

# How to Study Ephesians

*Disclaimer: this is an automatically generated machine transcription - there may be small errors or mistranscriptions. Please refer to the original audio if you are in any doubt.*

Date: 18 September 2008

Preacher: Bronwyn Short

[ 0 : 00 ] It's a real privilege, Ash, it's a real privilege for me to be here with you and I'm kind of wishing to see my smile on the inside. It is really delightful to come from St John's, to Shaughnessy and be with St John's Richmond.

It's kind of like coming to family, our family, and it's such an encouragement for St John's Shaughnessy to know you are here. And David and I both think the birth of St John's Richmond is one of the great blessings for St John's.

It's going to get bubbly. Whichever. The ones in Shaughnessy, you guys, your birth here, your presence here, is a great encouragement and a sign of the work of God, a very visible sign for us of the work of God.

And we pray for you. David and I regularly think about you and the church does as well and I want you to know that. It gives us great smiles that you are here. Very proud of them.

And we just want to say too, we need your prayers at St John's. Shaughnessy right now, you probably know that. The congregation is undergoing a great trial and the trustees and staff and the congregation are stressed and particularly stressed now and would appreciate your prayers for faith in God, courage and clarity for the way forward.

[ 1 : 20 ] And we really value your status and present time. Second thing is to say, when Sean emailed me to ask me to talk on Ephesians, my head was in Luke.

And I had to go, Ephesians? Almost forgotten it all. And I wrote my notes on the overview to Ephesians in the airport in Sydney. I wrote them on some scrap.

Did you think I could find that scrap? And it had all gone out the brain somewhere with the jet lag. So I had to pull it up again and get back into Ephesians, which has been a great treat. The other thing to say is, I really want to be a help to you.

And I think the best way I can be a help to you and you can be a help to me is if you say to me in the middle of my talking, could you clarify that or could you explain that or could you say it another way?

Could you say it more slowly? Could you say it with a different accent? Accent, all those things. I was reminded this morning at Bible study, two people came and said, we didn't understand what you said.

[ 2 : 20 ] I thought, oh, I'm so sorry. They had other accents besides Canadian ones that I was grappling with from Hungarian and Quebecois to Australian.

It was too big a job. Too big. Anyway, so to the book, Ephesians. I think you were in Exodus last year, right?

Yes? But it's like I need to give you this warning over the book of Ephesians. Exodus is a book, you look at it, it's big and you know it's big. There's 40 chapters. It's in the Old Testament.

And it's like this is a big load. So I'm going to lift this big load. So you kind of, you know, you strengthen your core. You kind of embrace yourself to lift the big load. And then you lift. Fair, honest weight, right, Exodus.

You know what you're in for. Now Ephesians, you think, oh, it's a short book. They're little verses, little chapters. It's not like Luke with 70 verses in a chapter. It's just a little book. I can use one hand to lift this load.

[ 3 : 19 ] I lift this load. You go to lift it. And each verse is pure gold. The weight of pure gold and you can't do it. So you've got to be the same thing. You just strengthen your core. Take your brace and lift.

It's deceiving. You see, this will be easy. Six chapters, no problem. Each word in Ephesians is pure gold. It's really weighty.

It's heavy. Every simple word is full of rich meaning. You've got to find that. You can't just, there's no throwaway. Paul has no throwaway lines. There's nothing that you can say, oh, that's not meaning.

You think there's nothing like that in Paul. That's true of all his letters. Ephesians is especially like that. So be prepared. You have been warned. It's short.

That's going to be rich. The other thing to say is, is that unlike most of Paul's other letters, there's no one particular problem he's writing about. He's not writing for a church who obviously has a lot of problems, like the Corinthian letters, the Galatian letters, the Thessalonian letters, the ancient church, and he says, listen, this is going on, and it's not much good.

[ 4 : 32 ] There's nothing like that in Ephesians. There's no problem. The book is, it's harder to tell exactly why he is writing it to the church at this time. It's not addressing one particular need.

