

Supplemental Notes:

*The Epistle
to
the Ephesians*

*compiled
by
Chuck Missler*

Acknowledgments

These notes have been assembled from speaking notes and related materials which had been compiled from a number of classic and contemporary commentaries and other sources detailed in the bibliography, as well as other articles and publications of Koinonia House. While we have attempted to include relevant endnotes and other references, we apologize for any errors or oversights.

The complete recordings of the sessions, as well as supporting diagrams, maps, etc., are also available in various audiovisual formats from the publisher.

Audio Listing

Ephesians Introduction and Chapter 1a

Introduction. Background. God's Blueprint.

Ephesians Chapter 1b

The Redemption. Forgiveness. Death.

Ephesians Chapter 1c

Prayer for the Ephesians' Spiritual Growth. Three Petitions.

Ephesians Chapter 2

The Christian's Past, Present and Future.

Ephesians Chapter 3

The Great Mystery, the Church. Church vs. Israel.

Ephesians Chapter 4

The Christian Walk. Seven Graces.

Ephesians Chapter 5 - 6:9

Light vs. Darkness. Ministries of the Spirit. Marriages.

Ephesians Chapter 6:10 - 24

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The Epistle to the Ephesians Session 1

Introduction/Ephesians 1:1-5

Background

Ephesus was the capital of Proconsular Asia; second only to Rome.

- Consecrated to Artemis;
- Colonized mainly from Athens;
- Great painters, Parrhasius and Apelles, were Ephesians;
- Pythagoras is said to have come from Ephesus;
- Schools of Parmenides, Zeno, and Democritus;
- Great harbor, gradually ruined by the silting of River Cayster;
- Temple of Artemis (“Diana”): 220 years in the building: 418 ft x 239 ft.; 127 56-ft columns; 4X larger than the Parthenon; stood until 262 A.D. when ruined by the Goths;
- Theater, excavated on west side of Mt. Coresus; largest in Hellenic world, 50,000 seating;
- Figurative references: 1 Cor 4:9; 9:24, 25; 15:32;
- Earliest NT allusion: pious Jews at Pentecost (Acts 2:9).

Paul stayed in Ephesus longer than in any other place. *The gospel may have been more effective in this area than any other place or time in the history of the world.*



Paul's 2nd Missionary Circuit (A.D. 51)

On his way from Greece to Syria, Paul visits Ephesus (Acts 18:18-21); brings Aquila and Priscilla and leaves them there. Paul is pressed to stay; departs with a promise to return (en route to keep festival in Jerusalem; Pentecost?). During his absence, Apollo visits, received full instruction from Aquila and Priscilla, and continued on to Corinth.

Paul's 2nd Visit to Ephesus Lasts 3 Years (A.D. 54-57)

Ephesus emerged as the headquarter church in Proconsular Asia (Acts 19: 20-31). There were 14 key churches: the seven of Revelation, plus Troas, Assos, Adramyttium, Miletus, Trogyllium, Hierapolis, and Colossae. 1 Corinthians was written here; the period closed with the tumult raised by Demetrius (Acts 19:19-41).

Paul's Last Voyage to Syria (A.D. 58)

Paul lands at Miletus, 30 miles S of Ephesus, to meet the leaders away from the crowd and presents the pathetic and noble charge of Acts 20:18-35:

For Paul had determined to sail by Ephesus, because he would not spend the time in Asia: for he hasted, if it were possible for him, to be at Jerusalem the day of Pentecost. And from Miletus he sent to Ephesus, and called the elders of the church. And when they were come to him, he said unto them, Ye know, from the first day that I came into Asia, after what manner I have been with you at all seasons, Serving the Lord with all humility of mind, and with many tears, and temptations, which befell me by the lying in wait of the Jews: And how I kept back nothing that was profitable unto you, but have shewed you, and have taught you publickly, and from house to house, Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And now, behold, I go bound in the spirit unto Jerusalem, not knowing the things that shall befall me there: Save that the Holy Ghost witnesseth in every city, saying that bonds and afflictions abide me. But none of these things move me, neither count I my life dear unto myself, so that I might finish my course with joy, and the ministry, which I have received of the Lord Jesus, to testify the gospel of the grace of God. And now, behold, I know that ye all, among whom I have gone preaching the kingdom of God, shall see my face no more. Wherefore I take you to record this day, that I am pure from the blood of all men. For I have not shunned to declare unto you all the counsel of God. Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know

this, that after my departing shall grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them. Therefore watch, and remember, that by the space of three years I ceased not to warn every one night and day with tears. And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified. I have coveted no man's silver, or gold, or apparel. Yea, ye yourselves know, that these hands have ministered unto my necessities, and to them that were with me. I have shewed you all things, how that so labouring ye ought to support the weak, and to remember the words of the Lord Jesus, how he said, It is more blessed to give than to receive. And when he had thus spoken, he kneeled down, and prayed with them all. And they all wept sore, and fell on Paul's neck, and kissed him, Sorrowing most of all for the words which he spake, that they should see his face no more. And they accompanied him unto the ship.

Acts 20:16-38

Near End of Paul's Life: Pastoral Epistles (A.D. 63)

Paul exhorts Timothy to stay on at Ephesus (1 Tim 1:3); Ephesus is twice mentioned in 2 Timothy; Paul was possibly seized at Ephesus and carried to death at Rome.

Occasion of the Epistle

Paul arrived in Rome from Miletus, in the spring of A.D. 61, nearly 10 years later. He spent two full years in "house arrest" chained to a Praetorian sentinel (Acts 28)—Can you imagine being chained to Paul!?... they got saved! (Phil 4:21,22).

Visitors included friends, envoys, etc.:

- Tychicus from Ephesus (who was the bearer of this epistle);
- Epaphras from Colossae (carried the Epistle to the Colossians; Col 4:12);
- Epaphroditus from Philippi (carried Epistle to the Philippians; Phil 4:18);
- Onesimus, the fugitive Colossian slave (carried the Epistle to Philemon, his master).

These four carried Paul's "Prison Epistles" to Asia in the year A.D. 62.

Other visitors included: Aristarchus from Thessalonica; John Mark, Dema, Jesus Justus; Luke (perhaps visited always—Gospel + Acts = trial background?); Timotheus ("spiritual son") visited very frequently.

This epistle was written right after Colossians: There are thematic and structural parallels with the Colossian letter (75 of 155 verses are the same). Ephesus is referred to in Col 4:15f (...from Laodicea); Tychicus is listed as the bearer.

John's Epistles

- Epistle of 1st John: a summary sermon.
- 2nd John: A letter to Mary?
- **Ephesus:** Abode of John's last years; probable site of his epistles and the Gospel of John (Patmos within 60 miles); probable site of John's burial.

Revelation

Unto the angel of the church of Ephesus write; These things saith he that holdeth the seven stars in his right hand, who walketh in the midst of the seven golden lampstands; I know thy works, and thy labour, and thy patience, and how thou canst not bear them which are evil: and thou hast tried them which say they are apostles, and are not, and hast found them liars: And hast borne, and hast patience, and for my name's sake hast laboured, and hast not fainted. Nevertheless I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent. But this thou hast, that thou hatest the deeds of the Nicolaitans, which I also hate. He that hath an ear, let him hear what the Spirit saith unto the churches; To him that overcometh will I give to eat of the tree of life, which is in the midst of the paradise of God.

Revelation 2:1-7

Subsequent History

Ephesus long remained a seat of the Christian church. [The Christian Council met there in A.D. 431: heresy of Nestorius; "Robber synod" of A.D. 449, etc.] It is presently a small Turkish village, Ayasuluk...

Outline of Ephesians

- **Ephesians 1-3:** Doctrine: Our position—what we are in Christ; what He did.
- **Ephesians 4-6:** Duty: Our responsibilities—what we should do in response.
- Paul balances *doctrine* with *duty*. We *inherit* the wealth by faith and *we invest* the wealth by works.

A Parallel with Joshua

Joshua: People of Israel entering into the possession of their promised inheritance.

Ephesians: Believers are called upon to enter by faith now into the possession of their promised inheritance [Alan Redpath, *Victorious Christian Living*.]

Ephesians Chapter 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...”: originally Saul (Act 7:58), after King Saul, also a Benjamite. [The Benjamites were known for their warrior temperament; feisty; tough.] Paul was born in Tarsus as a free-born Roman citizen; he was schooled in Hellenistic culture and had Pharisaical training by Gamaliel himself. “Paul” = “Small.”

“...by the will of God”: Paul did not choose his occupation—neither did the Church! This Epistle will bring us face to face with the **sovereignty** of God and the **mystery** of His Will (6X in Eph).

“...saints”: (9X in this letter, as well as in Acts 9:13, 32, 41); the Church doesn’t make them, God does. Simply, “set apart”; not a sinless person; but a saved sinner. Christians are also called disciples (Acts 9:1, 10, 19, 25, 26, 36, 38) and people “of the Way” (Acts 9:2).

“...which are at Ephesus”: The Epistle to the Ephesians was a circular letter for the churches in that day. He’s not writing here to the local church as much as he is to the church in general; that is, the invisible body of believers. In some of the older manuscripts, ἐν Ἐφέσῳ *en Epheso* is left out.

This epistle is encyclical—encompasses all churches; it includes no personal comments; and, was written after Colossians and sent by Tychicus (Col 4:15). It completes the circle: 7 letters to 7 churches (Rev 2, 3; Cf. Mt 13; & Paul’s 7 churches).

“...in Christ Jesus” is used 27 times in this letter! Paul always emphasized the name of Christ (His title) first. A member of the body of Christ, vitally united with Him by baptism of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:12-13).

- 2] Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

“Grace”: (Gr. *Charis*) = “hello.” (Used 12X in Ephesians). Grace is always mentioned first. Only after grace has dealt with the sin question can peace be known (Rom 5:1).

“Peace”: (Heb. *Shalom*) = “hello.” Church = Jew and Gentile in one body in Christ.

“Our Father”: One who is intimately near and accessible; relationship by (new) birth alone.

“Lord Jesus Christ”: Title, Name, and Mission.

Following this brief salutation, the apostle lifts his voice in a magnificent hymn of praise, soaring into some of the sublimest heights of New Testament worship.

Verses 3-14 trace God’s activity in salvation from eternity past, through time, through eternity future; including the mystery of God’s will, previously undisclosed!

- 3] Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:

“...in the heavenlies” (“places” has been added...): In contradistinction to that which is earthly.

Blessings

- Their quantity: with *all* blessings;
- Their quality: with all *spiritual* blessings;
- Their locality: in the heavenlies:

- 1) The sphere of our spiritual blessings (Eph 1:3);
- 2) The scene of Christ’s present enthronement (Eph 1:20);
- 3) The scene of our present enthronement in Him (Eph 2:6);
- 4) The locale from which angels witness God’s wisdom: exhibited in the church (Eph 3:10);
- 5) The region which is the source of our present conflict with evil spirits (Eph 6:12).

The phrase “in Christ Jesus” is used 27 times in this letter! Who is “in Christ”? A member of the body of Christ, vitally united with Him by baptism of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:12-13).

Their instrumentality: in Christ (“in Christ” = key phrase of this epistle). He has procured them all by His *finished* work at Calvary. *Everything* God has for the believer is in Christ. Your *Position*: either “in Adam” or “in Christ.” *What’s your basis before God?*

Our Identity in Christ

- | | |
|---------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| • In nature | 2 Pet 1:4 |
| • Life | Col 3:4 |
| • Relationships | Jn 20:17; Heb 2:11 |
| • Service | Mt 28:20; Jn 17:18 |
| • Suffering | Phil 1:29; 3:10; Col 1:24 |
| • Inheritance | Rom 8:16,17 |
| • Future glory in the Kingdom | Rom 8:18-21; 1 Pet 2:9; Rev 1:6; 5:10 |
| • A stranger and pilgrim on the earth | Heb 3:1; 1 Pet 2:11 |

Believer’s Position

...are perfect (Heb 10:4)
 ...are dead to sin (Rom 6:2)
 ...are a holy nation (1 Pet 2:9)

Believer’s Practice

...should be perfect (Mt 5:48)
 ...should reckon themselves
 dead to sin (Rom 6:11)
 ...should *be* holy (1 Pet 1:15)

Last Testament

Jesus wrote His last will and testament for His Church, making it possible for us to share His spiritual riches. He wrote us into His will, then died so that the will would be in force. Then He rose again that He might become our heavenly advocate to make sure the terms of the will were correctly followed! He is our Executor!

God’s Blueprint

- 1) He chose us in Christ;
 - 2) He predestinated us to the place of sonship;
 - 3) He made us accepted in the Beloved.
- [Some regard these verses as the most difficult in Scripture...]

Chapter 1: Topics

- **Blessings: Our riches in Christ**
- **Election**
- **Predestination**
- **Redemption**

- **Adoption**
- The will of God
- (12) Mysteries
- Dispensations
- Forgiveness
- Inheritance
- Sealing...and this is just in Chapter 1!

Theme: Our Riches in Christ. [Ephesus was considered the “Bank” of Asia; a depository for wealth. Note Paul’s use of financial words: *Inheritance* (Eph 1:11, 14, 18; 5:5); *fullness*, or *filled* (Eph 1:10, 23; 3:19; 4:10, 13; 5:18).]

- 4] According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

He has chosen us... When? “...*before the foundation of the world!*” Spurgeon: “I’m glad He did it then; if he saw me now, he might have changed his mind.”

Election

- “Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you” (Jn 15:16): The lost sinner, left to his own ways, does not seek God (Rom 3:10-11). God, in His love, seeks the sinner (Lk 19:10).
 - Offer is bona fide to everyone (Jn 3:16; 3:36; 5:24; Rom 10:9, 13). The lost choose to be lost.
 - Both elements: all that are given, come (Jn 6:37) all that come are received.
- 1) God does choose men to salvation (2 Thess 2:13);
 - 2) Believers are elect according to foreknowledge of God (1 Pet 1:2);
 - 3) People can know whether they are elected by their response to the Gospel: they who hear and believe are the elect (1 Thess 1:4-7).
- His purpose will not be completely realized until we are with Him in heaven (1 Jn 3:2).
 - Israel was chosen (Isa 42:1; Isa 43:20; Deut 7:6-8) through Abraham (Rom 8:28-30) and not for any merit (Ezek 36:20-22).

But I tell you of a truth, many widows were in Israel in the days of Elias, when the heaven was shut up three years and six months, when great famine was throughout all the land; But unto none of them was Elias sent, save unto Sarepta, a city of Sidon, unto a woman that was a widow. And many

lepers were in Israel in the time of Eliseus the prophet; and none of them was cleansed, saving Naaman the Syrian. And all they in the synagogue, when they heard these things, were filled with wrath, And rose up, and thrust him out of the city, and led him unto the brow of the hill whereon their city was built, that they might cast him down headlong.

Luke 4:25-29

Why?

But he passing through the midst of them went his way.

Luke 4:30

What stirred up their anger? Each example was that of a *Gentile*! This dealt with the volition of God regarding the issue of *election*. When Christ preached about it, they tried to throw Him off a cliff!

Election

In both the Old Testament and the New (Hebrew & Greek): “elect”; “election”; “choose”; and, “chosen” all mean “to choose”—of both divine and human choices.



Divine Election

Corporate: Israel (Isa 45) and the Church (Eph 1:4); and, **Individual:** According to the foreknowledge of God (1 Pet 1:2); Wholly of grace,

not human merit (Rom 9:11; 11:5,6); whereby certain are chosen for Himself (Jn 15:19) or for distinctive service (Lk 6:13; Acts 9:15; 1 Cor 1:27,28).

- 5] Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

“...predestinated”: προορίσας *proorisos*: to define, to make out, to set apart; “to horizon” (Cf. Eph 1:11).

“Having predestinated” = Gr. aorist: definite past act; done. This term is only used referring to God’s *purposes* for His people. Predestination has to do with God’s purpose with His people; it refers only to those who are saved.

Election	=	people of God
Predestination	=	purposes of God

“...adoption”: υιοθεσίαν *huiiothesia* placing as a son (Gal 4:4-7; Rom 8:15). Predestination is God’s *guarantee* (Jn 10:27-28). We need to know that we’ve been chosen in Him in order to stand for God today.

Adoption

Adoption was a Roman, not a Jewish, practice; not all offspring were heirs. You do not get into God’s family by adoption: you get into His family by regeneration: the new birth (Jn 3:1-18; 1 Pet 1:22-25).

Adoption is the act of God by which He gives His “born ones” an adult standing in the family, so that we can immediately begin to claim our inheritance and enjoy our spiritual wealth! An infant cannot legally use this inheritance (Gal 4:1-7), but an adult son can—and should. The future aspect of adoption is in Romans 8:22-23.

In regeneration a Christian receives the nature of a child of God; in adoption he receives the position of a son of God (Jn 1:11).

The moment he believes (Gal 3:25-26; 4:6; 1 Jn 3:1,2), the full manifestation of this sonship awaits the resurrection, change, and translation of saints, called the redemption of the body (Rom 8:23; Eph 1:14; 1 Thess 4:14-17; 1 Jn 3:2). There is no procedure to become “unadopted.”

Conclusions

- 1) The Christian rests *completely* on His *completed* work;
- 2) The greatest mistake any Christian (you) can make? *Substitute your own will for the will of God!*

Why did He do it? For His good pleasure. He would not be satisfied until He had surrounded Himself with sons, conformed to the image of His only begotten son, with Him and like Him forever.

Next Session

Read through the entire Epistle. Study carefully all of Chapter 1.

The Epistle to the Ephesians Session 2 Ephesians 1:5 - 14

Ephesians 1-3: Doctrine: Our position—what we are in Christ; what He did. **Ephesians 4-6:** Duty: Our responsibilities—what we should do in response. Paul balances *doctrine* with *duty*. We *inherit* the wealth by faith and *we invest* the wealth by works.

A Parallel with Joshua

Joshua: People of Israel entering into the possession of their promised inheritance. **Ephesians:** Believers are called upon to enter by faith now into the possession of their promised inheritance. [Source: Alan Redpath, *Victorious Christian Living*.]

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The Nature of Einstein’s Revolution

We have the advantage of modern physics, although few appreciate its aid to our understanding *Biblical* insights!

- **Special Relativity (1905):** Length, mass, velocity and time are *relative* to velocity of the observers
- **General Relativity (1915):** No distinction between time & space = a 4-dimensional continuum (confirmed 14 ways to 19 decimals).

Gravitational Time Dilation

Two identical Atomic clocks are located at the National Institute of Standards and Technology in Boulder, Colorado, and the Royal Observatory in Greenwich, England. *Both are accurate to better than 1 second per million years*, yet the NIST clock ticks *5 μ seconds/year faster* than an identical clock at Greenwich. Which is correct?

Both are! Boulder, Colorado = 5400 ft altitude; Greenwich, England = 80 ft. Atomic Clocks run faster by 10^{-16} sec/meter elevation.

Other Demonstrations

- Aircraft experiment (1971): Eastward : *lost* 0.059 microseconds; Westward: *gained* 0.273 microseconds. Accounting for the Earth’s rotation, etc., it was exactly what Einstein’s formula predicted.
- Twin Astronauts (hypothetical) Alpha Centauri trip...

Time Is *Not* Uniform

Time is a *physical* property; it *varies* with mass, acceleration and gravity...among other things...We exist in *more* than three dimensions (apparently, 10...). This physical insight will dissolve most theological paradoxes...

The Nature of God

Is God subject to the restrictions of mass? Acceleration? Gravity? He is not simply One with “lots of time,” He is *outside* of the restrictions of time. This uniqueness is His Personal Imprint...

From Outside Time

For thus saith the High and Lofty One, that inhabiteth eternity...
Isaiah 57:15

Since God has the technology to create us, He certainly has the means to get a message to us; but how does He *authenticate* His message so that we know that it is really from Him, and not a contrivance or a fraud?

Authentication

Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done...
Isaiah 46:10

People like us, who believe in physics, know that the distinction between the past, the present, and the future, is only a stubbornly persistent illusion.
—Albert Einstein

Paradigm of Divine Volition

Foreknowledge determines Election; Predestination brings to pass the Election; Election looks back to Foreknowledge; and, Predestination looks forward to Destiny.

Review of Ephesians 1:5

- 5] Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

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The full manifestation of this sonship awaits the resurrection, change, and translation of saints, called the redemption of the body (Rom 8:23; Eph 1:14; 1 Thess 4:14-17; 1 Jn 3:2). (There is no procedure to become “unadopted.”)

