

Sermon Outline

To the Praise of God's Glory
An Introduction to Paul's Epistle to the Ephesians
Ephesians 1:1-13
The Fifteenth Sunday after Pentecost

I. *The Big Picture in Ephesians*

- A. Paul the Apostle
- B. Ephesus the City
- C. Saints who are Faithful
- D. Gospel Greetings
 - Charis and Shalom
 - Salvation is Union with Christ and thus with One Another
- E. Structure
 - 1. Benediction (Berekah) and Prayer to God – 1-3
 - 2. Admonition and Instruction for the Church – 4-6

II. *The Central Message of Ephesians*

“God’s Saving Purpose Established in Christ and Extended through the Church”

- A. The Fall and Fragmentation
- B. The Savior and Reunification – **Ephesians 1:9-10**
 - Personal – Ephesians 2:1-10 (“In Christ”)
 - International – Ephesians 2:11-22 (“one new man...”)
 - Cosmological – Ephesians 1:9-10 (“things in heaven and things on earth,” in other words, the creation, once perfectly “good” but broken by rebellion, is to be restored – Genesis 1:1)
 - *“Cosmic reconciliation and unity in Christ are the central message of Paul’s letter to the Ephesians.”*
– Peter O’Brien
 - *“I do not hesitate to affirm that we have in this verse the key to the understanding of the chief practical purpose of this epistle... we are taken right up into the heavens and find ourselves looking at God’s final purpose... we are transported above the matter of our personal salvation into the realm of ultimate things – God’s grand comprehensive, final, ultimate purpose. The human mind can never contemplate anything greater.”* DM L-J, Ephesians (Vol. 1, p.196).
 - This “summing up,” or re-unifying of the broken universe, is the final goal of God’s plan that is yet to be realized, but is also without doubt because it is “*in Christ*,” and established in his cross and empty tomb (Colossians 1:20-22).

III. *The Glorious Work of Salvation in Ephesians*

- A. God-Glorifying
 - “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us...to the praise of the glory of his grace...”
- B. Trinitarian
 - The Father Arranges
 - The Son Accomplishes
 - The Spirit Applies
- C. Church-Centered
 - Ephesians 3:10 “That now through the Church...”
- D. Life-Transforming
 - Sit – Position in Christ
 - Walk – Practice in the World
 - Stand – Power in the Conflict