The book's actually, it's his heart opened up, really. It's Paul, it's Paul at his best without an agenda. He just has to tell them this wonderful stuff he wants them to get. It's a wonderfully rich book. I think Sean has worked through the toolkit with you.

Is that right? In the past. In the past. And one of the things you learn is when you tackle a book of the Bible, it's really good to ask the question, what is the one great thing that's running through the whole book?

Or there's another way of saying it. Those that have done preaching conferences with this phrase, what is the one melodic line that Paul is singing in the book? Like in a symphony, it's not the one refrain that holds the whole thing together.

[ 5 : 37 ] But each book of the Bible, surprise, surprise, has one great melodic line that's being sung. And your job as a reader is to try and look at what the writer is singing first.

A lot of us think the job is to bring our framework to the passage and sort of push it in that passage. It's got to be the opposite. We've got to look at what he is speaking about. Look at what is the big thing he's singing about the most.

What's the big thing? And there are little refrains that go into it. When I work at that, then I'll know where everything fits in. And I'll work out what he is wanting me to learn, not bringing my agenda to it first, which is what often happens when we read the Bible.

Do you understand what I've just said? Yeah. Don't put that word up on the board. So you're asking this question when you come to the book. And I'm going to tell you what I and Dave think the melodic line is at the end of what I've done.

And you can go through the study 11 weeks later. Write it down in the cover and see whether you think it fits after you've done the work on the ground. Okay. You can smooze it yourself. So you're asking this question.

[ 6 : 46 ] And by melodic line, I mean, what is the big idea? It's just another wise saying. You're a Sunday school teacher. You usually speak about it in that way.

What's the big idea? Well, each book has a big idea. It's headed to the framework of the big idea of the whole Bible. But your job is to find out what is the particular part of its big sign in Ephesians. Okay. So after you work out this what, what he's saying, and then you're going to ask, why is he saying it?

Why is he saying it? He doesn't need a couple of weeks. It's not God. It is God through Paul. So why is he saying it? So what's he saying? And then why is he saying it?

The next question is, what does he want me to learn particularly from it? What does he want St. John's Richmond to be doing in response to it? You've got to do this part first, the meaning part, before you do this part, which is the application part.

[ 7 : 53 ] A lot of Bible studies, they read the passage, and then they quickly go to the application. They jump straight to 2008, St. John's Richmond, and try and look at what the application is.

Without doing this part, asking what it means. Do I need to stop and slow down here? Yeah. So that's why you do a bit of work. You're thinking, what does Paul mean in here? What do the words mean? What is he saying?

What is he talking about? Before you jump, you quickly insert yourself into the text. Mm-hmm. Yeah. Okay. So what does he mean first, then what it means for us?

Now, one of the best ways to do this is, I'm talking about how you read Ephesians. I'm not really telling you about Ephesians yet. This is true of all parts of the Bible. One of the simplest ways of doing this is looking at key words.

What are the words and the things that are being repeated? When something's being said over and over and over again by a writer of the Bible, usually you're getting closer to the melodic line.

[ 8 : 51 ] And when words, apart from the ands and the its and the ises and the little join words, when words are being used, it's giving you a big hand. And I think if you did the toolkit, be sure, one of the ways you've got up the words is by actually using a colouring in thing.

You take a pen, colour it in, and it starts to jump out at you. Well, you don't want to colour in your Bibles, but what you might just start noticing as you're reading is what's being repeated. There are key words, and I'll start to get to Ephesians and I hear it, and they are some of these words.

I'll explain what one or two of them mean. Words like this, you'll notice. Fullness. Now, we don't know what that means yet. Glory. Grace.

Christ, of course, is repeated the most, but you'll notice that the Trinity is there. And you can do a whole study on Ephesians on the Trinity. You can go back again and start again and just look at what you can learn about the Trinity.

