

9-9-26 Wed Bible Study Ephesians Background

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SPEAKERS

Pastor Dow Boyer

. Good evening, everyone. This is always exciting for me that when we get to the point of starting a new one of these, I always think you know we're. I know that we're not necessarily Israel and trying to overcome until the end, but I do think it is interesting when I see who comes the first week, and who's still coming by the last week. So, we're going to take pictures, and oh, it is my my hope that you all will continue with it. And I tried a little. I think I was a little too ambitious last year, and so I've learned from that a little bit, and I'm going to back it up a little bit. What I did last year for well, some of you in the room survived it. Probably there's a documentary on it, probably as well. But I did Philippians, and gosh, that was from when we started. We got Philippians done by the end of the year, and then we went right into Galatians, like in January, and from January to the Wednesday before Memorial Day, we crammed Galatians in. And I was like, by the end, some of those weeks were like an hour and 10 minutes. I was like, I never really wanted it to be that. I wanted to be more in that 45 to 50-minute range. And so this year is going to be just Philippians, or sorry, no, we already did that one. I should be able to get that one done faster. This one's going to be just Ephesians, and the way I looked at it is after today, and there's a, I think October 14th, we are going to break that week, which will be I think fall break, one of the weeks of fall break. So I believe October 14 I'll be out of town, so we will not have it that week. And then the Wednesday before the week of Thanksgiving will probably be our shutdown date until the first week of January because I will be in South Africa for a couple of weeks, a couple of Wednesdays with Dean for doing their conference. Unless something changes there, there is a December 16 where if I don't quite get to where I want to be, we'll know when we get closer that I might come back in and do that one. Because here's my goal: my goal is to be completely done with by the end of Ephesians two by the time we break for, for the holidays, so if I need an extra week in there, then I think December 16 can be that week. Or if it helps with the Awana people, so I know that's an important thing. When we come back, that will give us 20 weeks from the first week of January to the Wednesday before Memorial Day, to do chapters 3, 4, 5, and six, so it really breaks down to each chapter having about five weeks. So I think we can go at a good pace there, and not have to kill you on these Wednesdays of trying to get everything just pushed through. I do think that we have an optional like spring break week. If I feel like hardly anybody's going to be here, and we need to take a spring break week as well. Then, I mean, we could probably still do that and have 20 sessions afterwards. So that's what I'm thinking right now. I've been breaking these down into into sections. Tonight is going to be just a background, so we will not actually be touching Ephesians one one until next week. But we are going to do as much background as we can. So anyway, what this is and what this isn't, it is meant to be a more in-depth expository teaching for those who would rather have that, or who would like to supplement with what they get on Sundays. With this, what it is not is a

replacement for a commentary. It is not designed to break down every Greek word, it is also not, you know, designed to take three years to go through six chapters. It is going to be an overview, but it's going to be an in-depth overview, and we are going to go verse by verse, so we're not skipping anything. So that's what you can expect from this. We will pull a lot of things in in order to make the points. We want to be able to see this clearly from the beginning to the end. What was being taught, and I think as a result of this, that it'll be good for you all. It'll strengthen you and your faith. And Ephesians is such a great book, so we're going to talk about that a little bit today as we kind of ring the bell towards Ephesians. But let's open up in a word of prayer, and then we will get started. Dear Heavenly Father, I thank you for this opportunity, Lord. It was just a great year last year, but I learned a lot as well, and learned what pace that was realistic for me to be able to present this, and that the people could endure until the end. So I pray, Lord, that you would just be with the time that we spend together, but I. Pray that the people also would would go home and study these things out and and to see what your word is actually saying, Lord, and not just depending upon me. This is great that as a body of believers, Lord, that we can come together and be edified by opening up your word. But still, Lord, the expectation is for each and every one of us to own our own faith, to be students, and Lord, there may be times where we can have minor things that we can agree to disagree on, and we should not get our feelings hurt. We should not be mean towards one another, but Lord, we want to be as honest as we can with Scripture, and Lord, we just pray for your guidance so that we can be able to understand it correctly and clearly, Lord, and that we can implement it into our lives. Lord, I pray you just be with us now and be with Awana and all the other ministries that are going on-the junior high and the senior high right now. Lord, we pray if there's any person in this building who doesn't know where they're going to spend eternity, that tonight would be the night. We love you and praise you in Jesus' name, Amen. Okay, so you all have a packet. They're not usually going to have pictures, but I gave you pictures. If I wouldn't have given you pictures, it would have been more around that eight-page mark. So just so you guys are, if you're keeping score at home, you're like, oh my gosh, this is already starting out with 10. Well, the last page has one verse, so you know what I'm saying. It's really nine, and then we take the pictures out of it. It's really eight. So I think you guys will be okay today. The main goal is basically give us a good understanding, things we can keep pulling towards, and and a