

# All-Ages Adult Life Group Expositional Study

## Ephesians Ch. 1:1-3

### To His Glory and Our Good (Part 1)

Class Reference: **Knowing the Bible Series**  
[Week 1: Overview: The Church in God's Plan](#)

June 15, 2025

Version 2

Prepared by Paul Szydlowski

# Lesson Schedule (First 7 Lessons)

Teacher	Date	Lesson #	Lesson Text	John MacArthur Commentary Chapter/ Title	James Boice	RC Sproul	KTB
Paul	June 15	#1A	1:1-3	1. The Salutation (1:1-2)	Ch. 1 1:1-2 Ch. 2 1:3	Ch.1 1:1-2	Week 1: Overview
Paul	June 22	#1B	1:4-6	2. The Body Formed in Eternity Past (1:3-6)	Ch. 3 1:4-6	Ch. 2 1:3-6	
Rob	June 29	#2A	1:7-10	3. Redemption Through His Blood (1:7-10)	Ch. 4 1:7-10	Ch. 3 1:7-12	Week 2: 1:1-14
Rob	July 6	#2B	1:11-14	4. Divine Inheritance Guaranteed (1:11-14)	Ch. 5 1:11-14	Ch. 4 1:13-23	
Scott	July 13	#3	1:15-23	5a. Our Resources in Christ (1:15-17)	Ch. 6 1:15-19		Week 3: 1:15-23
				5b. Our Resources in Christ (1:18-23)	Ch. 7 1:19-23		
Paul	July 20	#4	2:1-7	6a. Coming Alive in Christ (2:1-7)	Ch. 8 2:1-3 Ch. 9 2:4-5 Ch. 10 2:4-7	Ch. 5 2:1-10	Week 4: 2:1-10
Mike	July 27	#5	2:8-10	6b. Coming Alive in Christ (2:8-10)	Ch. 11 2:8-9 Ch. 12 2:10		

# ESV Commentary Outline (This Week: Ephesians 1:1-3)

## I. Introductory Address and Greeting ([1:1-2](#))

- A. Author ([1:1a](#))
- B. Recipients ([1:1b](#))
- C. Greetings ([1:2](#))

## II. Praise God for His Blessings in Christ ([1:3-14](#))

- A. He Chose Us ([1:3-6](#))
- B. He Redeems Us ([1:7-10](#))
- C. He Gives Us an Inheritance ([1:11-12](#))
- D. He Seals Us with His Spirit ([1:13-14](#))

## III. Thanksgiving and Prayer ([1:15-23](#))

- A. Paul's Thanksgiving for Their Faith and Love ([1:15-16a](#))
- B. Paul's Prayer ([1:16b-23](#))
  - 1. That God Will Give Them the Spirit of Wisdom and Revelation ([1:16b-17](#))
  - 2. That They Will Know God's Great Grace ([1:18-23](#))
    - a. The Hope of His Calling ([1:18a](#))
    - b. The Riches of His Glorious Inheritance ([1:18b](#))
    - c. The Immeasurable Greatness of His Power ([1:19-23](#))

v. 6-12 can also be divided into three sections, each of which focuses on a different Person of the Trinity.

- Verses 3-6a center on the Father,
- verses 6b-12 center on the Son,
- and verses 13-14 center on the Holy Spirit.

Paul takes us to the very throne room of the Godhead to show the greatness and the vastness of the blessings and treasures that belong to those who are in Jesus Christ.

— John MacArthur

# JM Outline (This week: Ephesians 1:1-3)

## The Salutation (1:1-2)

THE DUAL SOURCE OF AUTHORITY (1:1A)

THE DUAL DESIGNATION OF BELIEVERS (1:1B)

THE DUAL BLESSINGS OF BELIEVERS (1:2A)

THE DUAL SOURCE OF BLESSING (1:2B)

## The Body Formed in Eternity Past (1:3-6A)

THE ASPECTS OF BLESSING (1:3):

THE BLESSED ONE—GOD (1:3)

THE BLESSER—GOD (1:3)

THE BLESSED ONES—BELIEVERS (1:3)

THE BLESSINGS—EVERYTHING SPIRITUAL (1:3)