I believe D. Ruth Matheson is my husband's assistant, did an overview on Ephesians this morning. But her group did it like, and she took this point of view, and she just went back and said, what do we learn about God, the Trinity?

[ 10 : 03 ] God the sign, God the Father, God the Son. It was just so rich. You want to get a doctrine of the Trinity? Ephesians will give it to you. The other key words are purpose. And the word that also means the same thing is plan.

So God's purpose, God's plan. Riches is a favourite word in this first chapter. Okay, so these are some of the key words. There are others, but if you sort of pull up a Bible search program, find me the most common used words, these ones are going to start hitting the bing, bing, bing, bing, bing. Well, that tells you that his themes are being played into these words. Okay? I need to say this again. Is it okay? Different book of the Bible in different words.

Okay. So here are some of the key words. The other thing I want to say that I've found helpful in coming to grips with this book is the scope, the range of scope.

Now, if I was to write, Ephesians have got six chapters, like I said. There's chapter one, and we've got chapter two, chapter three, chapter four.

[ 11 : 14 ] There's my eraser. Yeah. I don't know if these words are. Is that okay? Yep. Chapter five.

Chapter six. Ah. Good. Ah, thank you. I was never very good at maths. Still not.

And one of the things I noticed in the book was the word, the only word I could use for it was scope, the scope of the book, by which I mean the scope of perspective in terms of time and place.

And it starts in chapter one. I don't know how to draw it almost. Some of you will graphic. The scope is just huge. It's just, you couldn't get bigger.

In terms of time, it goes back to the beginning before the foundation of the earth, in chapter one. It talks about God. He left the people before the foundation of the earth in his great grace and mercy.

[ 12 : 17 ] Then in chapter one goes to the future. And the next one you should read, where he talks about what God's plan for all things is. So you've got this huge framework that the book is working under. Time framework.

But it also talks about the heavens and all the earth in terms of the geography of where it's talking about and where the thing is located. It's not just one tiny little place and one tiny little time.

So the scope, okay, in chapter one, you can't get bigger. There's nothing out of the scope and time or place that's being talked about in this chapter.

And the phrase, the heavenly places, which is used in the book, isn't it? It does not mean heaven when it uses that phrase.

It's talking about anything that's not on earth. You get another phrase, principalities and powers. In Ephesians, they are evil principalities and powers.

[ 13 : 14 ] It's talking about things we don't see, the reality that is real, that we don't see, that it's just monstrous, huge, universal there. That's what Paul's canvas is in Ephesians. So the scope is huge.

It's still huge in chapter two when he starts talking about who we were without Christ. And he puts who we are without Christ in perspective of very large principalities and powers.

He had his captive. It's big. It's a little kind of narrow here when he moves across, applying it. The scope comes down to the church.

Okay. You kind of sit in time and place. Church general though. And then chapter five, it gets quite narrow. It gets to families and marriages and workplace.

So it gets very particular. But the surprise that came to me which made me think about this was, and we're still in workplace in chapter six.

[14:19] It talks about how you need to be Christ in your job. Chapter six, lo and behold, he goes back to this huge, how should I draw it, huge perspective again when it gets to the spiritual battle of his principalities and powers.

He sets all this in the context of this huge scope at the end. It kind of goes, whoop. It's like those things that you see, I think you can do it on your computer, but you can start it in space.

You're going to come in, come in, come in, come in. And then you get to Richmond and all the house at Richmond. And then you go, go, go, go, go, go, go, go, go, go. Right? He's doing that. It's like, it's huge. It's huge.

It's huge. It's huge. And then in and then out again. And you've got to ask, well, why is he doing that? Why does he do that? Like, what does he want us to learn from it? And it is, I think, and that's a good question for you to have in your head as you're reading the book.

I'm not going to give you all the answers to the book. I'm going to try and make you ask questions to set you up to read the book. Make it think as you read it and just alert you a few things. I mean, I'm not just a lay person who read it and noticed a few things and I'm going to share those with you.