baseline that we can pull from for the weeks to come, and so hopefully it does just that. The pictures, well, I usually have had this first picture in for last two studies because it was fitting, and it still works for this one, but I have added some additional ones. So, or if you need to color them, there you go. So give you something to do while I talk and while you're waiting for a wanna to let out. All right, so let's talk a little bit about Ephesus today. It is you can just pronounce Selkirk in Turkey. It's located on the Aegean coast, and it's really it's one of those places that I think probably Linda, maybe there's Linda and maybe some others who have taken like a cruise doing Paul's missionary journeys. I mean, there still is quite a bit to see in Ephesus, and there's quite a bit that has been found from archeological digs. So it's kind of cool seeing those pictures. I have to live, I guess, vicariously through the pictures. I have not been there, but it looks like there's still quite a bit that you can see and learn, which is kind of cool. But that's where it exists today. So it's going to be modern day Turkey, but going back in time since this was written 2000 years ago, it was a major city of Asia Minor and was probably at one point was the most principal in all of Eastern Europe, and I think you're going to see this a little bit when you see how long Paul ministered there, and when you're going to see what he says as a result of ministering there. A couple other things, though, that was really important about Ephesus is it gave access to the Silk Road. It also was known as the city of marble, there's a large stadium. There was a large library, and one of the seven wonders of the world, which we'll talk about here in a minute, was the Temple of Diana. So, if your wife happens to be named Diana, maybe your bedroom is called the Temple of Diana. But this really was one of the seven wonders of the world. Lame humor, but we got to do something in order to keep keep you guys fresh tonight. All right, but as far as where did it originate? Where where does it its roots come from? And it can be really tracked back to originally part of the Hittites, and they actually worshiped Sibyl, which was considered a mother goddess. Now this is interesting, because when you think about what

Ephesus was known for in the first century, and specifically when you read Acts 19, and you realize that oh, this was really just ripped off by the Greeks, who ripped it off by the Hittites, and so we think about how when Ephesians one is going to talk about this one God and these three persons, and you see all three that are that are working, and all three are working together as one. And then it's basically a little bit like a slam into the fact that oh well, you guys have went through goddess after goddess. You just keep saying it's a new name, right? I think that's important to be able to see this was kind of the culture for them, but originally it was the Hittites, and they worshiped Sybil, and there is this consensus of this mother goddess. It looks a little bit different when we get to the Greeks, and it looks a little different when we get to the Romans. But in the 10th century, and this is this is the tale. This is the rumor. I have no idea if this is true, but this is when you start reading, and they'll even kind of preface saying it was said or this possibly happened. It's like okay, but how did we get to where we were? You know, by the time we get at least to the Greeks and. So here's what I found in the 10th century. There was an Athenian priest, and this priest sought the guidance of an oracle. And the oracle said, "So you want to start a new city? Okay, here's the sign: a fish and a boar. And so the prince is going around, and he's thinking, "Okay, here's what the oracle said: a fish and a boar. What does this mean? And so, as they're kind of traveling around, he's trying to find this place to start this new Greek city. And as they are cooking breakfast in the morning, a fish jumps out of the pan, starts a fire, and it scares off a boar. And so he's like, "Oh, must be a sign. And so it was at that point, apparently, that that is why the Greeks come alongside and they call it Ephesus, and they start making a Greek city from that point on. And when they go in and they see Sybil, they're like, "Well, we got a Greek goddess named Artemis, so we're just going to replace Sybil with Artemis. Now Sybil was mother goddess, but Artemis kind of is known for what? Does anybody know? Like the bow? You know, is the big part with Artemis? A little bit different kind of consensus here than with than we started out with from Sybil, you know, and as time went on, eventually the Romans would colonize, and then when they colonized this area, they said, "Oh, well, this should really be Diana. Diana is the the Roman goddess, and so this was the transition to get you to this temple and the worship of Diana, and this became one of the seven wonders of the ancient world. It was the largest Greek temple, so it would have been Artemis at this point ever built. It was 418 feet by 239 feet. It was even built on an artificial foundation of skins and charcoal, so that when earthquakes and things like that would happen in that region, that it would be able to stand and sustain the earthquakes. Now about Diana, she was a mother goddess, and she was associated with fertility, as evidenced by a lot of statues that have been found with several breasts or eggs, and they have actually found a lot of these even in the archeological digs even today. When you read archeology today and in these areas, they still find these little statues, which is interesting because you see a whole dialog with Demetrius in Acts chapter 19, and it really is about these carved images. And they have found these. You know, the Bible is true once again, right? So this is kind of an interesting part here because Diana plays a pretty decent plot, I guess, plot point into Acts chapter 19, and will eventually cause the the riot at the theater. But there is a debate. This is something that people go back and forth on whether there really was these 1000 female temple prostitutes who were priestesses. Some say there was. There say there's no archeological evidence. Leave it up to you guys to go and