THE LOCATION OF BLESSING—THE HEAVENLY PLACES (1:3)

THE BLESSING AGENT—JESUS CHRIST (1:3)

THE ELEMENTS OF THE ETERNAL FORMING OF THE BODY (1:4-6A):

THE METHOD—ELECTION (1:4)

THE OBJECT—THE ELECT (1:4)

THE TIME—ETERNITY PAST (1:4)

THE PURPOSE—HOLINESS (1:4)

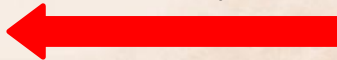
THE MOTIVE—LOVE (1:4)

THE RESULT—SONSHIP (1:5)

THE GOAL—GLORY (1:6)



# Opening Discussion

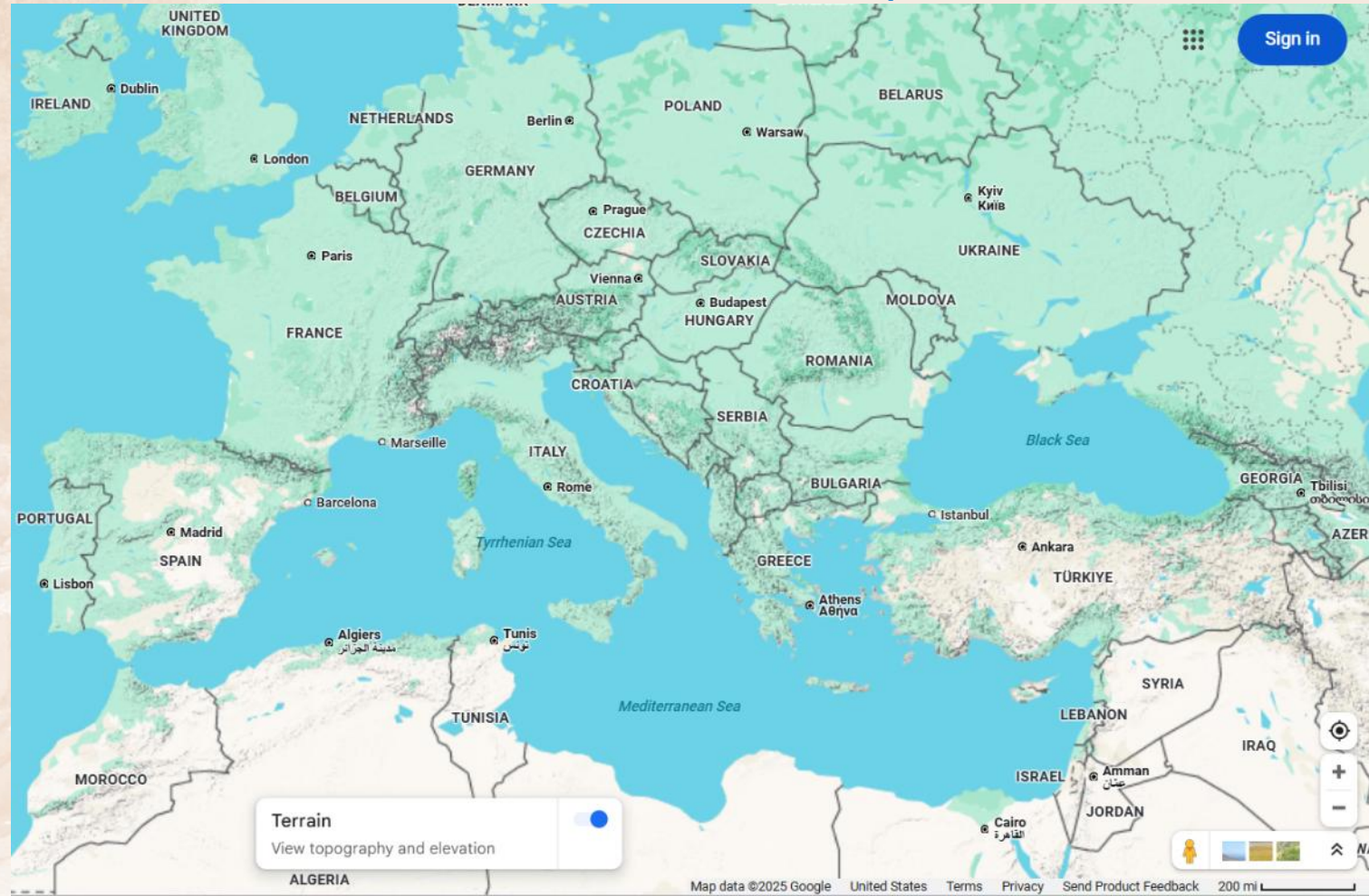
- To the saints who are at Ephesus...?
  - Written by the Apostle Paul during his Roman imprisonment (~AD 60–62).
  - Ephesus: a major city of commerce and idolatry (notably the Temple of Artemis).
  - Ephesians was likely a circular letter (Smyrna, Pergamon, Laodicea) 
  - Ephesians is a miniature doctrine of the church
    - A mini course on theology centered on the church
    - A short course on what theologians call ecclesiology (study of the church)
  - Like Romans, Ephesian deals with the most fundamental Christian doctrines.
  - Ephesians begins and ends with for God's glory
  - The central focus is the eternal plan of God the Father, who chose believers in Christ before the foundation of the world—not based on foreseen merit, but purely out of His love and sovereign will.
  - To reveal God's eternal plan for the church and the spiritual blessings believers have in Christ.
    - To show how believers are united in Christ and how this unity should shape the Christian life.
    - Why does the church exist? What is the church what is it about?
- ❖ Today's passage introduces Paul's letter and launches into a grand doxology (vv. 3–14) celebrating the spiritual blessings believers have in Christ, with verses 4–6 focusing specifically on **election, adoption, and grace**.