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Ephesians Chapter 1:6 - 14

Punctuated with an exclamation, an explanation, an exhortation; a holy gasp at the transcendent glories of such grace.

- 6] To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

“To the praise of the glory of his grace...”: Used 3X in this section.

Terms: which He *freely* bestowed
Recipients: on *us*
Channel: in the *Beloved*

“...made us accepted in the beloved”: Israel was chosen to live to His praise (Isa 43:20, 21; Mt 5:45; Lk 6:35). If He gave His Son for me, then He must love me as greatly as He loves His Son, or He never would have permitted Him to die for me (Cf. Jn 17:23-24). Cf. Philemon: “if his runaway slave, Onesimus, owes you anything, put it on my account...”

- 7] In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

What is God’s greatest work? Creation? or Redemption?

- 1) Portion of Scripture devoted to it...
- 2) The price paid... Redemption is Christ’s primary work...

Redemption

OT Background: 1) Redemption of lands (Lev 25:25-27, 47-49; Num 18:15). 2) Nation redeemed from slavery (Ex 15:13—the key to Exodus; Deut 7:8; Isa 43:20; 52:9). 3) The Passover sacrifice was distinct from “sin offerings” etc.; administered by the individual, not by high priest. All of these pointed to Christ... “Behold the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world...”

Three words in NT:

- 1) ἀγοράζω *agorazo*, to purchase (1 Cor 6:20; Rev: 3X).
- 2) ἐξαγοράζω *exagorazo*, to buy out of the market, never to sell them again; for one’s own use (Gal 3:13)
- 3) ἀπολύτρωσις *apolutrosis*, to be loosed away (from something); rescue by ransom (here); Lk 21:28.

There were six million slaves in the Roman Empire, bought and sold like chattel. One could purchase a slave and set him free. That’s what Jesus did for us “...through His blood” (1 Pet 1:18ff). No less a price would do (Heb 9:22).

Our lives were forfeit due to sin. The role of His blood cannot be overemphasized...

Summary: Heb 10:6-13 Τετέλεσται *Tetelestai* (Col 2:14; Jn 19:30). [Infinite—not *limited*—atonement: His offer is legitimate for everyone (1 Jn 2:1-2). Cf. “denied the Lord that bought them...” (2 Pet 2:1).

“...the forgiveness of sins...”: A fruit of redemption. Three aspects:

- 1) **Governmental forgiveness:** temporal consequences;
- 2) **Eternal forgiveness** (here): past, present, future;
- 3) **Restorative forgiveness:** Christian’s “bar of soap” (1 Jn 1:9).

The basis of our forgiveness: “according to the riches of His grace.” “Commitment to Christ”? ...you and I have very little to commit to Him. We can only love Him because He first loved us.

“...according to the riches of his grace”: (“Riches” = 6X in this letter); How measured?! Not merely “out of...” all your need (Phil 4:19); an equivalent to a blank check! Epistle to the Romans: “God’s Riches At Christ’s Expense.”

- 8] Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;

“...wisdom and prudence...”: In His grace He chose us; predestinated us; and, redeemed us. But that is not all...

Superabounded to us all: **Wisdom** (σοφία *sophia*): knowledge that sees into the heart of things, which knows them as they really are; **Prudence** (φρόνησις *phronesis*) understanding that leads to right action.

The Will of God

He shares His plans and purposes with us, for the Church and the universe, the great goal toward which all history is moving. [People speak of various dynamics in history: psychological, sociological, et al. Only one: *the Will of God!*]

Even the angels learn through us (1 Pet 1:12). [In business, etc., the most valuable information: *perspective!*] We are to be sanctified through this truth: Christ has given to us the ability to see the great ultimate truths of eternity and thus to properly deal with the challenges of each moment of time.

- 9] Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

“mystery”: μυστήριον *Musterion* = a sacred secret previously unknown but here revealed: The Mystery of His Will: *the dominant theme of this epistle*.

Mysteries

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1) of the kingdom of heaven | Mt 13:5-50 |
| 2) of iniquity | 2 Thess 2:7 (cf. Mt 13:33) |
| 3) of Babylon | Rev 17, 18 |
| 4) of the Church as one body | Eph 3:1-12; Rom 16:25; Eph 6:19 |
| 5) of the bride of Christ | Eph 5:23-32 |
| 6) of the in-living Christ | Gal 2:20; Col 1:26-27 |
| 7) of the fullness of the Godhead | 1 Cor 2:7; Col 2:2,9 |
| 8) of Godliness | 1 Tim 3:16 |
| 9) of the rapture | 1 Cor 15:51-52; 1 Thess 4:13-17 |
| 10) of Israel's present blindness | Rom 11:25 |
| 11) of the Will of God | Ephesians |
| 12) of the Seven Stars | Rev 1:20 |

We are to be stewards of these mysteries (1 Cor 4:1-2) [Ref.: Scofield, p.1014].

Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

1 Corinthians 4:1-2

- 10] That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

“...dispensation”: οἰκονομίαν *oikonomia* = dispensation, administration (of a household); stewardship; economy (ordered condition of things).

“...times”: not χρόνος *chronos*: passage of days, months, years; but καιρός *kairos*: particular times, decisive segments of time.

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15

Christ was a “dispensationalist”: Isa 61:1,2; Lk 4:16-21.

Dispensations [ref: Scofield]

- 1) Innocence; Gen 1:28. End: Fall of Man;
- 2) Conscience; Moral Responsibility; Gen 3:7. End: Flood;
- 3) Human Government; Gen 8:15. End: Babel;
- 4) Promise—Abraham; Gen 12:1f. End: Bondage in Egypt;
- 5) Law—Moses; Ex 19:1. End: Captivity in Babylon (or to John?)
- 6) Church—(“Grace?”); Acts 2:1. End: World worship of Antichrist.
- 7) Kingdom; Rev 20. End: Satan's Rebellion.

Dispensations [ref: Bullinger]

- 1) Innocence; Eden. End: Expulsion from the Garden;
- 2) Ignorance; without the Law. End: Flood; Babel;
- 3) The Law; the Nation of Israel. End: Rejection of Israel;
- 4) Grace; the Church Age End: The Day of the Lord;
- 5) Judgment; End: The destruction of the Antichrist;
- 6) Millennium; End: Destruction of Satan; Great White Throne;
- 7) Eternal State of Glory; End: None.

“...gather together in one all things in Christ”: ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι *anakephalaisomsasthai*: sum up, unite; Greek practice of adding a column of figures, with sum at the top.

“...all things” = absolute universality; in heaven and on earth (Col 1:17, 20; Heb 1:3).

Today's Heresy

The heresy of today: dividing life into the “sacred” and “secular”: Christ is concerned with all things; *all* things will find their true place and unity in Him. “Head up all things in Christ.”

- 11] In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

“...an inheritance”:

- κληρώ *kleroo*
 - 1) to cast lots, determine by lot
 - 2) to allot, assign by lot; on to another as a possession
 - 3) in NT: a heritage, private possession

- κληρονομία *kleronomia*
 - 1) an inheritance, property received (or to be received) by inheritance
 - 2) what is given to one as a possession

Inheritance

There are two kinds of inheritance: 1) Inheritance by birth (Gal 4:7); unconditional and automatic (Cf. Prodigal Son; Lk 15:24). 2) Inheritance for faithful obedience (Col 3:24; Heb 6:12; Rev 2 & 3). This inheritance is conditional upon faithfulness, obedience, and perseverance.

Inheritance Lost

In the OT, inheritance can be lost (Deut 6:18; 19:9,10; et al.) Ex: Esau (Gen 27:35-40; Heb 12:16,17); Reuben (1 Chr 5:1); Moses (Deut 4:21,22). In the NT, inheritance can be lost (Heb 2:1-5; 3:7-4:13; 6:4-8:10:26-39; 12:25-29). Ex: Judgment Seat (1 Cor 3:13-15; 9:14).

“...being predestinated”: προορίζω *proorizo*. To mark out or determine beforehand. In Scripture, this is more inclusive than election (which is always limited to those specially chosen of God).

Predestination

Predestination includes the salvation of the elect and also all other acts and events in the universe, both good and evil (Acts 4:27-28 Gr.).

Two classes: Divinely caused; Divinely permitted.

- 12] That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

Only a tiny remnant of Jews responded to the Gospel in the early days of Christianity. It will be different at His Second Coming (Zech 12:10; Rom 11:26).

- 13] In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

The entire process of salvation is given in this verse. [Remove “after”: these are not time clauses; they are genitive absolutes; all in the same tense as the main verb: aorist tense, once and for all.]

In whom also you, upon hearing [aorist] the word of truth, the good news of your salvation, in whom also on believing [aorist] you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.”

Steps: They heard; they believed; they were sealed... (Cf. Rom 10:13-15; Acts 10:34-48).

“...sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise”: Promised by the Father (Joel 2:28; Acts 1:4) and promised by the Lord Jesus (Jn 16:7). There are many mentions of the trinity in this letter: God the Father (v.3); God the Son (v.7); and God the Holy Spirit (v.13).

[“Sealed”: 4X in NT...]

Sealed

- Completed transaction (Jer 32:9-10; Jn 17:4): “Tetelestai” (Col 2:14; Jn 19:30).
- Ownership (Jer 32:11-12; 2 Tim 2:19).
- Security (Est 8:8); (stone sealed!? cf. Dan 6:17).
- Authenticity (Rom 8:9).
- Guarantees our preservation (Eph 4:30; 1 Cor 1:22; Jn 6:27).
- Branded as His property (1 Cor 6:19-20).

- 14] Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

“...earnest of our inheritance”: ἀρραβών *arrabon*: down payment, pledging that the full amount will be paid. From Phoenician traders; also used of bridegroom’s betrothal gifts to the bride...

Merges pronouns: “we” v.11,12 with “ye” v.13 to “our” v.14. Hint: of Chapters 2 & 3, a new organism, the *Church*.

This verse ends the marathon sentence begun in v.3 ...which sweeps God’s program from eternity past ...through our present ...to eternity future, with the most awe-inspiring thoughts that can occupy the human mind!

Seal = guarantee that we ourselves will be kept safely from the inheritance; earnest = that the inheritance will be kept securely for us. Three times he reminds us the intended goal and inevitable result: that God should be magnified and glorified...to the praise of the glory of His grace (v.6) that we should be to the praise of His glory (v.12) unto the praise of His glory (v.14).

Next Session

Read the entire epistle. Study Chapter 1, focusing on vv.15 - 23.

The Epistle to the Ephesians Session 3 Ephesians 1:15 - 23

Chapter 1: Topics

- Blessings: Our riches in Christ
- Election
- Predestination
- Redemption
- Adoption
- The will of God
- (12) Mysteries
- Dispensations
- Forgiveness
- Inheritance
- Sealing...and this is just in Chapter 1!

The Nature of Einstein's Revolution

We have the advantage of modern physics, although few appreciate its aid to our understanding *Biblical* insights!

- **Special Relativity (1905):** Length, mass, velocity and time are *relative* to velocity of the observers
- **General Relativity (1915):** No distinction between time & space = a 4-dimensional continuum (confirmed 14 ways to 19 decimals).

Time Is *Not* Uniform

Time is a *physical* property; it *varies* with mass, acceleration and gravity...among other things...We exist in *more* than three dimensions (apparently, 10...). This physical insight will dissolve most theological paradoxes...

The Nature of God

Is God subject to the restrictions of mass? Acceleration? Gravity? He is not simply One with "lots of time," He is *outside* of the restrictions of time. This uniqueness is His Personal Imprint...

Review of Ephesians 1:1 - 14

- 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:
- 2] Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Following this brief salutation, the apostle lifts his voice in a magnificent hymn of praise, soaring into some of the sublimest heights of New Testament worship.

Verses 3-14 trace God's activity in salvation from eternity past, through time, through eternity future; including the mystery of God's will, previously undisclosed!

Last Testament

Jesus wrote His last will and testament for His Church, making it possible for us to share His spiritual riches. He wrote us into His will, then died so that the will would be in force. Then He rose again that He might become our heavenly advocate to make sure the terms of the will were correctly followed! He is our Executor!

God's Blueprint

- 1) He chose us in Christ;
- 2) He predestinated us to the place of sonship;
- 3) He made us accepted in the Beloved.

[Some regard these verses as the most difficult in Scripture...]

- 4] According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

He has chosen us... When? Before the foundation of the world! Spurgeon said, "I'm glad He did it then; if he saw me now, he might have changed his mind."

Election

"Ye have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you" (Jn 15:16): The lost sinner, left to his own ways, does not seek God (Rom 3:10-11). God, in His love, seeks the sinner (Lk 19:10).

The offer is bona fide to everyone (Jn 3:16; 3:36; 5:24; Rom 10:9, 13). The lost choose to be lost. Both elements: all that are given, come (Jn 6:37) all that come are received.

- 1) God does choose men to salvation (2 Thess 2:13);
- 2) Believers are elect according to foreknowledge of God (1 Pet 1:2);
- 3) People can know whether they are elected by their response to the Gospel: they who hear and believe are the elect (1 Thess 1:4-7).

His purpose will not be completely realized until we are with Him in heaven (1 Jn 3:2). Israel was chosen (Isa 42:1; Isa 43:20; Deut 7:6-8) through Abraham (Rom 8:28-30) and not for any merit (Ezek 36:20-22).

Paradigm of Divine Volition

Foreknowledge determines Election; Predestination brings to pass the Election; Election looks back to Foreknowledge; and, Predestination looks forward to Destiny.

Divine Election

Corporate: Israel (Isa 45) and the Church (Eph 1:4); and, **Individual:** According to the foreknowledge of God (1 Pet 1:2); Wholly of grace, not human merit (Rom 9:11; 11:5,6); whereby certain are chosen for Himself (Jn 15:19) or for distinctive service (Lk 6:13; Acts 9:15; 1 Cor 1:27,28).

- 5] Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

“...predestinated”: προορίσας *proorisos*: to define, to make out, to set apart; “to horizon” (Cf. Eph 1:11).

“Having predestinated” = Gr. aorist: definite past act; done. This term is only used referring to God’s *purposes* for His people. Predestination has to do with God’s purpose with His people; it refers only to those who are saved.

Election	=	people of God
Predestination	=	purposes of God

“...adoption”: υιοθεσίαν *huiiothesia* placing as a son (Gal 4:4-7; Rom 8:15). Predestination is God’s *guarantee* (Jn 10:27-28). We need to know that we’ve been chosen in Him in order to stand for God today.

Adoption

Adoption is the preordained act in which this loving relation is formed. Our obedience is not the forced obedience of servants, but the loving obedience of sons. Adoption implies more than sentiment—a real legal relation to God as his sons (Rom 8:17).

The adoption is “by Jesus Christ.” “As many as received him, to them gave he the right to become children of God” (John 1:12).

Adoption was a Roman, not a Jewish, practice; not all offspring were heirs. You do not get into God’s family by adoption: you get into His family by regeneration: the new birth (Jn 3:1-18; 1 Pet 1:22-25).

Adoption is the act of God by which He gives His “born ones” an adult standing in the family. So that we can immediately begin to claim our inheritance and enjoy our spiritual wealth! An infant cannot legally use this inheritance (Gal 4:1-7), but an adult son can—and should. The future aspect of adoption is in Romans 8:22-23.

In regeneration a Christian receives the nature of a child of God; in adoption he receives the position of a son of God (Jn 1:11).

The moment he believes (Gal 3:25-26; 4:6; 1 Jn 3:1,2), the full manifestation of this sonship awaits the resurrection, change, and translation of saints, called the redemption of the body (Rom 8:23; Eph 1:14; 1 Thess 4:14-17; 1 Jn 3:2). There is no procedure to become “unadopted.”

Conclusions

- 1) The Christian rests *completely* on His completed work;
- 2) The greatest mistake any Christian (you) can make? *Substitute your own will for the will of God!*

Why did He do it? For His good pleasure. He would not be satisfied until He had surrounded Himself with sons, conformed to the image of His only begotten son, with Him and like Him forever.

The spring or motive to the selection is solely in God, not in man. It is an act of sovereignty. The Divine sovereignty is not presented in Scripture to *seekers*, but to *finders*.

It is a ground of thanksgiving to those who *have accepted* the offer; they see that before the foundation of the world God chose them in Christ. What an interest He must have had in them, and how thoroughly they may rely on His finishing the work He has begun!

- 6] To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.

“...made us accepted in the beloved”: Israel was chosen to live to His praise (Isa 43:20, 21; Mt 5:45; Lk 6:35). If He gave His Son for me, then He must love me as greatly as He loves His Son, or He never would have permitted Him to die for me (Cf. Jn 17:23-24). Cf. Philemon: “...if his runaway slave, Onesimus, owes you anything, put it on my account...”

- 7] In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

Redemption

OT Background: 1) Redemption of lands (Lev 25:25-27, 47-49; Num 18:15). 2) Nation redeemed from slavery (Ex 15:13—the key to Exodus; Deut 7:8; Isa 43:20; 52:9). 3) The Passover sacrifice was distinct from “sin offerings” etc.; administered by the individual, not by high priest. All of these pointed to Christ... “Behold the Lamb that taketh away the sin of the world...”

Three words in NT:

- 1) ἀγοράζω *agorazo*, to purchase (1 Cor 6:20; Rev: 3X).
- 2) ἐξαγοράζω *exagorazo*, to buy out of the market, never to sell them again; for one’s own use (Gal 3:13)
- 3) ἀπολύτρωσις *apolutrosis*, to be loosed away (from something); rescue by ransom (here); Lk 21:28.

There were six million slaves in the Roman Empire, bought and sold like chattel. One could purchase a slave and set him free. That’s what Jesus did for us “...through His blood” (1 Pet 1:18ff). No less a price would do (Heb 9:22). Our lives were forfeit due to sin. The role of His blood cannot be overemphasized...

Summary: Heb 10:6-13 Τετέλεσται *Tetelestai* (Col 2:14; Jn 19:30). [Infinite—not limited—atonement: His offer is legitimate for everyone (1 Jn 2:1-2). Cf. “denied the Lord that bought them...” (2 Pet 2:1).

“...the forgiveness of sins...”: A fruit of redemption. Three aspects:

- 1) **Governmental forgiveness:** temporal consequences;
- 2) **Eternal forgiveness** (here): past, present, future;
- 3) **Restorative forgiveness:** Christian’s “bar of soap” (1 Jn 1:9).

The Will of God

He shares His plans and purposes with us, for the Church and the universe, the great goal toward which all history is moving. [People speak of various dynamics in history: psychological, sociological, et al. There is only one: *the Will of God!*]

Even the angels learn through us (1 Pet 1:12). [In business, etc., the most valuable information: *perspective!*] We are to be sanctified through this truth: Christ has given to us the ability to see the great ultimate truths of eternity and thus to properly deal with the challenges of each moment of time.

- 9] Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself:

“...mystery”: μυστήριον *Musterion* = a sacred secret previously unknown but here revealed: The Mystery of His Will: *the dominant theme of this epistle.*

Mysteries

- | | |
|-----------------------------------|---------------------------------|
| 1) of the kingdom of heaven | Mt 13:5-50 |
| 2) of iniquity | 2 Thess 2:7 (cf. Mt 13:33) |
| 3) of Babylon | Rev 17, 18 |
| 4) of the Church as one body | Eph 3:1-12; Rom 16:25; Eph 6:19 |
| 5) of the bride of Christ | Eph 5:23-32 |
| 6) of the in-living Christ | Gal 2:20; Col 1:26-27 |
| 7) of the fullness of the Godhead | 1 Cor 2:7; Col 2:2,9 |
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| 10) of Israel’s present blindness | Rom 11:25 |
| 11) of the Will of God | Ephesians |
| 12) of the Seven Stars | Rev 1:20 |

We are to be stewards of these mysteries (1 Cor 4:1-2) [Ref.: Scofield, p.1014].

Let a man so account of us, as of the ministers of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

1 Corinthians 4:1-2

Dispensation

- 10] That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

“...dispensation”: οἰκονομίαν *oikonomia* = dispensation, administration (of a household); stewardship; economy (ordered condition of things).

“...times”: not χρόνος *chronos*: passage of days, months, years; but καιρὸς *kairos*: particular times, decisive segments of time.

Study to shew thyself approved unto God, a workman that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth.

2 Timothy 2:15

Christ was a “dispensationalist”: Isa 61:1,2; Lk 4:16-21.