do the research on this and see what you see what you think on that. But that certainly some commentaries say that's true. Others say that there is no archeological evidence for that. So whatever. I feel like does it matter really in a whole lot of story? It doesn't. But you might read something and just know that there are people on both sides of that fence, so that's a little bit as far as Ephesus as a whole and the role that it would play. So it was a there was this big provincial city in what the Bible would call this area known as Asia, right? It was a hub, so to speak, right? And so it would make sense that Paul would end up setting up camp there, and we're going to see here in just a couple minutes that Paul not only set up camp there, but he ministered there longer than any other place that he was at, any of the other churches that he established. So when did he go there? Well, he went there a few different times. The first time would have been on your first map on the first page. It would have been as he was coming back through, as the arrow is pointing. If you're trying to follow the arrow and he's making his way

back, then you'll see that there is a little stop point, and right where it says Lydia is probably the biggest bold letter here. Probably in the middle, in the yellow area, you'll see Ephesus. He made a stop there on his way of getting through this journey, which was interesting because this second missionary journey. Remember, he wanted to go to Asia, but he was forbidden by the Holy Ghost to go to Asia, which would eventually take him to Troas, right, the Macedonian man, which would give us the basically the gospel into Europe, which basically is how we all have it today. But on the way back, he did get to stop by Ephesus, and that was important to him. So as he's coming back through Ephesus on the second missionary journey, this is in Acts 18:19. Through 21, and so Scripture gives us a little indication as Luke is writing this. He says he came to Ephesus and he left them there, but he himself entered into the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews, and that's pretty normal. Where Paul would go, he would start out if there was a synagogue, or in the case of Philippi, where there wasn't one, so he went down by the river, and that's where the women were, right? And so, if there was a synagogue, he would go there first, especially in the early parts of his ministry. So he goes there and he starts reasoning with the Jews, and usually this ends up bad. But this was really not the case in Ephesus. In fact, it says here. It says they desired him to tarry longer time with them, but he consented not. He says, "But he bade them farewell, saying, 'I must by all means keep this feast that cometh in Jerusalem, but I will return again unto you if God will. And he sailed From Ephesus, so a couple of things about this feast is he's trying to get back for this feast. There's a verse in Corinthians where he says he's tarrying in Ephesus and then to go to a feast. So it's it's important kind of to understand that it wasn't that Paul was trying to get away from them. He just had a mission, and this was a stopping point. But he, at this point, we don't see anything in Scripture where this group in the synagogues were were really trying to come after him. In fact, we just see that hey, we would like to hear more about this. They they were sad that he was leaving, but this was the synagogue, so this first encounter it was very brief, but it's interesting that the Jews from the synagogue actually didn't want Paul to leave as he reasoned with him. This also is early in Paul's ministry, so there's a lot of things that start changing as as he gets more and more progressive revelation, right? This would not have been having the full mystery at this point. But when he's going to write the book of Ephesians, he is pretty much going to have the full revelation of the mystery, right? So at this point, though, he's still going first to the Jews in the synagogue, and so that was kind of the first piece there, and he did end up going back to Ephesus in his third missionary journey, but there is something that happened in between. This is interesting because even though he had a short stop, we see this little piece in Scripture where Apollos comes to Ephesus, and Apollos knows only the baptism of John, and Aquila and Priscilla come alongside Apollos and teach him the Word of God more thoroughly. But what has been done here is there are some seeds that Apollos plants before he learns and before he's sent to Corinth. So by the time Paul gets back to the second missionary journey, Apollos has been teaching in Ephesus. So the first time he's in this Jewish synagogue, and they want to hear more about him. The second time that he comes up is going to be for quite a bit longer. So what we know about this second part that he comes up. This would be in his third missionary journey. So this map here, this next map is going to kind of show you the path in which he went, which actually is also going to conclude with a follow-up farewell, that kind of addendum that he's going to have in Acts chapter 20. But most of what he's going to talk about here is you follow the arrow in, and now you're in the orange part of Asia, and you make your way to Ephesus. He's going to camp out here for three years. This was very significant period of time for Paul. This would probably been where he's writing even the first letter to the Corinthians at this point in Acts 20:31 it says therefore watch and remember that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one of you night and day with tears so we don't have to guess how long he was there he tells us I was there three years and we can actually not only we see him saying the three years, we can account for at least two years and three months because it's very descriptive what he did for at least two years and three months of those three years, and you find this in Acts 19:8. This is when he gets back and it says he went into the synagogue and he spake boldly for the space of three months. So there we have three months. And what was he doing in the synagogue this time? He was disputing and persuading the things