[15:21] I think this is so that we are given God's perspective. This scope is how God sees things through Paul humanly. But it's God's perspective.

Eternity, time, space, what is really going on in the world. And all this stuff going on in here, church, family, marriage, how you use your sexuality, how you use your tongue, what you do with your money, do you steal it, all those things, he's put into the perspective of this stuff, of what God is doing in the world.

Who is the one that is opposing God's plan? Let's have a look at chapter one and I'll try and show you how this works out in a particular chapter. So I'm sort of sweeping, guys, over the whole book. Let's say at women at ten, what I like to do is actually do those whirlwind tours of Europe in, you know, ten days. And you can't kind of just stop and look at everything. That's what I'm doing here. And you're going to go back and do the walking tour over the next two weeks as you work through it yourself.

So I'm just sweeping. And if I sweep too fast, you can say, hold on. But let's open your Bibles to chapter one. And I'll just show you there, verses three down to 14.

[16:42] I won't say too much because you're going to study it very quickly. But in terms of this scope, I'll show you what I think is what's going on. Let me read it.

He said, 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, in all the world.

Even as he chose us in him when? Before the foundation of the earth. That's time. That we should be holy and blameless before him. In love, he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose.

There's that purpose word. The purpose of his will. To the praise. There's the way he did it. To the praise of his glorious grace. Keep that from your head.

Which he's blessed us in the beloved. Verse seven. In him we have redemption for his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace. Which he lavished upon us in all wisdom and insight, making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose or plan, which he set forth in Christ.

[17:49] As a plan for the fullness of time. To unite all things in him. Things in heaven and things on earth. If you want to know what God's plan is for the world, you're told there in verse 10.

Have a little paper look at it. What is God's plan? The fullness of time. There's that word fullness. It is to unite all things in Christ.

What things? What's the geographical scope? Everything. Heaven, earth. There'll be nothing at the end of time that will not come united under the rule of Christ.

There'll be nothing. Everything. And this is what God is doing now, you learn. That's what God's doing on the world now. He's bringing everything into the Lord Jesus Christ and under his rule.

Everything.

So we're just setting in place your life, my life, my job, my marriage, my church. Everything. In that perspective.

[ 18 : 50 ] That's what God's doing in the world. And the way we learn he did that was through the redemption that Christ won on the cross. That all history, through the eternity timeline, eternity, past, future, the one big event in that timeline, according to Ephesians, is the cross.

All history pivoted around that is changed by that. Everything changed when Christ died. And I know this, of course, if you just go a bit further on into chapter 1, verse 20.

He was in the middle of a prayer here. And he's praying they understand the power of God that's at work in them.

20. That he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead. And then seated him, the right hand, where? They're not praising him in the heavenly places. Far above.

What? All rule. All authority. All power. All dominion. All right. Not only this age. Can you see the scope?

[ 20 : 06 ] Time. Place. It's huge. And this is huge. This is huge. You're starting to get a picture of where the cross fits in God's plan. We kind of have this, we kind of have this, it's like a painting.

You know, you go to those museums and there's huge paintings on the walls in Europe. and we often, and this is a picture of God's plan, we often have this kind of perspective.

You know, the painting, we're looking at the little corner down here and we're kind of, yeah, well, there's a tree there and there's a little barn there. And Paul's going, okay, you want to see the painting? Here's the painting. And this little picture, what is happening in Ephesians is being kind of stretched that way.

So you've got to kind of feel like, whoa, my brain, my heart. It's no wonder he goes from this section to prayer. Twice he does it. He says, whoa, so big, and you're caught up in this incredibly big thing. So your life is not just, I don't know what your life is like, you know, get up 9 o'clock, go to work 9 o'clock, get home at 3 o'clock, get home at 3 o'clock, go to bed at 7 o'clock, you know, put your kids to bed. It might feel like that.

