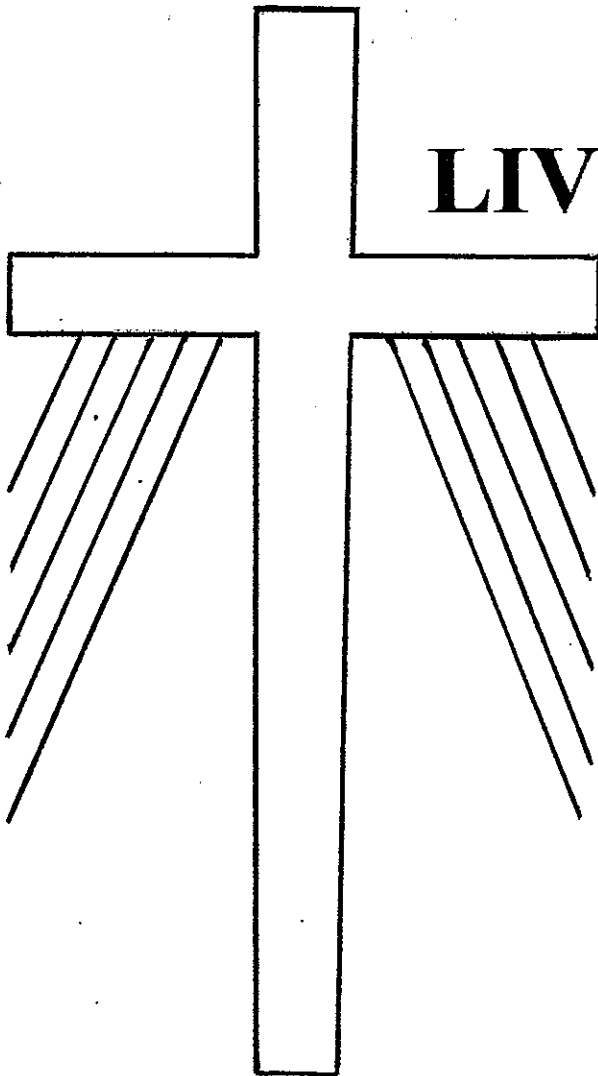


LIVING TRUTHS



PAUL'S LETTER TO THE EPHESIANS

BY: WILLIAM G. ARVAN

PAGE SETUP

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Paul's Letter To Ephesians was written and prepared by William G. Arvan.

Mr. Arvan and his wife, Patricia, served as Christian Missionaries for 36 years in the Republic of the Philippines with SEND International, a non-denominational mission organization located in Farmington, Michigan, in the United States of America.

Since retirement from ministry in the Philippines in 1990, Mr. Arvan continued to teach Bible in Eastern European countries, Ukraine and Russia. His teaching experience, both in the Philippines as well as in Eastern European - Asian countries, convinced him of the need for practical "grass-roots" teaching of the Scriptures. This book on Ephesians was prepared from his preaching and teaching outlines to help meet that need in the following manner:

As a preaching / teaching **aid** for **National pastors** and **Lay-pastors** with limited background in their knowledge of the Scriptures.

As a **pastoral aid** for teaching / training **laymen** on a local church level.

As an **aid** for **students** in theological training.

Scriptural quotations are from the **New International Version** of the Bible unless otherwise indicated. **KJV** represents the King James Version of the Scriptures.

All **quotations** by **W. E. Vine** are from his *Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*.

All **quotations** by **F. F. Bruce** are from his book *The Epistle To The Ephesians*, published by the Fleming H. Revell Company.

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All **quotations** by **Wilbur Fields** [and the **maps, artists concepts of Ephesus**, and the **Roman soldiers armor** on pages 5, 6, 7, 8, 76, 77, 78] are from his book *The Glorious Church*, published by College Press.

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Many, many thanks to my wife, Patricia, for her constructive suggestions and for proof reading all of my materials; and to my son, Rev. William P. Arvan for caring for the Russian translation of my materials; and to my grandson, David B. Arvan for creating my website [www.BasicBiblicalTruths.com] in which all of my printed materials are displayed.

May Paul's Letter To The Ephesians be used for the Glory of God.

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HISTORICAL BACKGROUND

In the 11th century B.C. Ionian Greeks crossed the Aegean Sea and established 12 cities in the central part of Western Turkey - an area they called Ionia and later called **Lydia** [see map on page 5]. Ephesus was one of these 12 cities and the capital of Ionia.

During New Testament times the city of Ephesus was the capital of the Roman Province of **Asia** [see map on page 5]. It lay near the mouth of the Cayster River about 3 miles inland from the Aegean Sea. The river was navigable up to the city [see artist's concept on pages 6-7]. Because of its excellent harbor and the water and road routes connecting it with every part of the Roman World, it was the chief commercial city of the East and the greatest, most populous, and wealthiest city in Asia Minor. One has said, "Ephesus was religiously like Rome and commercially like New York." Ephesus was a Roman "free city" having its own senate, magistrates, and "people" / lawful assemblies. Acts 19:35-41 is insightful about this.

At some time in the remote past the Assyrians or Babylonians [in their vain imaginations] conceived of a female deity, a mother goddess of the earth. They called her Ishtar. Other tribes and nations adopted the idea and borrowed some of the legends connected with her. The Greeks called her Artemis, the Romans, Diana, the goddess of fertility [see page 8].

Ephesus was infiltrated with temples dedicated to Greek mythical gods. However, the temple of the goddess Diana was the greatest temple of all and considered one of the ancient world's seven wonders. The inner shrine of the temple housed the image of Diana [see drawing on page 8] which was said to have fallen from heaven [Acts 19:35]. Over the centuries the temple was burned and rebuilt 7 times - each time on a grander scale. The Apostle Paul saw it at about 343 feet long by 164 feet wide standing on an immense raised platform about 425x240 feet. It had 100 or more columns 56 feet high and 6 feet in diameter. It had taken 220 years to build. An annual Feast, called the Artemisia, lasted a month. It attracted thousands from all parts of the Roman World. No work was done during this time while great crowds enjoyed daily sacrifices, dramas and games in a 24,000 seat Amphitheater [see drawing pages 6-7]. This last temple, which lay one and a half miles northeast of the port, was finally destroyed by the Goths in 262 A. D.. Ephesus itself was destroyed by the Turks in 1308 A.D.

Culled from "The Glorious Church" by Wilbur Fields

P. S. The worship of Diana may have contributed to the start of the worship of the Virgin Mary. It is a remarkable coincidence that one of the earliest churches in honor of Mary was built at Ephesus on the site of the famous Temple of Diana, and in that same city a synod [council] was held in 431 A.D. which first designated Mary as "Mother of God".

Now for a moment, let's consider **what we know** about this pagan city of Ephesus in New Testament times [about 52 A.D.] and how this populous **reacted** to God's message through the Apostle Paul, his missionary team composed of Priscilla and her Jewish husband Aquila [a native of Pontus in Eastern Turkey], a Jew named Apollos from Alexandria in Egypt [Acts 18:18-28], "Pastor" Timothy from Lystra in Galacia [I Timothy 1:4a]. and a minority group called Christians or "*people of the way*" [Acts 19:23].

On the one hand, Acts 19:13-16 and 19 tells us that the people of this city were immersed in supernatural evil power such as sorcery or magical arts [witchcraft, black magic, etc.]. The influence of evil spirits [demons] and the demon possessed were a constant "**thorn**" to new Christians. So much so, that the Apostle Paul warns Timothy, [the "Pastor" of the church at Ephesus - I Timothy 1:3-4], that "*some will abandon the faith and follow deceiving spirits and things taught by demons*" [I Timothy 4:1].

The temple of the “goddess” Artemis and the hand crafted silver shrines [Greek – *naos*] portraying the enshrined “goddess” in her temple **were sacred** to the Ephesians [Acts 19:23-27]. Any attempt to discredit her reputation, such as Paul reportedly saying “*man-made gods are no gods at all*” [19:26], brought a **furious response** - even rioting [Acts 19:23-41].

The Synagogue Jews entertained “*false teachers*” of doctrine & the law [I Timothy 1:3-7]; “*plotted*” against Paul [Acts 20:19]; were “*obstinate*”, that is, they hardened their hearts towards God & His Word that Paul and others proclaimed; and “*publicly maligned*” or spoke evil of the people of “The Way” forcing Paul and his disciples [people of “The Way”] to leave the Synagogue [Acts 19:9].

In Ephesus “*There were many who opposed*” the Apostle Paul [I Corinthians 16:9b]. In the Province of Asia, Paul and Timothy “*suffered hardships, were under great pressure* [persecution], *and despaired even of life*” [II Corinthians 1:8].

On the other hand, “*The word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power*” [Acts 19:20].

- “*All the Jews and Greeks who lived in the Roman Province of Asia heard the word of the Lord*” [Acts 19:9b-10]. What an amazing accomplishment - and all within a space of three years [Acts 19:26a].
- “*God did extraordinary miracles through Paul, --- illnesses were cured and evil spirits cast out*” [Acts 19:11].
- “*Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly*”. Their calculated value amounted to **50,000 days’ wages**.

However, Paul had predicted that when he left Ephesus **two things** would happen to this “flock” of believers [Acts 20:25-29].

First, external forces, called “*savage wolves*” in Acts 20:29, will endeavor to tear apart the “flock”. Generally speaking, this has reference to Jewish opposition against Jesus as the Messiah and the Body of Christ called “The Church”.

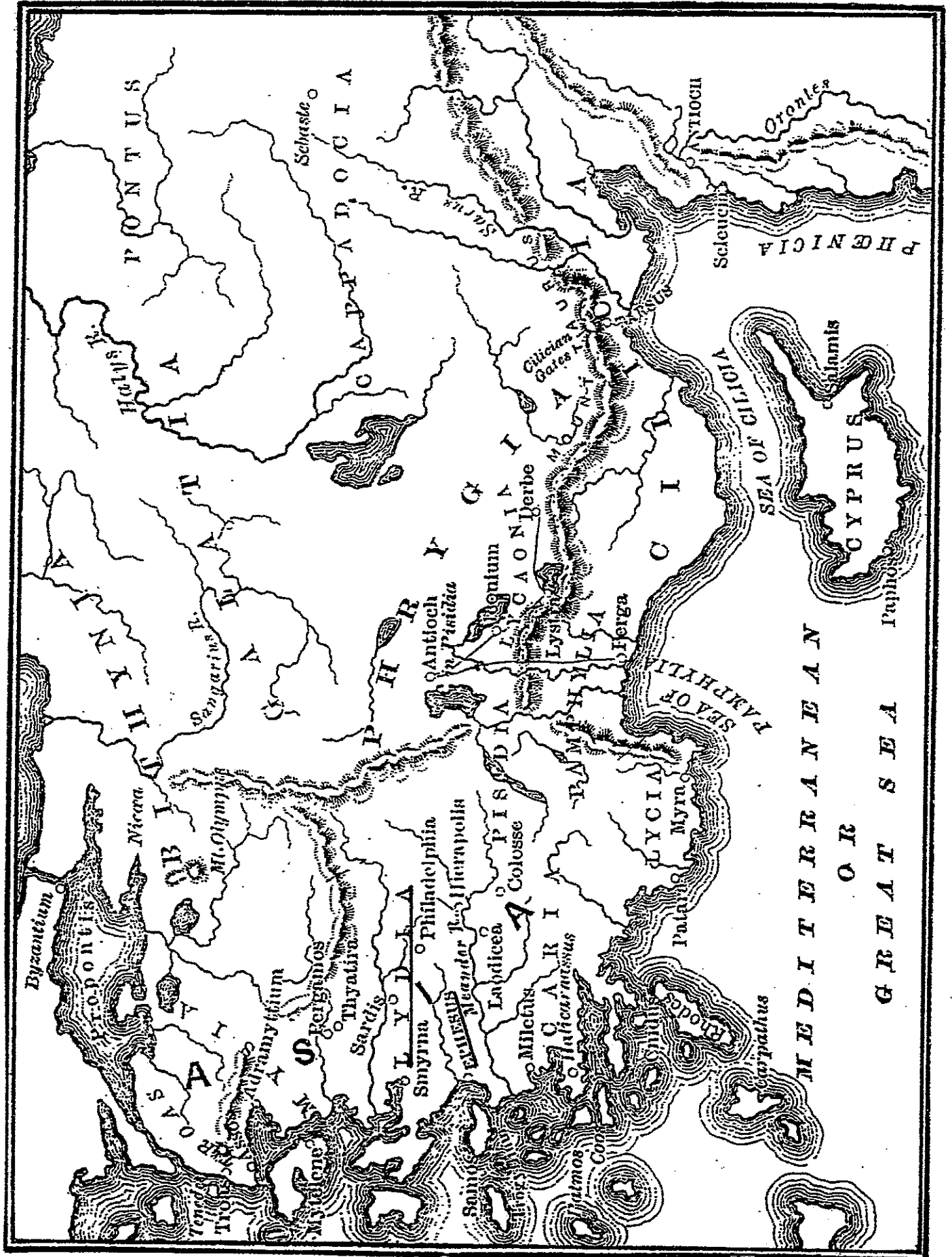
Second, internal forces, called “*men from your own number*” in Acts 20:30, will “*distort*” or **twist** the truth in order to “*draw away*” followers for themselves.