SEE PICTURES  
FOLLOWING  
SLIDES



So Where is Ephesus?

# Orientation Map





## Asia Minor or Anatolia in Paul's Day (Sites visited by Scott and I)





# Pergamon

Photo by Paul Szydowski





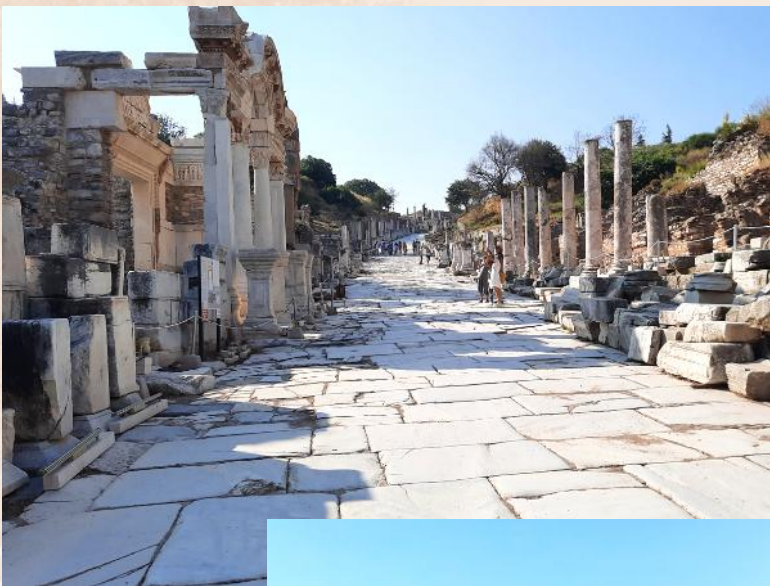
# Smyrna

Photo by Paul Szydowski





# Ephesus





# Laodicea



# Preparation for Hearing the Following Scriptures

- Election and predestination is often challenging and emotional, and it's okay to wrestle with it.
- This topic reveals the depth of God's grace and the certainty of His purposes.
- Scripture teaches both God's sovereignty in salvation and human responsibility to believe.
- God gave us books like John, Romans, and Ephesians to help us understand these topics. We must not steer away from these topics as they form a part of scripture and God's grace.
- We may not fully understand how these truths fit, but we can trust the God who reveals them.
- Our goal is not to debate mysteries, but to see the glory of God's grace in saving sinners.
- Everyone who comes to Christ is freely welcomed (John 6:37).
- If a person desires seeking after Christ, it's evidence that God is at work in them.
- Let this truth lead us to humility, worship, and assurance, not fear or pride.