[ 21 : 20 ] But if you're a Christian, your life is part of this huge, exciting, amazing plan. And when you get your place in this, your life's transformed. It goes from being, hmm, to being, wow.

Want to interject, anybody? Am I going too fast? Ready for a big lie down? I always say this. I'm going to be a lie down now. Sorry, I won't say.

I won't apologize for me because you don't do that when you're a speaker, but I often put people kind of, ah. I speak so quickly, I'm going to say. But this is what Paul is doing. He's trying to give you the large framework, the large canvas, and a big picture of the gospel.

It's not just this little thing that happened to you, like me, back in 1974 when I had my sins forgiven, and that's fantastic, and that's the end of the story. No, no, no, no, no. When I had my sins forgiven and believed in Christ, I was suddenly thrown into this huge, amazing, wonderful plan.

It's just incredible. That's where, if you are in Christ, and let me say that. That's what Paul said. One of the other phrases in Ephesians is this little phrase, in Christ. Verse 3.

[ 22 : 31 ] First thing he said, well, blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us in Christ that there is spiritual blessing. You want spiritual blessing? Do you know where it is?

It's in Christ. Not out of him. There's no blessing outside of Jesus. It's all in there. And if you don't feel like you're blessed and you are in Christ, what you need to do is go back and see what he's done for you and ask God to renovate your eyes.

The prayer straight after. Paul falls on his knees after this huge pain in praise. He says, oh, verse 7, 16, sorry.

He says, I'm praying for you. I don't seek to give thanks for you. Remembering me on my prayers.

The God of our Father may give you a spirit of wisdom and understanding and revelation and knowledge so that you get it, so that you see it, so that you believe it.

Because it's like we are blinded by our forwardness to see how beautiful this is. And so you have to on your knees pray for the Lord to give her the glasses to see it.

[ 23 : 35 ] Day by day by day. I've been a Christian since I was 16. And every day I think, hmm. And God has to by his Holy Spirit go, hmm. This is reality.

This is reality. That's not reality. You know, going to the shops, doing the tax. That's not what I'm made for. I have to do those things. But that's not who I am in God's eyes.

It's not who the church is in God's eyes. So there we are. I'm sweeping through. How am I doing your time, Sean? Chapter 2. We have this prayer. So praise. He goes to prayer.

No wonder. For us even to get it into our brains. Got a massive prayer. And it's a great prayer. But here he says, you want to know how amazing is what God has done for you?

Let's remember what you were like. Let's remember how captured you were. How terrible it was. How the principalities and powers had you in their grip. 2. 1. Look at chapter 2, verse 1.

[ 24 : 30 ] He says, you were dead. You were dead. You followed the courses of the world. You walked with the principalities. They had you in their captive. They were walking you into death and judgment.

And Jesus reached in and grabbed you out and rescued you. When you were blind, you were dead. When he's in and rescued you. He says, you don't think you're in this picture? You don't think he's going to be glad about it?

He sure is. And then he goes to prayer again at the end of that chapter. He says, it's incredible. It's incredible. Praise be to God that you can see it. In chapter 3, you need to pray that the Lord will open the eyes of your heart.

No. Pray. That God will give you the sight. So move through here. This is before and after. In chapter 2, he does another before and after.

Forgive the writing. He does it twice. From two different perspectives here. So they get it. This is what you were like before. This is who you are now. This is what you were like before. This is who you are now.

[ 25 : 28 ] Praise be to God. The riches he's given you in the Lord Jesus Christ. Every spiritual blessing he's given you in the Lord Jesus Christ. Three, Paul talks about his own ministry in the second of the gospel.

And then he prays again. He prays for them to get it. And then four here. The book sort of turns here. You have here. It's all been what God has done.

And is doing. Okay. That section. And Paul verse 1. He says, I therefore, prisoner of the Lord, urge you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling to which you've been called.

