

eral ancient fathers of the Church that the manuscripts of this epistle which they had, omitted the word Ephesus in the inscription. The two oldest copies in existence to-day bear this out. One is in Petrograd and one is in the Vatican library at Rome. They have no title. And finally we have a testimony that, in some places at least, it was known as the Epistle to the Laodiceans. Yet there must be some good reason for the fact that the title "Ephesians" always clung to it in church tradition.

## III

The question is not worth discussing further. I believe it was a general Pastoral letter for Ephesus and Laodicea and other churches—if so, it was the greatest Pastoral ever written. I call your attention now to the Epistle to the Ephesians. It is Paul's last and noblest letter to the Gentile churches. Here he is at his best and greatest. He passes away and rises far above all the (necessary) lower controversies of other epistles about Jews and Gentiles and ceremonial rites and systems of theology. He rises into the sublime and the infinite. His imagination is peopled with things in the heavenly places, his fancy is rapt into visions of God before the world was. To many devout students this epistle represents the high-water mark of Paul's inspired thought after his four prison years of contemplation of the stupendous mystery of God's dealings with man.

## IV

First comes the tremendous thought of God's Divine purpose from the beginning before anything was made that was made. This church of Christ