

Resurrection Life of Jesus Church

PAUL'S LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS

RLJ-1315

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PART 1: THE CITY & CHURCH OF EPHESUS

THE CITY OF EPHESUS

Ephesus was located on what is today the western coast of Turkey. It was the provincial capitol of the Roman proconsul of Asia Minor at the time of the apostle Paul. The city was built on the banks of the river Cayster as it flowed into the Mediterranean Sea, had a commercial port and was located about 40 miles southeast of Smyrna.

The city was founded around 1100 B.C. by Andoclus, the son of the Athenian King Codrus and was conquered later by the Persian Empire, which was later defeated by Alexander the Great. Eventually it became a Roman city as the Roman Empire expanded eastward.

The goddess Diana was the center of worship for the people in Ephesus and her temple was regarded as one of the wonders of the world. Silver replicas of Diana and the temple were a large commercial enterprise and the preaching of the Gospel of Jesus Christ created a huge backlash from the silversmiths and other workers in this industry.

THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH OF EPHESUS

The Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ came early to Ephesus but there was no organized church until the apostle Paul came to the city and his first visit was very short. **Acts 18:19-21**

Some time after Paul had left, Apollos, a well known Jew from Alexandria who believed in Jesus as the Messiah came to Ephesus and started to preach. **Acts 18:24-25**

He did not know about the full Gospel that included the Baptism of the Holy Spirit and Paul's old friends, Aquila and Priscilla (husband and wife), began to instruct him. **verses 26**

PAUL AS THE PASTOR OF THE CHURCH

Paul later stayed in the city of Ephesus for a period of three years. **Acts 20:31**

He described what kind of a pastor he had been. **Acts 20:16-27**

During his last visit with the elders of the church, Paul warned them of things to come. **verses 28-35**

The response from the elders showed that Paul had been a beloved pastor. **verses 36-38**



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FOUR MAJOR EVENTS

The Bible records four major events during Paul's ministry in Ephesus.

1. THE BAPTISM OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

All the apostles considered the Baptism of the Holy Spirit to be extremely important and it was the norm for new believers to be baptized in water and then prayed for to receive the Baptism of the Holy Spirit. Paul was no exception. **Acts 19:1-7**

2. THE MIRACLE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT

Paul preached in the power of the Holy Spirit and the supernatural gifts of the Holy Spirit worked mightily through him. **verses 8-12**

3. UNBELIEVERS CANNOT CAST OUT DEMONS

When the Jewish leaders saw that Paul had the power to cast out evil spirits, they decided to do the same thing but it backfired and caused the people in Ephesus to fear the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and His Son Jesus Christ. **verses 13-20**

4. THE CLASH WITH THE FOLLOWERS OF DIANA

There will always be a backlash from the Devil any time when the Gospel of Jesus Christ prospers. When the craftsmen of the Diana cult started rioting, the whole city exploded in pandemonium. Paul loved his flock of sheep and was willing to enter the arena and confront the leadership of Diana but the men in the church forced Paul to back down and brought him to safety. **Acts 19:23-41**

After the riot was over, Paul decided to leave Ephesus and continue his mission work of planting churches- **Acts 20:1**

It is noteworthy that while Paul was the pastor of the church in Ephesus, he wrote the first letter to the church in Corinth. **1 Corinthians 16:8-9**

Paul came to Ephesus in the early 50s and we know that the first letter to the Corinthians was written in 54 A.D. The letter to the church in Ephesus was written sometimes between 61 to 63 A.D., which would put it some 27 years after the resurrection of Jesus and about seven years after Paul had left Ephesus.

Remember, it's not so important how you begin your life after salvation, but how you finish it!

DO YOU HAVE AN EAR TO HEAR WITH?