“...fulness of times”: πλήρωμα *pleroma*, when everything is going to be brought under the rulership of Jesus Christ. The *pleroma* is like a vast receptacle into which centuries and millenniums have been falling. All that is past, present, and future is moving toward the time when every knee must bow and every tongue must confess that Jesus is Lord.

Classic Dispensations

Each dispensation involved grace as the basis of salvation. Abel and Abraham brought little lambs to sacrifice to the Lord (but I hope you didn't take a lamb to church last Sunday!). The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world has already come (Jn 1:29). The offerings simply pointed toward this consummate cosmic act.

Rightly Dividing the Word of Truth

While much can be said in this controversial area, surely the distinction appears undeniable between the Law (Lk 16:16) and Grace (Eph 3:1-2). Covenant theologians are disturbed by the recognition of dispensational distinctions.

Even the new manifestation of divine grace becomes one of those disturbing features of truth. If there is but one covenant of grace operating uniformly in every age, to what must the Apostle be referring when he asserts that a dispensation respecting a hitherto unrevealed program was committed to him? (Eph 3:1-10).

“...gather together in one all things in Christ”: ἀνακεφαλαιώσασθαι *anakephalaisomasthai*: sum up, unite; Greek practice of adding a column of figures, with sum at the top.

“...all things” = absolute universality; in heaven and on earth (Col 1:17, 20; Heb 1:3).

Today's Heresy

The heresy of today: dividing life into the “sacred” and “secular”: Christ is concerned with all things; *all* things will find their true place and unity in Him. “Head up all things in Christ.”

- 11] In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

Inheritance

- κληρώ *kleroo*
 - 1) to cast lots, determine by lot
 - 2) to allot, assign by lot; on to another as a possession
 - 3) in NT: a heritage, private possession
- κληρονομία *kleronomia*
 - 1) an inheritance, property received (or to be received) by inheritance
 - 2) what is given to one as a possession

There are two kinds of inheritance: 1) Inheritance by birth (Gal 4:7); unconditional and automatic (Cf. Prodigal Son; Lk 15:24). 2) Inheritance for faithful obedience (Col 3:24; Heb 6:12; Rev 2 & 3). This inheritance is conditional upon faithfulness, obedience, and perseverance.

Inheritance Lost

In the OT, inheritance can be lost (Deut 6:18; 19:9,10; et al.) Ex: Esau (Gen 27:35-40; Heb 12:16,17); Reuben (1 Chr 5:1); Moses (Deut 4:21,22). In the NT, inheritance can be lost (Heb 2:1-5; 3:7-4:13; 6:4-8:10:26-39; 12:25-29). Ex: Judgment Seat (1 Cor 3:13-15; 9:14).

“...being predestinated”: προορίζω *proorizo*. To mark out or determine beforehand. In Scripture, this is more inclusive than election (which is always limited to those specially chosen of God). The reason why the reference to predestination is repeated is to show that this new privilege of the whole Church as God’s inheritance is not a fortuitous benefit, but the result of God’s deliberate and eternal foreordination; it rests therefore on an immovable foundation.

Predestination

Predestination includes the salvation of the elect and also all other acts and events in the universe, both good and evil (Acts 4:27-28 Gr.).

Two classes: Divinely caused; Divinely permitted.

- 12] That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ.

Only a tiny remnant of Jews responded to the Gospel in the early days of Christianity. It will be different at His Second Coming (Zech 12:10; Rom 11:26).

- 13] In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

The entire process of salvation is given in this verse. This is when the baptism of the Holy Spirit occurs. You are baptized the moment that you trust Christ. You are also sealed the moment that you trust Christ. [Remove “after”: these are not time clauses; they are genitive absolutes; all in the same tense as the main verb: aorist tense, once and for all.]

In whom also you, upon hearing [aorist] the word of truth, the good news of your salvation, in whom also on believing [aorist] you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise.”

Steps: They heard; they believed; they were sealed... (Cf. Rom 10:13-15; Acts 10:34-48).

“...sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise”: Promised by the Father (Joel 2:28; Acts 1:4) and promised by the Lord Jesus (Jn 16:7). There are many mentions of the trinity in this letter: God the Father (v.3); God the Son (v.7); and God the Holy Spirit (v.13).

[“Sealed”: 4X in NT...]

“The Holy Spirit of Promise”

Promised by the Father (Joel 2:28; Acts 1:4); promised by the Lord Jesus (Jn 16:7). There are many mentions of the Trinity in this letter: God the Father (v. 3); God the Son (v. 7); God the Holy Spirit (v. 13).

Sealed

Completed transaction (Jer 32:9-10; Jn 17:4): “Tetelestai” (Col 2:14; Jn 19:30):

- Ownership (Jer 32:11-12; 2 Tim 2:19);
- Security (Est 8:8); (Stone sealed!?) Dan 6:17;
- Authenticity (Jn 3:33; Rom 8:9);
- Guarantees our preservation (Eph 4:30; 1 Cor 1:22; Jn 6:27);
- Branded as His property (1 Cor 6:19-20).

- 14] Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

This verse ends the marathon sentence begun in v.3...which sweeps God’s program from eternity past, through our present, to eternity future, with the most awe-inspiring thoughts that can occupy the human mind!

“...the earnest of our inheritance”: ἀρραβών *arrabon*: down payment, pledging that the full amount will be paid. From Phoenician traders; also used of bridegroom’s betrothal gifts to the bride...

Merges pronouns: “we” v.11,12 with “ye” v.13 to “our” v.14. An advance hint of chapters 2 & 3, a new organism, the Church.

Seal: guarantee that we ourselves will be kept safely for the inheritance.

Earnest: that the inheritance will be kept securely for us. Three times he reminds us the intended goal and inevitable result: that God should be magnified and glorified...

- To the praise of the glory of His grace (v. 6);
- That we should be to the praise of His glory (v. 12);
- Unto the praise of His glory (v. 14).

Ephesians 1:15 - 23: Prayer for their Spiritual Growth

- 15] Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,

This is the first of two prayers (second is at 3:14-21). They are known by their love (not their bumper stickers) [How many men of prayer to you know today?] Some may be defrauding the Body by non-performance...

- 16] Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

The prayer life of the believer: frequent concern for the brethren; note petitions for those already saved. [All great men of the Bible were men of prayer: Moses, David, Elijah, Daniel... Paul... Christ... James: “Old Camel-knees.”

Prayers

Gratitude vs. petitions; by name, not collectives; diligence and priorities...

- 17] That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

The Holy Spirit is the Spirit of wisdom (Isa 11:2) and revelation (1 Cor 2:10) Revelation deals with the imparting of knowledge; wisdom, with the proper use of it in our lives.

- 18] The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

“The eyes of your understanding..”: literally it reads, “the eyes of your heart” (not your mind).

That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Romans 10:9–10

Three Petitions

- 1) The hope of His calling.
- 2) His inheritance: His inheritance in the saints; We are looked upon as a treasure of incomparable worth! (Mt 13); a heritage (v. 11); a people for God’s own possession (Titus 2:14; 1 Pet 2:9).
- 3) Exceeding greatness of His power. What is the greatest exhibition of His power? Creation? Or Resurrection? Triumph over the very “hosts of darkness”!

“...his inheritance in the saints”: We are His inheritance! John 17: repeated references to “those whom Thou hast given Me.” We are His body (Eph 1:22-23 building (2:19-22) and bride (5:22-23). We are “joint-heirs with Christ (Rom 8:17). He cannot claim His inheritance apart from us! [the hope of His calling?..]

- 19] And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,

“...working on his mighty power...”: What is the exceeding (intense) greatness of His power (δυνάμειος *dunameos*—dynamite power) to us-ward who believe, according to the working (ἐνέργειαν *energeian*—the energizing) of the strength of His might. How great is that dynamite power, that energizing strength?

- 20] Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,

It is power enough to raise Christ from the dead—a tremendous power. Not only is it resurrection power, but it is also the power that set Christ at God’s right hand, and that is ascension power. Ascension (vs. Christmas and Easter...) “That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection” (Phil 3:10).

At the Right Hand of God

A place of distinction (Heb 1:3); of privilege (Heb 1:13); of power (Mt 26:64); of delight (Ps 16:11); and, of dominion (1 Pet 3:22). There must be a spot in the heavens where his glorified body exists, in immediate contact with some manifestation of the glory of the Father. There Stephen saw Him; from there He came to meet Saul on the way to Damascus; His promise to His people is “Where I am, there shall ye be also” (Jn 14:3).

- 21] Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:

Ranks of angels... (Rom 8). Titles of those spiritual powers venerated by the Gnostics, opposed by the Apostle (Col 1:16) and dealt with in the armor of Chapter 6. The dark side: Dan 10...et al.

- 22] And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,
23] Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

“...all in all...”: Quoted from Psalm 8:6 and explicitly linked to Christ (Heb 2:5-10). His Headship is not exercised yet (Heb 2:8). The Ultimate Goal (1 Cor 15:20-28).

Thou hast put all things in subjection under his feet. For in that he put all in subjection under him, he left nothing that is not put under him. But now we see not yet all things put under him.

Hebrews 2:8

But now is Christ risen from the dead, and become the firstfruits of them that slept. For since by man came death, by man came also the resurrection of the dead. For as in Adam all die, even so in Christ shall all be made alive. But every man in his own order: Christ the firstfruits; afterward they that are Christ's at his coming. Then cometh the end, when he shall have delivered up the kingdom to God, even the Father; when he shall have put down all rule and all authority and power. For he must reign, till he hath put all enemies under his feet. The last enemy that shall be destroyed is death. For he hath put all things under his feet. But when he saith all things are put under him, it is manifest that he is excepted, which did put all things under him. And when all things shall be subdued unto him, then shall the Son also himself be subject unto him that put all things under him, that God may be all in all.

1 Corinthians 15:20-28

What Follows

God knew Adam would blow it, and that it would lead to this entire drama of redemption... Why did God bother? (Chapter 2) Preparation for the Mystery of the Church (Chapter 3).

Next Session

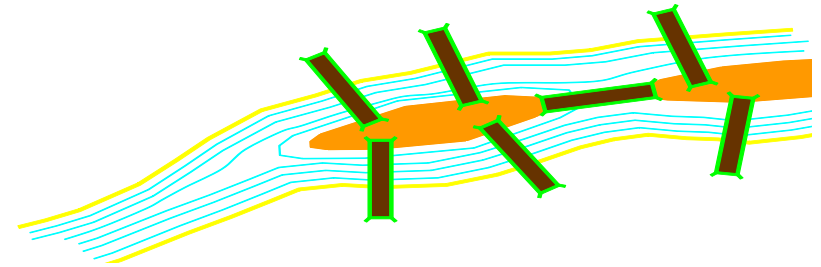
Read the entire Epistle. Study Ephesians Chapter 2.

The Epistle to the Ephesians Session 4 Ephesians 2

The Seven Bridges of Königsburg

In the town of Königsburg there is an island called Kneiphof, with two branches of the River Pregel flowing around it. There are seven bridges crossing the two branches. The question is whether a person can plan a walk in such a way that he will cross each of the bridges once but not more than once.

—Euler, 1735



Paradox Resolution

An ostensible paradox may be nothing more than the imputation of an assumed constraint which, once removed, quickly yields its resolution. Lesson: “Think outside the box” of your own self-imposed presumptions...

The Nature of Einstein's Revolution

We have the advantage of modern physics, although few appreciate its aid to our understanding *Biblical* insights!

- Special Relativity (1905): Length, mass, velocity and time are relative to velocity of the observers.
- General Relativity (1915): No distinction between time & space = a 4-dimensional continuum (confirmed 14 ways to 19 decimals).

Time Is *Not* Uniform

Time is a physical property; it varies with mass, acceleration and gravity...among other things...We exist in *more* than three dimensions (apparently, 10...). This physical insight will dissolve most theological paradoxes...

Beyond Euclid (>3 Dimensions)

June 10, 1854: the most important mathematical lecture ever given...it took over 60 years for it to be applied (Einstein went to his grave frustrated over his inability to reconcile issues which subsequently yielded by applying his previous insights). The current thinking among quantum physicists is that our universe consists of 1-dimensional “superstrings” vibrating in 10 dimensions... (?)

- 1854: Georg Riemann's Metric Tensors.
- 1915: Einstein, 4-Dimensional Spacetime.
- 1953: Kaluza-Klein: 4+n Dimensions (Light & Supergravity).
- 1963: Yang-Mills Fields (Electromagnetic & Both Nuclear Forces).
- 1984: Superstrings, 10-Dimensions.

The Nature of God

Is God subject to the restrictions of mass? Acceleration? Gravity? He is not simply One with "lots of time," He is outside of the restrictions of time. This uniqueness is His Personal Imprint...

Outline: Ephesians 1 (Recap)

- **Blessings from the Father** **1:1–6**
 - *He has chosen us* vv. 3–4
 - *He has adopted us* v. 5
 - *He has accepted us* v. 6
- **Blessings from the Son** **1:7–12**
 - *He has redeemed us* v. 7a
 - *He has forgiven us* v. 7b
 - *He has revealed God's will to us* vv. 8–10
 - *He has made us an inheritance* vv. 11–12
- **Blessings from the Spirit** **1:13–14**
 - *He has sealed us* v. 13
 - *He has given us an earnest* v. 14
- **Prayer for Understanding** **1:15–23**
 - *That God may give you spiritual understanding* vv. 17–18a
 - *That you might know the hope of His calling* v. 18b
 - *That you might know the riches of His inheritance* v. 18c
 - *That you might know His power* vv. 19–23

Ephesians 2

- **We Are Raised and Seated on the Throne** **2:1–10**
 - *What we were* vv. 1–3
 - *What God did* vv. 4–9
 - *What we are now* v. 10
- **We Are Reconciled & Set into the Temple** **2:11–22**
 - *What the Gentiles were* vv. 11–12
 - *What God did* vv. 13–17
 - *What the Gentiles and Jews are now* vv. 18–22

(All are a preamble to the astonishing disclosures in Chapter 3)

Chapter 1 emphasized *our possessions* in Christ; Chapter 2 emphasizes *our position* in Christ. Your position determines your possessions and authority. (Incidentally, Paul was a prisoner when he wrote this letter!)

The power that raised Christ from the grave and crowned Him with glory and honor... is that same power that now works in our own lives, raising us from spiritual death and seating us in Christ in the heavenlies!

We open this chapter with spiritual corpses in death valley. Man's problem is that he is "out of harmony with his environment" = alienated from the life of God (Eph 4:18).

Genesis Chapter 1

- 1) A scene of desolation, chaos, and ruin
Gen 1:2a Eph 2:1-3
- 2) The introduction of divine power
Gen 1:2b Eph 2:4
- 3) The creation of new life
Gen 1:3-31 Eph 2:5-22

- 1] And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;

"And...": A continuation of Chapter 1: Resurrection power...

"...dead": lifeless due to trespasses and sins.

"...trespasses": violation of known law.

"...sins": falling short of God's perfection.

Death = Separation

Physical death: separation of the soul from the body (James 2:26).

Spiritual death: alienated from the life of God, eternal separation (Eph 4:18,19); the "Second Death" (Rev 2:11; 20:6, 14). The unbeliever is not sick: he is dead. He does not need resuscitation; he needs resurrection (1 Tim 5:6). A corpse does not hear the conversation going on in the funeral parlor (cf. Mt 13:13).

- 2] Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:

“...the power of the air”: Doesn’t the flagrant disregard for truth in our public media demonstrate who is actually behind it all?

“...depraved”: meandered according to the weather vane of this world: the path of deceit, immorality, ungodliness, selfishness, violence, rebellion.

“...diabolical”: the prince of the power of the air (cf. birds of the sky in Luke 8:5).

“...disobedient”: walking according to the spirit that now worketh in the sons of disobedience.

Energized by Satan: Defy, dishonor, disobey ...the Lord. The cults are as busy as termites today—with the same results. Thus, doomed (Jn 3:18). [Climactic seventh bowl (Rev 16:17). Explains why the unconverted often stoop to vile forms of behavior lower than that of the animals... Man is dangerous today...]

- 3] Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others.

“...carnal”: conversations in times past in the lusts (desires) of the flesh (self-centered).

“...lusts”: any desires against the will of God.

“...corrupt”: fulfilling the desires of the flesh and the mind; abandonment to every natural desire—of thought as well as act—through the marvelous gift of imagination we throw the “reins on the neck of the steeds of passion...”

“...condemned”: children of wrath; appointed unto death and to judgment.

These few clauses sum up sin and its consequences (Cf. Rom 1 - 3). Man’s three enemies (1 Jn 2:15-17):

- | | |
|--------------|-----|
| 1) the world | v.2 |
| 2) the devil | v.2 |
| 3) the flesh | v.3 |

“...flesh”= the fallen nature. One is not a horse thief because one steals a horse. One steals a horse because one is a horse thief (Ps 51:5; 58:3).

- 4] But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

“But God...” *The most significant, eloquent, and inspiring transitions of all literature!* The Author: God Himself. No one else **could** have done it; No one else **would** have done it. The Source: His love. It is greater to be loved by the mighty sovereign of the universe than by *any* fellow human being.

“...great love”: How great? Examine the price which He paid. It was at Calvary that God displayed His hatred for sin and His love for us sinners (Rom 5:8; Jn 3:16).

- 5] Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ,

“...we were dead”: Compare our unworthiness and unloveliness—dead through trespasses; enemies of God; destitute and degraded.

He could love us without being able to save (cf. John 3:16). It is his grace that saves us. You can’t keep Him from loving you. But you can turn your back on Him and refuse His redemption. You can’t keep the sun from shining, but you can get out of the sunshine.

Our representative: not only for us; but *as* us. When He died, we died. When He was buried, we were buried. As a result we are: quickened with Christ; raised up with Him; and seated in Him.

In the Gospels, three were raised by Jesus: The widow’s son (Lk 7:11-17); Jairus’ daughter (Lk 8:49-56); and Lazarus (Jn 11:41-46)...each by the spoken Word that gave life (Heb 4:12).

Like Lazarus, we each were (are): Dead; Defeated (encumbered by our graveclothes; cf. Eph 4:22-24); and finally, Dangerous (threatening the strongholds; cf. Jn 12:10).

It took Moses 40 years to shed his graveclothes. Joseph, 13 years; David... Paul, 3 years in Arabia.

- 6] And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

“...in heavenly places in Christ Jesus”: Our Position: Already raised; already delivered; no longer earthbound; no longer occupied with the trivial and the transient.

The synopsis of all history (Mt 23:37-39:)

- The **Purpose** of all history v.37
- The **Tragedy** of all history v.37b, 38
- The **Triumph** of all history v.39

- 7] That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

“That in the ages to come”: *Verses 1-7 comprise a single periodic sentence in the Greek...*

Why Adam (et al.)? Why this laborious, painful, crimson thread from Eden to Golgatha? How does one demonstrate infinite power, knowledge, etc.? [The Creation]. How does one demonstrate infinite Love? [The Redemption].

The Cosmic Demonstration

The secret behind the drama: That **in ages yet to come** He might show (demonstrate):

- His kindness...
- His kindness toward us...
- His grace in His kindness toward us...
- The riches of His grace in His kindness toward us...
- The exceeding riches of His grace in His kindness toward us... we are to testify to His glory, just as His faithfulness to Israel (Ezek 36:19ff).

- 8] For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God:

These next three verses = the clearest statement of the plan of salvation in the Bible (Cf. Rom 3; Phil 3). It originates with the grace of God. His initiative. Given as a present possession.

The way is through faith: the commitment of a person to The person. Don't say “I hope to be saved.” If you have put your trust in Christ, you *are saved* (Cf. Phil 1:6).

Salvation can't be earned: it is the gift of God (2 Cor 4:13; Phil 1:29).

- 9] Not of works, lest any man should boast.

“Not of works”: Salvation *cannot be earned* by:

- Confirmation
- Baptism
- Church Membership
- Church attendance
- Tithing
- Holy communion
- (Trying to) keep the Ten Commandments
- “Living by the Sermon on the Mount”
- Being a good neighbor...
- “Living a moral, respectable” life...

Man is *not* saved by works. Man is *not* saved by faith + works. Man is saved by *faith alone*. He did it all. *Any attempt to add to His completed work is blasphemy*. It is a finished work (Jn 17:1-4; 19:30). We can add nothing to it (Heb 10:1-14). Salvation is a gift, not a reward. Why? To preclude human boasting (Rom 3:27).