concerning the kingdom of God. So we know at least three months of the three years were doing that. But in verse nine, it says, "But when divers were hard." And believed not. Now remember, he didn't have that interaction in the second missionary journey, but now we kind of got the normal response that Paul dealt with quite a bit. Here's a group that believed not and spake evil of that way before the multitude. So he departed from them and he separated the disciples, disputing daily in the school of one Tyrannus, and this continued by the space of two years. So we have two years and three months already, where he was in the synagogue for three months, and now he's in the school of Tyrannus for two years. And as a result, this kind of shows you the hub that Ephesus was. It says that all that which dwelled in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks. Now, there's not a whole lot we know about this lecture hall of Tyrannus. Was it? Was it? Was Tyrannus a believer that would open this up, was Paul renting space? We don't know. What we do know is it allowed him the opportunity for two years to be able to preach openly, and as a result of that, the word of God was going out. Now, when you look at Ephesians 19, this would take a long time to go through, so we're going to summarize some things. It's really an interesting, I guess, chapter in the Bible. So here's some key events that took place during those three-year period in that third missionary journey. Because I know you were wanting to know, right? That's a test to see if you're awake right now. Say, if I'm putting you to sleep in 20 minutes, we're in bad shape. There we see the the lecture hall of Tyrannus, and you get the Celsius Library in there. So a lot of this can be viewed even today. During these three years, what were some things that happened? Well, in the first seven verses of chapter 19, is the 12 disciples who said, "We don't, we haven't even heard if there be a Holy Ghost. We were baptized from the baptism of John. Now, where do you think they would have heard that from? Apollos, right? So here's a different kind of group of Jews that were studying under the baptism of John. Now, what does this mean? The baptism of John. Well, remember in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John that John was the forerunner, and his message was repent and be baptized, for the kingdom is at hand. They knew that baptism. They didn't understand this Holy Ghost, which was poured out at Pentecost, even though Peter was still saying, "Repent and be baptized, right? But then there was this gift of the Holy Ghost, this thing that was prophesied in Joel, right? That was happening. That power, and so this group said, "We have not even heard about this. So maybe it's because they had stayed in there; they must not have journeyed to Pentecost, you know, for the for the day of Pentecost at this point. But there is a group that said, "But we know this because Apollos came and taught us, and we know what John taught. And so this led to this led to Paul basically laying hands on them so that they would receive the Holy Ghost in the way that the that those on the day of Pentecost would have received it. And then you start seeing these signs and wonders that start taking place in Ephesus. We see also see that he starts for three months in the synagogue, then he goes to the school of Tyrannus for the two years. We see that Paul, this is an early part in his ministry. He's doing miracles. In fact, miracles to the point where, man, it's like this is some TBN stuff, but handkerchiefs and aprons are healing people, right? So I mean, this was early, but at the end of his ministry, he can't heal Trophimus, can't get the thorn removed, and definitely telling Timothy that drink a little wine for your stomach's sake. So obviously, some things change progressively, but this was still kind of in those signs and wonders part, where even Paul's doing things, right? And then there was this crazy part when you start reading that there are these these these Jews who were basically exorcists, and so they're asking this man who's possessed by spirits, like, who is this Paul? And basically, the next thing you know, that the this guy's jumping on them, and they're running out wounded. It's really strange, as far as that piece is going on, right? But then you see in the next several verses, we've got Jews and Greeks magnifying the Lord, and then there is this huge book burning. This remind me that when like Harry Potter originally came out, and then you would see like these churches that would all bring the movies and the books and have these these book burnings that I'm guessing is probably something very similar to here. But what was crazy about this is how much money that these books were worth. But they there was such a move of God going on here that they were like, we don't care about the money. We want this stuff out here. But it says. Jews and Greeks. There is a unified Jew and Gentile approach to purging the iniquity out and getting all the evil things out. So this was kind of taking place. So Paul is

seeing some crazy things happen as he's going on here, and then there's this man Demetrius. So Demetrius and the silversmiths, they end up getting pretty upset. They've seen all the books being burned, and now they're coming for these precious little Diana idols. And this is where Demetrius and the silversmiths were making all their money. They were creating these gods, and people were paying big money for this. And so once they saw that Paul had turned the hearts, and that there be no gods made with hands. They start creating a mob. This mob would end up. I guess we can read a little bit here in Acts 19. It says, "Moreover, you see and hear that not alone in Ephesus, but almost throughout all Asia. So Paul's making some major inroads here. This Paul hath persuaded and turn away much people, saying that they be no gods which are made with hands. And I can say, just as we pause here for a second, I would say this is just as applicable today as it was 2000 years ago, and it's still words that need to be heard today. That there be no gods made with hands. The things that we worship made by hands. You know, I'm as guilty as anybody. I mean, I just find I just find myself sometimes. I'm like, what is so alluring about the cares of this world? It is so, it so brainwashes