

Paul's Letter to the Church in Ephesus An Introduction / Ephesians 1:1-3 / Part I

INTRO:

The first three verses of Ephesians will tell us:

People: *Who is writing the letter and who it is written to*

Prayer: *Paul's opening prayer for the Ephesians.*

Praise: *Paul's praise for God's great blessings*

I. THE PEOPLE:

(1) Paul... an _____

An Apostle is "a messenger sent with a commission"
"an authorized spokesman for Jesus Christ."

(2) The Ephesians ... _____

Saint in the Bible

"One who has been _____" according to the Bible's definition,
ALL believers are saints.

EPHESUS

- Ephesians was built as a trade city. The ruin of its harbor had made it by Paul's day into a "temple and tourist" city.
- Ephesus was Paul's "-est" church
 1. _____ est stay (3 ½ years)
 2. _____ est impact (All of Asia heard)
 3. _____ est love (Acts 20)
 4. _____ est criticism (The silversmiths riot)

In Ephesus "*an easygoing Christianity could never have survived. It could not have conquered and trained the world...*"

Sir William Ramsey

"... to the saints **in** Ephesus ... to the faithful **in** Christ Jesus."

Sir William Ramsay

Sir William Ramsay, an atheist and the son of atheists, tried to disprove the Bible. He was a wealthy person who had graduated from the prestigious University of Oxford. Like Albright, Ramsay studied under the famous liberal German historical school in the mid-nineteenth century. Esteemed for its scholarship, this school also taught that the New Testament was not a historical document. As an anti-Semitic move, this would totally eradicate the Nation of Israel from history.

With this premise, Ramsay devoted his whole life to archaeology and determined that he would disprove the Bible.

He set out for the Holy Land and decided to disprove the book of Acts. After 25 or more years (he had released book after book during this time), he was incredibly impressed by the accuracy of Luke in his writings finally declaring that

'Luke is a historian of the first rank; not merely are his statements of fact trustworthy' . . . 'this author should be placed along with the very greatest of historians' . . . 'Luke's history is unsurpassed in respect of its trustworthiness.'

Luke's accuracy is demonstrated by the fact that he names key historical figures in the correct time sequence as well as correct titles to government officials in various areas: Thessalonica, politarchs; Ephesus, temple wardens; Cyprus, proconsul; and Malta, the first man of the island. The two books, the Gospel of Luke and book of Acts, that Luke has authored remain accurate documents of history. Ramsay stated, "This author [Luke] should be placed along with the very greatest of historians."

Finally, in one of his books Ramsay shocked the entire intellectual world by declaring himself to be a Christian. Numerous other archaeologists have had similar experiences. Having set out to show the Bible false, they themselves have been proven false and, as a consequence, have accepted Christ as Lord.

In an outstanding academic career, Ramsay was honored with doctorates from nine universities and eventually knighted for his contributions to modern scholarship. Several of his works on New Testament history are considered classics. When confronted with the evidence of years of travel and study, Sir William Ramsay learned what many others before him and since have been forced to acknowledge: When we objectively examine the evidence for the Bible's accuracy and veracity, the only conclusion we can reach is that the Bible is true.

- We are called to be *“in” the world but not “of” the world*. Though this expression is not a direct quote of scripture, this notion is consistent with the teaching of the New Testament.

John 17:14-16; John 15:19; John 8:22-24; 1 John 4:5; 1 John 5:19; John 16:11; John 12:31; 1 John 4:4; Romans 12:1-2; James 1:27; James 4:4; 1 John 2:15-17; John 18:36; Philippians 3:20; Matthew 16:26; Matthew 16:24; Ephesians 6:12; 1 Corinthians 5:9-10; 2 Corinthians 6:14; 1 Peter 2:11-12; Matthew 5:13-16; Ephesians 5:1