If a man could be saved by works then Jesus' prayer in Gethsemane was unanswered (Mt 26:39-44). The death of Christ was unnecessary (Gal 2:21) and man would be his own savior. Yet:

- Idolatry forbidden (Ex 30:3);
- Glory not be shared (Isa 42:8);
- God not to be his debtor (Rom 11:35).

- 10] For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

“Workmanship”: ποιήματα *poiema*. (Word only appears elsewhere in NT in Romans 1:20; used of God's creation.) The handiwork of God, not of ourselves. We are His masterpiece (2 Cor 5:17). Our conversion is not the end: it is the beginning (Phil 2:12,13). Works are the fruit, not the root. Works are the consequence, not the antecedent, of our acceptance in Christ. We work *because* we are saved, not in order to earn it. Works demonstrate the reality of our faith (James 2:14-26).

What Kind of Works?

“...which God prepared beforehand.” Our responsibility? To find His Will for us and to obey it. How?

- 1) **Confess** and **forsake** sin as soon as we are conscious of it;
- 2) Be continually and unconditionally **yielded** to Him;
- 3) Study the Word of God to discern His will and then to do whatever He tells you to do;
- 4) Spend time in **prayer** every day;
- 5) Respond to opportunities for **service** (as He leads!)
- 6) Cultivate the **fellowship** and **counsel** of other Christians.

Why? To glorify God (Mt 5:16; 2 Cor 9:8; Col 1:10; 2 Tim 3:17; Titus 2:14; Heb 13:16). In the previous ten verses, Paul discussed salvation in general; now he focuses on the work of Christ for the Gentile in particular.

- 11] Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

Gentiles were despised. “Uncircumcision” = a term of reproach. (vs. Israel’s opportunity; Gen 12:3; Isa 42:1,6; 49:6).

“Circumcision” = chosen; set apart; merely physical. Outward sign vs. inward reality; not proof of real faith (Rom 2:25-29; 1 Cor 7:19; Gal 5:6; 6:15) of the heart (Rom 2:25-29; Phil 3:2ff; Col 2:11).

Jews enjoyed great privilege before God (Rom 9:4-5). *Pride and arrogance: the greatest racial and religious difference the world has ever known.* [Paul was a Pharisee, the most exclusive club.]

Gentile = a foreigner. Cf. Rahab and Ruth; Sidonian woman (Mk 7:24-30). [Since Noah, no covenants were ever made with Gentiles.]

- 12] That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

“...aliens from the commonwealth of Israel”: regarding Man’s separation from God (Eph 4:18; Col 1:21). The Messiah was promised to the Nation Israel (Mt 15:24); blessings were promised to Gentiles (Isa 11:10; 60:3).

“...without God in the world” does not mean they were atheists: they were godless in their conduct; they had no real knowledge of the Living God.

This refutes any notion that pagan religions are just as acceptable to God as the Christian faith: Paul cites the Ephesians’ Christless state as a definite tragedy. “Outside Christ” is condemnation (Cf. Ps 115).

The Gentiles knew the true God but deliberately refused to honor Him (Rom 1:18-23). The first 11 chapters of Genesis are a saga of devolution, not evolution—a descent, not ascent, of Man. In Genesis 12, Abraham is called; the Jews were separated so that the Gentiles might also be saved. “Salvation is of the Jews” (Jn 4:22).

Predicament Summary: Ephesians 2:12

- 1) “Without Christ”;
- 2) “Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel”;
- 3) “Strangers from the covenants of promise”;
- 4) “Having no hope”;
- 5) “And without God in the world.”

- 13] But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

“But now...” : parallels (cf. v.4) a new class, neither Jew nor Gentile (1 Cor 10:32). (A prelude for the discovery in Chapter 3)

Verse 13 sums up the Gentiles’ condition in two words: “far off.” While the problem of sinners in general (vv. 1–10) was spiritual death, the problem of the Gentiles in particular was spiritual distance from God and His blessings. Note in the Gospels that whenever Christ helped a Gentile, He did it at a distance (Mt 8:5–13; 15:22–28).

- 14] For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

Our peace “In Christ” was foretold (Isa 9:6; 53:5; Hag 2:9; Zech 9:10).

Scope of Work (vv.14-18):

- 1) Unites Jew and Gentile (predicted in Micah 5:5).
- 2) Demolition of the “wall of partition.”

[Temple access for Gentiles was forbidden on pain of death.]

The Wall of Partition

Let no one of any other nation come within the fence and barrier around the Holy Place. Whosoever will be taken doing so will himself be responsible for the fact that his death will ensue.

Josephus, + 1871 discovery

Paul was arrested and condemned by the Jews in Jerusalem on the basis of a false accusation that he took an Ephesian, Trophimus, beyond this barrier (Acts 21:28-31).

- 15] Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace;

“...law of commandments contained in ordinances”: Some religious groups still attempt to get Christians back under the law (Gal 4:8-11; 5:1; Col 2:13-23).

...one new man: Not the individual believer, but an idiom for the Church as the Body of Christ in the sense of 1 Cor 12:12,13; Eph 1:22,23; Col 3:10,11; Heb 12:23.

Scope of Work (vv.14-18):

- 1) Unites Jew and Gentile (predicted in Micah 5:5).
- 2) Demolition of the “wall of partition.”
- 3) Abolition of the enmity that raged between Jew and Gentile and Man and God.

- 16] And that he might reconcile both unto God in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

“...having slain the enemy”: The Law was the cause of Man’s enmity; Christ removed the law as the cause by dying to pay the penalty of the law that had been broken. The Law has nothing more to say to those who are “in Christ”; the penalty has been paid in full. *Tetelestai*. We are not under the Law, but under grace...we are not to live as we please, but as He pleases.

Astonishing Changes

It is new that:

- 1) The Gentile has equal rights and privileges with the Jew;
- 2) Both Jew and Gentile lose their national identities by becoming Christians;
- 3) Jews and Gentiles are fellow members of the Body of Christ;
- 4) A Jew has the hope of reigning with Christ instead of being a subject in His kingdom;
- 5) A Jew is no longer under the law.

- 17] And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

“...Far off”: Gentiles; “...nigh”: Jews.

Christ is our peace (v.14); Christ made peace (v.15); and Christ came and preached peace (v.17)

He preached peace in resurrection (Lk 24:36); peace was among his first words (Jn 20:19, 21, 26). Peace comes through the Holy Spirit (Acts 10:36).

- 18] For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

“...one Spirit”: Note repeated “one” to emphasize the unifying work of Christ (vv.14, 15, 16, 18).

The proof of peace is access, at any time, into the presence of God (vs. only the high priest into the Holy of Holies, and only on Yom Kippur). Through prayer, you can enter the throne room of the universe, kneel down before the Sovereign of the Universe, and address Him as “Father.”

Did you notice the **Trinity** again?

- | | |
|-------------------|------------------------|
| • “Through Him” | The Son |
| • “By one Spirit” | The Holy Spirit |
| • “Unto...” | The Father |

- 19] Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

“...fellowcitizens”: New privileges: no longer “dogs,” aliens, outsiders, strangers, but first class citizens. Jews have no advantage over us (Phil 3:20-21). Contrast the old position of the Gentiles with their new position in Christ: in the new creation, every believer has the privilege of coming into the Holy of Holies (Heb 10:19-25).

Old Position vs. New Position

Ephesians 2:12	Ephesians 2:13 - 19
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“Without Christ”	“In Christ”	Eph 2:13
“Aliens”	“A holy nation”	1 Pet 2:9
“Strangers”	“No more strangers”	Eph 2:19
“No hope”	“Called in one hope”	Eph 4:4
“Without God”	“The God and father of our Lord Jesus Christ”	Eph 1:3

Note also, Peter's comparison in his presentation before the Council in Jerusalem (Acts 15:9,11). All nations are now eligible. The three families of Noah highlighted in the Book of Acts:

- Ham: The Ethiopian treasurer (Acts 8);
- Shem: Saul of Tarsus, becoming Paul;
- Japheth: Cornelius, the Roman (Acts 10).

20] And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

The Temple: foundation, cornerstone, cohesive agent... Unity, symmetry, growth, etc. Appropriate for both the Jew and the Gentile (Cf. Temple of Diana in Ephesus; Acts 19:21–41).

“...the foundation”: (NT, not OT in view: cf. 3:5) Christ is the *only* foundation (Rom 15:20; 1 Cor 3:11). Apostles are associated with the 12 foundations of New Jerusalem (Rev 21:14).

“...the cornerstone”: Ps 118:22 (quoted Mk 12:10) Isa 8:14; Acts 4:11; Mt 16:13-18; 1 Pet 2:4-8:

- 1) Joins walls together; Jews + Gentiles = one Church.
- 2) Keystone of an arch: highest place; preeminent support: remove it and the rest collapses.
- 3) Cf. “Rock” (Rom 9:33; 1 Cor 10:4; 1 Pet 2:8); “Stone cut without hands” (Dan 2:34, 35, 45).

Ecclesiology

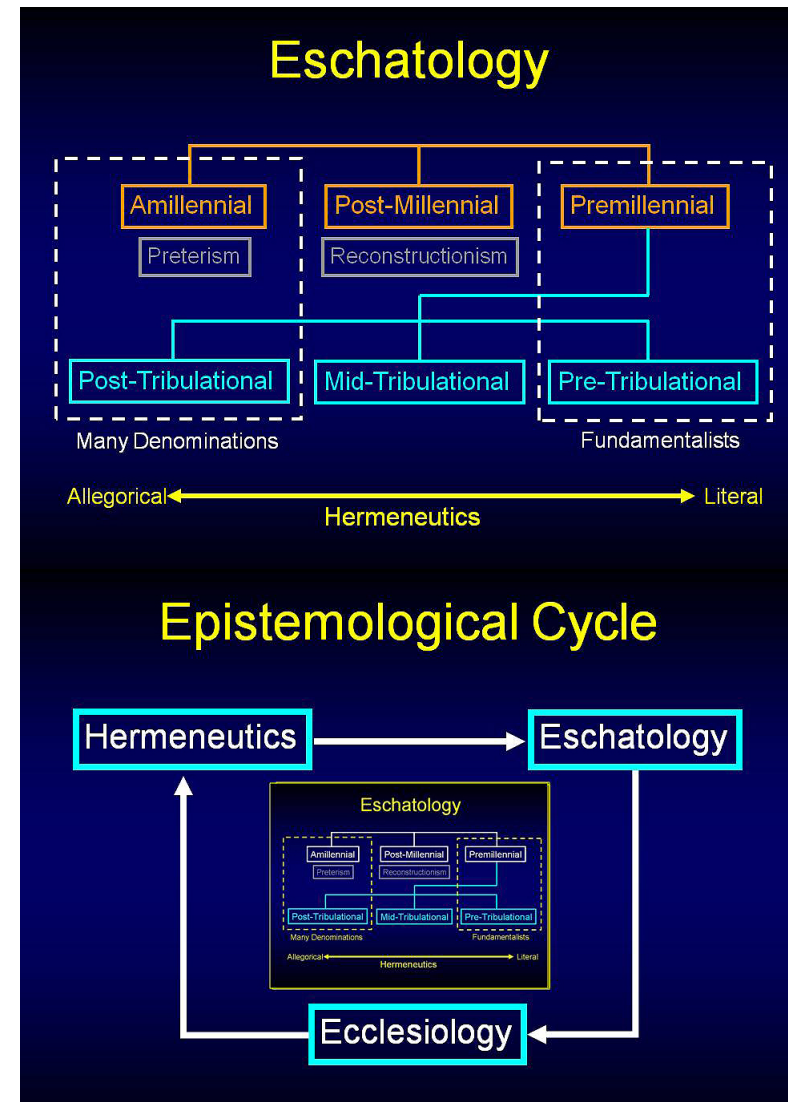
Paul's theme is Christ and the church, the eternal plan of God to gather together all things in Christ Jesus. The letter begins in eternity past and carries us to eternity future! In every sense, Ephesians is Paul's greatest word on the church, teaching us what the church is in the mind of God, and what it ought to be in practice before the eyes of men (see chart on next page).

For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ.
1 Corinthians 3:11

Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Zion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded.

1 Peter 2:6

This was written by the one who was with Christ at Caesarea Philippi, when Jesus said, “Upon this rock I will build my church” (Mt 16:18).



Peter Himself clarifies this widely held misunderstanding:

Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed.

1 Peter 2:7-8

Christ Himself is the “Rock” on which the church is built.

The Epistle to the Ephesians Session 5

Ephesians 3

Outline of Ephesians 3

- Part 1: Paul's Explanation of His Ministry (Eph 3:1–12).
- Part 2: Paul's Intercession for the Saints (Eph 3:13–21).

1] For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

“For this cause”: Paul begins with a statement that is interrupted from v. 2 to 14! (This conjunctive clause will be repeated in v.14.) He digresses to discuss a mystery... a literary parentheses to explain a *dispensational* parentheses: The Church itself is a parentheses in God's dealings with Israel.

The first thing we note is that Paul calls himself a prisoner and that he connects his imprisonment to the Gentiles! (Cf. Acts 22). Paul had been arrested in Jerusalem and was making his defense to his people. They listened to him until he got to the word “Gentiles,” and then a riot broke loose! (Acts 22:21).

The relationship of Gentiles to Jews was even a problem among the early Jewish believers, as Acts 10 and 15 reveal. What had brought him to Rome, what had made him appeal to Caesar, was his preaching the gospel *to the Gentiles*; indeed, the immediate occasion of his arrest at Jerusalem was the suspicion that he had taken Trophimus, an Ephesian, one of themselves, into the temple (Acts 21:29).

2] If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward:

“If”: A delicate reminder...

“...dispensation”: οἰκονομία *oikonomia*, economy or dispensation: *oikos*, house + *nomos*, law: law of the house; stewardship; management. Thus, the stewardship of God's grace: God's *principles* do not change; His methods of *dealing with mankind* do change over the course of history.

Distinguish the ages and the Scriptures harmonize.

—Augustine

Dispensations [ref: Scofield]

- 1) Innocence; Gen 1:28. End: Fall of Man.
- 2) Conscience; Moral Responsibility; Gen 3:7. End: Flood.
- 3) Human Government; Gen 8:15. End: Babel.
- 4) Promise—Abraham; Gen 12:1f. End: Bondage in Egypt.
- 5) Law—Moses; Ex 19:1. End: Captivity in Babylon (or to John?).
- 6) Church—(“Grace?”); Acts 2:1. End: World worship of Antichrist.
- 7) Kingdom; Rev 20. End: Satan's Rebellion.

Classic Dispensations

Each dispensation involved grace as the basis of salvation. Abel and Abraham brought little lambs to sacrifice to the Lord (but I hope you didn't take a lamb to church last Sunday!). The Lamb of God that taketh away the sin of the world has already come (Jn 1:29). The offerings simply pointed toward this consummate cosmic act.

Grace

- 1) *As to the one chosen*: Paul's undeserved favor to be selected for such a high privilege;
 - 2) *As to the contents of the message*: God's free and unmerited kindness;
 - 3) *As to the recipients*: The Gentiles were quite unworthy people to be so favored.
- 3] How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

“...mystery”: μυστήριον *musterion*: sacred divine secret, hitherto unknown, humanly unknowable, and now divinely revealed. Previous Allusions (Eph 1:9-14, 22-23; 2:11-22).

The Kingdom of Heaven “Twelves”

- 12 Tribes
- 12 Apostles (ruling over the 12 Tribes); Mt 19:28; Lk 22:30
- 12 Kingdom of Heaven Parables
- 12 Kingdom Mysteries
- 12,000 sealed from each of 12 Tribes (Rev 7)
- New Jerusalem (Rev 21): 12 gates, 12 foundation stones, 12,000 furlongs

12 Kingdom Parables

- | | |
|------------------------------|--------------|
| 1) Sower and the Seed | Mt 13:18-23 |
| 2) Tares and Wheat | Mt 13:24-30 |
| 3) Mustard Seed | Mt 13:31-32 |
| 4) Woman and Leaven | Mt 13:33 |
| 5) Treasure in the Field | Mt 13:34 |
| 6) Pearl of Great Price | Mt 13:45-46 |
| 7) Dragnet | Mt 13:47-50 |
| 8) Forgiveness of Debts | Mt 18:23-35 |
| 9) Latecomers equally paid | Mt 20:1-16 |
| 10) Guests at Marriage Feast | Mt 22:1-14* |
| 11) Ten Virgins | Mt 25:1-13 |
| 12) Stewardship of Talents | Mt 25:14-30* |

* “the darkness outside”?

12 Kingdom Mysteries

- 1) Mystery of the Kingdom of God (Lk 8:10; Mk 4:11); kept secret (Rom 16:25; Col 1:26; Eph 3:3,5; 1 Cor 4:1; 2 Cor 12:1-5; Gal 1:11-12)
- 2) Mystery of the Kingdom of Heaven (Mt 13:11)
- 3) Mystery of Manifestation in the Flesh (1 Tim 3:16)
- 4) Mystery of Salvation by Faith (Eph 3:19; Rom 16:25,26; 1 Tim 3:9)
- 5) Mystery of the Ultimate Unity (Eph 1:9)
- 6) Mystery of Gentiles in same Body (Rom 16:25; Eph 3:3)
- 7) Mystery of the Bride of Christ (Eph 5:10; Eph 2:6; 1 Cor 6:17; cf. Col 1:26,27; 2:2; 4:3)
- 8) The Mystery of the *Harpazo* (1 Cor 15:51; 1 Thess 4:12-18; OT: Isa 26:19-21; Ps 27:5; (Cf. Pavilions: Ps 18:11; 31:20; Jer 43:10)
- 9) The Mystery of Iniquity (2 Thess 2:6-12)
- 10) Mystery of the Seven Churches (Rev 1:20)
- 11) Mystery of Israel’s Blindness (Lk 19:42-44; Rom 11:25)
- 12) Mystery Babylon (Counterfeit Kingdom); Rev 17, 18 (Cf. Gen 10:10, 1st mention)

[Mysteries Finished: Rev 10:7]

Ecclesiology

Paul’s theme is Christ and the church, the eternal plan of God to gather together all things in Christ Jesus. The letter begins in eternity past and carries us to eternity future! In every sense, Ephesians is Paul’s greatest word on the church, teaching us what the church is in the mind of God, and what it ought to be in practice before the eyes of men.

A New Dispensation

In the Old Testament, God revealed through prophecy His program for the people of Israel: that He would establish them in their Kingdom when they received their Messiah, and then through Israel He would convert the Gentiles. **God offered them the Kingdom:**

- 1) Through the ministry of John the Baptist (Mt 3:2), whom the Jews permitted to be slain;
- 2) Through Christ’s ministry (Mt 4:12–17), whom the Jews asked to be slain; and
- 3) Through the apostles and Stephen (Acts 2–7), whom the Jews themselves actually killed (Acts 7:54–60).

A New Dispensation

Three offers of the Kingdom were made to Israel, but the nation rejected each of them. They had rejected the Father, who had sent John; the Son; and the Spirit, who was energizing the witnessing apostles. With the death of Stephen, the offers of the Kingdom ceased temporarily; the message went out to the Samaritans and the Gentiles (Acts 8 & 10); and, in the meantime Paul was saved miraculously (Acts 9).

What *Is* the Mystery?

- Jew + Gentile: known to the Twelve (Jn 10:4, 6);
- Peter’s sheet (Acts 10);
- Paul a prisoner for this very reason. Paul also mentioned the “mystery” (Rom 16:25, 26; 1 Cor 2:7);
- Lord Himself (Mt 13:10-17, 35) even hidden from angels (v.10; 1 Pet 1:12);
- How does this differ from OT (Gentiles being blessed)?
- Israel restored to covenant relationship. Gentiles brought to place of special blessing *through* them.
- **Church** = God calling out a people for the heavens to be the Body and Bride of His Son throughout ages to come, and *through whom He will administer the affairs of the redeemed universe.*

- 5] Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

Not made known in other ages: thus, not in OT (Rom 16:25; Col 1:26; cf. Mt 13:35). This verse refutes the “hyperdispensationalists”—that only Paul knew the mystery of the Church. (This “mystery” is one of

12 in NT). None of this either in OT or coming kingdom: OT predicted the call of Gentiles (Isa 11:10; 42:6; 49:6; 55:6-7; 60:3; Zech 2:11; Mal 1:11) ...but not as fellow members of the body.

