpose, which is the church
- Christ is far above all, and at the same time everything is subjected under His feet
- When I know this power, I realize that everything that tries to destroy God's inheritance, God's glory, is under Christ's feet
- Everything of death in me, that tries to usurp the lordship of Christ, is swallowed up by this resurrection power

# To know the church, which is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all and in all

- Such a knowing of why I am here (the hope of His calling), the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints (who the saints are), and the surpassing greatness of His power, cause me to know the church
- Not as an organization or group of believers, but as the Body, the issue, the expression of the Christ who fills every believer and is in every believer
- To have such a spirit of wisdom and revelation will cause us to see Christ in the saints, to see Christ in His Body.
- To know the church is to know Christ because the church is the Body, the outflow of the riches of Christ
- This power causes us to know the church the Lord Jesus talks about in Matthew 16:16, against which the gates of Hades cannot prevail

# Three Stand points of God

- Stand point of eternity past
- Stand point of God's operation
- Stand point of God's economy

# Stand point of eternity past

## The church = His Body

- Church: Greek word « ekklesia » - called out ones
- Not just an assembly of people meeting somewhere and doing something
- Called out.
- God opens His mouth and calls us out
- We are the out-called ones

- God's call is to  
come out of  
everything unto  
Him to be His  
Body



# Stand point of God's operation

- We are His masterpiece (Ephesians 2:10), His poeima, Greek
- Chapter 2 shows us God's work to creates something from darkness and death, to become His masterpiece
- This is different from the stand point of eternity in chapter 1.
- God's operation begins with our death situation (2:1).
- And with our walk in darkness (2:2-3)

# The producing of God's masterpiece

- God writes His masterpiece
- It is His writing, His poem
- It is He who has made us alive together with Christ
- It is He who has raised us up together with Him
- It is He who has seated us together with Him in the heavenlies
- Every stage of the masterpiece is **with Him**, that is, **with Christ**

# Stand point of God's economy: The one new man

- When we experience the church, which is the Body of Christ as the called out ones, we are brought into God's operation to become His masterpiece
- We realize how much God has had to operate, from scratch, to produce a romantic poem, full of feeling and experiences
- The same resurrection and ascension power that raised up Christ has raised us up, not separately, but together, with Christ
- Christ is the author of the masterpiece, and also the content
- Eventually, our life will be a display of the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus

# Stand point of God's economy: The one new man

- With God's calling out to produce His Body, and with His operation to produce His masterpiece, God is now able to create the one new man, according to His economy
- God's economy is not just His operation, but His operation with a purpose and a destiny, to accomplish what He desires
- His heart's desire is not just a Body to match who He is, nor just a masterpiece to display His operation and workmanship, but also a man with His personality and identity with His thoughts, intents and purposes

# The main characteristic of the new man: the abolishing of the enmity

- The middle wall of partition, the enmity, having been broken down
- The law of commandments in ordinances having been abolished in His flesh
- In order to create the two in Himself into one new man

# The one new man

- The one new man is a matter of growth or development
- From the Body, which is the fullness of the One who fills all in all by calling all to Himself, from the standpoint of eternity
- To the masterpiece, which is His operation where He has the full freedom to write, to cut, to chisel, to chip away, to make us His poem
- To the new man who is a man with His personality to accomplish His economy on the earth, in time

# As the new man, we are fellow citizens with the saints

- In the new man, with its personality and mind of Christ, we are fellow citizens with the saints, in God's kingdom
- Under God's ruling
- With rights and responsibilities
- To bear God's testimony

# As the new man, we are members of the household of God

- The more we bear responsibility for God's testimony as fellow citizens of His kingdom, the more we become God's family to provide Him with rest and satisfaction
- In the household of God, there are love and concern one for another, not just demands and requirements
- The living of the new man produces a kingdom living of the highest standard with a loving and sweet family atmosphere of the highest virtue, bringing in God's divine rule and also God's rest and satisfaction