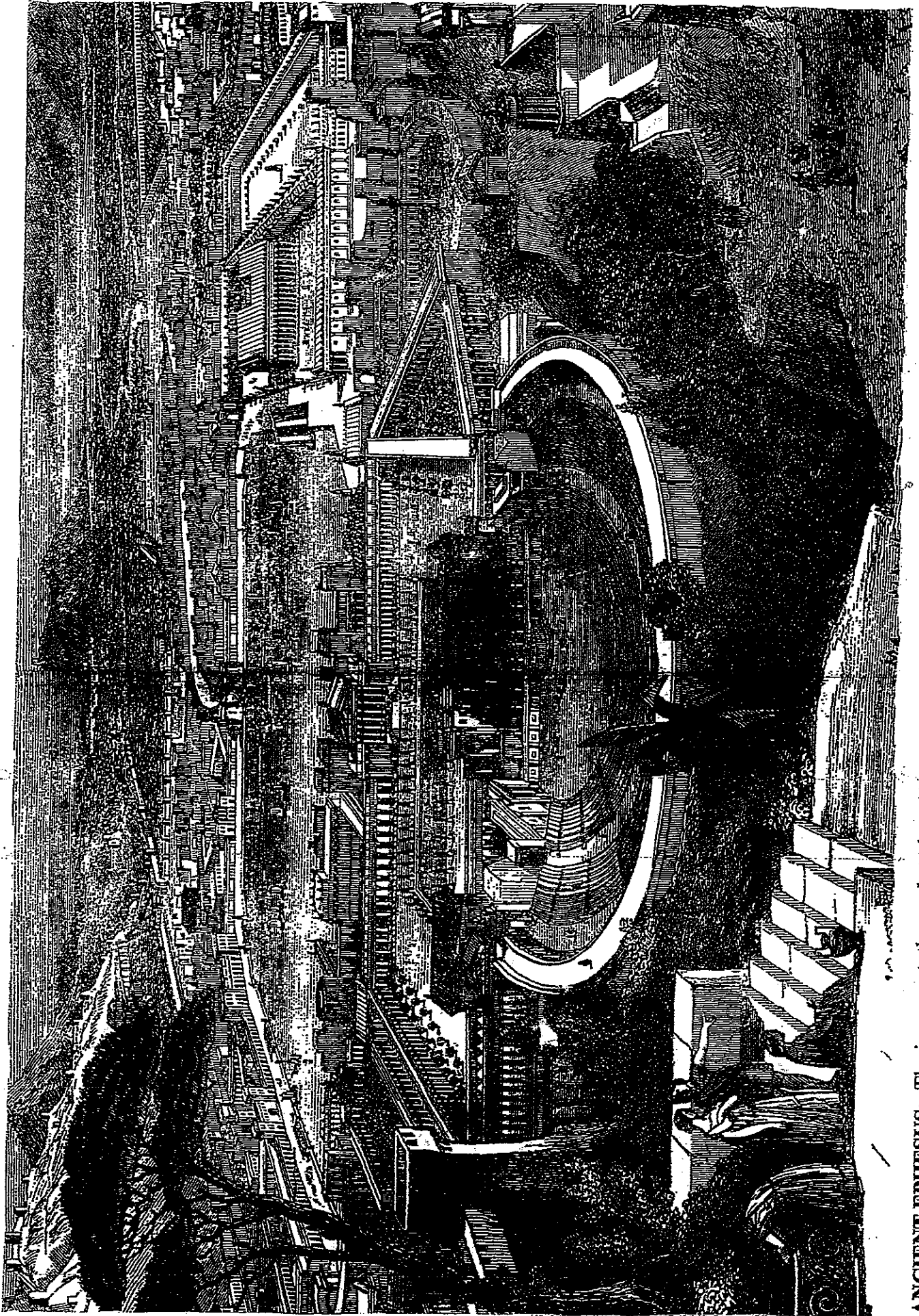
Examples – Hymenaeus and Philetus “*wandered* [swerved, missed the mark] *away from the truth. They said that the resurrection* [of believers] *had already taken place, and they destroyed* [overturned or overthrew] *the faith of some*” [II Timothy 2:16-18].

Some, like Hymenaeus and Alexander, “*rejected*” the faith and their conscience and thereby made a “*shipwreck*” of their faith [I Timothy 1:18-20].

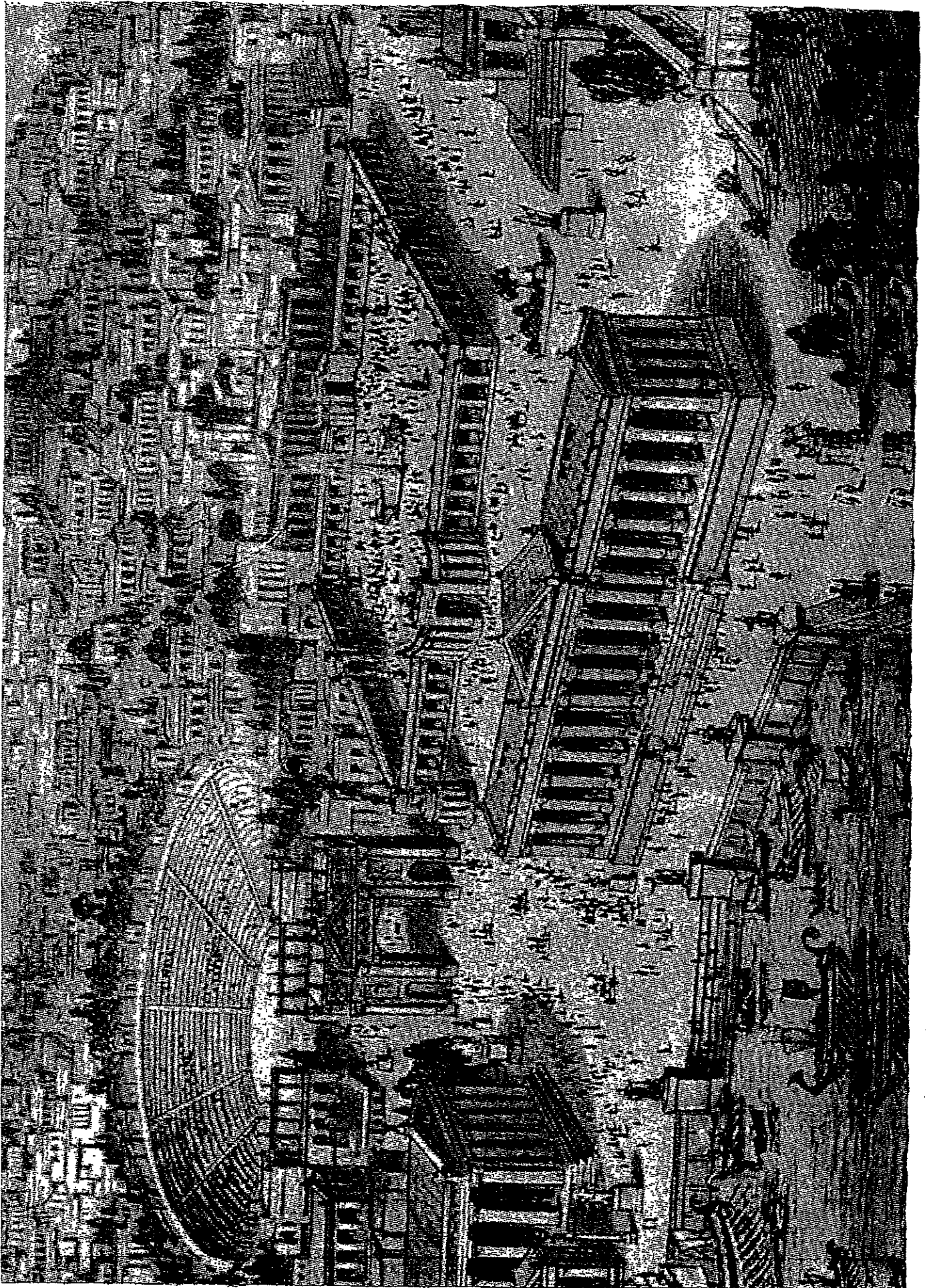
Some 4 - 5 years later [60 A.D.], in order to **counteract** the effect of these “external and internal forces” of evil, the Apostle Paul, [now imprisoned in Rome], writes a letter to the Ephesian believers and sends it to them through Tychicus [Ephesians 6:21]. In this letter Paul encourages them by stating **who and what they are in Christ Jesus** [1:1 - 3:21]; challenges them to live a life “**worthy of the calling they have received**” in Christ [4:1 - 6:9]; and to “**take their stand against the devil’s schemes**” [6:10 - 20].

Today [2013 A.D.], the spiritual forces of evil arrayed against believers in Jesus Christ are similar to those found in Ephesus. There are still those who attempt to “**tear apart**” the Church through “**distortion of**”, “**wandering from**” & “**rejection of**” the truth. **Therefore, study of this Letter is very relevant for us.**





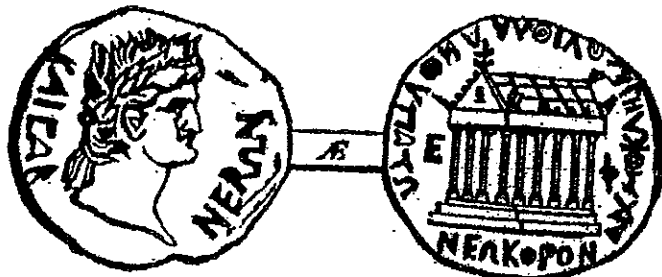
ANCIENT EPHEBUS: The inner port, the market place (Agora), and the amphitheater. (Looking West) The Glorious Church by: Wilbur Fields



ANCIENT EPHEBUS: Looking to the East.



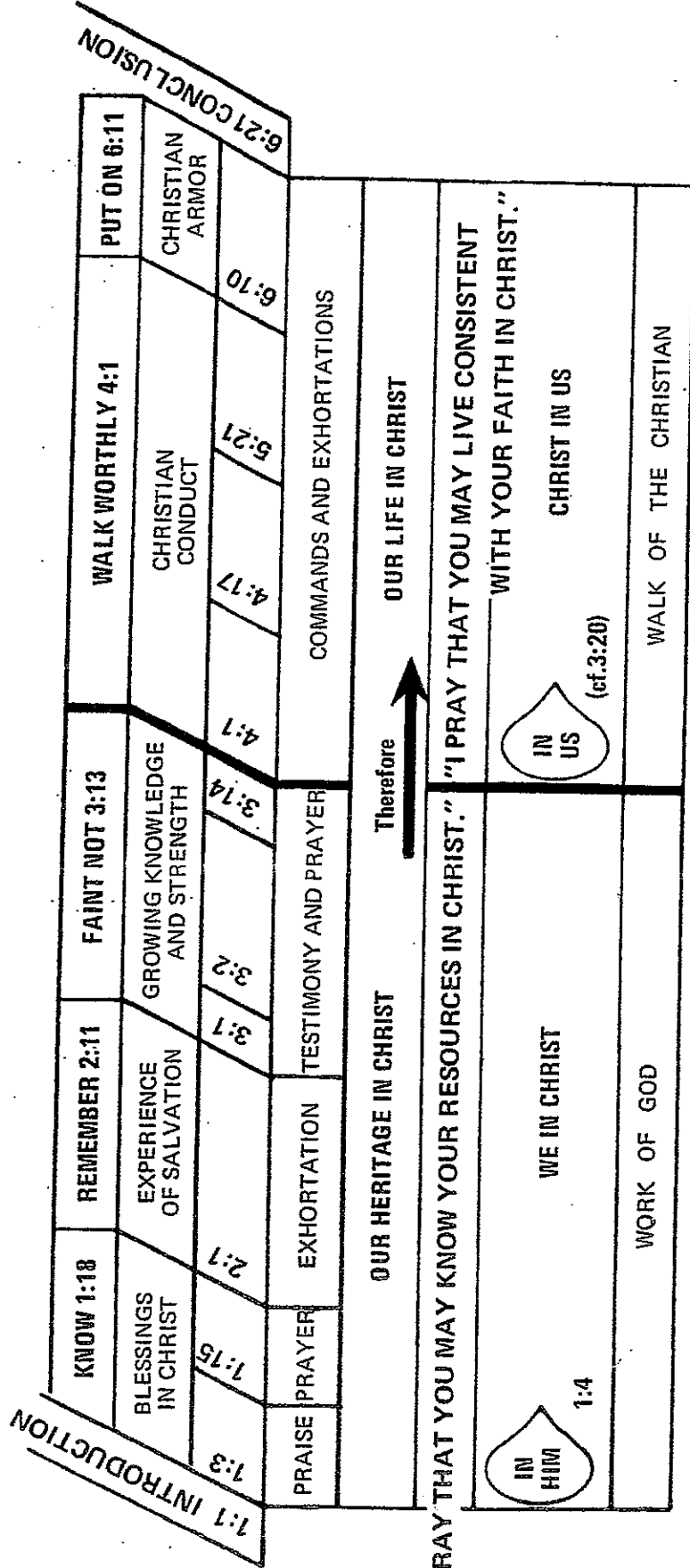
Diana.



