

## The First-Century Church

### "The Church in Ephesus"

#### Introduction:

1. The New Testament contains a tremendous amount of information that was written "about" as well as "to" various congregations in the first century.
2. By examining this information we can learn the Lord's will for His church today.
3. Many passages relate to the church in Ephesus.
  - a. We read about the establishment of this congregation in Acts 18-19.
  - b. The apostle Paul wrote a letter [Ephesians] to this congregation.
  - c. The Lord also sent a message to this congregation (Revelation 2:1-7).
4. Previously, we made several practical observations from passages that relate to the establishment of the church in Ephesus.
  - a. God works providentially in His church.
  - b. There is one way to enter the church.
  - c. The church will sometimes face opposition.
5. This lesson is a study of information revealed in Ephesians, the letter that the apostle Paul wrote "to" the church in Ephesus.

#### Discussion:

- I. IN EPHESIANS WE LEARN ABOUT THE IDENTITY OF THE CHURCH
  - A. The church is the Lord's body (1:22-23; Colossians 1:18).
    1. *"There is one body"* (4:4).
    2. Since the church is the Lord's body, and there is one body, He only has one church.
  - B. Christ made it possible for Jews and Gentiles to be reconciled to God in His body (2:14-16).
- II. IN EPHESIANS WE LEARN ABOUT THE CHURCH'S RELATIONSHIP WITH CHRIST
  - A. Christ is *"the head over all things to the church"* (1:22).
  - B. In addition to being the head of the church, Christ is *"the Savior of the body"* (5:23).
  - C. Christ *"loved the church, and gave Himself for it"* (5:25; Acts 20:28; John 15:13).
  - D. Christ nourishes and cherishes the church (5:29).
- III. IN EPHESIANS WE LEARN ABOUT THE CHURCH'S RESPONSIBILITIES TO CHRIST
  - A. God is glorified in the church (3:21).
  - B. The church is subject to Christ (5:24; Colossians 3:17).
  - C. The church is to *"be holy and without blemish"* (5:27).
- IV. IN EPHESIANS WE LEARN THAT THE CHURCH MAKES KNOWN *"THE MANIFOLD WISDOM OF GOD, ACCORDING TO THE ETERNAL PURPOSE WHICH HE PURPOSED IN CHRIST JESUS OUR LORD"* (3:1-12)