# Scripture Can “Preach” Itself

Go to minutes 4:33 to 5:33

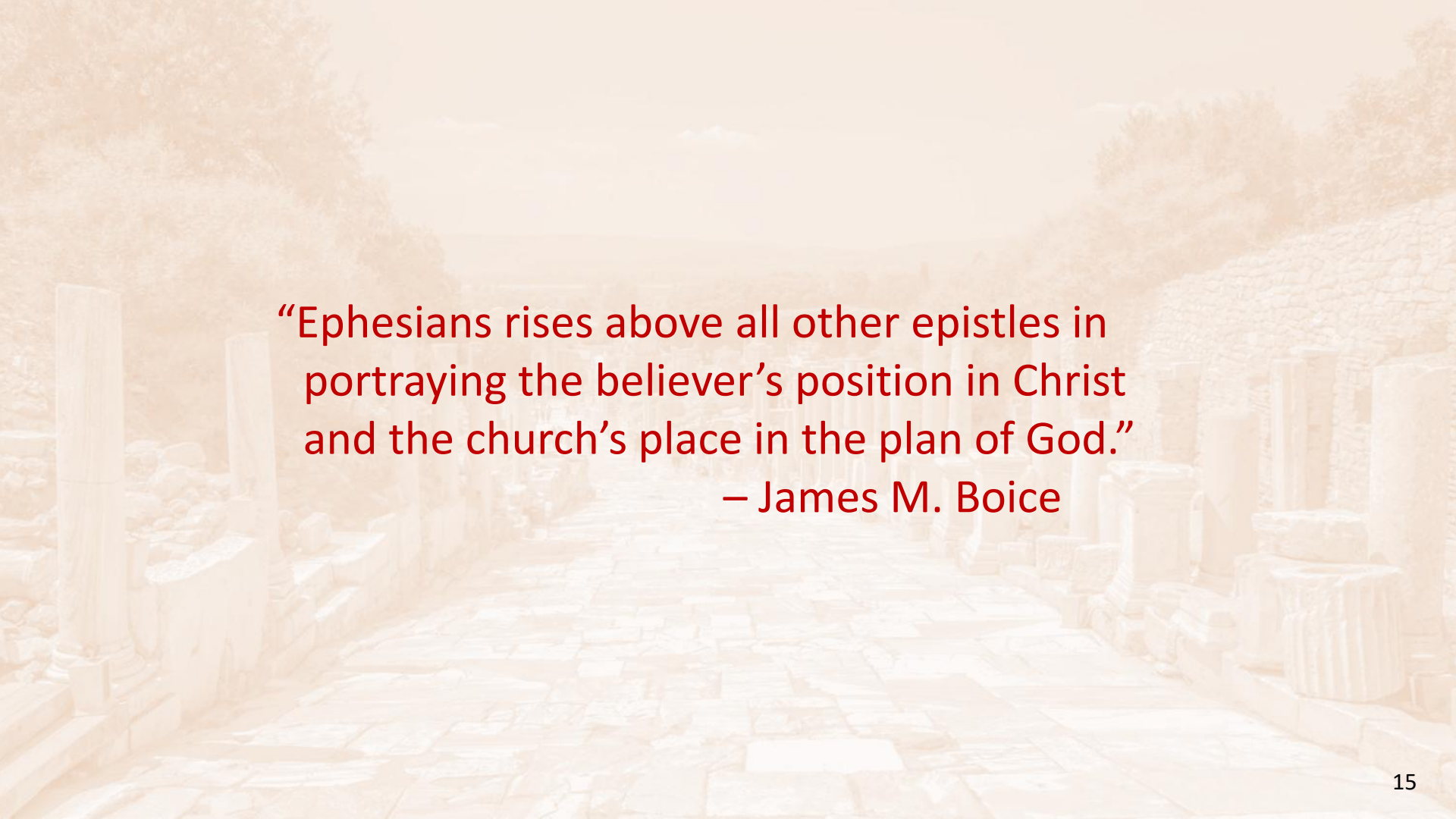


<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hwm-ZW8qUUM&list=PPSV&t=273s>