us, and it and it basically becomes things that we worship, right? This is is very relevant today. And here's a group of people saying, hey, somebody's saying we've got to get rid of all the idols. We've got to put a stop to this because if we don't put a stop to this, we don't make money. Our families aren't fed. We don't get to do all the things that we get to enjoy right now, that we get to do as a result of making these little idols. And again, they have found these idols in archeological digs. It's these little Diana idols with with all the all the breasts, right, or all the eggs, you know, the fertility ones, and so they were making these, and all of a sudden Paul was turning the hearts of the people, and like we don't want them anymore. We're not buying these anymore. We already burned all these books. We don't need any idols made with hands. We've heard what Paul said. There are no such thing as these idols. So this led to this mob meeting in a theater, you know, and then so Paul has some allies, and he's saying these allies are saying, "Hey, you don't need to come in here. This is going to end very badly for you. And so inside this mob, we've got people who are who are going at other people, and you've got some that are believers. Some people are trying to protect Paul, and things are going crazy. And then they start chanting that basically that we believe that in Diana, the goddess, right? They literally are chanting this, and then the town clerk comes, and the town clerk comes, and he's like, "What on earth am I going to do about this? And so he's like, "Is there something in the law? Is there something in the order of processes that I can appease Demetrius or get him to calm down so that this mob will dissipate. And so he said there is a way to go about this, and it's the wrong way. Think about this for a second. He says the this angry mob that has turned to violence is not the right way to solve the problem. Hmm. He says there's a process. You know, you get the basically what he's saying is from their their day and age. There's the courts. You get them involved, and there's a process. There's a right way to do this. Don't do this. And eventually, he calmed them down enough to where they dissipated the mob, and there was not this mass murder that took place, and this was all kind of. These are the highlights of these two years, and so things kind of go on, and he leaves, and then he comes back by his third year, or comes back by for a third trip, and this third trip is in chapter 20, and here's basically what we read, starting verse 17. It says, "From Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and he called the elders of the church. Now, at this point, who would the elders of the church be? He didn't come and call those in the synagogue. He wanted to bid farewell to the elders of the church, the leadership that was put in place that's going to carry forth this message. Well, if you read a little bit further, you find out who this is. In verse 19, he says, "Serving the Lord with all humility of mind and with many tears and." Temptation which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews. He's telling this group of leadership, these elders, of what befell him by these Jews. But a little bit later, he says in verse 36, when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down and prayed with them all, and they all wept sore and fell on Paul's neck and kissed him, sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship. This was mainly your Gentile elders and your Greeks who had been converted that now were the leadership of the church, and then some Jews who were on the other side who started believing and wanted to follow in that message. But we had started out with first missionary journey

goes into the synagogue. We want to hear more. Please don't leave. To now his farewell speech, he's with the elders of the church, and he's telling them about the evil that befell on him by the Jews. Same principle; they would always end up turning their back on him everywhere that he went. It's interesting that in First Corinthians 15:32, this is one of those things that we can kind of dig back into. This probably would describe Demetrius and the mob would be my guess, but First Corinthians 15:32. This is random statement. He says, "If after the manner of men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus, he brings that point up. I think to describe. He said, "There's evil that has befell on me by the Jews, and from what we can find that is recorded, there clearly was this mob who was coming after him. We don't know if there might be additional information that is not privy to us through Scripture, but we can kind of read between the lines. I think in some of this, but here, right in the middle of the resurrection chapter of the Bible, in verse 32, he says, "If after men I have fought with beasts at Ephesus. An interesting little note. First Corinthians 16:8. A chapter later, he says, "But I will tarry at Ephesus until Pentecost. So this is where gives us probably more background information about this city than just about any other city that Paul went and established it. Established a church, but also we know Ephesus is one of the seven churches of Asia that letters are written to in the book of Revelation, which again I think can kind of give you in real time in first in the first century some characteristics about the Ephesians. So when you look at this, this is found in Revelation chapter two. Here are some of the highlights. Basically, mostly a positive evaluation. Some of the churches did not receive one, but this is what Jesus says. He's standing in the midst of the candlesticks, right? He says that these Ephesians they they can't bear them which are wicked, or which are evil? Okay, that's a positive trait. They've tried false apostles and proved that they were liars. Well, that's a positive evaluation. They hated the deeds of Nicolaitans. That's a positive one. It says they didn't faint, but like every one of the churches, he says nevertheless, and their nevertheless was, you have left your first love. So he says, repent quickly and do the first works. So it tells you a little bit more about this church in Ephesians, which basically, who was all in this church? It had a diverse collection