- 6] That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

“...fellowheirs”: Paul already had mentioned the concept, but now he explains the tremendous impact of this “sacred secret” (Eph 1:10; 2:11, 22). (This is the most complete definition we have.) Fellow members of One body: No distance or disadvantage now (Eph 4:4). Fellow partakers of the promise: Holy Spirit (Acts 15:8; Gal 3:14).

The Mystery

Here in v. 6, Paul states the mystery clearly: that believing Gentiles and Jews are one body in Christ. This mystery had not been made known before this time; but now God had revealed it to His apostles and NT prophets by the Spirit.

Paul’s ministry was to the Gentiles, and his message was that of grace, Paul’s special task was to share the truth of the one body, the mystery of the church (Rom 16:25,26; Col 1:26,27; 4:3,4; Eph 6:19).

But contrariwise, when they saw that the gospel of the uncircumcision was committed unto me, as the gospel of the circumcision was unto Peter.

Galatians 2:7

To say that the twelve apostles from the beginning understood the mystery of the church is to deny Paul’s inspired words here. Even Peter had to have a vision from heaven in Acts 10 before he would go to the Gentiles.

The truth of the one body was given to Paul and its significance dawned gradually upon the early church. Both Peter and Paul had the same message, although it was to two different groups of people (Acts 4:12; 16:31).

The Kingdom

- Israel blessed as head of nations (Isa 60:12).
- Gentiles blessed through Israel (Isa 60:3; 61:6; Zech 8:23):
 - Adam to Abraham (~2000 years) only Gentiles;
 - Abraham to Christ (~2000 years) Jews and Gentiles;

- Christ to the Rapture (~2000 years) Jews, Gentiles, & the Church (1 Cor 10:32);
- [After Rapture]: Jews and Gentiles.

Calling

- **Israel:** Temporal blessings in earthly places (Deut 28); God’s chosen earthly people (Amos 9:13-15); God has not negated His promises to Israel (Rom 11:1-12).
- **Church:** Spiritual blessings in heavenlies (Eph 1:3); Heavenly Bride of Christ (Rev 21:9-11, 22-23).

Millennium

- Israel to be blessed under rule of Christ (Hos 3:5).
- Church will reign with Him over entire universe (Eph 1:22-23).
- God’s program today is not the “headship of Israel” but the headship of Christ over His Church (Deut 28:1-13).
- We are under a different “stewardship” from that of Moses and the prophets, and we must be careful not to confuse what God has clarified.
- The Church is not the same as Israel; the Church is not the same as the Kingdom.
- It is a unique fellowship, the most privileged body of believers we read about in the Bible!

The Church

- It came into being after ascension (Acts 2).
- Formed by baptism of the Spirit (1 Cor 12:13).
- Completed at the rapture (1 Thess 4:13-18; 1 Cor 15:23, 51-52).
- Lord’s revelation (Mt 13): His seven letters (Rev 2 & 3; cf. Paul’s seven churches...).

“Covenant Theology”

Groups that ignore this clear-cut statement of Paul, that the Church is not a revelation of the Old Testament, and treat the Church as a continuation (or replacement) of Israel, are known as “covenant” theologians. This view originated with Augustine, following the allegorizations of Origen, and was the doctrine of the Roman Catholic Church, carried over to (and overlooked by) the Reformation.

And round about the throne were four and twenty seats: and upon the seats I saw four and twenty elders sitting, clothed in white raiment; and they had on their heads crowns of gold.

Revelation 4:4

24 Elders

- David's 24 courses (1 Chr 24:1-19). Each course relieved each Sabbath.
- Non-Levitical Priesthood Orders: Jethro (Ex 3:1); Jacob's tithes? (Gen 28:22); Melchizedek (Gen 14:18-20).
- Messianic (Ps 110:4; Heb 5,6,7).

The 24 elders represent a completed group (1 Chr 24). *Cannot be:* Tribulation Believers (Rev 7:13-14); angels (Rev 7:11); or the Nation of Israel (Rev 7 & 12).

Tribulation Saints?

And one of the elders answered, saying unto me, What are these which are arrayed in white robes? and whence came they? And I said unto him, Sir, thou knowest. And he said to me, These are they which came out of great tribulation, and have washed their robes, and made them white in the blood of the Lamb.

Revelation 7:13,14

Angels?

And all the angels stood round about the throne, and about the elders and the four beasts, and fell before the throne on their faces, and worshipped God,

Revelation 7:11

Angels are not numbered, crowned, or enthroned. These elders are distinguished from the angels (Rev 5:8-11; 7:11).

The 24 Elders

Elders (*presbuteros*) in the New Testament are the highest officials in the church; representative of the whole church (Titus 1:5; Acts 15:6; 20:28; 1 Pet 2:5, 9; Cf. Dan 7:13,14; no 24 elders: Eph 3.3-7!).

Distinguishing Characteristics: Thrones (Rev 3:21); White Raiment (Rev 3:25); Crowns of Gold (Rev 2:10; 3:11); Song of Redeemed (Rev 5:9,10); called "Elders," "Kings & Priests" (Rev 5:10).

Dispensational Gaps

Book	Gap Evident	Book	Gap Evident
1) Gen 1	1,2	13) Micah 5	2,3
2) Ps 22	21,22	14) Hab 2	13,14
3) Ps 118	middle of v. 22	15) Zeph 9	7,8
4) Isa 9:6	after first clause	16) Zech 10	9,10
5) Isa 53	middle of v. 10	17) Mt 10	middle of v. 23
6) Isa 61	middle of v. 2	18) Mt 12	middle of v. 20
7) Lam 4	21,22	19) Lk 1	31,32
8) Dan 9	26,27	20) Lk 4	18-20 (qv. #6)
9) Dan 11	20,21	21) Lk 21	middle of v. 24
10) Hos 2	13,14	22) Jn 1	5,6
11) Hos 3	4,5	23) 1 Pet 1	middle of v. 11
12) Amos 9	10,11	24) Rev 12	5,6

It is interesting that there appear to be 24: the same number as the number of the Redeemed in Rev 5...

- 7] Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power.

"...I was made a minister": vv.7-9 describe Paul's own ministry—the Church. "Minister" = διάκονος *diakonos*, deacon; servant.

"...working": ἐνέργεια *energeia*, "energy."

"...power": δύναμις *dunamis*, "dynamic" ["dynamite"].

Paul has already mentioned the mighty resurrection power of Christ is available to us for daily life and service! (Eph 1:19-23; 3:20; 4:16).

- 8] Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

"...less than the least of all saints": invents a comparative of superlative; no feigned humility (1 Cor 15:9). "Chief of sinners" (1 Tim 1:12-15); memory of persecutions (Acts 9:4; Gal 1:13; Phil 3:6).

Understanding the deep truths of God's Word does not give a man a big head; it gives him a broken and contrite heart (Isa 6:5). Paul was given a special commission to Gentiles (Acts 9:15; 13:47; 22:21; Gal 2:2,8). Paul (Παῦλος *Paulus*) means "little" in Latin.

“...unsearchable riches”: literally “untraceable riches.” You cannot detect the mystery of the one body in the OT Scriptures; it was a mystery hidden in Christ.

- 9] And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

“...fellowship”: “All men” = believers only.

κοινωνία *koinonia* = fellowship (v.9).

οἰκονομία *oikonomia* = dispensation; stewardship (v.2). New creation hidden in God from all ages...

- 10] To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God,

One of God’s present purposes is to reveal His manifold wisdom to the angelic hosts of heaven (1 Pet 1:10-12); they rejoice at repentance of one lost sinner (Lk 15:10); they watch activities of local churches (1 Cor 11:10); we are a spectacle to them (1 Cor 4:9). ***However men may scorn the salvation of Christ and all that belongs to it, the highest intelligences regard it with profound interest.***

“...manifold” = πολυποίκιλος *polupoikilos*, variegated (cloth or flowers: intricate beauty of an embroidered pattern); Cf. Gen 37:3...yet foolishness to the unsaved (1 Cor 1:18-31).

The precise line of thought is this: God from eternity, had a purpose to put Jew anti Gentile on precisely the same footing, but concealed it for many ages, until he revealed it in the apostolic age, when he appointed Paul his minister to announce it.

- 11] According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord:

“...the eternal purpose”: The Church is not a divine afterthought; it is part of God’s eternal purpose in Christ. To ignore this truth is to sin against the Father who planned it, the Son whose death made it possible, and the Spirit who today seeks to work in our lives to accomplish what God has planned.

God’s foreknowledge and counter-strategy: incarnation; death; resurrection; ascension; and the glorification of Christ.

Satan knows the Scriptures; by keeping His program for the church hidden, God prevented Satan from hindering the plan. Satan took

Christ to the cross, and by so doing sealed his own doom! It is tragic today when we see pastors and churches wandering about aimlessly in their ministries because they do not understand God’s purpose for the church in this age. If they would move out of the message of Acts 1–6 and into that of Ephesians and Colossians, they would not be wasting time, talent, and money “building the kingdom” but instead would be building the church.

- How He has sent heaven’s best for the earth’s worst;
- How He has redeemed His enemies at enormous cost;
- How He has conquered them by love,
- and prepared them as a Bride for His Son.

And they see that through the work of the Lord Jesus on the cross, more glory has come to God and more blessing has come to believing Jews and Gentiles than if sin had never been allowed to enter.

God has been vindicated; Christ has been exalted; Satan has been defeated; and the Church has been enthroned in Christ to share His glory.

- 12] In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him.

Consequence: access to the Throne of God. Boldly, without being scolded (James 1:5).

- 13] Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

A very delicate and touching request, that they would not be too much distressed by what he was suffering for them; cf. Epaphroditus (Phil 2:26).

- 14] For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

“For this cause I bow my knees”: The Second Prayer in this Epistle (Eph 3:14-21): Prayer #1: Enlightenment (Eph 1:15-23); Prayer #2: Enablement. (Continues from v.1) Paul is saying, “I want you to get your hands on your wealth, realize how vast it is, and start to use it.” He went to God in prayer that these great truths might become realities in the lives of believers (cf. Chapters 4 - 6).

Prayer

There is something special about being on your knees...but note—no special posture required: Abraham *stood* praying for Sodom (Gen 18:22); Solomon *stood* at the dedication (1 Kgs 8:22); David *sat* before the

Lord (1 Chr 17:16); Jesus fell *on His face* at Gethsemane (Mt 26:39). It's the posture of the soul that is important. He does address his prayer to the Father (Jn 16 :23).

Brevity

Have you noticed that Biblical prayers are often brief?

- Moses' great prayer for Israel (3 verses);
- Elijah on Mt. Carmel (1 verse);
- Nehemiah's great prayer (7 verses);
- Jesus' prayer in John 17 can be read in 5 minutes...

15] Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

“...the whole family in heaven and earth”: There is no such thing in Scripture as the “Universal Fatherhood of God” that saves all men: “Ye must be born again” (Jn 3:7). Believers are “sons of God” *by rebirth* (1 Jn 3:1-2; Jn 1:11-12). There are four petitions in Paul's prayer—each one is sequential; each one leads into the next one: Strength, Depth, Apprehension, Fullness.

16] That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

“according to,” not “out of”: *in proportion*, not just a portion!

“Strength”

The *presence* of the Holy Spirit is evidence of salvation (Rom 8:9), but the *power* of the Spirit is enablement for mature, stable, intelligent Christians (Acts 1:8). Jesus performed His ministry on the earth in the power of the Spirit (Lk 4:1,14; Acts 10:38). [There are 59 references to the Spirit in the Book of Acts, 1/4 of the total in the NT.]

“...the inner man”: Notice that all of Paul's prison prayers (Phil 1:9-11; Col 1:9-12, and these) deal with the spiritual condition of the inner man, and not with the material needs of the body. The outer man is passing away...daily (2 Cor 4:16).

Inner Man

The inner man of the lost sinner is dead, but it comes alive when Christ is invited in (Eph 2:1). What does it mean to have the Holy Spirit empower the inner man? Our spiritual faculties are controlled by God and we are exercising them and growing in the Word (Heb 5:12-14).

The “Inner man”: can “see” (Ps 119:18); “hear” (Mt 13:9); “taste” (Ps 34:8); “feel” (Acts 17:27); and he must be “exercised” (1 Tim 4:7-8); “cleansed” (Ps 51:7); “washed” by the Word (Eph 5:26); “fed” (Mt 4:4; cf. Manna, daily; Ex 16:15ff); and, “renewed daily” (2 Cor 4:16).

17] That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

Three pictures in three verbs: “Dwell”: “Rooted”; and “Grounded.”

“Dwell” = to settle down and feel at home Cf. Oaks of Mamre (Gen 18). The Lord did not feel at home at Lot's house! (Does He feel at home in *yours*?) The Lord did not come to us as temporary visitor, but a permanent resident, with unrestricted access to your life...

“Rooted” = A tree must get its roots deep into the soil if it to have nourishment and stability (Ps 1:1-3; Cf. Jer 17:5-8).

“Grounded” = (architectural term) sound foundations. The storm that blows reveals the strength of the roots, or the soundness of the foundation (Mt 7:24-29).

The Trinity in previous four verses: **Father** (v.14); **Holy Spirit** (v.16); **Son** (v.17). *A bigger surprise is coming...*

18] May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height;

“...comprehend”: Should be “apprehend”—lay hold of; both stem from the Latin *prehendere*, “to grasp.” [Cf. A monkey's *prehensile* tail, able to cling to a tree limb, etc.] It is possible to understand something but not really make it your own.

“...with all saints”: without the others, our comprehension is *incomplete*. Truths often emerge from *within* a small group...

- the **breadth**,
 - πλάτος *platos*: breadth; suggesting great extent.
- and **length**,
 - μήκος *mekos*: length.
- and **depth**,
 - βάθος *bathos*: depth, height; deep things of God.
- and **height**;
 - ὕψος *hupsos*: height; of place (heaven); of rank.

Time Is *Not* Uniform

Time is a physical property; it varies with mass, acceleration and gravity...among other things...We exist in *more* than three dimensions (apparently, 10...). This physical insight will dissolve most theological paradoxes...

Beyond Euclid (>3 Dimensions)

June 10, 1854: the most important mathematical lecture ever given...it took over 60 years for it to be applied (Einstein went to his grave frustrated over his inability to reconcile issues which subsequently yielded by applying his previous insights). The current thinking among quantum physicists is that our universe consists of 1-dimensional “superstrings” vibrating in 10 dimensions... (?)

- 1854: Georg Riemann’s Metric Tensors.
- 1915: Einstein, 4-Dimensional Spacetime.
- 1953: Kaluza-Klein: 4+n Dimensions (Light & Supergravity).
- 1963: Yang-Mills Fields (Electromagnetic & Both Nuclear Forces).
- 1984: Superstrings, 10-Dimensions.

Dimensions of “Reality”

- Nachmonides (13th Century): 10 dimensions, but only four are “knowable” [*Commentary on Genesis*, 1263.]
- Particle Physicists (20th Century): 10 dimensions; 4 are directly measurable: (3 spatial + time); 6 are “curled” into less than 10⁻³³ cm, and thus inferable only by indirect means.

Paul wants us to live in all four dimensions:

- | | | |
|------------|--|--------------|
| • Breadth: | The world | John 3:16 |
| • Length: | | 1 Cor 13:8 |
| • Depth: | The Cross | Phil 2:8ff |
| • Height: | Heavenlies | 1 John 3 |
| • Breadth: | Extent of His Grace | Eph 2:11-18 |
| • Length: | Eternity to Eternity | Eph 1:4, 2:7 |
| • Depth: | Pit; our predicament | Eph 2:1-5 |
| • Height: | Joint heirs with the ruler of the universe | Eph 2:6ff |

- 19] And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

Is there a paradox here? How can we know that which passeth knowledge? [Like a baby’s confidence in its mother’s arms...]

“...fulness”: Can one even imagine “being filled with the fulness of God”?! (Col 2:9,10). The means is the Holy Spirit (Eph 5:18); the measure is God Himself (Eph 4:11-16).

Paul will have more to say about “fulness” later; we’ll explore more then (Eph 5:18-21).

- 20] Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

Another of Paul’s “pyramid” sentences: “Able...to *do*.. Translates the potential to the actual...We *ask*...or *think*:

...*all* that we ask or think
...*above* all that we ask or think
...*abundantly* above all that we ask or think
...*exceeding* abundantly above all that we ask or think...”

Paul seems to want to use every word possible to convey to us the vastness of God’s Power as found in Jesus Christ. [*Again, note the Trinitarian emphasis in this benediction: Paul prays to the **Father**; concerning the indwelling **Spirit**, made available through the **Son**...*]

- 21] Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

Praise (Psalm 148). *Is His power active in your life?* Get your hands on your spiritual wealth by opening your heart to the Holy Spirit, and praying for strength for the inner man...for new depth of love...for spiritual apprehension...and for spiritual fulness.

“Ye have not because ye ask not” (James 4:2).

Next Session

Next time we begin the second half of the epistle:

- 1) **Doctrine:** Chapters 1 - 3
2) **Duties:** Chapters 4 – 6

Study Chapter 4.

The Epistle to the Ephesians Session 6

Ephesians 4

In Chapters 1, 2 & 3 we have considered:

- The Calling
- The Construction
- The Constitution of the church

In Chapters 4, 5, & 6:

- The Conduct of the church
- The Confession of the church
- The Conflict of the church

(Unlike many seminary graduates, I personally remain skeptical of alliteration: I don't see how "one letter fits all" necessarily endorses a paradigm or outline.)

The Transition

We leave the mountain peak of the Transfiguration... and descend to confront a demon-possessed world and a skeptical mob.

J. V. McGee

In his discussion of this walk of the believer, Paul speaks first to the individual. The individual is to walk in lowliness and meekness. Then he widens out to the entire church, which is one body and one spirit. Finally, he brings this passage to a great, tremendous crescendo, which pictures the eminence and transcendence of God.

The Joshua of the New Testament

Position was a key word in the first half of Ephesians—God has blessed us "with all spiritual blessings" (Eph 1:3).

Possession is the great word in the Book of Joshua. Joshua had to appropriate the land by taking possession of it for the enjoyment of it and for blessing in the land. Although enemies and other obstacles stood in his way, Joshua had to overcome and occupy.

Joshua entered the Land of Promise on the basis of the promise made to Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and Moses. It was his by right of promise, and he led the children of Israel over the Jordan into the land. Passing over Jordan is symbolic of the death, burial, and resurrec-

tion of Christ. We as believers have been brought into the Promised Land. That is where you and I live—at least we should be living—in resurrection territory today.

[Source: Alan Redpath, *Victorious Christian Living*.]

Hear Ye! Hear Ye!

If you are not a Christian, God is not asking you to do the commands in this epistle. First you must become a child of His through faith in Christ; you must become a member of His body. What follows in this epistle is for those who have been redeemed and have heard the Word of truth.

Dead men cannot walk no matter how insistently they are urged to walk. The dead man must first be made alive. Paul has told us that we were dead in trespasses and sins. If you are not a Christian, you just stay on the sidelines and listen.

Our Wealth

Called by grace (Ch.1)
Raised from the dead (2:1-10)
Reconciled (2:11-22)
Christ's victory over Satan (Ch. 3)

Our Walk

Walk worthy, in unity (4:1-16)
Put off graveclothes; walk in purity (4:17-5:17)
Walk in victory (6:10-24)

[Source: Warren Wiersbe, *Be Rich (Ephesians)*.]

- 1] I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

"...therefore": Re: Chapters 1, 2 & 3.

"...prisoner" again? Cf. 3:1. Paul can be seated in the heavenlies while seated in a prison as a witness for Christ

"...vocation": To be seated in the heavenlies, yet walking on the earth...

"...walk worthy": Phil 1:27; Col 1:10; 1 Thess 2:10.

"...beseech = God's urging! [Same word as in Romans 12:1] OT: "Obey me and I will bless you." NT: "I have already blessed you. Now, in response to my love and grace, obey Me."

- The World: “Do something and be somebody.”
- The Truth: “Be somebody and then you can do something.” If you are not a Christian, you are on the sidelines.

The main idea in the first 16 verses is unity. Seven Christian graces are then listed.

- 2] With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

Lowliness

The first is lowliness, of humility. “When you know you have it, you’ve lost it.” In Greek culture, humility was thought of as a vice, to be practiced only by slaves. But Paul stated that saints should be completely humble in their daily walks.