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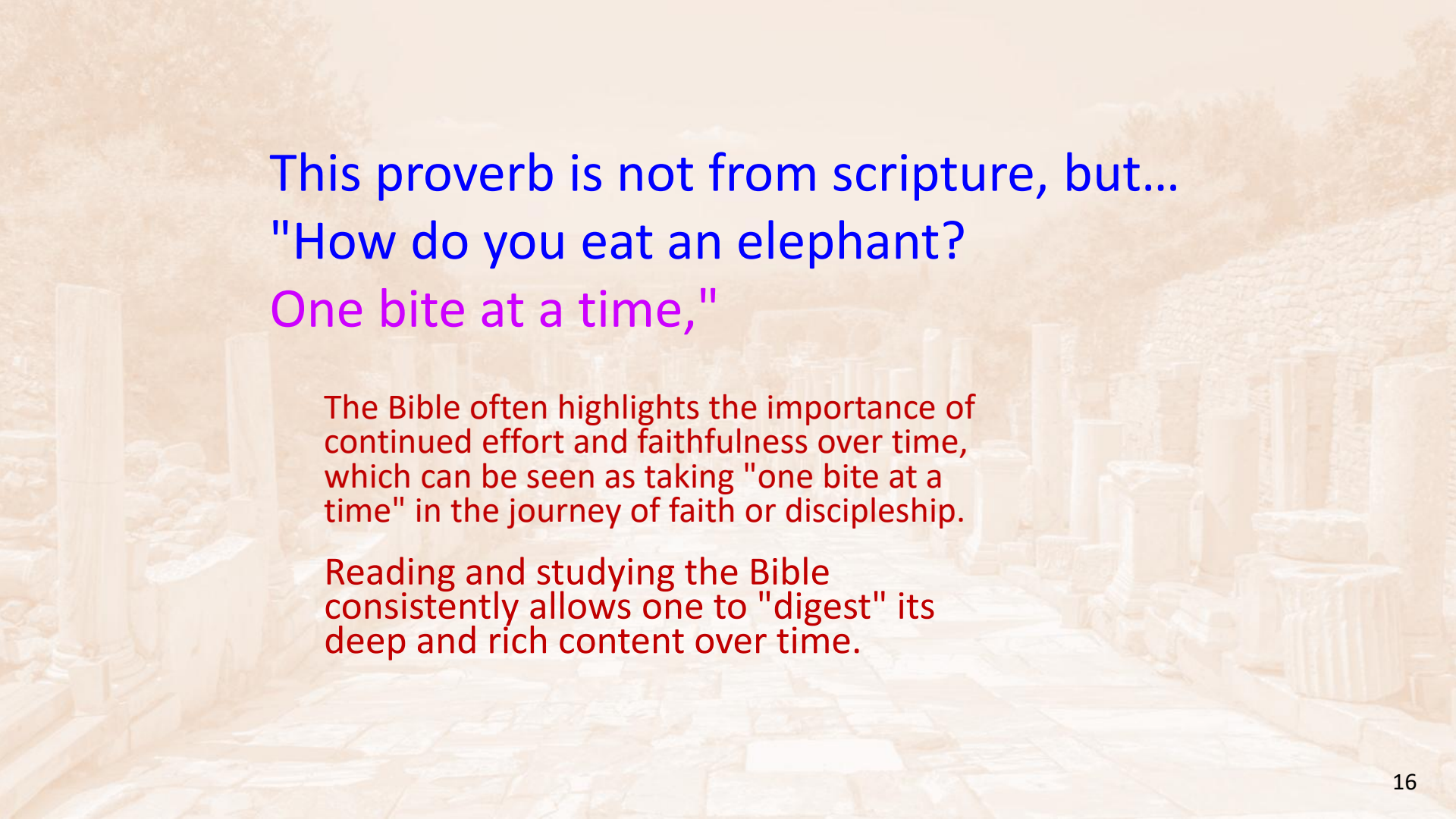
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Hwm-ZW8qUUM&t=273s>





“Ephesians rises above all other epistles in portraying the believer’s position in Christ and the church’s place in the plan of God.”

— James M. Boice



This proverb is not from scripture, but...  
"How do you eat an elephant?  
One bite at a time,"

The Bible often highlights the importance of continued effort and faithfulness over time, which can be seen as taking "one bite at a time" in the journey of faith or discipleship.

