

## I. THE AUTHOR (1:1a)

### A. PAUL...

1. Formerly, "Saul of Tarsus", the persecutor of the church - Acts 9:1-2
2. But who became the "apostle to the Gentiles" - Acts 9:15

### B. AN APOSTLE OF JESUS BY THE WILL OF GOD...

1. His apostleship was not of his own choosing - Gal 1:1
2. He knew it was by the grace of God that he had been so called - Eph 3:8a
3. And his charge? To "preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ" - Eph 3:8b

### C. WHOSE WORK HAD BROUGHT HIM TO EPHESUS...

1. First, for a short stay - Acts 18:19-21
2. Then for over two years, one of his longer periods of service in one place - Acts 19:1-10
3. He also met with the Ephesian elders at Miletus - Acts 20:17-38

### D. WRITING NOW AS "AN AMBASSADOR IN CHAINS"...

1. At the time Paul wrote this epistle, he was awaiting trial in Rome - Eph 3:1; 4:1; 6:20
2. This epistle was written about the same time as Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon, approximately 60-62 A.D.
3. I.e., during the time period briefly described in Acts 28:30-31

## II. THE RECIPIENTS (1:1b)

### A. THE SAINTS WHO ARE IN EPHESUS...

1. The recipients of this letter were called "saints"
  - a. The word "saint" means "one who has been set apart"
  - b. It is related to the word "sanctified" which means "set apart"
  - c. ALL Christians were called saints in the New Testament, for in Christ Jesus even the vilest sinners are "sanctified" upon their conversion - 1 Cor 6:9-11
2. The recipients of this letter were those brethren "in Ephesus"
3. Historical background concerning the work in Ephesus can be found in Acts 18:19-28; 19:1-41; 20:17-38

### B. AND FAITHFUL IN CHRIST JESUS...

1. This describes the character of those "saints" in Ephesus
2. They are "faithful in Christ Jesus"; that is, they trusted in Him for their salvation - Eph 1:13
3. They were "faithful" in another sense, also, in that they were trustworthy in their stand for the truth - Rev 2:1-3, 6
4. However, they were to be later rebuked for leaving their "first love" - Rev 2:4-5

### III. THE THEME: THE BELIEVER'S RICHES IN CHRIST (1:3)

#### A. THE SOURCE OF OUR BLESSINGS (RICHES)...

1. They come from "the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ"
2. As revealed later, they come to us a result of the "riches" of . . .
  - a. God's grace - Eph 1:7
  - b. God's glory - Eph 1:18
  - c. God's mercy - Eph 2:7
3. As James wrote, "every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father of lights" - Jam 1:17

#### B. THE SCOPE OF OUR BLESSINGS (RICHES)...

1. They include "every" spiritual blessing; not just a few, but every single one!
2. Blessings that are "spiritual" in nature; unlike many of the blessings to the nation of Israel of old, which were but material

#### C. THE SPHERE OF OUR BLESSINGS (RICHES)...

1. First, they are "in the heavenly places"
  - a. Lit., "in the heavenlies", a phrase found only in Ephesians - 1:3; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12
  - b. Referring to the spiritual realm, as opposed to the physical
2. Secondly, they are "in Christ"
  - a. It has been counted that this phrase "in Christ" occurs 27 times in this epistle
  - c. Emphasizing that it is only by being "in" Christ that one can have access to "every" spiritual blessing