So you spend three chapters telling them about the calling they have. And it's an incredible calling. It's just a huge, high, wonderful, marvelous calling.

And he says, Now you know your calling. I urge you. I beg you to walk to live in a manner that is worthy of that high calling. And this word walk, I should have put it up.

[ 26 : 34 ] It's another key word. And in the next one, two chapters, walk is a word he uses a lot. He says, walk this way. Don't walk like you used to walk when you were captive to the old way of life.

Walk this way. Now you are God's redeemed child. Call it this huge plan. Walk like that. And he spills it out of a whole lot of different areas. So look for this word walk as well.

In some Bibles, it's translated live. Walk is better because it's more active. It's actually directional. When you keep choosing to walk, get a manner worthy of the calling of the human calling.

It's like, and I'll tell you what I have to give this illustration. I've used it in front of it. It's like, I'll use two illustrations. This, you are rich in Christ.

I mean, in the sense of spiritual blessing, in your redemption, in your calling, in your future. So walk. Wise telling, how rich we are.

[ 27 : 36 ] So walk. It's like, sometimes you hear about people who are straight people. And, you know, folks kind of care for them or find out their story.

You find actually that they're millionaires. You know how there's some stories? Yeah. They're millionaires, really, but they're choosing to live impoverished lives. There are people who do that. I think, we are like this. We are rich who live impoverished lives because we choose not to see what God has done for us in our Lord Jesus Christ.

And we start to go, this is how God has blessed me. I am so, so blessed. I am so rich in the Lord Jesus Christ. I don't mean it's in a sense of some other stuff that's coming out of some churches where they're talking about material blessing.

I'm not talking about that. I'm talking about spiritual blessing. We are rich. You can be the, you can be a person in Sudan in captivity. And if you are in Christ, you are rich, according to Paul.

Nobody can believe that. We don't believe that. But Paul says you are. Paul's writing from prison. He's rich. Okay. So, war. Now, the other illustration I was going to use, it's like this.

[ 28 : 44 ] I just watched a wonderful series, this is why I told him, and I'll tell you this illustration of this picture, called Cranford, which is written by a woman from Elizabeth Gaskell that came on the telly, with a B being seen.

That's television. Television. Thank you. Interpretation. Television. I'll use a book on this outfit, will I? Television. And it's a great series, and it's set in England, and it's set on a really, I can't use the word posh, can I?

Yes. Can you say posh? Like posh estate with a lady who is, you know, it's the turn of the, turn of the industrial revolution.

So she's living like the past, but around her, there are always coming into the town for Cranford. She's got this huge manor, and there are people who've lived on the manor for 400 years, and the grandfather's grandfather's grandfather's grandfather's always got the same job, and on her manor is a very poor family.

The father basically keeps the family alive by stealing from the forest. He's a poacher. He goes to jail for being a poacher, and there's a little boy who lives in that family who the steward of the lady takes under his room.

[ 29 : 54 ] There's a lovely picture, this steward teaches him how to read, and the lady of the manor says, that is a very dangerous thing, but he'll stop doing it. He has to go back to the stable, where he'll be lucky to work for the rest of his life, and the son's son will work again.

So this is kind of... Anyway, for the steward who loves the boy, and educates the boy, and almost becomes a father to the boy, because the other father's in prison, writes his will.

Now, we find out that he's actually a very wealthy man, and after he dies in a tragic train accident, the lady of the manor brings the will to the boy, and this steward, who is wealthier, actually, than the lady of the manor, has left all his money to the little boy, who is a poacher.

And the little boy, you can see sort of a scene where the little boy suddenly realises everything has changed. The will. He's off. The future has changed. And he's no longer a poacher.

He no longer has spent his day in the stables. It might be known. Of course, that's not going to be the future for him. He's going to be, as a person who will use his money, what he chooses to do to bring education to the village, he gives his money to serve the village back, to be what he can have.