Lowliness is the opposite of pride: pride of race; pride of face; pride of grace... On the other hand Christians should not promote false humility, but should recognize who they are in God’s program (Jn 3:30; Rom 12:3). This virtue is listed first because of Paul’s emphasis on unity: pride promotes disunity; humility promotes unity.

“**I’m Third**”? Christ first; others, second. It means not thinking more highly—nor less highly—than we ought to. Our acceptance in the Beloved.

Meekness

Meekness (8X in NT) is not weakness. It is power under control, with nothing “to prove.” Moses was meek (Num 12:3); yet, angry (Ex 32). Christ was meek (Mt 11:29); yet, angry (Mt 21:12,13) ...meekness is bowing yourself to the will of God. The Greek word, *πραῦτης* *praotes*, was used for a soothing medicine; a colt that had been broken; and a soft wind.

Longsuffering

Long-suffering (12X in NT) = “long-tempered,” the ability to endure discomfort without fighting back.

Forbearance

Forbearance is lovingly putting up with all that is disagreeable in other people (1 Cor 13:4). A fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:22-23. Cf. Col. 1:11; 3:12,13; 2 Tim 4:2).

- 3] Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

“...unity of the Spirit”: John 17:21. Cf. Symphony orchestra tuning cacophonously; vs. the harmony when under the leadership of the conductor...Unity is not uniformity. Unity comes from within; uniformity, from without.

“Endeavouring” = being eager to maintain, guard...like a happy marriage, you have to keep working at it...

“Peace” = James 3:13 - 4:10. The reason for war on the outside is war on the inside.

Unity

Many today attempt to unite Christians in a way that is not Biblical. Paul doesn’t deal with unity *until* he has laid an adequate doctrinal foundation.

Christians are not to agree to false doctrine (Rom 16:17-20; 2 Jn 6-11); however, doctrinal purity does not produce spiritual purity! (Rev 2:1-7). This is why Paul joins “speaking truth in love” (Eph 4:15).

Paul lists the seven elements of unity, centered on the three Persons of the Trinity. [There is no excuse for a person not to be a member of a local body for it is there that he exercises his gifts to help others to grow.]

“What denomination are you?”

“I belong to the same denomination that David did.”

“What was that?”

“David said, ‘I am a companion of all them that fear thee and keep thy precepts.’” (Ps 119:63)

- 4] There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;

“...one body” refers to the total number of believers from Pentecost to the Rapture. This one body is also called the invisible church, but this is not wholly accurate. All true believers should also be very visible (Eph 1:23; 2:16; 3:6).

“...one Spirit” refers to the Holy Spirit who baptizes each believer into the body of Christ. The work of the Holy Spirit is to unify believers in Christ. This is the unity that the believer is instructed to keep.

“...one hope”: The Return of our Lord to take us to heaven (Eph 1:13-14). This is the blessed hope (Titus 2:13). A focus on His impending Return galvanizes us into proper spiritual priorities and emphasis.

5] One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

“One Lord” refers to the Lord Jesus Christ. His lordship over believers brings into existence the unity of the church. Two believers, claiming the same Lord, should be walking in unity.

Someone asked Ghandi, the spiritual leader of India, “What is the greatest hindrance to Christianity in India?” He replied, “Christians.”

“...one faith” refers to the body of truth called the apostles’ doctrine (Acts 2:42; Rev 2:1-7, et al.). The early Christians recognized a body of basic doctrine that they taught, guarded, and committed to others. When this is denied, there are divisions.

There must be substance to form an adhesion of believers. This substance is correct doctrine. “In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, en agapé” (Augustine).

“...one baptism”: This has reference to the baptism of the Holy Spirit, which is real baptism. Ritual baptism is by water. Water baptism is a *symbol* of the real baptism of the Holy Spirit by which believers are actually made one.

For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:13

6] One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

“One God and Father of all” refers to God’s fatherhood of believers. We are reborn into His family. Paul likes to emphasize the Father (Eph 1:3, 17; 2:18; 3:14; 5:20). The “Lord’s Prayer” opens with “Our Father,” not “My Father.” Since there is only one Father, He is not the Father of unbelievers. Sonship can come only through Christ.

7] But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ.

Now Paul moves from what we have in common to how we differ from one another.

In the natural realm, we each have abilities (although we are, in this respect, not all created equal!) In the spiritual realm, each believer has at least one spiritual gift.

There are three primary lists of spiritual gifts in the NT (1 Cor 12:4-11; 27-31; Rom 12:3-8; Eph 4:11). Each list is different, and probably only representative. However, spiritual gifts are not toys to play with; they are tools to build with. We are to inspect fruits of the Spirit rather than gifts.

8] Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

“...led captivity captive”: This is a remarkable quote from Ps 68:18, applying to Jesus a victory song written by David. [The same Hebraism is found in Judges 5:12: lead captive him who held you captive] Cf. Isa 14:2; Heb 2:15.

9] (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth?

“To open the prison to them who are bound” (Isa 61:1 Cf. 1 Pet 3:19).

10] He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

11] And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

Five Classes of Gifted Roles

1) Apostles: One sent with a commission. A disciple is a follower or learner. An apostle is a divinely appointed representative. Strictly, they were to have been personal witnesses to the resurrection (Acts 1:15-22; 1 Cor 9:1-2). These men laid the foundation (Eph 2:20); once laid, they were no longer needed. In a broad sense, all Christians have an apostolic ministry (Jn 20:21). [*Aren’t we building on Paul’s foundation by studying Ephesians right now?*]

2) Prophets: Not necessarily predictive; a forth-teller of the Word of God (Acts 11:28; 1 Cor 13:2; Eph 3:5). Purpose: edification, encouragement, and consolation (1 Cor 14:3).

3) Evangelists: Bearers of good news. To win the lost (Acts 8:26-40; 21:28). These are obstetricians...

4) Pastors: Shepherds; feed and lead. These are the pediatricians...
[The conductor has his back to the audience...]

5) Teachers: Since the word “some” is not repeated suggests that we have one office—”pastor/teachers”—with two ministries. Mentioned also in Rom 12:7; 1 Cor 12:28-29; 1 Tim 3:2.

- 12] For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

A pastor is not paid to do the work. He is called to “equip *the saints* unto the work of the ministry, unto the building up of the Body of Christ” (Literal translation). The greatest tragedy of our churches is the Biblical illiteracy in the pews. Would you get into an airplane if the pilot didn’t know more about flying than the average church member knows about the Word of God? Also, well-fed sheep *multiply*.

- 13] Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

“...the measure of the stature”: Measures of Maturity: Christlikeness (v.13); Stability (v.14); Truth joined with love (v.15); Cooperation (v.16).

- 14] That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

“I’m a truth-seeker.” vs. “I have found Him who is the truth...”

“I was reading about you”: Ever learning, and never able to come to the knowledge of the truth (2 Tim 3:7)!

- 15] But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

“...speaking the truth”: (present participle formed from truth; “truthing”): “manifesting the truth in love.” Truth without love is brutality; love without truth is hypocrisy. Truth unites; lies divide. Love unites; selfishness divides.

Faithful are the wounds of a friend; but the kisses of an enemy are deceitful.
Proverbs 27:6

[Our Conductor will lift His baton with nail-pierced hands...]

- 16] From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

Every believer, no matter how insignificant he may appear, has a ministry to other believers. An isolated Christian cannot minister to others; neither can others minister to him. Note the emphasis on love (vv. 2, 15, 16). Love is the circulatory system of the Body.

- 17] This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

“...therefore”: The Bible was written to be obeyed, not simply studied. We are to be “doers of the Word, and not hearers only” (James 1:22). Repentance is a change of mind. When a person trusts Christ, his entire outlook changes: values, goals, world-view.

- 18] Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

“...understanding darkened”: We have become an entire culture that has lost its perception of moral values (Isa 5:20, 21).

- “Is our biggest problem ignorance or apathy?”
- “I don’t know and I don’t care!”

“...blindness of their heart”: hardness of heart. Dulled, as by an anesthetic. Sin has a hardening, deadening, blinding effect upon people. An unsaved person’s thinking is “vanity” (futile). He does not know God, he cannot understand the world around him; he cannot understand himself. Our world has much knowledge but very little wisdom.

- 19] Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

[Read Romans 1:18-32 for an exposition of these verses.] A corpse cannot hear a conversation in a funeral parlor. Satan has blinded the minds of the unsaved (2 Cor 4:3-6). If you are not a Christian, God is not asking you to do the commands in this epistle. Dead men cannot walk no matter how insistently they are urged to.

- 20] But ye have not so learned Christ;

“...learned”: Note the emphasis on thinking (vv.17, 23); understanding

(v.18); ignorance (v.18); “learned the Messiah” (v.20). Note: it doesn’t say “learn about” Christ. It is possible to learn about Him and never be saved! A personal relationship, a fellowship growing every day... The living *Messiah*. His sheep hear His voice. Those who are not His sheep will not hear Him (Jn 10:3-5).

- 21] If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

“...the truth is in Jesus”: The better I understand the Word of God, the better I know the Son of God, for the entire Bible is a revelation of the Lord Jesus Christ. You have never seen a strong Christian that wasn’t a lover of the Word of God. Hence, our K-House mission statement: “to create, develop, and distribute materials to stimulate, encourage, and facilitate serious study of the Bible as the inerrant Word of God.”

Sanctify them through thy truth: thy word is truth.

John 17:17

I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life. No man cometh unto the Father but by me.

John 14:6

- 22] That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

“...conversation”: ἀναστροφή *anastrophe*: manner of life, conduct, behaviour, deportment. Put off the graveclothes! (Jn 11). Verses 22-24 are a summary of Rom 5-8. Paul also dealt with this in Ephesians 2:4-6 and Colossians 3.

- 23] And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

Romans 12:1,2. See *Be Ye Transformed* by my Nan for a practical guide on how to do this: “put on the Mind of Christ.” You can’t change your actions until you change your way of thinking...

- 24] And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

We have not only changed our “minds,” we have totally changed our citizenship. We are part of a new creation (2 Cor 5:17).

- 25] Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

“Wherefore”: Paul was never content to explain a principle and then

leave it. He always applied it to different areas of life that need its power. Paul now names five specific sins to be avoided...

Five Sins to Avoid: #1 Lying

Lying: ψευδοῦς *pseudos*, “that which is false.” Lying is a contrary-to-fact statement with the intent to deceive. Satan is the father of lies (Jn 8:44), and he wants us to believe that God is a liar (Gen 3:1).

Sad consequences inevitably come from lies. “Ye know that no lie is of the truth” (1 Jn 2:21). The first sin judged in the early church was the sin of lying (Acts 5:1-11). David said, “I said in my haste, All men are liars” (Ps 116:11). Dr. W. I. Carroll: “I’ve had a long time to think it over, and I still agree with David.”

Lying: No believer can be neutral in the battle of truth. [We’ll discuss this more in Chapter 6.] “We are members of one another.” The Christian is called to be punctilious, to be honest, even in the little things. We should never deceive a fellow believer. We are called to loyalty. We must never be unfaithful to a member of the body. We are to be fiduciaries. [More of this in Chapter 6.]

- 26] Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

#2 Anger

“Be angry and sin not”: a direct quotation from the LXX of Ps 4:14. “Anger is momentary insanity” (Horace). “A soft answer turneth away wrath, but grievous words stir up anger” (Solomon, Prov 15:1).

We are to stand in awe; tremble in the presence of God. We are to be angry at sin, but loving toward people. “Ye that love the Lord, hate evil” (Prov 97:10).

Anger is an emotional arousal caused by something that displeases us. There are times when it would be very wrong not to be angry. We should be angry at nothing but sin.

[It is difficult to practice a truly holy anger or righteous indignation because our emotions are tainted by sin. The moment self comes in, my anger is sinful.]

- 27] Neither give place to the devil.

“...the devil”: Anger cherished becomes malice; Satan works through a malicious spirit. Malice is anger that smolders. This same anger can suddenly burst forth, which we call wrath.

Anyone can become angry. But to be angry with the right person, to the right degree, at the right time, for the right purpose, and in the right way—this is not easy.

—Aristotle

#3 Stealing

Stealing: Satan is also a thief (Jn 10:10). He coaxed Eve to take the fruit that was forbidden. In work, a lazy Christian robs himself, others, and God. Every Jewish rabbi was taught a trade: “If you do not teach your son a trade, you teach him to be a thief.” [Where does our “welfare” system fit in?]

- 28] Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

“...steal no more”: The first Adam was a thief and cast out of Paradise. The Last Adam turned to a thief and said, “Today shalt thou be with Me in paradise” (Luke 23:43).

God instituted private property as one of the Ten Commandments. Socialism is social plunder and a denial of private property rights. Delinquent payables are also a form of stealing.

“...let him labour”: The men whom God called in the Scriptures were busy working: Moses was caring for sheep; Gideon was threshing wheat; David was tending his father’s sheep; the first four disciples were casting or mending nets; Jesus, apparently, was a carpenter.

- 29] Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

#4 Corrupt Communication

“Out of the abundance of the heart, the mouth speaketh” (Mt 12:34).

“Corrupt” = rotten fruit; worthless, bad, or rotten. “Our mouths are an open sepulchre” (Rom 3:13).

Corrupt Communication: We expect a change in speech when a person becomes a Christian. Trace the word “mouth” in the book of Romans... 3:14 vs. 10:9-10; 3:19 vs. 15:6, etc.

Remedy: Fill the heart with the love of Christ so that only truth and beauty can emerge. Never have to say “take this with a grain of salt...” but rather let your speech be...seasoned with salt” (Col 4:6; Cf. James 3).

- 30] And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

“...grieve not the Holy Spirit of God”: Grieve means “to give pain.” This is perhaps the most important part of this section: The Holy Spirit (also) loves you. You can’t grieve someone who doesn’t care... No one can unseal the work of the Holy Spirit, which continues to the day of redemption (Rom 8:22,23). He abides with you forever (Jn 14:16).

- 31] Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

#5 Bitterness

Bitterness leads to wrath... it hardens the heart. Bitterness is a settled hostility that poisons the whole inner man. The basic cause of bitterness is an unforgiving spirit. Learning how to forgive and forget is one of the secrets of a happy Christian life (Cf. Ps 133:1).

“Be put away from you” = aorist imperative, requiring a one-time, once-and-for-all decisive act.

- 32] And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ’s sake hath forgiven you.

“...forgiving one another”: a reflexive form. Putting the most charitable construction on apparent faults or faux pas. Forgiving rather than magnifying the faults of others. Remember, we have been forgiven of much more.

Justified hurts are the most dangerous; they are the hardest to let go. Practice graciousness rather than legalism. Courtesy is more than just attitude; it requires knowledge. We call it manners. The ignorance of common courtesy is often simply a lack of training.

Next Session

Study Chapter 5. The Bride of Christ.

The Epistle to the Ephesians Session 7

Ephesians 5 - 6:9

Our Wealth

Called by grace (Ch.1)
 Raised from the dead (2:1-10)
 Reconciled (2:11-22)
 Christ's victory over Satan
 (Ch. 3)

Our Walk

Walk worthy, in unity (4:1-16)
Put off graveclothes; walk in purity
(4:17-5:17)
 Walk in victory (6:10-24)

[Source: Warren Wiersbe, *Be Rich (Ephesians)*.]

- 1] Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

“...followers” = μιμηται *mimetes*, imitators. Paul’s basis for his exhortation here is God’s example of forgiveness in Eph 4:32. God in Christ has forgiven you; now be imitators of God in forgiving one another.

“...dear children”: “As beloved children.” Uphold the family name. God speaks of us the same way He spoke of Jesus Christ: “This is my beloved Son.” (Mt 3:17). The Father loves us as He loves His Son (Jn 17:23).

- 2] And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

“...sweetsmelling savour”: **Sweet-savor offerings** (Lev 1 - 3):

- **Burnt offering:** Pictures Christ’s complete devotion to God;
- **Meal offering:** His perfection of character;
- **Peace offering:** His making peace between sinners and God.

“...walk in love”: [Sin offerings and Trespass offerings (Lev 4-5). These picture Christ taking the place of the sinner and are not “sweet-savor” offerings. There is nothing beautiful about sin.] Another way to resemble the Lord: walk in love = give ourselves for others.

- 3] But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints;

Sexual Immorality

- **Fornication:** illicit intercourse among unmarried persons; any form of immorality (“pornography”—“whore-writing”—is derived from the Greek word *porneia*, *porneia*, translated, fornication.)

- **Uncleaness:** immoral acts, interests: books, pictures, other suggestive materials that feed the fires of passion.
- **Covetousness:** not just lust for money, but sensual desire; insatiable greed to satisfy one’s appetite outside the bounds of marriage (Ex 20:17).

Covetousness and fornication are but different expressions of the same basic weakness of fallen nature: uncontrolled appetite. It should not be made light of or discussed in any way that makes light of their sinful and shameful character. We are called to be *separate*.

- 4] Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.

Speech should be free from every trace of:

- **Filthiness:** dirty stories, suggestive jokes, double entendres; all forms of obscenity and indecency.
- **Foolish talking:** empty, vapid conversation. Silliness.
- **Jesting:** (A translation of a word meaning “able to turn easily.”)

“...not convenient”: Wit is a blessing, but when used with a base motive or style, it is a curse. Jests that are inconvenient (out of place) can pollute any conversation. Coarse jokes, or talk with unsavory hidden meanings, are to be avoided.

We should not joke about sin. This exhortation by Paul reminds us of the OT prohibition of mentioning even the names of the gods of the heathen and of speaking of their manner of worship (Ex 23:13; Deut 12:30; Ps 16:4).

- 5] For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

No room for doubt about God’s attitude toward immorality: they have no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. These are the same three classes of offenders as in v.3: whoremongers, unclean persons, and covetous men.

- Men call immorality a sickness; God calls it sin.
- Men condone it: God condemns it.
- Man’s answer is psychoanalysis; God’s answer is regeneration. The human heart is *incurable*: it must be replaced (Jer 17:9).

Idolatry

“...covetous man, who is an idolater”: A covetous person is an *idolator*:

- 1) False concept: God approves sensual greed;
- 2) Puts person's own will above the Will of God;
- 3) Worship of the creature rather than the Creator (Rom 1:25).

Paul makes it clear that people who deliberately and persistently live in sin will *not* share in God's kingdom “They who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God” (Gal 5:2, literal). Sin in the life of a believer is different from sin in the life of an unsaved person: it's *worse!*

The Christian demonstrates the reality of his faith by an obedient life. Many professors are not possessors.

- 6] Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience.

- God's attitude toward fornication: 24,000 slain (Num 25:1-9);
- God's attitude toward homosexuality: Sodom and Gomorrah (Gen 19:24, 28);
- Also, venereal disease; AIDS, etc. Personality (Rom 1:27); eternal judgment (Heb 13:4; Rev 21:8).

- 7] Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

Believers are warned to have no part in such behavior; to do so is to dishonor the name of Christ; to wreck other lives; to ruin one's own testimony; and, to invite retribution (2 Cor 6:14 - 7:1).

- 8] For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

To enforce the imperative of v.7, Paul now engages a brief discourse on light and darkness: v. 8-14.

- 9] (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

- **Goodness:** inclusive term for all moral excellence;
- **Righteousness:** integrity in all dealings with God and Men;
- **Truth:** honesty, equity, and reality. When the word and the deed become one (Mt 5:16; Jn 3:20-21).

- 10] Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

Put every thought and action to the test: what does the Lord think about this? Our conversation, our standard of living, our clothes, books, business, pleasures, furniture, friendships, vacations, automobiles, sports...

- 11] And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them.

- 12] For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

“What fruit had ye then in those things whereof ye are now ashamed? For the end there of is death” (Rom 6:21).

“Men *agapao* darkness rather than light...” (Jn 3:19). Light exposes what is wrong. Could an artist paint a true picture in darkness?

- 13] But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light.

Believing wives to win unbelieving husbands (1 Pet 3:1).

- 14] Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

This is a paraphrase of Isa 60:1 (Cf. Rom 13:11-13; 1 Thess 5:1-11). “Wake up!” *Carpe diem!* “Seize the day!” Make the most of opportunities for our King!

- 15] See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

“Walk”: 7X. “...circumspectly” comes from two Latin words which mean “looking around.” The Greek word ἀκριβως *akribos*, carries the idea of precision and accuracy.

“See that you walk carefully, with exactness” is the meaning. The opposite would be walking carelessly and without proper guidance and forethought.

