

"God's Word, Alive!"
A Biblical Teaching Ministry Dedicated to Holding Forth the Word of Life

Outline of Ephesians Chapter One:

Verses 1, 2	Introduction and Greeting
Verses 3 – 14	God's Blessings and Our Response
Verses 15 – 19	Paul's Commendation and Prayer
Verses 20 – 23	Christ's Exaltation

SUBJECT: Paul's Commendation of the Saints at Ephesus

SCRIPTURE: Ephesians 1:13 - 16

"In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers."

INTRODUCTION

After having heard the word of truth (the gospel of salvation), the saints of Ephesus believed and placed their trust in it. To these actions, there was a spiritual response to their faith, and an earthly/human response.

- Spiritually, the Holy Spirit of Promise became their seal and earnest.
- Earthly, Paul (the human witness), after hearing about their faith in the Lord Jesus and love all the saints, gave thanks and prayed for them.

PAUL'S COMMENDATION

\Paul, as an apostle, did not commend the saints for any of their earthly possessions or natural accomplishments. Although, these things are needed to function in life, they should not be the main focus of the Christian life. Paul had just given an extensive listing of spiritual blessings (Ephesians 1:3 – 14). And, likewise his compliments were spiritual in nature.

This is in stark contrast to what is often heard in our generation. There is such a focus (from pulpit and pew) upon that which is earthly, temporal and sensual. Much labor and untold sermons, so called, are geared towards acquiring wealth; in other words, setting affections on things of the earth. This is in total contrast to what the Christian faith is about and what we as Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ should strive for. There is certainly nothing wrong with lofty positions and wealth. These, too, can be blessings that come from God. But, the driving force of the Believer's heart should be to please God; to serve God; to know God, and to worship God. This should be our chief aim and joy. Paul, therefore, commends these saints because their priorities were in proper order. He commends their faith in the Lord and their love for all of the saints.

- 1 John 2:15 – 17. Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world. And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof; but he that doeth the will of God abideth forever.
- James 4:3, 4. Ye ask, and receive not, because ye ask amiss, that ye may consume it upon your lusts. Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? Whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God.
- Colossians 1:1, 2. If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth.
- Hebrews 13:5. Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee.

THEIR FAITH IN THE LORD

The faith of the saints of Ephesus was striking enough that news of it had reached the ears of Paul. He was not slow to commend it because he knew the value of faith. Paul had commended others for their faith, including the saints of Rome.

It is through their faith that the righteousness and the work of God is attested to. It is evidence of their justification towards God, and of their union with Christ.

Because of their degree of faith, Paul's prayer for them was to grow even deeper in the things of God. True faith in God never goes unrewarded.

- Romans 1:8. First, I thank my God through Jesus Christ for you all, that your faith is spoken of throughout the whole world.
- Romans 1:17. For therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, The just shall live by faith.
- Romans 5:1. Therefore, being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 1 Corinthians 13:13. And now abideth faith, hope, charity (love), these three, but the greatest of these is charity (love).
- Galatians 5:22. But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith.
- Hebrews 11:6. But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

THEIR LOVE UNTO ALL THE SAINTS

True faith in God will result in love for the people of God.

- John 13:33 – 35. Little children, yet a little while I am with you. Ye shall seek me: and as I said unto the Jews, Whither I go, ye cannot come, so now I say to you. A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another.
- Romans 13:8. Owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath fulfilled the law.
- Ephesians 3:17 – 19. That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fullness of God.
- 1 John 4:20, 21. If a man say, I love God, and hateth his brother, he is a liar; for he that loveth not his brother whom he hath seen, how can he love God whom he hath not seen? And this commandment have we from him, That he who loveth God love his brother also.

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