# Being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets

- This is crucial in the book of Ephesians, and provides the introduction to Paul's burden in chapter 3 and 4, as well as in the following book, the book of Philippians
- The apostles and prophets (plural) labor for the raising up of the church as the new man
- Without such a foundation, the church cannot be built
- No church can be independent of the apostles and prophets
- They labor as His servants to produce something that matches Him as the cornerstone

With such a foundation, the new man, expressed as the kingdom and the household of God, grows

# As fellow citizens, into a temple of the Lord

- Eventually, God settles down in our spirit as His dwelling place
- As fellow citizens, we grow into His kingdom under His ruling, till we eventually grow into a holy temple in the Lord, where we are brought all the way into the holy of holies, that is, into our spirit
- Paul prayed for a spirit of wisdom and revelation in 1:17
- Here, not just do we see the church in our spirit, but even more, we are brought into a life in the holy of holies, not in the outer court nor just in the holy place

# As the household of God, into a dwelling place of God in spirit

- The more we grow into the Holy of holies in our experience, the more the Lord is able to have His abode with His family
- The more we grow into the new man, as fellow citizens exercising responsibility to bear God's testimony, the sweeter is the relationship between the members of the household of God
- The sweeter the family life, and the more God is able to enjoy His rest in our spirit, which is the Holy of the holies in the temple

The revelation and vision of the church in chapters 1 and 2, from God's side, with His operation and economy, become a cause for Paul in chapter 3, which drives him to pour himself out so the Ephesians could experience the vision that they saw in their spirit

# Four pillars that a local church needs

- Apostles and prophets (2:20; 3:5)
- To be strengthened with power through the Spirit into our inner man (3:16)
- To endeavour to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace (4:1-6)
- To be perfected (4:7-16)

# Apostles and prophets in spirit

- Paul received the stewardship of the grace of God given to him for the Gentiles
- Stewardship is God's economy being put into the trust of a servant, or steward
- On behalf of a cause
- There is a cause that drives the steward to take what God entrusts to him
- God's economy is now just no longer in Himself, from eternity past, as something carried out exclusively by Him
- Chapters 1 and 2 show us the Father's choosing, the Son's redemption, and the Spirit's sealing and pledging.
- Furthermore, we see God's calling, God's operation, and God's economy, in the progression from the Body of Christ to the new man

# A steward, a minister, less than the least of all saints

- Now, God's economy is placed in a vessel chosen by God, to be transmitted to the Gentiles
- When God's economy is ministered to us, the Gentiles, it becomes grace
- Hence, it a stewardship of grace (3:2), it is grace as the unsearchable riches of Christ (3:8).
- When God's economy is ministered, the unsearchable riches of Christ as grace are enjoyed
- This causes the mystery that has been hidden in God to be revealed, and made know to the rulers and authorities through the church



# The prayers of the apostle

- The stewardship of the grace of God is carried out in spirit, by the prayers of the apostles
- In three stages:
- Through thanksgivings for the believers (1:16)
- Through specific mentioning of the believers (1:16)
- Through prayers with specific requests

# The first prayer (1:17-23)

- Prayer for a spirit of wisdom and revelation to know
- This prayer is for spiritual understanding (spirit of wisdom) and for spiritual revelation or unveiling (spirit of revelation)
- The first prayer is a prayer for the Father of glory to give us the spiritual ability to grasp spiritual things, so that we may receive revelation, the unveiling of our mind to know

# The second prayer (3:14-21)

- This is the second pillar that a local church needs
- To be strengthened with power through His Spirit into the inner man (3:16)
- This is the power that Paul prayed for the believers to know in his first prayer in chapter 1
- In the second prayer, Paul does not pray for the believers to know, but to be strengthened
- That Christ may make His home in our hearts through faith
- That we may be strong to apprehend with all the saints what the breadth and length and height and depth are
- To know the knowledge surpassing love of Christ
- That we may be filled unto all the fullness of God