We should not leave the Christian life to chance; we must make wise decisions and seek to do the will of God.

[Compare with the youth of today. The tragic lack of love of learning and the driftiness seems a characteristic of our times.]

“Luck is when Opportunity meets Preparation.” “Opportunity” comes from the Latin *a means* “toward the port.” It suggests a ship taking advantage of the wind and tide to arrive safely in the harbor.

To him who has no course plotted, no wind is favorable.

—Mariner’s proverb

It is not unchristian to plan. A planned life is better able to deal with unexpected events.

Planning involves the futurity of today’s decisions.

—Peter Drucker

- 16] Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

So teach us to number our days, that we may apply our hearts unto wisdom.

Psalm 90:12

Fully exploit opportunities. Paul was alluding to the Roman persecutions which were beginning. There may, indeed, be a parallel in our own day as we become increasingly “politically incorrect.”

- 17] Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

“...what the will of the Lord is”: ...knowing Him (Rom 12:1, 2). Understanding: by means of prayer, meditation, and worship. Also, gathering the facts, weighing them, and praying for wisdom (James 1:5). The greatest adventure of all is to discover God’s purpose for *your* life: through...His Word (Col 1:9-10)...His Spirit in our hearts (Col 3:15)...His working in our circumstances (Rom 8:28).

- 18] And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

“...be not drunk with wine”: Commanded—the result of obedience.

Wine: mentioned in the Bible as recommended medicine (Prov 31:6; 1 Tim 5:23); our Lord provided it at Cana (Jn 2:1-11).

Forbidden when it leads to excess (Prov 23:29-35); when it become habit forming (1 Cor 6:12b); when it offends another believer (Rom 14:13; 1 Cor 8:9); and when there is any doubt (Rom 14:23).

“...be filled” = verb form: imperative mood; a command; not optional. Present tense: “keep on being filled”; an experience we should every day and not just on special occasions. Passive voice: we do not fill ourselves, but permit the Spirit to fill us.

We do not use the Holy Spirit: He uses us. “Filled” means *controlled by* (Lk 4:28; Acts 13:45).

Ministries of the Spirit

- **Baptism of the Spirit:** Incorporates the believer into the Body of Christ (1 Cor 12:13).
- **Indwelling:** Takes up residence in the body of the Christian and empowers him for holiness, worship, and service (Jn 14:16).
- **Anointing:** The Spirit Himself is the anointing who teaches the child of God the things of the Lord (1 Jn 2:27).
- **Earnest & Seal:** Guarantees the inheritance for the saint and guarantees the saint for the inheritance (Eph 1:13-14).
- **Continuous:** “Be ye *being filled* with the Spirit.” Confess and put away sin (1 Jn 1:5-9).

Yield yourselves completely (Rom 12:1-2). Let His Word dwell in us richly (Col 3:16). Be emptied of self (Gal 2:20). It is interesting that at Pentecost, they were accused of “being drunk” (Acts 2:13-15). Self control is a fruit of the Spirit (Gal 5:23; 1 Cor 14:32). To fill a cup with a new ingredient, it must first be emptied of the old. To be filled with *Him*, we must first be emptied of *us*. [For more on this critical subject, see *The Spiritual Gifts*, and *The Way of Agape*, and its sequel, *Be Ye Transformed*.]

- 19] Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

Speak to one another in psalms, hymns, spiritual songs; inward joy and praise. Christian joy is a deep experience of adequacy and confidence in spite of the circumstances around us (Phil 4:11).

- 20] Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

“Giving thanks always”: Thanksgiving is not occasional; it’s *continual*. In **all** things. Remember, Paul was a prisoner when he wrote those words (Eph 1:16; 5:4, 20; Col 1:3, 12; 2:7; 3:17; 4:2; Phil 1:3). Gratitude fills the house with fragrance. Gratitude comes from the same root word as grace.

- 21] Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

“Submitting yourselves one to another”: We are to esteem others “more important than ourselves” (Phil 3:1-4; Rom 12:10). Remember, who

washed their feet (John 13)? Other examples:

- Boldness in rebuking sin Acts 12:9-12
- In testifying for the Lord Acts 4:8-12, 31; 13:52-14:3
- Power for service Acts 1:8; 6:3,8; 11:24
- Generosity, not selfishness Acts 4:31-32
- Exaltation of Christ Acts 9:17, 20
- of God Acts 2:4, 11; 10:44, 46

Submission (Ephesians 5:22 - 6:9)

Specific areas for submission in the Will of God:

- Wives should be subject to their husbands;
- Children should be subject to their parents;
- Servants should be subject to their masters, or employers).

Model Marriages (and Marriages as Models)

22] Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

“...as unto the Lord”: God has ordained government; also, in the home. In submitting to the husband, the wife is submitting to the Lord (Cf. 1 Cor 11:3; Col 3:18; Titus 2:5; 1 Pet 3:1ff).

Alternatives: Eve usurped the place of Adam and introduced sin into the human race. False cults are frequently started by women. Women who leave their appointed sphere can wreck a local church, break up a marriage, and destroy a home. Contrast: There is nothing more attractive than a woman fulfilling the role that God has assigned her (Prov 31:10-31).

Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. For Adam was first formed, then Eve. And Adam was not deceived, but the woman being deceived was in the transgression.

1 Timothy 2:11-14

23] For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body.

He is her head. Headship is not dictatorship. He loves, leads, guides, provides, protects, and cares for her.

24] Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

“...the church is subject unto Christ”: The Bride of Christ is not an equal partner; does not seek to nullify the role that God has ordained [vs. “Women’s Lib...”].

This is another reason that a Christian must not become “unequally yoked together” with an unbeliever (2 Cor 6:14-18). It is wrong for a believer to marry an unbeliever, but it is also wrong for two Christians to marry *out of the will of God*. It is sometimes God’s will for a Christian to remain single (Mt 19:12; 1 Cor 7:7-9).

25] Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

“...gave Himself for it”: [Paul had much more to say to Christian husbands than to the wives!] The husband will love his wife sacrificially (v.25), sanctifying her (v.26) and satisfying her (v.28-30). No wife would mind being subject to a husband who loves her as Christ loves the church.

26] That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word,

“Already ye are clean because of the Word...” (Jn 15:3). “Sanctify them through thy Truth...” (Jn 17:17).

27] That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Sanctify means “to set apart.” The wife is to be “set apart.” Any interference with this God-given arrangement is sin.

28] So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself.

“Own” (6X) in vv.22-23: God permitted polygamy in the OT but never approved it.

29] For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

Love is the nourishment of the home. The Spirit of God uses the Word of God to work in our lives. For a parallel passage to the Ephesians passage, see Col 3:16-25.

30] For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones.

31] For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh.

This passage quotes Gen 2:24 (quoted 3X in NT: Mt 19:5,6; Mk 10:8; 1 Cor 6:16) and involves “leaving” as well as “cleaving.” A man’s relationship to parents is superseded by a higher loyalty: to his wife. This should eliminate in-law troubles on the one hand; marital strife on the other.

32] This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

“...a great mystery”: Just about the time you think you know where Paul is heading, he seems to throw us a curve: *He reverses the parallelism* and focuses on the Church, using the marriage as a model to communicate His highest and most intimate truths!

The Mystical Basis of Marriage

- 1) **Biological Basis:** for procreation, etc.
- 2) **Psychological Basis:** a union to meet life’s challenges, joys, sorrows, etc.
- 3) **Sociological Basis:** the family unit as the primary element of the tribe, community, nation, etc.
- 4) **Supernatural/Spiritual Basis:** God’s ordained unit through which He communicates His most significant truths.

Supernatural/Spiritual Basis

- **Preeminence:** Christ is the Head of the Church (Eph 1:22; 4:15; 5:23; Col 1:18; 2:19).
- **Preciousness** of the His People (Eph 5:25):
 - “Apple of His Eye” (Deut 32:10);
 - Crown of Glory (Isa 62:3);
 - Stones of crown, ensign (Zech 9:16);
 - Jewels (Mal 3:17).
- **Love for the Church:** Eph 1:15; Phil 4:1; 1 Thess 2:8; 1 Pet 1:22; 1 Jn 5:2. Church = “Bride”: Isa 62:5; 2 Cor 11:2; Rev. 21:2; 22:17.

Marriage as Prophetic Types

Authority (Hosea 12:10):

- 1) **Abraham & Isaac** Gen 22 & 24
 - Isaac edited out of record Gen 24:62
 - Isaac & Rebecca Gen 24
 - Unseen until Well of *Lahai-Roi*.

2) Ruth & Boaz:

- Boaz = Goel, Kinsman-Redeemer;
- Ruth = Gentile Bride;
- Naomi = Israel (Redemption of the Land, etc.)

3) Israel as “wife of YHWH” (Hos 2:14-23)

- Harlot (Ezek 16:35)
- “Widowed” (Lam 1:1; Isa 54:4)
- Mystery Babylon “I am no widow” (Rev 18:7)

4) Adam as a type of Christ (Rom 5:14)

vs. Christ = “Last Adam” 1 Cor 15:45)

- Adam was not deceived (1 Tim 2:14) vs. “Gal, are *you* in a lot of trouble...”
 - Adam loved Eve so much as to *knowingly choose* to share her in her destiny! ...to be made sin for her (2 Cor 5:21) ...without which, there would have been no redeemer, no “Seed of the Woman.”
- [*Do you love your wife that much?*]

Gentile Brides as Types

- | | |
|----------|----------|
| – Adam | Eve |
| – Isaac | Rebekah |
| – Joseph | Asenath |
| – Moses | Zipporah |
| – Salmon | Rahab |
| – Boaz | Ruth |

...all have no death recorded!

Ancient Jewish Marriage

- **Shiddukhin** (engagement: arranged by the father!)
- **Ketubah** (the covenant, or agreement). Bridegroom absent to build the house (Jn 14:2, 3). ...taken in the night...Marriage!
- **Huppah** (wedding ceremony); seven-day celebration. Concerning the mystical union of the Body of Christ; Cf. 5:31; Eph 2:15; Jn 17; et al.

[Source: Missler, Chuck, & Young, Woody, *Countdown to Eternity*, Joy Pub., 1992, pp.175-191.]

33] Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

Only two rules, one for each: **Wife:** Let your husband be in charge. **Husband:** Love your wife supremely. It’s so simple. Why don’t we do it?

Parents & Children; Employers & Employees Ephesians 6:1-9

Broken Families

- National policies contribute to family instability and breakup.
- Divorce is the public acknowledgment of failure. It has been a problem since the 1960s, *after the Supreme Court outlawed mentioning God in schools*.
- Divorce: 10/1000; then sudden growth to (1979) 23/1000.
- Since 1974: exceeds death as leading cause of family breakup.
- 1990: 1/4 women had a child unmarried. Half of all marriages now end in divorce. Remarried couples are more likely to break up than couples in first marriages (56%).
- One in four children in the 1990s entered a stepfamily.
- Hollywood celebrates divorce and unwed motherhood.
- Federal policy celebrates social and sexual variance.
- Postwar generation: 80% grew up in a family with two biological parents who were married to each other. By 1980, less than 50% spend their entire childhood in an intact family.
- An increasing number of children will experience family breakup two or even three times during childhood.
- Scientific evidence demonstrates that children in disrupted families do worse than those of intact families: they are 6X more likely to be poor; 22% of one-parent families will experience poverty during childhood for 7 years or more, vs 2% of children in two-parent families.

—Barbara Dafoe Whitehead, *Atlantic Monthly*, April 1993

Children of single parent families are three times as likely to have emotional and behavioral problems; they are more likely to drop out of high school, get pregnant as teenagers, abuse drugs, and be in trouble with the law.

They are also higher risk for physical or sexual abuse; less likely to be successful as adults: esp. in love, and in work; they have a harder time achieving intimacy in a relationship, forming a stable marriage, or even holding a steady job. The teen suicide rate has tripled; juvenile crime has increased and become more violent; school performance has continued to decline.

—National Center for Health Statistics, 1988

The “Me” Generation

Fewer than half of all adult Americans today regard the idea of sacrifice for others as a positive moral value. The adult quest for freedom, independence, and choice in family relationships conflicts with a child’s developmental needs for stability, constancy, harmony, and permanence in family life.

Welfare dependency tends to be passed on from one generation to the next. Daughters of single parents are 53% more likely to marry as teenagers; 111% more likely to have children as teenagers; 164% more likely to have premarital birth; and 92% more likely to dissolve their own marriages.

Each divorce is the death of a small civilization. It inflicts wounds that never heal. Survey after survey demonstrates that Americans are less inclined than they were a generation ago to value sexual fidelity, lifelong marriage, and parenthood as worthwhile personal goals.

- 1] Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right.

Rebellious youth: “Where did we go wrong?” “We had children.”

Obedience “in the Lord” (Col 3:20). Prophetic implications (Rom 1:29, 30; 2 Tim 3:1). In Israel, rule by the children was an indicator of degeneracy (Isa 3:4, 12).

- 2] Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;)

“...commandment”: Ex 20:12; Deut 5:16: We are not “under the Law” (Gal 3:13; 5:1), but the righteousness of the law is still a revelation of the holiness of God; and the Holy Spirit enables us to practice that righteousness in our daily lives (Rom 8:1-4).

An Israelite who persistently disobeyed his parents was not privileged to enjoy a long, stable life in the land of Israel. A clear example of this was Eli’s sons Hophni and Phinehas (1 Sam 4:11).

- 3] That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth.

Which is in the child’s best interest... Obedience brings blessing; they will escape much of the sin, danger, etc. Sin always robs us; obedience always enriches us. Disobedience to parents is rebellion against God.

- 4] And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

“...ye fathers”: *Fathers* are given the responsibility for government of the home... No unreasonable demands, undue harshness, constant nagging...rather:

- Chastening: discipline, correction;
- Admonition: warning, rebuke, reproof;
- Subduing self-will = renewing and saving a soul vs. indulgence which makes spiritual growth extremely difficult.

Partiality is forbidden (Deut 21:15-17): David pampered Absalom... Eli failed to discipline his sons... Jacob showed favoritism to Joseph... all with tragic results.

- “The Board of education applied to the seat of learning...”
- The opposite of “provoke” is “encourage.”
- Keeping promises: Not just physical needs, but a balanced growth intellectually, physically, socially, as well as spiritually.
- Nowhere in the Bible is the training of children assigned to agencies outside the home (vs. The UN “Rights of the Child”...!).

Employer/Employee Relationships

Notes on Slavery: Almost half of over 100 million people of the Roman Empire were slaves. The NT does not condemn slavery as such. Every true believer is a *doulos* of Christ (Cf. “Coeur d’Alene”).

Moral reformation vs. forcible revolution. The NT has more to say to slaves than it has to kings. “Not (m)any wise... mighty...noble...are called” (Cor 1:26).

Paul was careful not to confuse the social system with the spiritual order within the Church (1 Cor 7:20-24). Note: Feudal peasants owed their land owners 25% of the fruits of their labors. *Today, we work until July before we earn for ourselves: we pay about 60% of our income in our federal, state, and other taxes!* We, too, must not get our kingdoms confused. Yet, our stewardship of our mandate for a representative government is one we will be held accountable for. Ballots, not bullets...

The worst kind of slavery—more pernicious than that of the Roman Empire—is prevalent today: the enslavement of the mind through the lies and deception of our schools, media, et al. Only the power of the Gospel can free us from that kind of slavery (Jn 8:36).

- 5] Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ;

Obedience to “masters according to the flesh”; i.e., physical and mental; *not* spiritual or of the conscience.

“...in singleness of heart”: not just 60 minutes of each hour paid, but as a *fiduciary*.

“...as unto Christ”: no distinction between secular and “sacred.”

Basic Vocabulary

- **Faithful:** Firmly adhering to duty; of true fidelity; loyal; true to allegiance; constant in the performance of duties or services; true to one’s word; honest; *loyal*.

Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful.

1 Corinthians 4:2

- **Fiduciary:** The relation existing when one person justifiably reposes confidence, faith, and reliance in another whose aid, advice, and protection is sought in some matter; the relation existing when good conscience requires one to act at all times for the sole benefit and interests of another with loyalty to those interests; the relation by law existing between certain classes of persons (as confidential advisors and the one advised; executors or administrators and legatees or heirs; corporate directors or officers).

The Requirements of a Fiduciary

Many forms of conduct permissible in a workaday world for those acting at arm’s length, are forbidden to those bound by fiduciary ties. A trustee is held to something stricter than the morals of the marketplace. Not honesty alone, but the punctilio of an honor the most sensitive, is then the standard of behavior. As to this there has developed a tradition that is unbending and inveterate. Uncompromising rigidity has been the attitude of the courts of equity when petitioned to undermine the rule of undivided loyalty by the “disintegrating erosion” of particular exceptions...Only thus has the level of conduct for fiduciaries been kept at a level higher than that trodden by the crowd.

Justice Cardozo, Meinhard v. Salmon

A director of a corporation is in the position of a fiduciary. He will not be permitted improperly to profit at the expense of his corporation. Undivided

loyalty will ever be insisted upon. Personal gain will be denied to a director when it comes because he has taken a position adverse to or in conflict with the best interests of his corporation. The fiduciary relationship imposes a duty to act in accordance with the highest standards which a man of the finest sense of honor might impose upon himself... While there is a lofty moral ideal implicit in this rule, it actually accomplishes a practical beneficent purpose. It recognizes the frailty of human nature; it realizes that where a man's immediate fortunes are concerned he may sometimes be subject to a blindness often intuitive and compulsive. This rule is designed on the one hand to prevent clouded conception of fidelity and a moral indifference that blurs the vision, and on other hand, to stimulate the most luminous critical sense and the finest exercise of judgment uncontaminated by the dross of prejudice, of divided allegiance, or of self-interest.

Justice Shientag, Litwin v. Allen

- 6] Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart;

“...with eyeservice”: Diligence only when the boss is looking? Slacking off when the boss is away is a form of dishonesty. “God loves us so much that He can’t take His eyes off of us!”

- 7] With good will doing service, as unto the Lord, and not to men:

“...as unto the Lord”: A Christian can perform *any* good work as a ministry to Christ... from the heart. *Being* a witness; vs. “Witnessing.” (Are you an “Undercover Christian”?). What if the master is overbearing, abusive, unreasonable? “As unto the Lord”(!)

- 8] Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

Your wages are only temporal. Our *real* rewards are from Him.

An old missionary returning from many years of sacrificial service in Africa; on the same ship with President Theodore Roosevelt, returning from a big game hunt in Africa. When the ship docked, great crowds, press, et al., greeted the President. The old missionary and his wife walked off unnoticed and made their way to a cheap hotel.

“It doesn’t seem right! We gave our lives in Africa to win souls to Christ and when we arrive home there’s nobody to meet us. The president shoots some animals and receives a royal welcome!” the missionary complained.

“Because we aren’t home yet,” the wife noted.

- 9] And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

Masters should be fair, kind, and honest. “Moreover it is required in stewards, that a man be found faithful” (1 Cor 4:2). Who was our ultimate fiduciary? Christ!

Glossary For Service

- **Conspiracy:** A planning and acting together secretly, especially for an unlawful or harmful purpose.
- **Faithful:** Firmly adhering to duty; of true fidelity; loyal; true to allegiance; constant in the performance of duties or services; true to one’s word; honest; loyal.
- **Fiduciary:** The relation existing when one person justifiably reposes confidence, faith, and reliance in another whose aid, advice, and protection is sought in some matter; the relation existing when good conscience requires one to act at all times for the sole benefit and interests of another with loyalty to those interests; the relation by law existing between certain classes of persons (as confidential advisors and the one advised; executors or administrators and legatees or heirs...corporate directors or officers...).
- **Fraud:** Intentional deception to cause a person to give up property or some lawful right.
- **Embezzlement:** Theft or the act of fraudulently appropriating money or goods entrusted to one’s care and management.
- **Larceny:** Theft; the act of taking and carrying away the goods or personal property of another without his consent and with the intention of depriving him of it.
- **Misfeasance:** Wrongdoing; a misdeed or trespass; specifically, the doing of a lawful act in an unlawful manner so that there is an infringement on the rights of another or others.
- **Malfeasance:** Evil doing; ill conduct, the commission of some act which is positively unlawful; Wrongful conduct that affects, interrupts or interferes with the performance of official duties.
- **Nonfeasance:** A failure to perform a duty; an omission of an act which a person ought to do.

