

Ouachita Baptist University

Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita

Vaught Sermon Notes: Ephesians

W.O. Vaught Archive

1-1-1975

The Establishment and the Revolt Against It

W. O. Vaught

Ouachita Baptist University

Follow this and additional works at: https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/vn_ephesians



Part of the [Biblical Studies Commons](#), and the [Liturgy and Worship Commons](#)

Recommended Citation

Vaught, W. O., "The Establishment and the Revolt Against It" (1975). *Vaught Sermon Notes: Ephesians*. 1. https://scholarlycommons.obu.edu/vn_ephesians/1

This Sermon Notes is brought to you for free and open access by the W.O. Vaught Archive at Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. It has been accepted for inclusion in Vaught Sermon Notes: Ephesians by an authorized administrator of Scholarly Commons @ Ouachita. For more information, please contact mortensona@obu.edu.

THE ESTABLISHMENT AND THE REVOLT AGAINST IT

A STUDY OF THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS
NUMBER 1
EPHESIANS 1:1-2

Dr. W. O. Vaught, Jr.
Immanuel Baptist Church
Little Rock, Arkansas

EPHESIANS 1:1-2 "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

Man's worst enemy in this earth is religion. (Definition: Religion is man's effort to reach God by his own ability. Christianity is God's plan for providing for man's need.)

"The Establishment" is a plan whereby in eternity past God made provision for every need of man. God is perfect and his plan is perfect. Anything that has ever come from God has been perfect. God is the force behind history. Remember, God's plan is perfect and imperfect man can't ruin God's perfect plan. God gave every man volition and man is free to go negative or positive. Within the whole framework of God's plan man was given volition. Adam and Eve were created perfect, and they had a perfect place in which to live. They had everything going for them. Christ visited them every day in that garden. But within the framework of that perfect plan man had human freedom. Every day man had an opportunity to decide whether or not he wanted to continue with God's plan. God made it very clear to man that even in perfect environment freedom was necessary if man was to be complete. So God said in substance to Adam and Eve--"Look, I am going to give you freedom. Every day you are going to make this decision, for I am going to put a tree of the knowledge of good and evil in the garden. Every day you will walk by that tree and every day you must exercise your human freedom. You may maintain the plan of God just as it is, but if you eat of the fruit of that tree then everything will change. "Dying thou shall die" if you eat. The day you eat of that fruit you will step outside of my plan and it will mean spiritual death." Now this, in substance is what God said to the first man and the first woman. They understood when they ate of the forbidden fruit they would be outside of the plan of God. The woman understood this, but Satan tricked her and she was deceived and she ate of the forbidden fruit and she died spiritually. Then Adam came along and he ate of the fruit, but he was not deceived when he ate. (In I Timothy 2:13-14 Paul gave us this interpretation.) Then Adam died spiritually. Remember, they didn't die physically for almost a thousand years. So man walked out on God and exercised his freedom. Remember, freedom is the key to the angelic conflict. Even though he died spiritually, man still had a soul. The soul is made up of mentality, self-consciousness, volition, emotion, conscience and the old sin nature. That day when man ate of the forbidden fruit in exchange for his spirit he received an old sin nature, and man has had that old sin nature ever since. Please notice the first act of the fallen man was human works, I call it "operation fig leaves". This was an act of human good. Man, by man's effort, was trying to cover up his own sin. That was the first time socialism was ever practiced. Now who was behind this revolt? Satan, using the serpent as his tool, persuaded the woman to revolt. Now who persuaded the man to revolt? Well, the woman did. Now what is "the establishment" we are talking about in this study? It is God's plan. Millions of years ago God set up a plan, a perfect plan, and we call it God's establishment. We call it salvation by grace. But that plan calls for free will. You get into the plan by an act of positive volition by

faith in Jesus Christ. When the spark of life hits the fetus we are alive, and when the spark of life hits the old sin nature we are spiritually dead. But we have volition, and we are free to decide. We enter the plan of God by faith. Then we are free to make decisions. "The Establishment" is the plan of God where human freedom exists. Now all revolution in history falls into one of two categories. A bonified revolution is one where there is revolt against tyranny, a revolt against the curtailment of human freedom. In 1775 our national volition was being curtailed and this great issue led us to revolt against England for we were paying taxes without any representation. One of the reasons why we are in trouble in our country is because human freedom is being curtailed. Patrick Henry was right when he said "Give me liberty or give me death". But we must remember that this is the Devil's World and God must protect his own in the Devil's dominated world. We must have freedom to make our own choices. We must have the right to reject or accept Jesus Christ as Saviour. This is a matter of our own personal choice. When you destroy free enterprise and become a socialistic nation you are dangerously near economic suicide. Now God has a plan, and he designed this plan in eternity past and he designed it to be a winning plan. So God looked at us and we were all losers and he determined to take losers and put us in his plan and make winners out of us. God isn't ever going to let one of his be a loser. God's plan calls for winners and that is Ephesians 1 summarized. So we are here launching out on a study of the Book of Ephesians. Paul wrote this book from his own hired apartment in the city of Rome. He had arrived in Rome from that long and dangerous sea voyage from Caesarea. Upon his arrival in Rome he preached to the Jews, but when they rejected his message, he turned to the Gentiles. And during that two-year stay in Rome he did the best writing of his life, and one of the books he wrote was this book of Ephesians. This book is going to tell us about straight thinking, straight thinking about God and also it is going to tell us how God does straight thinking about us.