[ 31 : 09 ] So he becomes incredibly rich, and as he realises the riches he has, he then starts to walk a completely new life. That's like what we do. We've come to realise how incredibly rich we are in the Lord Jesus Christ.

And he says, so walk in a manner worthy of that now. And that's what chapters 4, 5 and 6 are doing. And you know, the first place of application of walking he goes to, it's the church.

It is to the church. He talks about what it is to belong to the body of Christ. And I want to go back here and just tell you why that would be. We go back to chapter 1 and have a look at verse 22 of chapter 1.

After he said that bit about putting Christ far above all will and dominion and getting in the name of every other name, he says, and he put, and God put all things under Christ's feet, past tense, and gave him as head of all things to whom?

The church. So God takes Christ up and then he gives him back to the church. And how is the church described? It is Christ's body, the fullness of him that fills all in all.

[ 32 : 35 ] Now what is that fullness word again? We find out that the church is dead at the centre, dead at the centre of God's painting, what he's doing in the world.

When you want to think about St. John's Richmond and where he's in God's plan, how important it is to the Lord Jesus Christ, how important it is to God the Father, even though you might think very ordinary, this is an ordinary of all churches like that, all churches that are in Christ are at the centre of God's plan for the world because it is to the church he gives the Lord Jesus Christ back and then he proceeds to fill the world through the church with his glory.

I'll say that again because I don't really believe it. The way that God is bringing his glory into all the earth is through you the church. And I'll just set a very big statement.

This word fullness comes from, thank heavens you study Exodus. That word fullness at the end of chapter 1 comes from the book of Exodus. Do you remember in Exodus where God fills?

In Exodus there is a phrase where God fills the earth as the water of knowledge comes to see us in the earth that Bible verse that's not quite it.

[ 34 : 02 ] No, in Exodus something happens right at the end where the book has been leading to is the point of the book. Thank you Mary. God comes in all his fullness. If you read the last verse in Exodus or second last it says God comes in all his Shekinah glory and fills the tabernacle with himself.

It is himself who comes to dwell there. There is no part of God that's not there. God is there in all his fullness his glory his beauty. It is astounding that he would do that with the Israelites because you know where they haven't got a work.

But what we find now is where is God's fullness? It's no longer in the tabernacle. Where is it now today? According to that verse the church. You. God comes in all his glory in the Lord Jesus Christ to fill the church and through the church he fills the earth with the Lord Jesus Christ.

This is the heart of God's mission this place here. This is the heart of the action. This is what God is doing. This is what God is going to do for the end of the time. And part of our renovating our perspective which is what the book is doing is renovating our perspective of the church and its place in God's plan.

Any view in other words could blow your mind about how important the church is to God. And it is 2 end of 2 verses 19 to 22. Want to see what the body what the church is to God?

[ 35 : 32 ] 20 says you then are no longer state strangers and aliens and read verse 19 but now you members of St John of Richmond are fellow citizens of the saints members of the household of God built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone in whom the whole structure being drawn together grows into a holy temple of the Lord.

Here's the Exodus language again and it's you not a building in him you are being built together into the dwelling place of God by the Spirit.

This is where the holy God of the universe chooses to dwell and it's where his glory is. It's incredible isn't it? It's not in the tabernacle anymore that was pretty incredible when he came into the tabernacle it was like they all had to kind of go oh couldn't look at it but now in God's great mercy comes to live in you and it's through you that the blessing comes out to all the earth.

Now so you go okay this is so fantastic so glorious how come reality is like this? How come my life is so oh what God calls me to be and my church is so far so far God's standard so far the game is huge how come?

