Lessons From Ephesus

Prepared by Nathan L Morrison for Sunday August 23rd, 2020

Text: Ephesians 1:13-14

### Intro

1. “What do I need to do to become a Christian?”
	1. Many “theories” and false doctrines that attempt to answer this question.
		1. The answer is in the word of God! (Not found in creeds of man)
	2. There are examples of conversions so that we may know & do what pleases God!
2. We can look at the conversion of the Ephesians to see what they were *before* they were believers, and what they did *to become* Christians.
3. How did the church grow in the center of Artemis (Diana) worship?
4. The lessons from the Ephesians answer the question of life: ***What must I do to be saved?***

#### What The Ephesians ***Were*** Before Conversion

* 1. Study from book of Ephesians and appropriate chapters in Acts tell us the kind of people they were when they heard and answered the call of the gospel.
	2. Disciples of John, not of Jesus *(Acts 19:1-7);* “Exorcists & Magicians” *(19:13, 19);* Idolaters *(19:24-41)*
		1. After being taught John the Baptist pointed to Christ, they were baptized in His name.
		2. There were those who tried to exorcize demons in the name of Christ, but had no authority to do so and were overpowered *(19:13-17).*
		3. Many who practiced “magic” converted and burned their books *(19:18-19).*
		4. Ephesus was the center for Artemis (Greeks)/Diana (Romans) worship (Acts 19:34) – “The Great Mother Goddess”
			1. Artemis’ Temple was one of the 7 wonders of the world.
			2. Christianity came into direct conflict with such worship – *Acts 19:24-41*
			3. Saints in Ephesus had to give up this type of pagan worship!
	3. In book of Ephesians we learn more of who they were before conversion:
		1. Eph. 5:8: Once in darkness
		2. Eph. 2:1-3:
			1. Were “dead” in trespasses and sins – 2:1
			2. “Walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air;” “disobedient” – 2:2
			3. “Formerly lived in the lusts” of flesh (sexual immorality) – 2:3
				1. Diana of the Ephesians was a fertility goddess and was worshiped and depicted in sexual ways.
			4. “Indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind” – 2:3 (Diana worship)
			5. “Children of wrath” – 2:3
			6. Note: Paul acknowledges all fall into this category before conversion: “We” in 2:3.
		3. Eph. 2:11-13:
			1. “Separate from Christ” – Eph. 2:12
			2. “Excluded from the commonwealth of Israel” (Considered dogs by Jews) – 2:12
			3. “Strangers to the covenants of promise” (No spiritual home) – 2:12
			4. “Having no hope and without God in the world” – 2:12
			5. “Formerly were far off” – 2:13
		4. Eph. 4:14:
			1. “Carried about by every wind of doctrine” by “trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming.”
			2. They were as confused as to what truth is as people are today!
			3. How does this happen? **By not being grounded in the word of God!**
		5. Eph. 4:17-20:
			1. “Futility of mind,” “darkened in their understanding,” “ignorance,” “callous,” and “practice of every kind of impurity.”
	4. Not a pretty picture – nature of sin: twisted and ugly (often wrapped in pretty paper)!

#### What The Ephesians Did ***To Become*** Christians

* 1. They “HEARD” the word of Truth – the Gospel – Eph. 1:13-14
		1. Acts 19:5: After hearing, they were baptized!
		2. Acts 19:10: They heard the word of the Lord.
		3. Acts 20:26-27: Paul declared to them the “whole counsel of God.” (NKJV)
		4. Eph. 1:13-14: Their belief came after hearing the word of Truth!
	2. They “BELIEVED” the word of God – Eph. 1:13
		1. Acts 20:21: “Faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.”
		2. Eph. 1:13: “Having believed” after hearing it preached.
	3. They “REPENTED” – Acts 19:18
		1. Acts 19:18-19: “Confessing and disclosing their practices” they burned their books “in the sight of everyone.” (They got rid of their old life)
		2. Acts 20:21: “Repentance toward God.”
	4. They “CONFESSED” Christ as Lord – Acts 19:17; Eph. 6:24
		1. Acts 19:17: “The name of the Lord Jesus was being magnified.”
		2. The act of charlatans being subdued by an evil spirit gave that much more credit to the miracles of God worked thru Paul, and brought many to God.
		3. The book of Ephesians is a confession of Christ’s Lordship! (5:20-21, 23; 6:24)
	5. They were “BAPTIZED” in the name of Christ – Acts 19:5
		1. Acts 19:5: “They were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.”
		2. Eph. 4:4-6: Paul reminded them there was “one baptism.”
		3. Eph. 5:25-26: “Cleansed her by the washing of water with the word.” Baptism washes away sin *(Acts 22:16)* & is obedience to the word of God!
	6. They were exhorted to remain “OBEDIENT” – Eph. 5:6-8
		1. Eph. 5:1, 6-8, 11, 15: He draws on where they were from, and exhorts them to not go back, but to “walk in the light” and stand firm in their faith *(6:10-17).*
	7. The Ephesians are an example of obedience to God’s plan for salvation!

## Conclusion

1. The things done in the 1st century are in obedience to God’s commands – not man’s!
	1. As such, they are just as binding today as they were then.
		1. Eph. 1:1:22-23; 5:23-24: The church today can do no different than it did then, for Christ is still it’s “Head” and so the church must be “subject to Christ.”
2. People today must take the same steps as the Ephesians did to be saved or they are still left in the same “darkness” the Ephesians “formerly” were in.
3. People searching for the answer to “What must I do to be saved?” need to go to same source the Ephesians did: the word of God!
	1. God’s way is correct way – not man’s (no need for human creeds or traditions).
4. Believe and obey God’s word, God’s way, TODAY! *(II Cor. 6:2: Now is the day of salvation!)*
5. If you are not a Christian, you need to be. Won’t you do as the Ephesians did and become a Christian? Repent of your sins and be baptized!
6. If a Christian in error, remember the “darkness” you escaped from, repent and “walk in the light” once more!
7. Whatever your requests, let them be made known ***NOW*** while we stand & sing!