Reading and studying the Bible consistently allows one to "digest" its deep and rich content over time.

## Today's Verses Ephesians 1:1-3

**READER #1:**  
Ephesians 1:1-2

### Greeting

<sup>1</sup> Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God,  
To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus:  
<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

**READER #2:**  
Ephesians 1:3

### Spiritual Blessings in Christ

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has  
blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,



## The Salutation (1:1-2):

### THE DUAL SOURCE OF AUTHORITY (1:1A): THE DUAL DESIGNATION OF BELIEVERS (1:1B)

<sup>1</sup> Paul, an **apostle** of Christ Jesus by the **will of God**,  
To **the saints** who are in Ephesus, and are **faithful** in Christ Jesus:

- **Paul's Authority** — Paul emphasizes divine commissioning. Paul expresses his authority simply but powerfully.
- The foundation for his message is not personal authority but God's calling.
- Paul's apostleship is "**by the will of God**," which expresses the means by which Paul was chosen and commissioned as an apostle. Same phrase is found in other epistles.
- Paul's ministry, like our salvation, is rooted in God's will—not human ambition.
- Being a **saint** means first and foremost being "set apart" or "separated" from the world.
- From God's side believers are those whom He has made holy, which is the meaning of **saints**. From man's side believers are those who are **faithful**, those who have trusted in Christ Jesus as their Lord and Savior.
- **Discussion Question:** Why does it matter that Paul was "an apostle by the will of God"?

## The Salutation (1:1-2):

### THE DUAL BLESSINGS OF BELIEVERS (1:2A): THE DUAL SOURCE OF BLESSING (1:2B)

<sup>2</sup> Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

- **QUESTION:** What is grace?
- Grace is unmerited (unearned) favor [in this case, from God].
- **QUESTION:** What is the dual blessing and dual source found in the verse?
- **Grace and Peace** — Paul offers the twin blessings of the gospel: grace (the cause) and peace (the effect).
- “Grace comes first, because it is the basis of peace. Only through the grace of God in Christ can peace with God and with one another be experienced.” – John Stott
  - These summarize the gospel’s benefits to the believer.
  - Every Christian stands in grace and is at peace with God through Christ.
- **Discussion Question:** How do grace and peace shape the way we approach our daily lives?

# The Body Formed in Eternity Past ([1:3-6A](#)): THE ASPECTS OF BLESSING ([1:3](#)): GOD, BELIEVERS, SPIRITUAL, HEAVENLY, JESUS CHRIST ([1:3](#))

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

- This section begins the first half of the body of the letter ([Eph. 1:3–3:21](#)).
- In the original Greek this section ([1:3–14](#)) consists of one long sentence (202 words).

## Next Week

Rob	June 22	Lesson #2	1:7-14	3. Redemption Through His Blood (1:7-10)
				4. Divine Inheritance Guaranteed (1:11-14)

- Paul is declaring a doxology—a word of praise—to begin the letter. It sets a tone of worship and gratitude.
- This verse identifies God as the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ emphasizes.
- Paul begins the doctrine of the trinity he completes in [v.13](#) (we will see next week) connecting Christ's divine Sonship and unique relationship with the Father. (Consistent with SBD [BFM](#))



## The Body Formed in Eternity Past (1:3-6A): THE ASPECTS OF BLESSING (1:3): GOD, BELIEVERS, SPIRITUAL, HEAVENLY, JESUS CHRIST (1:3) (CONTINUED)

<sup>3</sup> Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

- **Spiritual Blessings in Christ** — Paul begins with praise: God is the source; Christ is the channel; blessings are spiritual.
- **Heavenly places** = the spiritual realm, where our identity is secure.
- **Agree or Disagree:** Too many Christians live as if they're spiritually poor, not realizing the riches already given to them in Christ.
- **Discussion Question:** What are some "spiritual blessings" we already possess in Christ?
- Believers receive "**every spiritual blessing**," including election, adoption, and the Holy Spirit. Election (1:4), Adoption (1:5), Redemption & forgiveness (1:7), Holy Spirit (1:13–14)
- Though we live on earth, we participate in Christ's heavenly reign (i.e., **heavenly places**) because we are "in Christ."