Coin of Ephesus, exhibiting the head of Nero and the Temple of Diana.

EPHESIANS

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH



KEY WORDS: CHURCH, IN CHRIST, HEAVENLY PLACES, ACCORDING TO, POWER, RICHES, GLORY, EVEN AS, MYSTERY

KEY VERSES: 2:19-20; 1:22-23

Irving L. Jensen Bible Study Charts - Moody Press

INTRODUCTION [1:1-2]

Imagine the excitement when after 4-5 years one of the believers in Ephesus cries out "**Tychicus is here! He has come from Rome with a letter from Paul**". Hurriedly the believers assemble - their hearts pounding as the "letter" is unwrapped and as Tychicus assures them of Paul's well-being [Ephesians 6:21-22], tells them of his ministry in Rome to both Jews and Gentiles [Acts 28:16-31], and informs them of other letters Paul is sending to Philippi and Colosse. Then, in hushed silence, the reading begins:

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, To the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus: Grace and peace to you from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

And now may **we also** sit in hushed awe as we drink in the teaching of this letter which emphasizes "The Church" [9 times], The Church as "The Body of Christ" [9 more times], and divides into two natural divisions: Chapters 1 - 3 relate to the **blessings / privileges** bestowed upon those "in Christ" and chapters 4 - 6 to the believers "**walk**" or "**life**" in Christ. [See Jensen's Bible Study Chart on page 9.]

The Writer - "Paul" 1:1a

Paul's Conversion --- The name **Paul** brings to our minds the writer's **conversion experience**. The word "convert" means "**to change** or transform; **to turn** from one thing --- to or into another."

Paul had a "**faith**" - **changing conversion**. **Previously**, as **Saul**, he trusted "*in a [legalistic] righteousness of his own that comes from the law.*" As the **converted Saul / Paul**, he trusted "*in the righteousness that comes from God through faith in Jesus Christ.*" [See Philippians 3:4a - 9.]

Paul also had a "**life**" - **changing conversion**. It happened on the road to Damascus. **Previously**, as **Saul**, he had "**persecuted**" the disciples / followers of Jesus as well as Jesus Himself [see Acts 9:1-5]. As the **converted Saul / Paul**, he "**preached / proclaimed**" - "*That Jesus is the Son of God*" [see Acts 9:19b-22].

Paul's conversion was his **initial step** which eventually led to a life of service that honored and glorified his Master, Jesus Christ.

Question: Is it possible that you have **never experienced** a spiritual conversion? If so, this is the message you need to believe.

*"Salvation is found in no one else, for there is **no other name** under heaven given to men by which we must be saved"* [Acts 4:12].

*"I want you to know that **through Jesus** the forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you. Through Him everyone **who believes** is justified from everything **you could not be justified from the law of Moses**"* [Acts 13:38-39]. Because, the law demands a sinner's obedience but provides no help or ability by which he can fulfill the law.

Paul's Credentials --- Paul was "*an Apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God*" [1:1a]. That meant that periodically God, in order to accomplish His will in Paul's life, had to intervene or become an influencing force to bring Paul to the position of **an Apostle**.

God **first intervened** when, at Paul's birth, He "**set him apart**" for Himself [Galatians 1:15a]. The Greek word *aphorizo*, here translated "*set apart*", means "**to determine**" and is used "when setting men apart for the work of the Gospel" [W. E. Vine, Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words]. At birth, therefore, God "**set apart**" or "**determined**" that Paul would be an **Apostle** of Jesus Christ.

God **also intervened** in Saul's / Paul's life when, on the road to Damascus, He "*called*" Paul for a purpose [Galatians 1:15b]. *Kaleo*, the Greek word here translated "*called*", refers to **vocation**, that is, "to be called by a name and / or to bear or carry a name" [W. E. Vine]. So, **what vocation** was Paul called to? **What name** was he called to bear or carry? The answer is found in the conversations that transpired when God intervened in Paul's life on the road to Damascus.

What the Lord Jesus said about Saul / Paul to Ananias ---

"This man is my chosen instrument - to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel" [Acts 9:15].

What Ananias told Paul that God had said to him ---

"The God of our fathers has chosen you to know his will and to see the Righteous One and to hear words from his mouth. You will be his witness to all men of what you have seen and heard" [Acts 22:14-15].

What the Lord Jesus said directly to Paul ---

I have appeared to you to appoint you as a servant and as a witness of what you have seen of me and what I will show you" [Acts 26:16].

Paul's **vocation**, then, was that of an **Apostle**, a "**sent one**". He was God's "chosen instrument, servant and witness" to carry the name of the Lord Jesus Christ to the Gentiles and to all men. [See Romans 11:13; Galatians 2:7-8; and II Timothy 1:11]

God **further intervened** in Paul's life when He endued him with the credentials of an Apostle.

"The things that mark an apostle - signs, wonders and miracles - were done among you [by Paul in Corinth] with great perseverance" [II Corinthians 12:12].

Summary: Paul has an excellent **resume**. A genuine life - changing conversion to faith in Jesus Christ; personally called by God to be a servant & witness of Jesus Christ; and given the credentials of an Apostle. This man, with this resume, is writing **on behalf of God** to the "Saints" in Ephesus as well as to all who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ. **We need to listen and act upon what he has to say.**

The Addressed - *"The saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus."* 1:1b

The Greek word "*hagios*", here translated "*saints*", means "**sanctified**" or "**holy ones**". That is, **those separated** or **set apart** to exclusively belong to God through their "*full faith in Jesus Christ*" and who, **as believers in Jesus Christ**, separate or set themselves apart from **sin's defilement**.

"In the plural, '**Saints**' designates **all believers** and is not applied merely to persons of exceptional holiness or to those who, having died, were characterized by exceptional acts of saintliness."

[See II Thessalonians 1:10 where "*God's holy people*" (the saints) and "*all those who have believed*" refer to the same people, i.e., the whole number of the redeemed.] W. E. Vine

Question: Are you a "**saint**"? If so, then this "Letter To The Ephesians" **is also applicable to you.**

The Greeting - *"Grace and peace to you from God our Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ."* 1:2

If a person receives "**grace**" and "**peace**" from God, what does that person **actually experience**?

Grace is God giving us what we do not deserve. It is the free and loving favor of God [the forgiveness of our sins; God's continual presence in our lives; etc.] bestowed upon all believers in Jesus Christ.

Peace is the resulting tranquility of mind and spirit in those who belong to God through Jesus Christ.

PART ONE
[Chapters 1:3 – 3:21]
THE BELIEVER'S BLESSINGS / PRIVILEGES IN CHRIST

A Eulogy of Praise 1:3

“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.”

What a sentence! What a statement! What an encouragement! What truth! Let's look at it more carefully.

- **“Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ”**
The Apostle Paul is **eulogizing** or **celebrating** with **praise** the accomplishments of God the Father.
- **“Who has blessed us”**
You will notice that the one who **“Blesses” us** is God and the blessings here referred to are in the **past tense** [Who has blessed us]. The blessings are the **honor, privileges, or benefits already pledged** to the believers in Ephesus, and by extension, **to all who believe in Jesus Christ**.
- **“In the heavenly realms”**
“Heavenly realms” pertain to what is **above** in distinction to **“earthly realms”** which are **below**. It is where Christ is seated at the right hand of the Father [1:20] and where Believers in Christ are seated with Him [2:6]. It may be defined as the sphere of the Christian's spiritual experience in Christ. It is the **sphere** or **realm** where their blessings are kept [see also I Peter 1:3-4].
- **“With every spiritual blessing”**
Notice first of all that these blessings are **“spiritual blessings”** in contrast to material, physical and temporal blessings which also come from God. **Notice also** that these blessings are all encompassing. They constitute **“every”** or **“all”** of God's Spiritual blessings no matter how many there be. These spiritual blessings are designed to **inwardly** uplift, encourage, strengthen, assure and empower the soul and spirit of those saved or redeemed in Christ. These blessings are **administered** through the indwelling Holy Spirit so that no matter what situation a believer finds himself in, [whether in Ephesus in 60 A.D. or in our world of 2013 A.D.], he may be triumphant.

*“I pray that out of his (God's) glorious riches he may **strengthen** you with **power** through his **Spirit** in your **inner being**,”* The Apostle Paul - Ephesians 3:16
- **“In Christ.”**
These **“Spiritual Blessings”** are **only** found **“in Christ”**. They become **ours** by virtue of, or because of, our being **“in Christ”**. That is, **through our belonging** to Jesus Christ.

The Believer's Blessings / Privileges in Christ 1:4 - 3:20

In chapter 1 verse 4 Paul begins to **enumerate** by **name** and / or by **description** that which up until this point in his “Letter” he has only referred to as “spiritual blessings”.

Numbering these blessings **does not** indicate that one is superior to another. The numbering only helps identify individual blessings and the number of them that God has chosen to reveal to us.

#1 The Blessing of Sanctification

"For he [God] chose us in him [Jesus Christ] before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in his [God's] sight." 1:4a



Imagine for a moment when there was **nothing** except God, and before God created **something out of nothing**. It was **then** that God made certain choices - one of which was, "**He chose us**". But, "**How does God choose or select people?**"

He could have chosen you or me in an **arbitrary manner**. However, in His Sovereignty, God decreed that "Those He **foreknew** or **foresaw** [before the creation of the world] to be '**in Christ**', or to belong to Christ, **those He chose**."

This choosing is **not** a direct reference to their salvation or eternal life. Rather, it is a **direct reference** to the "**blessings**" or "**privileges**" that accompany their salvation. [See chart on page 15]

This first blessing, "*To be holy and blameless in God's sight*", is what I have termed "**The Blessing of Sanctification**."

The word "**holy**" is a translation of the Greek word "**hagios**" which carries the thought of being **sanctified** or **separated** unto God. According to G. B. Stevens in Hastings' Biblical Dictionary, "*Hagios* is something more than being pure or free from defilement. *Hagios* is more comprehensive. It is characteristically **godlikeness**". It is to be in character and conduct "*conformed to the likeness of God's Son*" [Romans 8:29].

The word "**blameless**" is best understood as "**without blemish, fault or shortcoming**."

"*In God's sight*" [Greek - "*kateropion*"] refers to standing **before** God as our Judge. As those "*In Christ*" are **scrutinized** by God, they are found to be "**holy**" and "**blameless**" *in His sight*. [O, what a glorious day that will be.]

Colossians 1:22 states this same truth in this way:

"God has reconciled you by Christ's physical body through death to present you holy in his sight, without blemish and free from accusation." [See also Jude 24]

You will notice that the **fulfillment** of this blessing "*to be holy and blameless in God's sight*" is **future**. It will **ultimately** or **finally** be realized [in **our experience** with God] when, as resurrected / raptured believers, we stand before God.

John Calvin stated that "it is wrong to say that any of us may **attain perfection** in this life; nevertheless, this is **the goal** to which the whole course of our lives must be directed, even though we cannot reach that goal till we have finished our course."

When your present struggle with sin and your sinful nature seems to be overwhelming [see Romans 7:14-25], **then take courage**. Because, in your **present experience**, the indwelling Holy Spirit is **able to deliver you from the desires** of your sinful nature [see Romans 8:1-4 and Galatians 5:16] and **ultimately, "in Christ"**, with a new sinless nature, you will stand in God's presence as "**holy**" [Christ-like] and "**blameless**" [without blemish].