- In chapter 1, it is the church who is His Body, the fullness of the One who fills all in all, from God's viewpoint, from the standpoint of eternity
- Here, in chapter 3, specific prayer is needed on the part of the steward, on behalf of the church, for the saints to be filled unto the fullness of God
- Without this second pillar, there is no way for a local church to become the fullness of God in reality

# Paul's second prayer: strengthened into the inner man

- The inner man: our regenerated spirit with our renewed soul, with the life of the soul denied
- Not just our spirit (1:17), but our inner man
- For the new man in chapter 2 to be lived out, there is the need for the inner man to be strengthened in chapter 3
- The strengthening is not strictly speaking of the inner man, but a strengthening into
- Indicating a being brought into the inner man, into a state or condition of mind and soul, through prayer, where Christ can have the freedom to make His home in our hearts

# The third pillar: the seven ones

- The living needed to walk worthily of the calling with which we were called
- Our walk according to the revelation and vision we see in chapters 1 and 2, and the experience that we have in chapter 3
- To walk worthily of this calling is to endeavour to keep the oneness of the Spirit in the uniting bond of peace (4:3)

# The charter of our oneness

- Walking in the reality of the new man
- The biggest safeguard of the experience of chapter 3
- The biggest test to living according to the revelation of the mystery of Christ in chapter 3
- Everything is realized in the keeping of the oneness of the Spirit
- Everything can be lost in the adding to, or subtracting from the seven ones

- One Body
- One Spirit
- One hope of our calling
- One Lord
- One faith
- One baptism
- One God and Father of all, who is over all,  
and through all and in all



# The fourth pillar: the perfecting of the saints through the gifts

- The keeping of the oneness of the Spirit brings in the operation of the gifted ones for the perfecting of the saints, so all the saints can operate unto the work of ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ (4:11-16)
- The keeping of the oneness of the Spirit produces the most diversity and variety of gifts (4:7)
- We do not look for differences to point out and criticize, but every local church should treasure the other local churches and learn from each other, without imposing anything
- Churches may be so different from each other, but in harmony with each other where there is a real receiving and honoring of the gifts, and also an imparting of the gifts
- In such an atmosphere, the gifted members have the freedom and room and field to operate to raise up the saints to become pillars who can operate in the same way
- Such a perfecting causes the saints to arrive at the oneness of the faith and of the full knowledge of the Son of God
- At a full grown man
- At the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ

- Not only are we, as the Body of Christ, the fullness of the One who fills all and in all (from God's eternal stand point)
- Not only are we being filled unto the fullness of God (through our being strengthened into our inner man)
- But we are arriving at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ through the keeping of the oneness of the Spirit, and through the perfecting by the gifts
- This is not just the Body as an entity (1:23), but the Body as a full grown person with a personality and a mind
- A functioning Body that is no longer childish and holding to winds of teaching, but holding to truth in love, and growing up into the Head in all things, through the joints of the rich supply, and the operation in the measure of each one part, builds itself up in love

# From God's eternal stand point to the realization of God's economy

- From the producing of the Body of Christ as the fullness of the Triune God through His work in eternity
- Through the operation in time of the Triune God
- To the realization of the growth and maturity of the Body of Christ unto a full grown man
- The bridge between the two is the stewardship of the servants of God, the apostles and prophets in spirit, their commitment, their labor (their prayer), their vision, their revelation

The result: the putting off of the old man and the putting on of the new man (4:22-24)

- The practical living or walk of the Body of Christ, as the new man, in truth
- The truth or reality which is in Jesus (4:21)

# Such a walk in truth results in a walk in love and light

- The walk in truth is a walk in love and light
- We hold to truth in love (4:15)
- The truth is never to be a thing to used to beat others with
- The living out of truth is in love and light
- There is no obligation, no demand, no requirements
- The more we arrive at the oneness of the faith, the more we arrive at a full grown man, at the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ, the more our walk must manifest itself in love