of people. We know this that Acts 18:19, as we saw earlier, we had the Jews from the synagogue at the very beginning, the ones that said, "Okay, we want to reason with you. Please don't leave. Tarry here longer. Right? You find that in Acts 18:19, when he says he came to Ephesus, he left from there and he entered into the synagogue and he reasoned with the Jews. Then a separate group of 12 were Jews only knowing the baptism of John, probably disciples of Apollos. These were found in Acts 18:24 through 25. As far as this is where the I guess the start would have come from, a certain Jew named Apollos, born at Alexandria, an eloquent man, mighty in the Scriptures, came to Ephesus. This man was instructed in the way of the Lord, and being fervent in the Spirit, he spake and taught diligently the things of the Lord, knowing only the baptism of John, and this would have been after Paul had already come and already had left. We see this same group in Acts 19:3, and he said unto them, "Unto what then were you baptized? And they said, "Unto John's baptism. That's where they go on and say, "We have not heard if there." Be this Holy Ghost. We also know that there are Greeks that are there. Acts 19:10, and this continued by the space of two years, so that all which dwelled in Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks. So we have these Gentiles who are mentioned in the book of Ephesians. These who mainly were going to be Greeks because it was a Greek area for a long time, and even during the Roman colonization, it still had the majority Greeks. Then we have these vagabond Jews. They're specifically called in Scripture vagabond Jews. So this would have been those when it was kind of weird exorcism thing. But says certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, "We adjure you by Jesus, whom Paul preacheth. And there were seven sons of one Sceva, a Jew, and a chief of the priests, which did so. So that group may have overlapped with this first synagogue group, but they're mentioned separately, so they might have been a different one here. So you had a lot of different types of people in there. So I think it's important, even like you're reading Romans, you have to really keep track of the pronouns in Galatians. Sometimes we just read it all the way through and not realizing that, much like our congregation, right? We have a lot of different backgrounds in our congregation, right? There's been some who've been saved out of Catholicism, right? There, there's

some who have grown up for like 30 or 40 years with the grace message. There's a lot of people who were Baptists who have kind of migrated over to this. We have quite a bit of diversity, right? And I think there's also, like, I mean, different, you know, ethnic backgrounds also that come together in one pool. So you can. It seems silly sometimes just say when we just in our minds just think this was written to the Gentiles and it's all one type of people, all the exact type type of people. It just does not make much sense. No organization of people work that way. And so sometimes it's good when the Bible is talking about these different groups of people, and then like in the book of Galatians, when Paul would be able to say us and you, and he would sometimes agree with his background of Judaism, but then he would make it a point to tell this group that wasn't under the law, he would say you to separate them from that. So pronouns are extremely important when you are reading scripture because sometimes there's a lot of audiences. The book of Romans is addressing just about everybody. That's why he can say all are under sin. I mean, he's coming right after Gentiles, after Jews, and you just have to understand from the context who is being discussed? Romans was not written to just one group of people or about one group of people, right? So I think it's important to be able to see that there should be a diversity of people, especially in a city this size, and that's exactly what you would think to find in what Scripture records. So who is it written to? Well, there isn't really any debate about whether the Church of Ephesus received the letter. The question is whether it was intended to be a cyclical letter throughout Asia, and some would argue that the at Ephesus wasn't present in all manuscripts, but it is clearly in the King James version. In fact, Ephesians one one says Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ, by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus. There are a handful of manuscripts that have removed the at Ephesus, so there has been some skepticism as to whether or not this was specifically to the Ephesians, or if it was to all the churches of Asia, but it was going to be read in Ephesus and then taken around. And here are some, I think, some reasons that might support that idea. But again, if we agree to disagree on this, it is okay. But here are some things that I think are worthy about asking, and the first one's this: the only name mentioned in this letter was Tychicus. Now, when you compare that, I mean, let's be honest. I mean, the book of Romans, the whole last chapter is a roll call, right? And then we have in the book of Philippians, we have several names mentioned in the book of Philippians. I mean, he's addressing Eudes and Sintucky and the fight that they're having, they're having in Epaphroditus. I mean, you've got several names mentioned: Timothy, right, Titus. A lot of the letters he's bringing in, like the book of First Corinthians, he's bringing in what the house of Chloe has sent to him with all the letters of division that's happening. So it seems very personal. He's addressing a letter. This one though only mentions Tychicus as the man who is being sent with this letter. Remember though. He had spent three years with them. In fact, in the second part, the second point that I have down here, we know in verse 115 it says, "Wherefore I also, after I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and love unto all the saints, I yes, he could have maybe heard a report a little bit later, but I mean he knew them pretty intimately. He wouldn't have had to say I heard of your love. I mean he would have seen their love. So I think that might lead to an idea that maybe this letter yes was given to the Ephesians, but