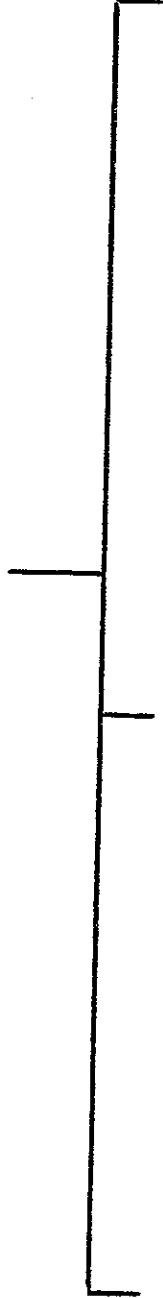
Is it any wonder then that there comes from the Apostle Paul this exclamatory expression of joy:

"Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!"

GOD IS SOVEREIGN

GOD'S SOVEREIGN DECREES

(To order, decide, or appoint by official decree; anything settled and unchangeable.)



In His Sovereignty, **God has decreed ----**

That He chooses those who are "in Christ" to be His very own. Ephesians 1:4a

That whom God foreknew to be "in Christ", He chose to be His very own.

"God **did not** choose certain individuals to go to heaven and others to go to hell - but God **chose** a class of people. He chose those who are **in Christ** to be His people. The Glorious Church by Wilber Fields, page 31-32.

In His Sovereignty, **God has decreed ----**

It is "by faith" that a person is included or belongs to Christ. Ephesians 1:13-14

"Faith issues from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, (John 6:44, 65; 16:8-11) illuminating the heart to appropriate the love of God revealed in Christ dying for the ungodly." Basic Christian Doctrines by William Childs Robinson, page 55.

In His Sovereignty, **God has decreed ----**

That those who "by faith" belong to Christ ---
1. Are blessed with every spiritual blessing in Christ. Ephesians 1:3

2. Were chosen before the creation of the world to be holy and blameless in God's sight. Ephesians 1:4b

3. Were predestined (marked out beforehand) to be God's adopted sons. Ephesians 1:5-6

4. Are, by God's grace, redeemed and forgiven through Christ's atoning blood. Ephesians 1:7-8

5. Etc.

#2 The Blessing of Adoption

"In love he [God] predestined us to be adopted as his sons through Jesus Christ, in accordance with his pleasure and will - to the praise of his glorious grace, which he has freely given us in the One he loves". 1:4b-6



In Jewish tradition, the Bar Mitzvah, meaning "Son of Duty" or "Son of the Commandments", is a celebration of a male child reaching the age of responsibility [13 years] in relation to obedience to the Old Testament Law [Commandments] and Jewish tradition. However, his **tutelage** in these matters **continues** until 15-16 years of age when he is accepted as a **full member** [an adult son] in the family. **Similarly**, "God **does not adopt** believers in Christ as 'children'. They are **begotten** as such by the Holy Spirit **through faith**. **Adoption** is a term involving **the dignity** of the relationship of believers **as sons**; **It is not** a putting into the family by spiritual birth, but a putting into **the position of sons**. The place of a son with all the **rights** and **privileges** of a son given to one to whom it **does not naturally belong**." W. E. Vine

Now, let's look at the **key words** or **thoughts** expressed by the Apostle Paul in 1:4b-5.

"In love", is the first thought. According to W. E. Vine, "**Love** [Greek – *agape*], is the exercise of the Divine Will in deliberate choice made without assignable cause save that which lies in the nature of God Himself."

"It is beyond all controversy, that no man is loved by God but **in Christ**." William Childs Robinson

"God predestined us." --- That is, "*in love*" [God's deliberate choice] God **predestined** [determined beforehand] that those "*In Christ*" [those belonging to Christ], "*be adopted as his sons*."

This act of God's love was "*in accordance with his pleasure and will*."

The phrase "*in accordance with*" [or according to], means, "in a way **consistent** with something." It is a term of **explanation** and / or of **measurement**.

The word "*pleasure*" implies "a gracious purpose" and the word "*will*", "desire".

Therefore, in verses 4b-5, the Apostle Paul is hereby saying that "**God's Love**", as defined above by W. E. Vine, and *the love* by which God **predestined** believers in Christ to be His adopted sons, can only be explained as **God's gracious purpose** and **desire** for those "*in Christ*".

Presently, believers in Christ "*are children of God, but what they will be has not yet been made known*." That awaits Christ **second appearance** or coming [I John 3:2a].

In I John 3:2a the above underlined words, "**known**" and "**appears**", are a translation of the same Greek word "*phaneroo*". A better translation would be the word "**manifest**".

W. E. Vine gives us the reason why. He states that "A person may **appear** without a disclosure of what he truly is. To **manifest** is to **reveal** one's true character."

Those "*in Christ*" already **know** that they are **predestined** to be adopted as God's sons but the **ultimate fulfillment** of this blessing is still **future**. It awaits the **manifestation** of Jesus Christ at His second coming when He in turn will **reveal** or **manifest** the true Sons of God along with their blessings or privileges.

Question: What blessings or privileges will be made known [revealed or manifest] in those who belong to Jesus Christ? Here are a few of them.

- They will receive “*the full rights of sons*” however many there be [Galatians 4:4].
- We have already discovered they will be “*holy*” & “*blameless*” in God’s sight [Ephesians 1:4a].
- “*We, who have the first fruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.*” [Romans 8:23].
“*Christ will transform our lowly bodies [our bodies of humiliation] so that they will be like his glorious [resurrected] body*” [Philippians 3:20-21]. An incorruptible, immortal body created for life in the **environment** or **surroundings** of the New Heaven and New Earth.
- “*We know that when he [Jesus Christ] appears [His second coming], we shall be like him, for we shall see him as he is*” [I John 3:2b]. We will share in **the likeness** of His body, character and conduct.
- “*Since you are a son, God has made you also an heir*” [Galatians 4:7b] --- “*heirs of God and co-heirs with Christ*” [Romans 8:17].

As one who is “**in Christ**”, what can you or I say in response to God’s love in which He has **predestined us “to be adopted as his sons”** with all rights, privileges and blessings?

On bended knees and with a grateful heart I cry out, “Heavenly Father, I praise you for your **glorious grace** which you have **freely given me** in the One you love.” AMEN

#3 The Blessing of Deliverance

“*In him [Jesus Christ] we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, in accordance with God’s grace that he lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding.*” 1:7-8



Redemption means, “to deliver, release or free from bondage upon payment of a **ransom**.” **Forgiveness** means, “to dismiss or send away.”

The **spiritual concepts** of redemption / forgiveness in Jesus Christ are readily understood through rituals performed on Israel’s Day of Atonement [Leviticus chapter 16].

On the Day of Atonement Israel’s High Priest selected **two male goats** [16:5]. He then “**cast lots**” to determine which one would be “**for the Lord**”, and which one would be the “**scapegoat**” [16:7-8].

The “**Lord’s goat**” was sacrificed and its blood brought into the presence of God in the “**Most Holy Place**” **in the man-made** earthly Old Testament Tabernacle or Sanctuary. There to be sprinkled on the mercy seat covering the Ark of the Covenant. In this way, a **yearly ceremonial blood ransom** was offered for all Israel, “*no matter what their sins have been*” [16:15-16a].

However, this yearly ceremony was only a “shadow” of a coming reality.

“*For Christ did not enter a man-made sanctuary that was only a copy of the true one; — nor did he offer himself year after year — then Christ would have had to suffer many times since the creation of the world. But now he has appeared once for all [time] at the end of the ages to do away with sin by the sacrifice of himself*” [Hebrews 9:24-26]. “*He entered the Most Holy Place [in heaven] once for all [time - people] by his own blood, having obtained eternal redemption*” [Hebrews 9:11-12].

Then the High Priest prayed over the “scapegoat” confessing “**all the sins of Israel.**” The goat was then sent away into the desert “**carrying on itself all the sins of Israel**” [Leviticus 16:20-22].

In His sacrifice for our sins, Christ became our “Scapegoat” [the one who bore the blame for our mistakes or crimes against God].

For, just as Israel’s High Priest laid his hands on the head of their scapegoat, **ceremonially transferring** the sins of Israel to the **innocent scapegoat**, so God **actually** “*laid on Christ the iniquity [sin] of us all*” [Isaiah 53:6b] and “*Made Christ who had no sin to be sin for us*” [II Corinthians 5:21].

And, just as Israel’s scapegoat **ceremonially bore away** their sins, **so it is in Christ.** “*As far as the east is from the west, so far has God removed our transgressions [sins] from us*” [Psalms 103:12] so that “*Our sins and lawless acts God remembers no more*” [Hebrews 10:17].

Redemption from the penalty of sin is **the greatest act of deliverance** the world has ever known. “How, then, are we **to understand** how this could be possible?”

It is “*in accordance with [or consistent with] God’s grace [His unmerited favor] that he lavished [caused to abound or overflow] on us -- in Christ.*” PTL

#4 The Blessing / Privilege of Knowing The “Finale”

“He [God] made known to us the mystery of his will according to his good pleasure, which he purposed in Christ, to be put into effect when the times will have reached their fulfillment - to bring all things in heaven and on earth together under one head, even Christ.” 1:9-10

As we analyze these two verses this is what we discover:



- “God’s workings are **not** the result of **chance** or **impulse**. Before time began God laid out in His mind a **program for the ages.**”
Wilber Fields in The Glorious Church, page 38
- The **climax**, or **final act**, of this program [“*to be put into effect when the times (ages) will have reached their fulfillment*”] is “**the mystery**” herein referred to.
- The word “**mystery**” [Greek - “*musterion*”] means, “a truth which cannot be known except by revelation. A truth **once hidden** but now **made known** or **revealed.**”
- **The mystery God “made known”** or revealed “**to us**” who belong to Jesus Christ is that “*He will bring all things in heaven and earth together under one head, even Christ.*”

Therefore, “If here and now Christ is ‘head over all things to the Church’ [1:22], then verses 9-10 are a **promise** of the day when He will be head of a **completely redeemed creation.**”

H. H. Bruce in The Epistle To The Ephesians, pages 32-33

Remember, that our blessings in Christ are designed to **inwardly** uplift, encourage, strengthen, assure, and empower the soul and spirit of those “**in Christ**”. Therefore, this blessing of “**Knowing The Finale**”, as well as **all of our Blessings In Christ**, assures believers that, no matter what personally happens to them in their physical life on earth [hardship, suffering, death, etc.], or how they may be affected by adverse political societies / governments [humiliation, persecution, war, displacement, etc.], or how intense their struggle against demonic opposition may be [such as with “Diana of The Ephesians”] **they will be triumphant in Christ.**

For “when God brings all things in heaven and earth together under one head, even Christ” [1:10], “there will be **no more death or mourning, or crying, or pain, for the old order of things has passed away**” [Revelation 21:4].

And, when Jesus Christ reigns over earth’s Millennial [1000 year] Kingdom, believers in Christ “*will reign with him for a thousand years*” [Revelation 20:6].

Likewise, when God / Christ rule over the “Eternal Kingdom”, the redeemed will reign with them “*forever and ever*” [Revelation 22:5b]. **PTL**

#5 The Blessing of An Assured Inheritance [Israel / Jewish Inclusion]

“*In him [Jesus Christ] we were also chosen, having been predestined according to the plan of him [God] who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will, in order that we, who were the first to hope in Christ, might be for the praise of his glory.*” 1:11-12



Who do you think the “we” are in verses 11-12? Here is how F. F. Bruce explains it. “It is plain that in verses 11-12 Paul has primarily in mind **believers** of Jewish origin - because the words ‘**you also**’ in verse 13, with their evident allusion to Gentile Christians, indicate clearly enough that ‘we’ in verses 11-12 are Jewish Christians.” The Epistle To The Ephesians, page 34

The word “**chosen**” [Greek - “*kleroo*”] is better understood as “**heritage**” - “**we were made a heritage.**” That is, those Israelites / Jews believing “*In him [Jesus of Nazareth as the Messiah / Christ]*” **were predestined to be God’s heritage, His chosen portion or private possession.**

This group of people is **also defined as “the first to hope in Christ.”** “They represent the people of God, the believing remnant of Israel, whose hope was fixed on the Messiah **before He came**, and who accepted Him **when He appeared.**”

F. F. Bruce - The Epistle To The Ephesians, page 34

God’s plan was that the Gospel **first** be presented to the Jew, **and then** to the Gentile [Romans 1:16]. This actually happened. For in Acts chapters 1 through 7 [covering a period of two years] the multitudes who responded to the Gospel message were reported to be **Jews only** and all this response was in the **environs of Jerusalem**. It was not until chapters 8 through 12 [covering a period of 12 years] that the **first Gentiles** are reported to have accepted Christ. This took place in **Judea and Samaria**.