EPHESIANS 1:1 "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:" Paul was on the losing side as he went up that Damascus Road from Jerusalem. But before he reached Damascus he changed over to the winning side. Paul was a zealous Jew, and if he had played football I believe he would have been an All-American. There was a lot of opposition to Christianity by the Jews in Jerusalem and Paul said that all the Christians should be killed. Paul had the idea of winning even when he was on the losing side. He went to Damascus to kill Christians and the church in Jerusalem issued him a hunting license. He declared an open season on all Christians, but before he reached Damascus he met Jesus Christ personally. So in this very first verse we read "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God". God did that for Paul and it was a miracle of God's grace. Then we read "to the saints" and the word saint means that a person is on the winning side. Anyone who says he can get in the plan of God and then commit a sin so big that he will be thrown out of that plan is simply saying that the sin he commits is greater and stronger than the plan--and it isn't. You can't lose your salvation after you have gotten it, for there is no sin bigger and stronger than the plan of God. You recall that many who crucified Christ later came to believe on him and they moved into the plan of God and they became saved forever. The word "saint" means one who is set apart. Set-apart is the verb and saint is the noun and both mean the

Same thing. Jesus Christ is God's saint. You are a saint because you have accepted Jesus Christ as your Saviour. Now this letter was written to all the saints in Asia Minor, but the word Ephesus was added here when it was sent specifically to the saints at Ephesus. Then we read "to the faithful in Jesus Christ". The faithful are those who learn daily. These are those who walk in his will and apply his word to their daily living. That Bible you hold in your hand includes the thinking of God and is the mind of Christ. The mind of God contains a plan that has been designed to win. The plan will result in victory. Losers are made into winners. Everything we will ever need was designed for us in eternity past. Some of our needs may slip up on us and surprise us, but they never surprise God. He knew millions of years ago what we would need and he made provision for our every need. Now isn't it wonderful to know that we go through life a winner and the reason is that God was thinking about us millions of years ago and provided for us.

Look back behind all the details of God's great plan and you will see GRACE. God's amazing grace. Grace is the plan, whereby God takes a bunch of losers and turns them into winners. Can you think of taking sorry, weak insignificant people and turning them into winners? When we walked into God's plan we were all losers. For we read "For all have sinned and come short of the glory of God". All of us were losers and in a moment of time we believed and became winners. Now that is grace, God's amazing grace. Grace equals God doing the work and man receiving the result of that work apart from any merit of his own. We read "It is the gift of God, not of works, lest any man should boast". Now Ephesians is the book that tells us about grace. At the time Paul wrote this Nero was about to ruin the Roman Empire. Nero came from a great family, but he was one of the worst men of all history. Late in his life Nero became mentally ill. Nero brought chaos to the Empire and he blamed it on the Christians. Yet at the very same time that all those tragedies were taking place, God took men and turned them into fantastic winners. In this second verse Paul used the word "peace" for he knew this was the mental attitude of a winner. Peace is a relaxed mental attitude. It is possible to have peace right in the midst of the worst kind of circumstances. One can have peace in the midst of pride, envy, jealousy and guilt and fear. But it takes grace in the life to remove all these mental attitude sins and substitute peace. (Illustration--I have seen football players who have been highly successful because of their mental attitude. Sometime they are not too big, but because of their desire to win and their mental attitude they have done fantastic things. We saw these characteristics in a boy named Bill Burnett. He ran over players much bigger than he was and was a winner largely because he had the attitude to win.) Now in the Christian a mental attitude of peace comes from grace. Grace comes first, then peace. Our verse says that this peace comes from the ultimate source of God. Then Paul goes on to say that this peace also came from Jesus Christ. Peace comes from God the Father, who is the author of the plan, and then it also comes from Christ who went to the cross and carried out the plan. Why is not the Holy Spirit mentioned here? Because the ministry of the Holy Spirit in the church age was to glorify Christ. In an explanation of the plan of God the Holy Spirit is not mentioned because he operated from behind the scene.

JOHN 7:39 "(But this spake he of the Spirit, which they that believe on him should receive: for the Holy Ghost was not yet given; because that Jesus was not yet glorified.)"

JOHN 16:14 "He shall glorify me: for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it unto you."

That is the reason why the Holy Spirit is not mentioned here in this salutation. There is one entrance to the plan of God and that entrance is the cross. This plan was designed for those who have failed, and it was designed before man failed. The old sin nature put all of us on the losing road, but God stepped into the picture and told us we could be winners.

So in this first study of Ephesians get this in your mind. This book was designed to change your life. This book is straight thinking, the straight thinking of God about us, and our straight thinking about God. This is a very practical book, and will give many answers to the problems we will have to face every day. After many centuries of study by the greatest minds of the world, many pronounce this book to be the finest in all the Bible to help the Christian in his daily living. In our next study we will think about the straight thinking of God.