Well there's two how comes the first is because we need this ongoing prayerful on any renovation of who we are from the scriptures and the second is what happens here at the end look at this mess what happens here at the end of the book and remember what happens here at the end of the book in chapter 10 and 6 have a look warfare spiritual warfare this is why there's such a huge gap because the principalities and powers are throwing everything they can they can't get Jesus Christ anymore he's in heaven you know where they throw all their armament and their warfare the church the only way they can stop the glory of God in all its fullness coming is by attacking the church and you in the church so no wonder it's tough eh these guys the principalities and powers are evil they are powerful they are clever and they hate the plan of God they're not particularly interested in you they're interested in you as so far as you're being obedient to the plan of God you're being disobedient one year only if you are seeking to be obedient to God and in all the ways it talks about in 4 and 5 that is in 4 and 5 he talks about your sexuality he talks about your tongue he talks about your money he talks about husbands loving their wives as Christ so marriages he talks about wives submitting to their husbands marriages parents not being cruel to their children children being obedient workplace working like

[ 38 : 28 ] Christ in the workplace all those things if in all those places you are seeking to be obedient to Christ then these guys will be throwing everything at you to divert you from that if you're not as I said they're not interested in you but as you start to be obedient to be having the fullness of Christ in your life the glory of God in your life then the action is going to happen and you will need to be on your knees prayerfully and alert and ready and know you're in a battle because the battle you win is not just you and the devil it's not just you it's this battle where they are it's huge they are against this and they are doing everything they can behave to stop it but they will not succeed they will not succeed because we learn in chapter 1 that Christ is already ruling above all things scrap up but it will feel like more combat to you and the astounding thing I'm going to finish now the astounding thing in Ephesians is we learn that the whole world is watching the principalities and powers are watching us so we have this audience not just of your husband or your parents or your kids or your church we have this audience of the principalities and powers and do you know and I get that from Ephesians you'll see as you read through why I get that they are watching and when

God rescues someone out of darkness into light they are astounded at the grace of God they cannot understand but when that person who was dead in their transgressions and sin walked following their way somebody says no no no I'm going to follow the Lord Jesus Christ now when

they start obeying him they go the grace of God they cannot understand if you start obeying God the whole world is amazed at the grace of God because it is a huge miracle when a husband starts to love his wife from Christ that is a huge miracle when a Christian goes to work and says I am the servant of Jesus Christ at work that is a huge miracle because the word in your transgression says you're completely committed to just being self-centered when you say now I know I'm going to steal what I need to start giving it away that is a huge word of God and the whole world is going on so you need to think about your life in these perspectives in the big plan of God you think about your precious church in this perspective you think about how you work how you marry how you etc how you use your time in these perspectives and in context of whether your life is bringing the fullness of God into your life into the church and then into all the world that's what's at stake it's not just whether you're happy or not this is what it's okay now I'm going to give you what I think is a melodic line and I want you to you can write it down if you want and see if it works in 11 weeks time you might get a better one

I'm going to write it up and it comes from the rector of Cigone so more than me we worked on it together so this is our stab at it and it is the fullness of God which is all the glory of God fullness and wisdom of God and through Christ and the church the part we can't believe church right right this is the part that gets a bit clumsy being shown to the world I think to all the world and the principalities and powers it's a mouthful isn't it play around with it yes and the principalities and powers so yeah they they're a special poor word and we learn in this little letter by the way you've got a word in the Bible you don't know what it means you don't go to the columns English dictionary and find a meaning for it you have to go back to the Bible and see how it's used in the Bible and the best place is stick with the same author so stay in the book and see where does he use this word over and over and over and over and if he has another book maybe does Colossians do that rather than the Colossians English dictionary because the Colossians English dictionary is the English use of the word after Shakespeare to do whatever it's not how the Bible writers do it necessarily but principalities and powers in Paul's letter to Ephesians are the forces of evil in Ephesians 6 he talks about that stand against God so it's Satan and all his work Satan's the word bigger yeah just another word he uses that word stands yeah principalities in it you learn that they are powerful and that's what you learn in Ephesians 6 and they're evil and they're scheming they plan okay so this is being demonstrated to all of that