the intention was for all the churches in Asia to receive this information, especially the content of the information. And then the third point I have is the letter doesn't address a specific problem of the church. Most of Paul's letters do. I mean, we spent what four months talking about Galatians, yeah, there was a problem. The Judaizers and circumcision, yeah, he made that clear over and over and over again, right? Even brings up those of the concision and Philippians that we looked at in the in first semester of last year, right? There is certainly issues that he's addressing, but you don't see that really in this epistle. The next one, I guess, a point that I think might be one that really makes the point is Colossians was a very similar epistle, and Paul literally says in that epistle that it is to be read in other places, and some of it, some have even suggested that Ephesians could be the other epistle referenced in that verse. In Colossians 4:16, it says, "When this epistle is read among you, cause that it be read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that ye likewise read the epistle from Laodicea. That may may or may not be that that one there, but clearly we see that Colossians, which is very similar in content of Ephesians, it is said to cause it to be read

also elsewhere. So whether you go there or not, whether you agree or not, that's I mean it it doesn't matter much, but I think that it is interesting to think that maybe this letter's intent was clearly to go to Ephesians, but maybe to go to everyone in that area. And you would think that the content in this epistle would kind of bear witness to that, because it is said by most people that Ephesians is the fullest expression of the mystery program. So it would kind of seem now that he's at the later stages of his ministry, having full revelation. He's like, I want to get this word out to everyone. So what is the purpose of this letter? Well, I've got it is for the saints to understand their riches in Christ, their identity in Christ, and their purpose to live out in Christ. As most commentators would call it something about the. It's funny the the bank of the Ephesians. There are a lot of kind of names talking about the riches that's mentioned because it's like three or four times. Like I think in the first chapter alone, the riches is mentioned there. So a lot of people will talk about that. I think it really deals with this idea of your identity in Christ, and then living your life in accordance to that identity, right? And this seems to be the big disconnect, especially when you talk about grace, and you just want to say, "Oh well, all right, we don't like those easy believeism people because they just don't obey, right? And then you've got the people over here that says, "Oh well, we're really we're of we're of Yah. It's all about the Torah, and the Torah has never really gone away. And that Paul Paul really addresses most of the stuff in the Torah. So it's really all about him being Lord of our lives and about all obedience. And it's really difficult when you're like, how does this work out, right? For one, once you are saved, you should produce good works. You should live a holy life. Believing in the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ alone for your salvation does not neglect that. I've never understood that. I've never personally met anybody who says you're saved by grace through faith alone. Now go live however you want to live. But it feels like, from the outside, that's how everybody views the faith alone in the death, burial, resurrection of Jesus Christ. That it is this big license to sin. I mean, Paul literally says in Romans six, "Shall we continue in sin? God forbid. Right and. We are told, even in Romans chapter eight, that that our mortal body, the one we have right now, right there's this process of sanctification and mortifying this body right to Him and submission to Him. We are told to be holy and blameless. We're told that grace is teaching us to live to live godly in this present evil world, so I don't understand that. It's just the different motivation is I'm not doing it because I'm under the law and being threatened to get cursed from God. That's the real distinction, right? Instead, it's the love of Christ is what constrains me to want to obey, to want to honor Him, to want to please Him with my life, to know that my purpose here on this earth-I've been left here to see all men saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. If I go and live like the world, who's going to want to hear that message? I think it's important, and if we are the hands and feet, right? If we are the body of Christ, right? We should be holding up the head in doctrine. Our brain doesn't. Our brains want to send us the messages how we should be moving here, just like Christ is sending us through the Word of God, how the body of Christ is supposed to move and act. So I don't understand the whole cheap grace thing, and I do understand that when I read the Book of Ephesians, I'm like, all right, we know who we are in Christ. We know that we're saved by grace through faith. This is all great, but then we get to chapter four, verse one, the whole second half of the book is about our walk, not just about who we are in Christ, but how we are to live in Christ. This is the transitional verse of the book of Ephesians. It's really fascinating, and it really shows you how you are to live today. So many people just want to read a devotional, and they want it to be practical, and they just want to put something into place in their life. But wrong doctrine with just a prescription of a behavior will just manifest itself into some sort of legalism. What he does in chapters one through three as he establishes the doctrine. Once the doctrine's right, you live out of that doctrine, so you're not living out of false doctrine. But you can't bypass the doctrine, right? That's how people handle snakes. They bypass the doctrine, right? That's why we have so much divisions here today. We think about all the different things here. It's like people just say we just want to go do doctrine. As long as we agree about Jesus, we can we can all just get along. And I'm like, wait a second, we don't all believe the same thing about Jesus. We certainly don't believe all the same gospel. How can you just say, well, let's just go serve the community? We all agree on this. We don't all agree. Ephesians makes it clear: you