This blessing, that Jews believing in Jesus Christ were **predestined to be God’s heritage**, is “*in accordance with [or consistent with] the plan of God who works out everything in conformity with the purpose of his will*” so that God’s heritage [believing Jews] “*might be for the praise of his glory.*” The word “glory” [Greek - “*doxa*”] means, “the **honor** resulting from a good opinion.”

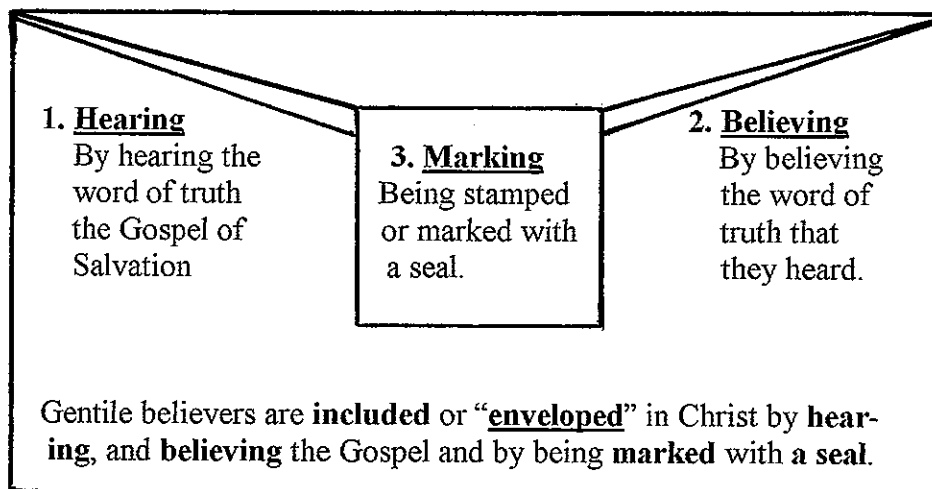
As used in Ephesians 1:6, 12, and 14, “the word ‘**glory**’ signifies the **due acknowledgement** of the exhibition of God’s attributes and ways.” W. E. Vine

In predestining believing Jews to be His heritage, God **exhibited** His attributes and ways --- His sovereignty, His purpose and will, His power to do as he wills, etc. **In response**, God is to receive the **honor and glory** due this great accomplishment.

#6 The Blessing of An Assured Inheritance [Gentile Inclusion]

“*And you also [Gentile believers] were included in Christ when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation. Having believed, you were marked in him with a seal, the promised Holy Spirit, who is a deposit guaranteeing our inheritance until the redemption of those who are God’s possession - to the praise of his glory.*” 1:13-14

We now turn our attention to **Gentile** believers. They are the “*you also’s*” of verses 13-14 who, along with **Jewish** believers [11-12], were “**included in Christ**”. But **how** were they included? Also, “**in Christ**”, Jewish believers were **predestined** to be **God’s** heritage. But how do Gentile believers become **God’s** heritage or **possession**? Perhaps this simple **three point envelope illustration** will help us.



Official documents are often stamped with a seal because the seal’s **mark** or **impression** upon a document proves the **authenticity** of the transaction. In Ephesians 1:13-14, the Apostle Paul applies this analogy to believers in Jesus Christ when he says, “*you were “marked with a seal”*”. The **Seal** is the **promised Indwelling Holy Spirit** [see also John 14:15-20] and the Holy Spirit’s “**imprint**” upon a believer signifies three things.

- **The Seal is a mark of genuineness.**

“If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Christ” [Romans 8:9b].

The **Seal** of the Spirit **differentiates** between the **genuine**, [those who belong to Christ], and the **non-genuine**, [those not belonging to Christ].

Therefore, if you have **heard** and **believed** God’s Word of Truth, [the Gospel of your salvation], and were “**marked as being in Christ with a seal**”, [the Indwelling Holy Spirit], then you are “**genuine**” - you truly “*were included in Christ*”. For, “**the distinguishing mark between a false professor and a genuine Christian is the indwelling Holy Spirit.**” Lehman Strauss

- **The Seal is a mark of divine ownership.**

“As livestock are distinguished by the owner’s brand, even so God has His own special brand whereby believers are marked out as **His possession**. The stamp of validity is God’s seal, the **gift** of the Holy Spirit, which is a sign that we are **His people** and members of the true church of Jesus Christ.” Lehman Strauss

The fact that the Holy Spirit produces His “**fruit**” [real, observable, measureable, spiritual fruit] in the life of a believer [see Galatians 5:22-23] makes it obvious to anyone associated with that believer that he has been **stamped** or **sealed** as being “**God’s property or possession**”.

- **The Seal is a mark of assurance.**

The Greek word “*arrabon*”, translated “**deposit**” in 1:14, means an “earnest”, “pledge” or “down-payment”. The “**deposit**” is the **binding agent** in an agreement, **assuring** that something that has been promised will be kept.

In his commentary, The Book of Ephesians, H. S. Miller gives this fuller understanding.

“A believer’s **promised inheritance** in Christ is wonderful and extensive. However, believers **do not** have it all yet, but they have the Holy Spirit as the “**earnest**” given as assurance that the full payment of the complete transaction will follow. The “**earnest**” implies that God has placed Himself in the position of a debtor who has paid an installment; and He is a debtor who is sure to pay the remainder in full”

Through Christ’s Sacrifice, [His redeeming blood 1:7-8], you who are **in** or **belong to Christ** have **already been redeemed** from sins penalty [death] and power [control]. You have also received the Indwelling Holy Spirit as a “**deposit**” guaranteeing your **unfulfilled promised inheritance**, possession of which begins on the “**day**” of **redemption**.

[Ephesians 1:13-14, 4:30; and II Corinthians 1:20-22, 5:5].

That “**day**” [a time of undetermined length] **begins** with the dead in Christ being raised in “**incorruptible / imperishable**” bodies and the living in Christ being changed from mortal into “**immortal**” beings [I Corinthians 15:50-54] - both of which are **raptured**, [caught up together to meet the Lord in the air], in newly created bodies **fashioned like unto Christ’s glorious** [resurrected] **body** [Philippians 3:20-21].

The culmination of that “**day**” is when “*the old order of things has passed away*” and “*God makes everything new*” [Revelation 21:4b-5]. That “**day**” - when there is a **new heaven** and a **new earth**; when the **dwelling** of God is **with** [redeemed] **men**, and he will **live** with them; when they will be **his people**, and God himself will be **with them** and be their God **forever more** [Revelation 21:1-5].

The time between the beginning and the culmination of the “**day**” of **redemption** is the time when we who belong to Jesus Christ will **receive-in-full** our promised inheritance [new bodies, sinless natures, new homes, a rule and reign with Christ, eternally with God, etc.].

In the meantime, we have been **blessed** with the Indwelling Holy Spirit as our “**deposit**” [an earnest, pledge, or down-payment] **guaranteeing** or **assuring** our **future inheritance** - “*to the praise of God’s glory*”.

Before proceeding with 1:18, we need to be reminded that the Book of Ephesians divides itself into **two natural divisions**, Chapters 1-3 and Chapters 4-6, and that “The Believer’s Blessings / Privileges In Christ”, according to my [the authors] understanding and outline of Ephesians, is the **main emphasis** in Chapters 1-3.

The Apostle Paul **began** God’s “**parade**” of **blessings** in chapter 1:3 by simply stating “*Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ.*” **But now** in 1:15-19a, after revealing 6 of those blessings, Paul **pauses to pray**. My question is **why**? Why pause to pray at this point in his Letter? As we **dig deeper** let’s see what answers we can discover.

Paul **begins** his prayer by stating “*For this reason*”, ---, *I have not stopped giving thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers*” [1:15-16]. The phrase “*For this reason*” could be translated “*Therefore*” or “*On account of this*” and refers back to chapter 1:3-14, which I believe is the **longest sentence** in the Greek New Testament, with its emphasis on **The Believer’s Blessings / Privileges in Christ**. Therefore, Paul’s prayer is **somehow related** to the believers blessings in Christ.

Paul **continues** by asking God for **two** [or 3] **specific things** all of which refer to the Holy Spirit. “*I keep asking that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father, may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation* [1:17] --- *I pray also that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened*” [1:18a].

Paul's **first request** is that "*God may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation*".

You will notice that in some translations of 1:17 the word "spirit" **is not capitalized** [King James Translation] while in other translations [New International Version] **it is capitalized** thereby referring to the **Indwelling Holy Spirit**. Listen to the explanation of F. F. Bruce of this seeming contradiction.

"While the reference is not actually to the personal **Spirit of God** here [1:17], yet such a **spirit of wisdom and revelation** cannot be possessed apart from **Him**."

I Corinthians 2:11-12 states that: "*No one knows the thoughts of God except the Spirit of God --- we have received the Spirit who is from God, that we may understand what God has freely given us.*"

Therefore, Paul's **first request** is that God [Holy Spirit] would give believers in Christ a **spirit of wisdom** [Greek - *sophia*] and **revelation** [Greek - *apokalupsis*] in order to "*know him [Christ] better*".

The word "**wisdom**" bears the thought: that the Holy Spirit **imparts** to the believer in Christ the **ability** or **capacity** to **receive** spiritual truths which are beyond the **unaided** human mind to grasp.

The word "**revelation**" means "to reveal or to uncover". As used here in 1:17 it refers to the Holy Spirit "**communicating** the knowledge of God to the soul of man." W. E. Vine

The phrase, "*know him [Christ] better*", is the **heart** of Paul's request. The words "**know**" and "**better**" [1:17] are a translation of the **same** Greek word "*epignoses*" which denotes exact or full knowledge. The implication is that there is **more** to be **revealed** to the believer than what he has **already received** in 1:3-14.

Paul's **second request** is quite **similar**. It is that "*the eyes of your heart may be enlightened in order that you may know*" --- [perceive something more -1:18].

"*Enlightened*" is a translation of the Greek word "*photizo*". When used metaphorically, as in 1:18, it means "to receive spiritual light or spiritual understanding". The word "**know**" in 1:18a is the Greek word "*oida*" which carries the thought of "**to see or perceive**"; hence, **to know**.

Up to this point, [1:18a in Paul's Letter To The Ephesian], the knowledge believers have about Jesus Christ came to them through the **6 spiritual blessings / privileges** they have **in Christ** [1:3-15].

But now, in both of his requests, Paul is saying that there is **more to be known**. **Known about what?** I believe the **additional**, and as yet unknown, **blessings / privileges** believers have in Jesus Christ.

Therefore, after pausing in 1:15-18a to pray that **wisdom, revelation and enlightenment** be given by the Holy Spirit so that believers in Christ would come to "*know Him better*", or more fully or completely, the "**parade**" of our blessings / privileges in Christ resumes.

My **last comment** on 1:15-18a is this: If Paul paused to pray, as he has, for wisdom, revelation, enlightenment, etc. we can only **wonder** what unusual, remarkable, exceptional, extraordinary, "**blessings / privileges in Christ**" remain to be **revealed to us** in 1:18b - 3:21!!!

#7 The Blessing of Hope

I [the Apostle Paul] pray that you may **know** [see or perceive] "*the hope to which God has called you*". 1:18a



W. E. Vine defines this word translated “**hope**” [Greek - *elpis*] as “the **prospect** before those who **respond** to God’s call in the gospel.”

This word “**hope**” always refers to the **future**, to **future things**, **things beyond time** that **await** believers in Jesus Christ, that is, what they **will have** or **receive** in their life **beyond the grave**.

As yet, we who believe **do not possess** our resurrected glorified bodies [Philippians 3:20-21, I Thessalonians 4:13-18]; nor have we received the address and zip code - for **occupancy** of our heavenly home [John 14:1-3]; nor have we been completely **conformed** to the moral likeness of Jesus Christ [Romans 8:29]; but **this**, [yes, and **many more things**], is our **hope**, **our assured Christian expectation**.

In Colossians 1:23 the Apostle Paul gives us this **admonition**: “*continue in your faith, established and firm, not moved from the **hope** [same Greek word - *elpis*] held out [to us] in the gospel*”, that is, “the hope of the **fulfillment** of all the promises presented [to us] in the gospel” [W. E. Vine].

