

A Love Letter From God

Lesson 1

Selected New Testament Verses



Why did Paul write a letter to the Ephesians?



A Love Letter From God

Paul wrote a message similar to the one above to the Christians in Ephesus whom he had come to know and love.

Because God inspired Paul's words, they are a message from God to *you* as well. Insert your name on the blank in the greeting and *God* on the blank in the closing.

With a partner, discuss what this personal message from God means to you.

WORD

1. Read the following paragraph about the inspired author of Ephesians. The underlined words are incorrect. Write the correct words after them. Look up the Bible readings for help.

Earlier in his life, the apostle Paul was known as Luke _____ (Acts 13:9). He was a Sadducee _____ (Acts 23:6). Jesus appeared to Paul as he went to Damascus to persecute Christians and brought him to faith. Paul went on three missionary journeys, preaching primarily to Jews _____ (Acts 9:15). He established congregations, including one at Ephesus, where he served more than four _____ years (Acts 19:8,10 and Acts 20:31). Later Paul wrote e-mails _____ to these congregations.

2. Paul stopped at Ephesus on his third missionary journey. For three months he taught at the synagogue but stopped because of opposition. Read Acts 19:8-10. What blessing did God bring about as a result of the opposition Paul faced?

3. The Lord confirmed Paul's inspired message as the truth by using Paul to do extraordinary miracles. See Acts 19:11,12. In the box, illustrate one of the miracles.

4. Read Acts 19:23-31. As a result of the proclamation of God's Word in Ephesus, many people stopped worshiping idols. Whom did this hurt, and how did it hurt them?

Whom: _____

How: _____



How did Paul get to know the Christians in Ephesus?

God led Paul to establish a congregation in Ephesus and to proclaim God's _____ there for more than _____ years.

WORDtoday

5. Imagine that your family is going through challenging times. You receive encouragement from church friends and your pastor, and a letter comes in the mail from a Sunday school teacher you admire. Why would encouragement from such people be especially important to you?

WORD

6. After more than two years in Ephesus, Paul visited the Christians in Macedonia and Greece on his way to Jerusalem. Read the passages and complete the synopsis of what happened to him.

a. **Acts 20:15-25:** When Paul left Greece, he passed by Ephesus because he wanted to get to Jerusalem before _____. He sent for the elders of

Ephesus and told them that they would never _____.

b. **Acts 21:27-29:** Jews from Asia stirred up people in Jerusalem because they thought Paul had brought _____, a Gentile from _____, into the temple. Later in Acts

we are told that a Roman commander arrested Paul to stop the uproar. Because some Jews vowed to kill Paul, he was transferred to Caesarea. He was imprisoned for two years.

c. **Acts 25:9-12:** In the court of Festus, Paul appealed to _____ and was then sent to Rome.

d. **Acts 28:30,31:** In Rome, Paul was under house arrest for _____ years. He was not prohibited from _____.

7. Imagine that you are a leader of the church in Ephesus. Why would it be important to receive a

letter from prisoner Paul?



What encouragement did prisoner Paul give the Ephesians?

Paul told the Ephesians that even though he was a _____, he was still sharing the _____ and wanted them to do the same.

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8. In many countries today, Christians are persecuted. Compare the opposition Christians face today to the opposition Paul faced in his ministry.

How is the life and work of Paul an encouragement to you as you live as a Christian in a hostile world?

WORD 9. Use the words in the box to complete the paragraph and learn how Paul's letter likely got to the Christians in Ephesus.

| | | |
|-----------|-----------|-----------|
| Ephesians | greatness | letter |
| Christ | mixed | salvation |

Word reached Paul that at the congregation in Colosse the message of Christ was being watered down and _____ with false teachings. Paul wrote a letter to the Colossians, reminding them of the surpassing _____ of Christ. It seems likely that because a courier (message carrier) going to Colosse would pass through Ephesus, Paul sent along a _____ to the _____. He reminded the Ephesians that _____ is the only hope for _____.

10. Now peek into just a few passages from Ephesians. Then write next to the microscope what Paul wanted to be the focus for the Ephesians.

Ephesians 2:1,4-6,13



In view of what was happening in a neighboring congregation, what did Paul want to do through his letter to the Ephesians?

Paul wanted to strengthen the _____ congregation against the _____ teachings that were surfacing in another congregation.

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11. Why might your pastor bring up in a sermon an error taught by another Christian church?



Question: Why did Paul write a letter to the Ephesians?

Answer:



Acts 20:32

Hymn 494:1,3,4

- 1 Blest be the tie that binds
Our hearts in Christian love;
The fellowship of kindred minds
Is like to that above.
- 3 We share our mutual woes,
Our mutual burdens bear,
And often for each other flows
The sympathizing tear.
- 4 When here our pathways part,
We suffer bitter pain;
Yet, one in Christ and one in heart,
We hope to meet again.