establish the doctrine, and then you live out of that doctrine. Right? That is the way it should be. That's what should drive your behavior. So, in chapter four, verse one, Paul says, after three chapters of establishing the doctrine, he says, "I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord beseech you that you walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you were called. You know the great riches that you have in Christ. You know that you are saved by grace through faith, right? You know that you Gentiles in Ephesians chapter three, who were far from God, had no hope, right? Were strangers to the covenants of God, but you've now been brought nigh by the blood of Christ as a result of all this information, and as a as a result of now what you have in Christ and this inheritance that you have, and that you're seated in heavenly places, you've been given all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. That now, as a result of knowing that, go and walk worthy. See, knowing all that shouldn't give you license to sin. It should push you to walk in accordance with to who you are. That's like if somebody, you know, I guess my kids, I'm sure probably your kids as well, probably watch like the Princess Diaries when you're. Maybe some of you really love that one. I don't know. It's okay, guys. You can shake your head. Yes, you're forced to watch it probably. But it's like if somebody finds out that they were royalty and they didn't know it before, do they then just live like a pauper the whole rest of their life? Immediately they're like, "Oh, well, she's the rightful heir, and so we need to get her through finishing school, and we have to prepare so that she can sit on the throne. Why? Because that's our identity-to sit on the throne, and I think that's really what Ephesians is doing. It's saying, "Hey, now that we've established you're not far from God, you Gentiles, in chapter two. Right, and he starts talking about what was before the world began, and all these things-the stuff that has been put into place to put you in this unique situation to go and walk worthy of the vocation wherewith you're called. That's why you're going to look in chapter four, and he's going to say, "Put off concerning the old man, put on the new man. And in chapter five, he's going to say, "Walk in love, and he's going to talk about not walking in darkness, right? And then he's going to talk about marriage at the end of chapter five, and in chapter six we're going to get into the armor of God, right? It's all about how we walk after you know who you are in Christ. So, if you only stick with me to maybe January, you're going to have a really good foundation of who you are in Christ. But if you don't come back, you're not going to learn how to put that into practice. Does that make sense? Okay, I did pretty decent. So I said 45. It got me out of here at 50. Okay, so my goal is to try to get these things done about 45 minutes each week and give us time. I used to pull the microphones out and allow for Q and A's, but it got a little out of control. Whether I trust you guys to do that again, I don't know. But I want to at least stick around and say I'm willing to stick around in here till eight each week, so we can talk. We can have dialog. We can ask questions. We can be able to talk through things. If I get a lot of feedback from the people that watch online who would like, who basically say, "Could we start the Q and A up again? I might try it, but if it gets out of hand and people are looking at their watches, I don't want to hurt Awana, and I want to get you guys out of here on time. My goal is to be at that 45 to 50 minute mark each week of just me, and then be able to free free you guys up. If you have to leave, you can leave. If you want to sit and talk, that you can. So I think we did pretty good. I also know, and I've got to get this from my mind, it is a stationary camera. So some people watch me online and be like, "You kept disappearing on us, I guess I would walk too far over here, not realizing there's not a guy on the camera. So I'm going to try to just stay in my lane as best I can. That's going to be really hard for me, but I'm going to try to do that. So if you watch it, if you're watching online, I went out of focus. I'm or went out of frame. I'm going to try really hard to do better at that this time. Okay. Well, you will have one of these packets each week. There is a typo in this one. We try to catch every one, but on page nine, the second-to-last page, it says Ephesians 622 through 22. Now, I'm I'm not a very smart man, but I can tell you that that's inaccurate. So it should be verses 21 through 22. So the scripture is correct, but the address is incorrect. You may find other errors in here. I wouldn't be surprised, but we're going to do the best that we can. All right. Well, let's pray, and then we will get right into Ephesians one. We're gonna we're gonna try to make each chapter about five weeks, and the first one might be four weeks, depending where we're at. So I stay on task, but I don't want to keep you guys here longer than we need to on Wednesday night. So let's pray, Heavenly Father. Thank you for this day, and thank you

for the opportunity to open your Word, Lord. I know that there are a lot of people who prefer expository, Lord. So we want to basically use these these Wednesday nights to be able to do that, Lord. There's so much great stuff in the Book of Ephesians. We're excited to be able to unpack that together, Lord. I pray that each person would go home. They would maybe study it out, Lord. I've been reading it for a while since we stopped Galatians, and Lord, I'm going to probably pick that back up now and start start trying to read it more consistently again. But Lord, we thank you for the opportunity to to come here together and to lift up your word and lift you up, Lord. And I pray that anything that is questionable or incorrect, Lord, that might come out of my mouth would be discarded, and we would just focus on your truth and focus on you, and Lord, we just give you all the honor and praise in Jesus' name, Amen.