In chapter 6:19 of the book of Hebrews the writer gives us this word of **encouragement**: “*we have this hope as an anchor for the soul, firm and secure*”, that is to say, “this **hope** is a **staying power** to our souls in the midst of the **storms** of this life” [W. E. Vine].

O, **praise God** for the **blessing / privilege** of **hope** - the **hope** we have in the gospel of Christ.

#8 The Blessing of Being God’s Inheritance

I [the Apostle Paul] pray that you may **know** [see, perceive or understand] “*the **riches** of God’s glorious inheritance in the saints*”. 1:18b



The “**inheritance**” spoken of in 1:18b **is not** the “*inheritance that can never perish, spoil or fade - kept in heaven for you*” [I Peter 1:4]. **Rather**, 1:18b presents the “**saints**” [believers in Jesus Christ] as **God’s inheritance**.

As His **heritage**, God wants you to **know something** - to **see** or **understand something**. That **something** is described in the word “**riches**” which speaks of **your worth** to God, what **you mean** to God, and **how precious** you are to God.

You, as a **believer** in Christ are **God’s “riches”**. You are the **greatest** of God’s **accomplishments**. You are God’s **treasured possession**.

F. F. Bruce provides this understanding about **God’s riches** in the saints. He says “that His people [the saints] **constitute** an inheritance for God, His own possession, **in whom** He will **display** to the universe the **untold riches** of His glory.”

Whether or not we accept F. F. Bruce’s understanding of 1:18b, **when would be** the most **logical time** for us **to know** [to see, perceive, or understand] the “**riches**” [the wealth, scope, or glory] of *God’s inheritance in the Saints*? **Would it not be** when the **full number** of “Saints” that comprise The Church, the Body of Christ, **is complete** [all who **believe** in Jesus Christ from the Day of Pentecost in Acts chapter 2 until Christ returns for His Church] **and is fully redeemed**?

Included in the Saints’ **full redemption** is their resurrection & rapture, [I Thessalonians 4:13-18]; their appearance at the “Bema”, the Judgment Seat of Christ [II Corinthians 5:10], their bridal adornment - “*dressed in fine linen*” prepared for “*the wedding*” and “*the wedding supper of the Lamb*” [Jesus Christ - Revelation 19:7-9] - “*as a radiant church [or bride], without stain or wrinkle or any*

other blemish, but holy and blameless” [Ephesians 5:27]; **then**, hypothetically speaking, come these familiar words “I now pronounce you husband and wife” because **the full number of “Saints”** that comprise The Church, The Body of Christ and / or The Bride of Christ, **is complete and fully redeemed**.

The next **prophetic event in chronological order** is the 2nd coming of Jesus Christ to the earth in what is called The Battle of Armageddon [Revelation 19:11 - 20:3]. **Notice**, that in descending from heaven, Jesus Christ is riding on a white horse [19:11] under the banner “*KING OF KINGS AND LORD OF LORDS*” [19:16] and following Him are “*the armies of heaven [including His Bride] riding on white horses and dressed in fine linen, white and clean*” 19:14].

Arrayed against Jesus Christ and His armies are **Satan**, the “*beast [the Antichrist], the false prophet, and the kings of the earth and their armies gathered together to make war against the rider on the horse and his army*” [19:19].

Observations from Revelation 19:11 – 20:6 [please read carefully]

- The number of participants [both sides] will be **astronomical**, in the billions.
- The “battle” will be between **good** and **evil**, between **God / Christ** and **Satan** or the devil, between **truth** and **delusion**.
- Imagine the depths of sin and ignorance, depravity and rebellion exhibited by Satan, the “beast”, the “false prophet” and the armies of the kings of the earth to **think** that they could “*make war*” against the One, True, Living, Almighty, Eternal God.
- This will be the last war or battle on our planet earth as we **presently** know it. Only those in the “*armies of heaven*” **survive**. All those in the “*opposing earthly armies*” are **destroyed** [killed] as will be **all unbelievers** living on the earth at that time.
- Christ’s victory ushers in His Millennial [1000 year] Reign, His Kingdom on the earth.

Summary: With this setting and background in mind [Revelation 19:6 - 20:6] **I would like to suggest** that Christ’s 2nd coming with the **complete number of fully redeemed “Saints”** comprising **The Church** [Christ’s Body - Christ’s Bride] is the most **appropriate time** for us to **know** [to see, perceive, or understand] the “*riches [the wealth, scope, glory; the spiritual and moral riches] of God’s inheritance in the saints*”.

As Christ **descends** from heaven with the “**saints**” [all of His saved, sanctified and glorified ones from the earth] there comes this **shout of triumph**: “These are **God’s inheritance**; These are **His heritage**; These are His **riches**; of which Satan, and his Antichrist, and his False Prophet, and the defeated armies of the earth, along with all unbelievers, **have no part**.”

Men and women, there **is coming** a wonderful glorious day that we shall never forget. It is the **day** when God **makes known** to the world “*the riches of His glorious inheritance in the saints*.”

O, praise God for This Blessing of Being God’s Glorious Inheritance.

#9 The Blessing of God’s Power

I [the Apostle Paul] pray that you may **know** [see, perceive or understand] “*God’s incomparably great power for us who believe*”. 1:19-23

Question? What **superlatives** would you use in **describing** God’s power? I probably would chose **awesome, unbelievable, or fantastic**, to name a few. The Apostle Paul selected “**incomparably**” and “**great**” and you will be **amazed** at the **depth** of their meaning. As we begin this section [1:19-23] remember, that it is **God’s power** that Paul wants us to **know** [see, perceive or understand].

This power is described in 1:19a ---



As “**God’s power** - an **inherent power** existing or residing in **God alone**.

This word “**power**” is a translation of the Greek word *dunamis*. English words whose prefix is “**dyna**”, such as, dynamic, dynasty, dynamite, and dynamo come from this word *dunamis* and all express the thought of **power related to change**.

[**Example**: Dynamo relates to changing mechanical power to electrical power.]

Therefore, **God’s power** is able to bring about **change** in your life.

Continuing to look at verse 19a, we see God’s power described as His “**great**” power. The Greek word Paul uses for “**great**” is *megathos* [greatness] which is akin to *megas* [a measure of degree or intensity]. “**Mega**”, in a **combined** form, such as Megaton or Mega Mall, shows **greatness**. “**Mega**”, as a unit of measurement, means “a **million times more** than a specified unit of measurement”.

[**Examples**: In **electrical power**, a Megawatt equals 1,000,000 watts. In **thermonuclear power**, a Megaton equals 1,000,000 tons of TNT explosive power.]

Thirdly, still in verse 19a, Paul describes God’s power as an “**incomparable**” power [Greek - *energeia*]. It is God’s **almighty** power. An immeasurable unlimited power or **energy** that if it could be measured, would have to be measured in “**Mega**” units of energy.

In his prayer for you Paul is saying, *I want you to know* that there resides in God alone unlimited dynamic **power** that will enable you to accomplish whatever God calls you **to do, to be, or to endure, or to go through** - no matter what. **PTL**

This power was demonstrated in 1:19b-21 ---

When we consider the words “*that power [just described] is like the working of God’s mighty strength which he exerted [Greek - *energeo*] in Christ*” [1:19b-20a] it means, the **exercise** of that power; to see it in **action**; to see it **demonstrated**. Paul says that God’s power was **demonstrated** in Christ in **two ways** ---

First, it was demonstrated in **Christ’s Resurrection**, as a **life giving - liberating power** [1:20a].

When Christ died, He **dismissed** His spirit or **gave up** His spirit (and soul) [John 19:30]. He **departed** from His body and went into Paradise [Luke 23:39-43]. His body died, became lifeless, and was wrapped in linen cloth like a mummy and buried [Luke 23:50-54]. But God’s **dynamic power** brought about change. On the 3rd day God exerted His **life giving power** in Christ’s **lifeless** body thereby causing Christ’s spirit and soul to **return** to His body and become **alive again**.

Now, alive again within the linen cloth wrappings within the sealed tomb, “*God exerted His liberating power in Christ and raised Him from the dead*” [1:20a]. The body of Christ **passed through** the linen cloth wrappings [John 20:1-9], **through** the earthen rock of the sealed tomb, and Jesus Christ became the **first fruits** or the **first born** out from among the dead. The **first one** to be **liberated** from the grave [death] - **never to die again**.

Secondly, Paul says that God’s power was also “**exerted**” in Christ’s **Ascension** and **Exaltation** as a **reigning - authoritative power**. This was **demonstrated** when ---

“God seated Christ at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come” [1:20b-21].

In order to **ascend** from earth to God's right hand in the heavenly realms, we must remember that Christ needed to **pass through** the territory of "*the ruler of the kingdom of the air*", none other than Satan himself [Ephesians 2:2a]. The "**air**" is sometimes referred to as the 1st heaven or the earth's atmosphere.

Colossians 2:15 is very **descriptive of the effects of the power God exerted** in Christ's death and resurrection as well as in Christ's **ascension and exaltation**.

"And having disarmed the powers and authorities, he [Christ] made a public spectacle of them, triumphing over them by the cross" [Colossians 2:15].

As we **dissect** this verse keep **two things** in mind. **First**, according to W. E. Vine, the circumstances in this verse "relate to Christ's victory over spiritual foes at the time of **His death**; accordingly [correspondingly] the reference may be to the **triumphant display** of the defeated." In other words, the verse may have reference to the **death and resurrection** as well as the **ascension and exaltation** of Christ. **Secondly**, keep in mind that "**powers and authorities**" refer to **demonic spiritual powers**.

With that in mind I would like to direct your attention to the words "**disarmed**" and "**spectacle**".

"**Disarmed**" [Colossians 2:15] is a translation of the Greek word *apekdyomai*. W. E. Vine associates this word with the **death and resurrection** of Christ. The following are his comments about this word from his Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words.

"There is no doubt that Satan and his hosts gathered together to attack the soul of Christ while He was enduring, in propitiatory sacrifice, the judgment due to our sins and fulfilling the great work of redemption."

"It [the word disarmed] seems to stand simply as a **vivid description** of Christ's repulsion of their attack and of **the power** by which He **completely, overthrew them**."

"**Spectacle**" is a translation of the Greek word *deigmatizo* and means "to make a show of" or "to expose". W. E. Vine associates this word with the **ascension and exaltation** of Christ to the Father's right hand. The following are his comments about this word.

The "**public spectacle**" [Colossians 2:15] was "the triumphant display of the defeated". In this **public spectacle**, Christ showed or exposed "the true inferiority of demonic angelic beings". When passing through the air, the territory of "*the ruler of the kingdom of the air*", "Christ displayed the principalities and powers [demonic angelic beings] as a victor displays his captives or trophies in a triumphal procession".

Thus, "God's **incomparably great power was exerted in Christ** when He **seated Christ** at His right hand in the heavenly realms, **far above all**." ---

RULE	AUTHORITY	POWER	DOMINION	and EVERY TITLE
Government	Power	Might	Lordship	Name
Principality				
ARCHE	DUNAMIS	DUNAMIS	KURIOTES	ONOMA

Remember, in 1:20b-21, the "**titles**" Rule, Authority, Power, and Dominion refer to **demonic angelic beings**, and "**every title**" to **anything** that can be **given or named** whether in this **present age** or in the **age to come**, and **JESUS CHRIST IS FAR ABOVE ALL** of them.

This power is declared to be ---

- *“For us who believe”* [1:19a].
“I [the Apostle Paul] pray also” [1:18a] --- *“that you may know”* [1:18b] --- *“God’s incomparably great power for us who believe”* [1:19a].

There is **no question** that if you are a **genuine believer** in Jesus Christ, this **power** that Paul has **described** as “God’s power” and which God **demonstrated** when He raised Christ from the dead and seated Him in the heavenly realms and **declared** to be “**for us who believe**” [24/7 - 24 hours a day 7 days a week without interruption] **is for you**.

However, **to experience** God’s **exercise** of His incomparably great power in the varied problems and complicated situations we face in our individual lives and for which we have no answers or ability to solve, we must keep **three things** in mind: **Faith, God’s Will, and God’s Timing**.

Faith --- God’s power is always there *“for us who believe”* that is, for us who have trusted Jesus Christ to be our Lord and Savior. But His power is only **exercised** in our varied problems and situations, **if** and / or **when** we believe Him. That is, when in faith we **seek** or **call** upon God and **lay before Him** that for which we are helpless to solve.

For “Without faith it is impossible to please God, because anyone who comes to him must believe that he exists and that he rewards those who earnestly seek him” [Hebrews 11:6].

God’s Will --- You will notice that when God “**exerted**” his power in Christ in his resurrection and ascension, that it was **God’s will to do so**, for God had **made known** His will **before** these events **happened**.

