

## The Church: The Community of Christ

(An Introduction to Ephesians)

Ephesians 1:1 - 3

*Once you become aware that the main business that you are here for is to know God, most of life's problems fall into place of their own accord.* J.I. Packer, *Knowing God*

*If we train people to be consumers instead of communers, we'll end up with customers instead of disciples.* Greg Laurie, *The Upside-Down Church*

### Outline:

- The Church in Canada and the relevance of Ephesians -
- The Form of an Ancient Letter -
- Paul's Words of Introduction -

### Questions for Reflection:

1. Consider reading the entire letter of Ephesians out loud in one sitting; either alone, with your family or in your Life Group. This is the way the Church at Ephesus would have first heard it, and it will help you get the big picture. It should take just 20 - 25 minutes. 😊
2. Paul used the word "sinner" to refer to unbelievers, while "saint" designated those who were part of the Church of Christ (cf. Rom.3:7; 5:8; Gal. 2:17; I Tim. 1:15 - 16; 2:14 and Rom. 1:7; I Cor. 1:2; 14:33; 2 Cor. 1:2; 13:33; Eph.1:1; 3:18; 6:18; Phil. 4:21; Col. 1:26) Do you think of yourself more as a saint or a sinner? How does this affect our behaviour?
3. Is there any evidence in the New Testament of a person in union with Christ, but not in communion with a visible, local expression of His Church? Discuss why these two elements are essential to faith.



## Ephesians 1:1-3 (ESV)

*Paul, an Apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,  
To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus:*

*Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.  
Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,  
Who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.*

*I will give you every place where you set your foot, as I promised Moses...  
Be strong and courageous, because you will lead these people  
to inherit the land I swore to their ancestors to give them.*

**Joshua 1:3, 6**

### Verses of Interest:

- 78 of the 155 verses in Ephesians are similar to verses in the book of Colossians.
- Nearly 100 references are made to Jesus in the six chapters of Ephesians.
- In Christ / In Him - used 164 times in Paul's epistles, 32 times in Ephesians.

### Insights Gained:

*There are three principal unions revealed in the Scriptures... First the union of three divine persons in one Godhead: having distinct personalities, being co-eternal and co-glorious, yet constituting one God. Second, the union of the divine and human natures in one person, Jesus Christ, Emmanuel, being God and man. And third, the union of the Church to Christ, He being the Head, they the members, constituting one mystical body.*

Arthur W. Pink (1886 - 1952)

### **Questions or Insights for Discussion:**

- 1)
- 2)