A walk that becomes an offering  
and a sacrifice to God, as a sweet  
smelling savour

- Such a walk of the Body of Christ, as the new man walking in the truth, manifests itself as a sweet smelling offering and sacrifice to God, where Christ can shine on us, on every part of our walk
- Such a walk issues spontaneously in a life of praise, singing, speaking, thanksgiving, and submission, and of love in light

# The living of the Body of Christ in love, as the wife of Christ

- Christ is the Head of the church
- Christ is the Savior of the Body
- In such a walk of love and light, Christ nourishes and cherishes the church
- Christ sanctifies and cleanses her by the washing of the water in the word
- To present the church to Himself, glorious, holy and without blemish
- This is the fulfillment or realization of the Father's choosing and predestinating in chapter 1

# A walk in love, as the wife of Christ, leads to a life of warfare (6:10-20)

- Being empowered in the Lord and in the might of His strength (6:10)
- In chapter 1, the need is to have a spirit of wisdom and revelation to know the surpassing greatness of His power towards us who believe
- In chapter 3, the need is to be strengthened with this power into our inner man, to experience the revelation of the Body of Christ
- In chapter 3, this very power operates in the church (3:20)
- But in chapter 6, there is the need to be empowered, active passive voice
- Put on the whole armour of God
- Paul gives a series of commands to charge the Ephesians to stand against the attacks of the enemy
- This is the warfare of the church, the Body of Christ, as the new man, as the wife of Christ, to display the multifarious wisdom of God to the principalities and powers in 3:10
- Chapter 6 shows us the practical warfare of the Body of Christ as a full grown man, able to stand against the enemy
- And able to stand with the apostle, praying that utterance may be given to him in his imprisonment in Rome, that he may be able to speak boldly as he ought to speak



# Ephesians, a book in love

- Chapter 1
- The work of the Triune God is in love
- The Father's choosing is in love
- The realm of His choosing and predestinating is in the Beloved
- Paul hears of the faith and the love that the Ephesians had towards all the saints (1:15)
- Chapter 2
- God, rich in mercy because of His great love with which He loved us (2:4)

# Ephesians leads into Philippians

- Ephesians is a book in the heavenlies, from the heavenly view point, not addressing specific problems like 1 Corinthians, nor presenting God's salvation from the human point of view, like Romans
- However, Ephesians is written by the apostle, the servant, the steward of the Lord, to an actual local church, which was very much related to the apostle who had labored for 3 year with them.
- The need of the apostles was great
- Without the apostles, a church cannot grow well
- At the end of the epistle, the test of the maturity of a local church is whether they can stand with the apostle in the spiritual warfare, in the midst of strong opposition (1 Corinthians 16:9)
- This sets the stage for the book of Philippians

# Ephesians, a book in love

- Chapter 3
- Rooted and grounded in love
- Causing us to know the dimensions of Christ together
- And to know the knowledge surpassing love of Christ
- Chapter 4
- The keeping of the oneness of the Spirit can only be done through lowliness and meekness, with long suffering, bearing one another in love (4:2)
- The holding to truth must be in love (4:15)
- The building up of the Body of Christ is in love (4:16)

# Ephesians, a book of love

- Chapter 5
- A walk in love, that eventually becomes a sacrifice, an offering to God
- The love of a husband for a wife, even as Christ loved the church and gave Himself up for her
- Love leading to nourishing and cherishing
- Chapter 6
- Ephesians concludes with grace being with all those who love the Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptibility
- The revelation of the church, the experience of the church, and the living out of the church, can be realized only through love in incorruptibility, according to God's heart's desire
- I may love according to my taste, preference, and desire, but not according to God's revelation and heart, which are incorruptible
- For me to love in incorruptibility means I must find myself in God's way and God's heart, to live according to God's purpose
- Any other kind of love may lead to corruptibility