“You [Father] will not abandon me [God’s Son] to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay” [Acts 2:25-28]. *“Destroy this temple, [Christ speaking of His body] and I will raise it again in three days”* [John 2:19-22].

“I [Jesus Christ] came from the Father and entered the world; now I am leaving the world and going back to the Father” [John 16:28]. *“I have told you now before it happens, so that when it does happen you will believe”* [John 14:28-29].

So it is with us who believe. We must remember that **it is not** “our will be done” but **it is** “God’s will be done”. God **exerts** or **demonstrates** His power in the varied problems and complicated situations of our individual lives **according to His will**.

“This is the confidence we have in approaching God: that if we ask anything according to His will, he hears us. And if we know that he hears us - whatever we ask - we know that we have what we asked of him” [I John 5:14-15].

God’s Timing --- You will **also notice** that there were **40 days** between Christ’s resurrection and his ascension. **Why the delay?** In order to **erase all doubt** *“that God hath raised Christ from the dead”* [Acts 2:22-24].

“After his suffering, he showed himself to these men [The 12 Apostles] and gave many convincing proofs that he was alive. He appeared to them over a period of forty days and spoke about the kingdom of God” [Acts 1:3].

“He appeared to Peter, then to the twelve. After that, he appeared to more than five hundred of the brothers at the same time, most of who are still living, though some have fallen asleep” [I Corinthians 15:3-8].

In the case of Abraham, there were **25 years of waiting** between God’s promise of a son and the birth of Isaac. **Why the delay? Why this interval of time?** In order to give Abraham time to **believe God’s promise** and to be **sure** of his and Sarah’s **inability** to bear children. In other words, to be sure that Isaac could only be born according to **God’s timing / power**. [See Genesis 18:10-14]

*“Without weakening in his faith, Abraham faced the fact that his body was as good as dead - since he was about one hundred years old - and that Sarah’s womb was also dead. Yet he did not waver through unbelief regarding the promise of God, but was strengthened in his faith and gave glory to God, being fully persuaded that **God had power to do what he had promised**”* [Romans 4:19-21].

*“And so, after waiting patiently, Abraham received what was **promised**”* [Hebrews 6:15]. That’s what **you** also **must do**. After trusting God to do His will in your particular situation, then wait patiently for **Him** to exercise His power.

- **This power is declared to be - “For the Church, the Body of Christ.”**

“And God placed all things under Christ’s feet and appointed him to be head over everything for the church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills everything in every way”.

Ephesians 1:22-23

As we endeavor to unravel the meaning of these two verses [1:22-23], let’s begin with a statement from the author, F. F. Bruce. He states that these verses reveal “**the implications of Christ’s exaltation for those who are members of His body**” [the church].

The word “**church**” [Greek - *ekklesia*], as used in verse 22, **is not** the **local church**, that is, a church in a certain geographical location. Rather, it refers to the **Universal Church** or the Universal Body of Christ which is composed of born-again believers in Jesus Christ from **every nation** or ethnic group on earth.

Now then, **what are the implications of Christ’s exaltation**, [His ascension and being seated at the Father’s right hand in the heavenly realms], **for His Church?** The **implications** are seen in **Christ’s power, position, and fullness**.

Christ’s Power / Authority

“Christ is far above all rule and authority, power and dominion, and every title that can be given, not only in this present age but also in the one to come” [Ephesians 1:21)].

“God has placed all things under Christ’s feet” [Ephesians 1:22a].

Christ’s Position

“God appointed Christ to be head over everything for the church, which is his body.”

Ephesians 1:22b-23a

Christ is the **supreme** [pre-eminent] **head** over His body, The Church, from whom the **other parts** of His body derive their life and power.

Christ’s Fullness

Christ is the one, “*who fills everything in every way*” [Ephesians 1:23b].

“For in Christ all the fullness [completeness] of the Deity lives in bodily form, and you [Christ’s body] have been given fullness [completeness] in Christ” [Colossians 2:9-10a].

The following is a **meaningful and concise outline** of these **implications**.

God gave Him [Christ] ---

The One **seated** in the heavenly realms
The One who is **far above all**;
The One **under whose feet** all things have been placed;
The One who is the **Supreme Head** over everything;
The One in whom dwells **all the fullness** of God;
The One who **fills everything** in every way;

God gave Him for the church.

This **Exalted Christ**, in **all the fullness** of His power / authority, is **God's gift** to the church, which is His body.

What then does that **imply** to us **who believe**, to us that **are members** of Christ's body? It **implies**, that "*His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness*" [II Peter 1:3a] as well as for the **accomplishment** of the church's mission, i. e., the **evangelization** of the world --- because, "*All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to Christ. Therefore go and make disciples of all nations --- and surely I am with you always*" [Matthew 28:18-20]. **PTL**

There is **one more thought** in 1:23 that needs **clarification**. It is the thought of the church or the body of Christ as "*the fullness of Christ*". In this verse the word translated "**fullness**" [Greek - *pleroma*] expresses the thought of the church as being the **completeness** or **complement** of Christ, the concept of which is somewhat difficult to grasp. Someone has explained it in this manner:

*"As we, the church, the spiritual body of Christ, are complete through Christ - 'the head over everything for the church', ---
So we, the church, the spiritual body of Christ, so complement the Head that we are 'His completeness or fullness'."*

In other words, the **Head** of the church, Jesus Christ **energizes** His spiritually gifted body [the church] through His power and authority, thus, giving the church **fullness** or **completion**. **In turn**, these spiritually gifted energized members of His body **accomplish** His will in the world, thus, **complementing** or **completing** their Head, Jesus Christ. **What an amazing truth!**

**O, Praise God For The Blessing of His Power For Us Who Believe;
For Us Who Comprise The Church - The Body of Christ.**

#10 The Blessing of a Salvation As a Free Gift of God's Grace

"For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not of works, so that no one can boast." 2:1-10

Before you or I, or anyone else, can **fathom** the blessing of being "**saved**" or "**delivered**" by **God's matchless grace**, we need to be **reminded** of the **depths** and **consequences** of sin from which we have been **rescued**. That's the Apostle Paul's **approach** or **purpose** as he begins his teaching about "The Blessing of Salvation" here in Ephesians chapter two.

In his book, "Galatians and Ephesians", Lehman Strauss explains this same truth in this way: "The clearer the picture of our **destitute condition** before we were saved, the **greater** is our **appreciation** of what God has undertaken to do for us" [our blessings].

Mr. Strauss continues by **comparing** sin and its consequences in 2:1-3 to “**Three ravaging forces** - The world, the devil, and the sinful nature”. These are the dominant, devastating forces that bring mankind to **spiritual ruin**.

In these same verses [2:1-3], the Apostle Paul **reminds** those in Ephesus, as well as all of us, of the depths and consequences of sin by **revealing** the **ungodly conditions** that existed in **our lives** prior to our **salvation** or **deliverance** through Jesus Christ.

We Were Once Dead 2:1-3



[1] “*As for you, you were dead in your transgressions and sins, [2] in which you used to live when you followed the ways of this world and of the ruler of the kingdom of the air, the spirit who is now at work in those who are disobedient.*”

[3] *All of us also lived among them at one time, gratifying the cravings of our sinful nature and following its desires and thoughts. Like the rest, we were by nature objects of wrath”* [2:1-3].

The following is a deeper understanding of the **ungodly condition** that existed in “**you**” [1-2], and “**in all of us**” [3] prior to our “salvation” or “deliverance”.

- **It is Defined As:** [2:1-2a]

Being “**spiritually dead**” or “**spiritually separated**” from God; “The natural man is **dead**. He is separated from God because the **life-cord** has been severed”. Lehman Strauss

Living in transgressions and sins. Both words suggest acts against God’s established ways.

The plural indicates repetition - which implies **habitual sin**, or a **state of living in sin**.

The **absence** of oneness or union, contact or communication, with the Living God.

- **It is Depicted As:** [2:2b]

Following the ways of **this world** [Greek - *kosmos*] “the present condition of human affairs, in alienation from and in opposition to God” - His Word and Will. W. E. Vine

Following the ways of **the ruler** of the kingdom of the air [Satan / Devil, the god of this age] - who “*has blinded the minds of unbelievers, so that they cannot see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ*” [II Corinthians 4:4].

Following the **spirit** [of the evil one - Satan] who is **at work** [Greek - *energeo*] **actively promoting** in mankind a **lifestyle** of disobedience and rebellion towards God.

- **It is Described As:** [2:3]

Gratifying or fulfilling [Greek - *poieo*, “to do”] the **lustful cravings** of our sinful natures, by willfully following [Greek - *poieo*, “doing”] its evil thoughts and desires.

Being objects of God’s wrath / judgment:

There are **three kinds of death**, all of which are **judgments** imposed by God upon mankind. In the garden of Eden, **spiritual death** [the separation of mans’ spirit and soul from God] and **physical death** [the separation of mans’ spirit and soul from his body] were imposed by God upon Adam’s sin of disobedience / unbelief [Genesis 2:15-17; 3:1-19] and thus, upon all mankind [Romans 5:12-14; I Corinthians 15:21-22]. **Eternal death**, [the eternal separation of mans’ spirit, soul and body from God] is imposed by God upon all unbelievers [John 3:16-21] and those who willfully suppress the truth God has revealed to them [Romans 1:18-20]. without hope; and without **any means within ourselves** to escape God’s judgments of death.

In our **pre-salvation condition**, we were separated from God’s saving grace in Jesus Christ; were without hope; and **without any means within ourselves** to escape God’s judgments of death.

We Are Now Alive 2:4-7

[4] “*But because of his great love for us, God who is rich in mercy [5] made us alive with Christ even when we were dead in transgressions - it is by grace you have been saved. [6] And God raised us up with Christ and seated us with him in the heavenly realms in Christ, [7] in order that in the coming ages he might show the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus*” [2:4-7].

In verse 4, the conjunction “**but**” introduces **God’s actions** towards sinners, **in contrast** to their plight in verses 1-3.

“These words, ‘**but God**’ [KJV], mark the **turning point** of man’s destiny. Without **God’s intervention** all would still be dead, separated, doomed.” Lehman Strauss

Question: Why did God intervene in mans’ plight?

God intervened “*because of his great love [Greek - *agape*] for us*” [2:4].

W. E. Vine’s explanation of the word “**love**” as it is embodied in the Greek word “**agape**” is simply tremendous.

He says that “Love can be known only from the actions it prompts. God’s love is seen in the gift of His Son, I John 4:9, 10. But obviously this is not the love of complacency, or affection, that is, it was not drawn out by any excellency in its objects, Romans 5:8. It was the exercise of the divine will in deliberate choice, made without assignable cause save that which lies in the nature of God Himself.”

“It [God’s intervention] expresses the deep and constant love and interest of a Perfect Being towards entirely unworthy objects.” W. E. Vine - Expository Dictionary of Biblical Words

God intervened “*because of his mercy*” - for us [2:4].

Mercy is “God’s exercise of pity and compassion [to suffer with] upon a sinner with a **forbearance** he **does not** deserve”.

“Love begat mercy [God **not giving** us what we **do** deserve - wrath, judgment], and mercy begat grace [God **giving** what we **do not** deserve - salvation, forgiveness].” Lehman Strauss

“God’s intervention allows believers to share the same experiences **spiritually** that the Lord Jesus did **physically** in 1:19-23.” Lehman Strauss

Now, as we look **particularly at verses 5-6**, there are some things to keep in mind.

To begin with, keep in mind that the “**us**” in verses 4-7 has reference to both **believing Jews** and **believing Gentiles**.

Also, when the Apostle Paul speaks of our being “made alive”; “raised up”; and “seated in the heavenly realms”, he is speaking of **Spiritual** or **Positional Truth**. As Christ was “made alive”, “raised up”, and “seated in the heavenly realms” in His recognizable, resurrected body, so we, by virtue of being “**in Christ**” or “**belonging to Christ**”, are **spiritually** or **positionally** “made alive”, “raised up” and “seated in the heavenly realms” **with Him**.

Now, let’s examine these **spiritual / positional truths**.

- **God made us alive with Christ** [2:5].

In Christ or through their relationship with Christ, believers in Christ have been given **spiritual life**. A **new life** united with or in union with God. A life never **possessed** or **experienced** before.

In verse 2:5, the verb, “*have been saved*”, is in the perfect tense which expresses the **present permanent state** as a result of a past action. Because believers **have been made** spiritually alive with Christ, they **have been and are saved**.

- **God raised us up with Christ** [2:6a].