Next Session

Our Desperate Warfare: We are presently engaged in warfare. Did you realize that? Are you equipped and prepared? Or are you a sitting duck? Study the Armor of God (Eph 6:10-18) and Paul’s closing comments. [Supplemental study: Daniel 10.]

The Epistle to the Ephesians Session 8

The Armor of God: Ephesians 6:10-24

Our Desperate Warfare

We are presently engaged in warfare. Did you realize that? Are you equipped and prepared? Or are you a sitting duck?

Final Session Outline

- **The Armor of God:** **Eph 6:10-18**
 - Our Predicament
 - Strategic Assessment
 - Paul’s Armament List
 - Girded with Truth
 - Breastplate of Righteousness
 - Preparation of the Gospel
 - The Shield of Faith
 - The Helmet of Salvation
 - The Sword of the Spirit
 - The Heavy Artillery
- **Paul’s closing comments** **Eph 6:19-24**

“Reality” Reexamined

For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

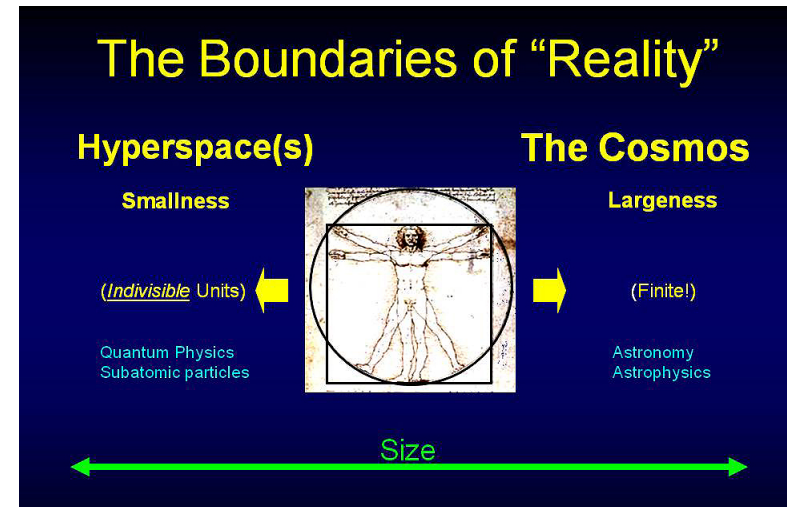
Ephesians 6:12

Ranks of (fallen) angels and demons...

Model of an Atom

The model of a hydrogen atom shows that the “solid” nucleus is 10^{-13} cm. in diameter, and the atom as a whole (made up of the “empty space” of the electron cloud) is 10^{-8} cm. in diameter, a volumetric ratio of $1:10^{15}$, the same ratio as one second in 30 million years. Another way to look at it is that the nucleus is 100,000 times smaller than atom: a pinhead vs. 100 meters: a pinhead in a football field!

So, how solid is this podium? Is it 1) solid or 2) empty space? *Conjecture (2) is more descriptive than (1) by the same ratio: One second/ 30 million years!*



Our three-dimensional reality is just a “shadow of a larger reality” (*Scientific American*, June 2005, p.57-63). Isn’t that what the Bible has said all along? (Heb 11:3; 1 Cor 15:44-49)

Daniel 10:1-14 — A Glimpse of the Dark Side

- 1] In the third year of Cyrus king of Persia a thing was revealed unto Daniel, whose name was called Belteshazzar; and the thing was true, but the time appointed was long: and he understood the thing, and had understanding of the vision.

The exiles had returned from Babylon and had begun rebuilding the temple. Daniel still in Babylon; perhaps he had not returned with the exiles because of his age, being over 80 years old.

- 2] In those days I Daniel was mourning three full weeks.
- 3] I ate no pleasant bread, neither came flesh nor wine in my mouth, neither did I anoint myself at all, till three whole weeks were fulfilled.
- 4] And in the four and twentieth day of the first month, as I was by the side of the great river, which is Hiddekel;
- 5] Then I lifted up mine eyes, and looked, and behold a certain man clothed in linen, whose loins were girded with fine gold of Uphaz:
- 6] His body also was like the beryl, and his face as the appearance of lightning, and his eyes as lamps of fire, and his arms and his feet like in colour to polished brass, and the voice of his words like the voice of a multitude.

“Angel” = *angelos*, military messenger. A unique form of created being; not preexistent, but with formidable capabilities.

- 7] And I Daniel alone saw the vision: for the men that were with me saw not the vision; but a great quaking fell upon them, so that they fled to hide themselves.
- 8] Therefore I was left alone, and saw this great vision, and there remained no strength in me: for my comeliness was turned in me into corruption, and I retained no strength.
- 9] Yet heard I the voice of his words: and when I heard the voice of his words, then was I in a deep sleep on my face, and my face toward the ground.
- 10] And, behold, an hand touched me, which set me upon my knees and upon the palms of my hands.
- 11] And he said unto me, O Daniel, a man greatly beloved, understand the words that I speak unto thee, and stand upright: for unto thee am I now sent. And when he had spoken this word unto me, I stood trembling.
- 12] Then said he unto me, Fear not, Daniel: for from the first day that thou didst set thine heart to understand, and to chasten thyself before thy God, thy words were heard, and I am come for thy words.
- 13] But the prince of the kingdom of Persia withstood me one and twenty days: but, lo, Michael, one of the chief princes, came to help me; and I remained there with the kings of Persia.
- 14] Now I am come to make thee understand what shall befall thy people in the latter days: for yet the vision is for many days.

Michael

“...Michael one of the chief princes”: Eph 6:11, Dan 10:13, 21; 12:1; Jude 9; Rev 12:7.

“...came to help me”: Strength: Ex 4:10-12; Isa 6:6,7. Michael fights Satan himself (Jude 9). Cf. Voice of Archangel (1 Thess 4:16). Why was Moses’ body needed? (Mt 17; Rev 11). [Role of fasting?]

- 15] And when he had spoken such words unto me, I set my face toward the ground, and I became dumb.
- 16] And, behold, one like the similitude of the sons of men touched my lips: then I opened my mouth, and spake, and said unto him that stood before me, O my lord, by the vision my sorrows are turned upon me, and I have retained no strength.
- 17] For how can the servant of this my lord talk with this my lord? for as for me, straightway there remained no strength in me, neither is there breath left in me.
- 18] Then there came again and touched me one like the appearance of a man, and he strengthened me,
- 19] And said, O man greatly beloved, fear not: peace be unto thee, be strong, yea, be strong. And when he had spoken unto me, I was strengthened, and said, Let my lord speak; for thou hast strengthened me.
- 20] Then said he, Knowest thou wherefore I come unto thee? and now will I return to fight with the prince of Persia: and when I am gone forth, lo, the prince of Grecia shall come.
- 21] But I will shew thee that which is noted in the scripture of truth: and there is none that holdeth with me in these things, but Michael your prince.

Daniel 10: A Glimpse of the Dark Side

Daniel fasts for 21 days. An Angel is sent, but is withstood for 21 days by “The Prince of the Kingdom of Persia” until assisted by “Michael, the Chief Prince.” After giving Daniel the subsequent vision (Chapters 11 & 12) he will then have to deal with “The Prince of the Power of Greece.”

Satan: His Origin, Agenda, and Destiny

When did he fall? ...and 1/3 of the angels with him...

The Origin and Career of Satan

Satan’s origin and career are addressed indirectly: Gen 3:14,15; Isa 14:12-20; Mt 16:23. He is an accuser (Job 1—Satan had access!) and a tempter (Lk 4:1-13).

The Woman and Man-Child: Revelation 12

- **Woman (Israel)**
 - with sun, moon, 12 stars
 - With child
- **Red Dragon (Serpent, Devil, Satan)**
 - 7 heads, 10 horns, 7 crowns
 - To devour Man-child when born
- **Man-Child (Kinsman-Redeemer)**
 - To rule all nations with rod of iron
 - Caught up to God and His throne
 - Woman flees into wilderness (1260 days)
- **Michael and His Angels**
 - Fights Dragon and his angels
- **Dragon cast to earth**
 - Persecutes the Woman (3½ years)

Satan’s Whereabouts

God expelled him **from the mount of God** (heaven—Ezek 28:16,14). Satan was cast from God’s government in heaven (Lk 10:18) but was still allowed access to God (Job 1:6-12; Zech 3:1-2). In the Tribulation, Satan will be cast from heaven and restricted to the earth (Rev 12:7-13). During the Millennium he will be in the bottomless pit (Rev 20:1-3). After his brief release at the end of the Millennium (Rev 20:7-9), he will be cast into the lake of fire forever (Rev 20:10).

The Stratagems of Satan

- Corruption of Adam's line Gen 6
- Abraham's seed Gen 12, 20
- Famine Gen 50
- Destruction of male line Ex 1
- Pharaoh's pursuit Ex 14
- The populating of Canaan Gen 15
- Against David's line 2 Sam 7

Attacks on David's Line

- Jehoram kills his brothers 2 Chr 21
- Arabians slew all (but Ahaziah)
- Athaliah kills all (but Joash) 2 Chr 22
- Hezekiah assaulted, etc. Isa 36, 38
- Haman's attempts Est 3

New Testament Stratagems

- Joseph's fears: Mt 1
 - Herod's attempts: Mt 2
 - At Nazareth: Lk 4
 - 2 storms on the Sea: Mk 4; Lk 8
 - The Cross
 - Summary: Rev 12
- ...and he's still not through!

Satan's Titles

- The Prince of This World (Jn 12:31)
- The Prince of the Power of the Air (Eph 2:2)
- Head of the World-Rulers of Darkness (Eph 6:1)
- The God of This Age (2 Cor 4:4)

Our Present Predicament

America is in moral free fall. We are victims of *spiritual* warfare. We have a media masking truth. We have courts perverting justice. We have schools deliberately "dumbing down" our youth. We have replaced our traditional heritage with "multiculturalism," revisionism, and value relativism. Traditional patriotism is now relegated as a form of idol worship. Our government is now the *purveyor* of immorality.

Why are we surprised? Governments have always loved crises: they provide the rationale for increasing budgets and bureaucracies, and subjugating the population. Most new dictators create external crises to consolidate their internal powers. In our country, they long ago learned that social crises serve as well as military ones. There is one insight that supplies a key missing link: *immorality* results in social crises. Is it any surprise to learn that governments have an enormous incentive to promote immorality?!

The Armor of God: Ephesians 6:10-18

Our Imperative

10] Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

- Imperative Mood: *This is a command*
- Present Tense: *Be continually strong*
- Passive Voice: *You receive the action*
- κράτει *kratei*, "power that overcomes resistance," (as used in Christ's miracles)
- ἰσχύος *ischyos* of God's inherent strength:

"Allow yourself to be continually made strong by the Lord in the strength of His might."

11] Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

The form of the Greek imperative *put on* indicates that believers are responsible for putting on God's (not their) full armor πανοπλίαν *panoplian*. Be *completely* armed (also in v.13) *before* the battle begins: ...you are already on enemy turf!

12] For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

Against ranks of (fallen) angels and demons...

A Glimpse of Unseen Warfare: 2 Kings 6:8-17

8] Then the king of Syria warred against Israel, and took counsel with his servants, saying, In such and such a place shall be my camp.

9] And the man of God sent unto the king of Israel, saying, Beware that thou pass not such a place; for thither the Syrians are come down.

- 10] And the king of Israel sent to the place which the man of God told him and warned him of, and saved himself there, not once nor twice.
- 11] Therefore the heart of the king of Syria was sore troubled for this thing; and he called his servants, and said unto them, Will ye not shew me which of us is for the king of Israel?
- 12] And one of his servants said, None, my lord, O king: but Elisha, the prophet that is in Israel, telleth the king of Israel the words that thou speakest in thy bedchamber.
- 13] And he said, Go and spy where he is, that I may send and fetch him. And it was told him, saying, Behold, he is in Dothan.
- 14] Therefore sent he thither horses, and chariots, and a great host: and they came by night, and compassed the city about.
- 15] And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do?
- 16] And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them.
- 17] And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha.

Ephesians 6

- 13] Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

“...whole armour”: Be *completely* armed (also in v.13).
“...withstand”: ἀνθίστημι *anthistemnai*, “to withstand or stand against” (cf. James 4:7; 1 Pet 5:9).

Paul’s Armament List

Paul’s detailed description of the armor may stem from being chained to a Roman soldier while in prison awaiting trial (Acts 28:16, 20). Most assume that the chains were keep Paul from escaping. From Paul’s point of view, it was so that the *soldier* could not get away! Can you imagine being chained to Paul for entire shift? Paul won most of them to Christ! (Phil 4:21-22). Actually, the Holy Spirit is consistent in His use of idioms: these same elements are alluded to in the Old Testament (Cf. Isa 59:16,17).

- 14] Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

“...having your loins girt about with truth”: “What is Truth?” the famed Roman procurator asked cynically. Truth is *our most precious treasure* to be coveted. Truth is the key to success, fulfillment, victory, or achiev-

ing any worthwhile goal. The pursuit of truth is our greatest challenge in any of our endeavors. In a cultural war, truth is the first casualty. Yet, determining the nature of reality in our world is the cornerstone of our living.

“...belt of truth”: The Roman belt was 6-8 in wide; all the body armor and weapons were attached to it. One definition of truth: when the Word and Deed become one. The ultimate truth is the fulfillment of God’s promises in His Messiah (Jn 14:6). It was prophesied of Christ that righteousness should be the girdle of his loins and faithfulness the girdle of his reins (Isa 11:5).

“...having on the breastplate of righteousness”: What is your most important stewardship? *Your heart!* The Roman breastplate was bronze, backed with leather. The breastplate secured the vitals.

The breastplate covered *the heart* (Rom 6:13; 14:17; Isa 59:17; James 4:7). *A blow through this was usually decisive.*

- 15] And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

“...feet shod”: Shoes, or greaves (often of brass or the like), were part of the military armor. The use of them was to defend the feet against the gall-traps, and obstructions (Cf. 1 Sam 17:6). (And when you are fighting with swords, your first slip is usually your last! Anyone who has trained in boxing, wrestling, or hand-to-hand combat knows the need for a sure footing. At the Naval Academy sessions, I quickly learned this the hard way!)

“...preparation of the gospel of peace”: Preparation is the prerequisite to success in any endeavor.

- 16] Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

“...the shield of faith”: The Roman shield was 4 ft. x 2½ ft., overlaid with linen and leather, to absorb fiery arrows. The integrity of the shield was essential. The time to plug any holes was *before* the battle. Diligence was the key to proper maintenance. The time to plug any holes in ones faith is NOW. Any doubts, any serious questions, should be pursued with diligence.

- 17] And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God:

“...the helmet of salvation”: The helmet provided protection for the head. The believer knows ultimate victory is sure. His *assurance* is a critical blessing. One of the most important aspects of our defense against Satan’s most vicious attacks is our firm faith in eternal security—sealed and guaranteed by the Holy Spirit (Rom 8:31-39).

...nevertheless I am not ashamed: for I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day.

2 Timothy 1:12

“...sword of the spirit”: The Roman *machira* was only 24 in. long, but sharpened on both sides. The more typical sword of that day was longer, sharpened on only one edge. It had to be used with cocked arm in a chopping motion. With the doubly sharpened short sword, the Roman legionnaire could duck, catch his enemy off balance, and thrust or cut from any position, winning the engagement at close quarters. With this revolutionary innovation, they achieved legendary victories. However, it required special training ...and extensive practice!

“...word of God”: Christ employed this Sword three times when tempted by the devil (Mt 4:1-11). Being hid in the heart (Ps 119:11) God’s Word will preserve from sin, and will mortify and kill those lusts and corruptions which are latent there.

The Heavy Artillery

One of the most important factors in a military engagement is proper ground support: interdiction, flanking fire, and direct assaults. This goes beyond personal armor. Now we focus on the heavy artillery—with action-at-a-distance—*prayer!*

- 18] Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

“Praying always...”: As with any supporting fire, coordination is vital! We all need to be supported by Prayer Warriors. In the Greek “all” occurs four times in this verse. Continual, not sporadic: Like reliable soldiers, we are to be keeping diligent, literally, “in all persistence.”

Habitual: public & private; deliberate & spontaneous; supplication & intercession; confession & humiliation; praise & thanksgiving.

- 19] And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,
20] For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

“...that I may open my mouth boldly”: This recalls Paul’s lengthy discussion of this “mystery of the gospel” (Eph 2:11-3:11). For this reason Paul was “an ambassador in bonds” (Acts 28:16, 20; Eph. 3:1; 4:1; Phil 1:7, 13-14, 16; Col. 4:3, 18; Philemon 1, 9-10, 13).

Paul’s Concluding Remarks: Ephesians 6:19-24

- 21] But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:
22] Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts.

In Colossians 4:7, Paul called him by these same titles and added that he was a “fellow bondsman” σύνδουλος *syndoulos*. Tychicus is also mentioned in Acts 20:4; 2 Tim 4:12; and Titus 3:12.

- 23] Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
24] Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

Grace concludes the letter, just as it had introduced it (Eph 1:2). Paul warned the Ephesian elders that false teachers would rise within the flock. Their doctrinal diligence was commended in Christ’s Letter to the Ephesians; however, unfortunately some believers did lose the fervency of their “first love” for Christ (Rev 2:4).

<To the Ephesians written from Rome, by Tychicus.>

Paul’s Personal Mark

When one understands that there were apparently forgeries of Thessalonian letters being circulated, then several passages start to make more sense (2 Thess 2:2). At the end of that letter, Paul includes a sort of private mark, a personal token.

The salutation of Paul with mine own hand, which is the token in every epistle: so I write.

2 Thessalonians 3:17

“...which is the token in every epistle: so I write”:

The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen.

2 Thessalonians 3:18

So what is this signature or style item that is included in every letter from him? [Rom 16:24; 1 Cor 16:23-24; 2 Cor 13:14; Gal 6:18; Eph 6:24; Phil 4:23; Col 4:18; 1 Thess 5:28; 2 Thess 3:18; 1 Tim 6:21; 2 Tim 4:22; Titus 3:15; Philemon 25]

Why is this so impressive of Paul's style? *Because the word "Grace" does not even appear in any of the other epistles!* (Except once by Peter, where it is used as an exhortation and *not* as a salutation or blessing as here; cf. 2 Peter 3:18). So, how does Hebrews end?

Grace be with you all. Amen.

Hebrews 13:25

<Written to the Hebrews from Italy, by Timothy.>

This may communicate more than is generally appreciated...

* * *

The Cycle of Nations

“from bondage to spiritual faith;
from spiritual faith to great courage;
from courage to liberty;
from liberty to abundance;
from abundance to complacency;
from complacency to apathy;
from apathy to dependency;
from dependence back again into bondage.”

—Alexander Tyler, 1750

Where are we?

Lifecycle of Democracies

“A democracy cannot exist as a permanent form of government. It can only exist until the voters discover that they can vote themselves largesse...from the public treasury... The average age of the world's greatest civilizations has been 200 years.”

Nineveh was the pagan capital of the world and they were 40 days from “ground zero!” Jonah was the reluctant prophet: “40 days and you get yours!” One could argue that Nineveh's repentance was the greatest miracle in the Old Testament!

If my people, who are called by my name, shall humble themselves; and pray; and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land.

2 Chronicles 7:14

Our Action Plan

- Guard our reactions: Be a witness!
- Repair our illiteracy (both Biblically and about Islam).
- Realign our personal priorities (our most precious resource: *time*).
- Our heavy artillery: *Prayer!*
- *It's time to get serious about our faith!*

A Challenge

We are being plunged into a period of time about which the Bible says more than it does about any other period of time in history, *including the time that Jesus walked the shores of Galilee or climbed the mountains of Judea.*

* * *

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About The Cover Design

(on the tape cassette volumes)

The “Front” cover:

The Greek border: “I am Alpha and Omega, the beginning and the ending, saith the Lord, which is, and which was, and which is to come, the Almighty (Revelation 1:8).” The center design element symbolizes the Word of God Incarnate, illuminated by the Holy Spirit.

The “Back” cover: (the “front” to the Jewish reader)

The Hebrew border: “Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord: and thou shalt love the LORD thy God with all thine heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy might (from the Sh’ma, Deut 6:4-5).”

The center design represents the Burning Bush, made up of Hebrew letters which proclaim “the Eternal One cannot lie.”

The Spine:

The spine includes a Menorah from the Old Testament, a Maranatha Dove suggesting the New Testament, and the Koinonia House logo at the base.



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