



The Epistle to the Ephesians

GOOD TO KNOW

1. Ephesians is the first of Paul's epistles written in prison. It is also considered the most impersonal of his epistles. When Paul was writing his letters during his imprisonment such as: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians and Philemon, he no longer traveled from city to city to fight and defeat his enemies. Confined probably to a house under high surveillance in Rome (ref. Acts 28:30), he could devote his attention to noble concepts.
2. The doctrine set forth by Paul in the Epistle to the Ephesians contains the essential truths about the Church, but not about its organization. This is the True Church, the body of Christ (Eph. 1:22; 5:23), not the local churches like Philippi, Corinth, etc. (Eph. 1:22; 5:23).
3. Paul makes a very clear distinction: good deeds do not enable us to obtain God's favor, but they occur naturally as we experience Christ's love (Eph. 2:8-10). Thus, even if eternal life is not gained through good deeds, God expects us to do them. According to the apostle James, faith without deeds is dead (James 2:26).
4. Because the church at Ephesus was well established, Paul does not dwell on urgent problems; rather, he tries to draw the attention of young Christians to the measure of God's love and grace (Eph. 3:13-21) as they have not fully grasped those aspects.
5. Paul concludes his epistle to the Ephesians with a brief analogy, probably inspired by the presence of a Roman soldier in his armor standing guard at the apostle's cell. Paul saw the Christian life as a kind of battle and wanted his readers to prepare themselves for this battle against a dangerous enemy (Eph. 6:11-13).
6. While taking his inspiration from the armor of the Roman soldier, Paul in turn mentions the weapons of God which every believer must put on. Thus, only the sword of the Spirit which is the word of God is named as the offensive weapon (Eph. 6:17b); all the others were used for defense (ref. Eph. 6:14-17a).