Believers in Christ have been spiritually raised up with Christ in order to walk or live in **newness of life** [Romans 6:4]; a new life with a new set of moral values [Romans 6:11-13].

- **God seated us with Christ in the heavenly realms** [2:6b].

By virtue of being in Christ or belonging to Christ, believers have also **been seated** with Christ in the heavenly realms. In that position, they, being in Christ, are along with Him “*far above all --- every title [or name] that can be given*” [Ephesians 1:21]. In that position, we, being in Christ, share in Christ’s victory over sin, death, and the spiritual forces of evil. O what a **blessing** to have as we live out our earthly lives “**in Christ**”, and what an **assurance** in our time of need.

Remember, it was because of God’s “*great love for us*” [2:4a] and “*the riches of his mercy*” [2:4b] and “*grace*” [2:5] that, **in or with Christ**, he “made us alive, raised us up, and seated us in the heavenly realms. Now, in verse 2:7, Paul says that God did this “*In order that in the coming ages [age upon age upon age] he might show [something]*”. That something is “*the incomparable riches of his grace, expressed in his kindness to us in Christ Jesus*” [2:7].

The following are F. F. Bruce’s comments on verse 2:7:

“In the limitless future, as age succeeds age, the **crowning display of God’s grace** will ever be His kindness to His redeemed people, not simply in pardoning their sins, but in raising them up to **share** the place which Christ occupies by right in the heavenly sphere.”

“If the raising of Christ from death to sit at His own right hand is the **supreme demonstration of God’s power** [1:19-20], the raising of the people of Christ from spiritual death to share Christ’s place of exaltation is the **supreme demonstration of His grace**.”

H. S. Miller adds this comment:

“We are to be **monuments**, in the coming ages, of the exceeding, surpassing riches of **God’s grace and kindness**.”

The songwriter, H. G. Spafford, has said, “Lord haste the day when **my faith shall be sight**”. At present, **by faith** we believe that God has seated us with Christ in the heavenly realms. This is our **spiritual position**, our **spiritual blessing**, in Christ. But imagine what it will be like when **in actual experience**, our faith [our spiritual position] “shall be” or “become” **sight** [our actual experience of being seated with Christ throughout the ages to come]. **PTL**

Our Great Salvation 2:8-10

[8] “*For it is by grace you have been saved, through faith - and this not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - [9] not of works, so that no one can boast. [10] For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do*” [2:8-10].

- **The concept of salvation**

“*It is by grace --- through faith*” [2:8a].

Grace - New Covenant or New Testament salvation **springs forth from God’s grace**. Grace is its **basis or foundation**. It is a salvation **bestowed by God’s grace** in and through the merits of Christ’s **atoning sacrifice** for our sins.

Faith - Faith, is “**believing God**” [Genesis 15:1-6 with Romans 4:16-22]. Faith [believing God] is the **means** by which man **receives** or **appropriates** God’s grace / salvation [John 1:11-12].

“Faith issues from the inward work of the Holy Spirit, illuminating the heart to appropriate the love of God revealed in Christ dying for the ungodly.” William Childs Robinson

- **The source of salvation**

“This is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God - not by works, so that no one can boast”
[2:8b-9].

The word “**this**” refers back to the **concept** of a salvation by grace through faith.

This concept of salvation does **not** have its **source** in man. It is **not of** or **from ourselves**. It is **not** of **human effort** or **human works**.

This concept of a salvation by grace through faith has its **source** in God. It is a **gift of God**.

In this **concept** of salvation, “**no one can boast**” except as they “boast in the Lord”.

I Corinthians 1:30-31

Question: What if salvation **could be obtained** through **good works** [which most probably the majority of people on our planet believe] - **what then?** There would be **utter spiritual chaos**. **Who or what would determine the type or kind of works and the number of them required for any one particular sin to be forgiven**, whether a sin of omission or commission?

Praise God, in His sovereignty He has decreed that salvation **is not** because of **our works** or the righteous things **we do**, - it is because of **His mercy** [Titus 3:4-5] --- so that, being justified by His grace, we might have the hope of eternal life [Titus 3:7].

[See further **illustration** and **explanation** of Ephesians 2:8 on page 34]

- **The purpose of salvation**

“For we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do” [2:10].

Having established that salvation or deliverance from sin **is not by works**, the Apostle Paul is quick to point out that our salvation **is unto good works**.

Believers in Jesus Christ are **God’s workmanship**, which has reference to things **God has made** or **created**. God is the **craftsman** and believers in Jesus Christ are **His** work of art, **His** masterpiece, **His** new spiritual creation in Christ Jesus.

Believers are created in Christ to do God’s “**prepared in advance**” or “**foreordained**” works. Some of these works will be revealed by Paul in **Part Two** of Ephesians, chapters 4-5. They are **encompassed in thoughts** or **statements** such as:

“I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received” [4:1];

“You were taught, with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self — and to put on the new self, created to be like God in true righteousness and holiness” [4:22-24];

“Be very careful, then, how you live” [5:15];

“Be imitators of God” [5:10].

Believers in Christ who live or walk by these prepared or foreordained works do so, not in order to be saved by doing them, but to **give evidence** of the power of a new life operating in them.

#11 THE BLESSING of CITIZENSHIP 2:11-22

Introduction

For a moment, put yourself in the “shoes” of an Israelite or Jew at the beginning of the New Testament Era, and more particularly in the shoes of those who lived in Ephesus in about 52 A.D.



They traced their **biological ancestry** back to Abraham [who entered Canaan in 2090 B.C.], to Isaac [born in 2065 B.C.], and Jacob [born in 2005 B.C.] and his 12 sons. They also traced their **spiritual heritage** to the **covenant** given by God to **Abraham** a little over 2000 years ago, [Genesis 12:1-3, 22:15-18] and which was confirmed to Isaac [Genesis 26:1-6] and Jacob [Genesis 28:10-15]; and to the **Covenant of Law** given to them by God through Moses at Mount Sinai in 1445 B.C.; and to the **promised New Covenant** [Jeremiah 31:31-34 in 627-574 B.C.] in which “*God would forgive their wickedness and remember their sins no more*”.

It was through this people [as the writers of the Old Testament Scriptures] that God revealed Himself to mankind. In God’s own words, “*out of all the peoples on the face of the earth, they were His chosen people, His treasured possession*” [Deuteronomy 7:6] whom “*He guarded as the apple of His eye*” [Deuteronomy 32:10].

Now, however, that **particular “offspring”** or “**seed**” promised in God’s Covenant with Abraham [Genesis 12:7, 13:15-16, 24:7] **had come**. The “**seed**” or that “**one person**” is **Christ** the Messiah [Galatians 3:16] through whom “*all peoples on earth will be blessed*” [Genesis 12:1-3]. This blessing **began** with the inauguration of the New Covenant at the Feast of Pentecost in Jerusalem in 33 A.D. when 3000 Jews “*repented and were baptized in [into] the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of their sins*” [Acts 2:37-38]. This New Covenant message of “*redemption and forgiveness through Christ’s blood*” [Ephesians 1:7] was **proclaimed in Ephesus** through the Apostle Paul, Priscilla and Aquila, and Apollos [Acts 18:18-28]. **When many --- both Jews & Greeks [Gentiles], believed** the message [Acts 19:17-20] it prompted **thoughts, discussions and questions** such as:

“What **relationship** can believing Gentiles [with no Godly spiritual heritage] **have** with believing Jews [with their 2000 year spiritual heritage]?” “Is not their spiritual heritage **evidence** that Covenant Jews [through whom the Messiah came] are **spiritually superior** to Gentiles?” Therefore, “will not Covenant Jews have the **predominant place** and Gentiles a **lesser place** [as second class citizens] in any relationship they may have in the Commonwealth of Israel?”

In Ephesians 2:11-22, The Apostle Paul **expounds** how these two **diverse entities**, [believing Jews and believing Gentiles], have become, in and through Jesus Christ, **equal** fellow citizens in **one new body**. [See also Galatians 3:26-29.] Paul does so by using a **trilogy** or a **triad**, [a set of three related ideas], i.e., **before, at, and after** the cross.

Before The Cross 2:11-12 [“What Gentiles Once Were”]

“Therefore, remember that formerly you were Gentiles by birth and called ‘uncircumcised’ by those that call themselves ‘the circumcision’ - that done in the body by the hands of man - [12] remember that at that time you were separate from Christ, excluded from citizenship in Israel and foreigners to the covenants of promise, without hope and without God in the world”. 2:11-12

THE GENTILES

Formerly [before the cross], Gentiles were called “uncircumcised” [having no “**mark**” of inclusion in the Abrahamic Covenant, nor the Covenant of Law] by “the circumcision” [those having the “**mark**” of inclusion] and were **described** in verse 2:12 as:

- **Christ-less** ---- spiritually **dead** or spiritually **separated** from Christ.
- **Homeless** ---- excluded from the **rights of citizenship** in the commonwealth of Israel.
- **Promise-less** - a stranger or foreigner to the **covenants of promise**.
- **Hopeless** ----- without an **assured future expectation** or hope beyond the grave.
- **Godless** ----- without **God** in the world.
- **Summary** ---- Gentiles are "*far away*" from God [2:13]

THE BARRIER 2:14-15

Formerly [before the cross], there was also the "*barrier*" or "*the dividing wall of hostility*" which separated Jews from Gentiles. The King James Version of the Bible translates it as "*the middle wall of partition*" which caused "*enmity*" [the opposite of *agape* love] between Jews and Gentiles.

Metaphorically, the "*barrier*" most probably refers to a **five foot high barrier or wall** in Herod's Temple separating the Court of the Gentiles from the Court of the Jews or the inner courts of the Temple into which **only** Jewish worshipers might enter and to which notices were affixed in Greek and Latin, warning Gentiles to **keep out** on pain of death. [See Acts 21:17-32]

[Note: Herod's Temple, where the ceremonial rites of the Law were performed, was still standing in Jerusalem & its ceremonial rites still operational when Paul wrote his "Letter To The Ephesians". The Temple was not destroyed until 70 A.D.]

In reality, the word "*barrier*" or "*the dividing wall*" [a translation of the Greek word *phragmos*] means, "to fence in" and has reference to the **commandments and regulations** of **The Law** given by God through Moses at Mount Sinai. Paul says that this "*barrier*" or "*wall*" caused "*hostility*" that is, it made **enemies** of and caused **hatred** between Jews and Gentiles. How so? By "**fencing in**" or "**shutting in**" the Jews [the circumcision] to the Covenant of Law, and conversely, "**shutting out**" the Gentiles [the uncircumcised] from inclusion in the same covenant.

Remember, we are speaking of what it was like – "**before the cross**".

At that time **the Israelites** or **Jews** were awaiting the coming of the Messiah [the Christ] and the inauguration of their promised **New Covenant** [Jeremiah 31:31-34]. When that happens, they would be "*released from the law* [the Old Covenant of Law] *in order to serve in the new way of the Spirit*, [the New Covenant] *and not in the old way of the written code*" [Romans 7:1-6].

Likewise, **The Gentiles** were awaiting the promised "offspring" or "seed" of Abraham through whom all nations [Gentiles] would "**be blessed**" [Genesis 12:3]. The "offspring" or "seed" is **Christ** [Galatians 3:16] who was also prophesied to be "*a light for the Gentiles*" [Isaiah 49:6 and Acts 13:47]. When Christ's coming happens, all those who accept Jesus of Nazareth as the Christ [Gentiles and Jews alike] would become "**sons of God**" [Galatians 3:26], and "**heirs**" together of the promise given to Abraham [Galatians 3:29].

At The Cross 2:13-18 ["What Christ did for **both** believing **Jews** and believing **Gentiles**."]

"But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far away have been brought near through the blood of Christ. [14] For he himself is our peace, who has made the two one and has destroyed the barrier, the dividing wall of hostility, [15] by abolishing in his flesh the law with its commandments and regulations. His purpose was to create in himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace, [16] and in this one body to reconcile both of them to God through the cross, by which he put to death their hostility. [17] He came and preached peace to you who were far away [Gentiles] and peace to those who were near [Jews]. [18] For through him we both [Jew and Gentile] have access to the Father by one Spirit" [2:13-18].

The Apostle Paul begins this **second part** of his “trilogy” with a statement of fact. “*In Christ you [Gentiles] who were once far away [spiritually separated from God and His Covenants] have been brought near [to God & the New Covenant] through the blood of Christ*” **shed on the cross** [2:13].

In verses, 2:14-18, the Apostle Paul gives **the details** of how this was **made possible**, not only with regard to the **Gentiles**, but also as it regards the **Jews**. Paul begins by saying that **at the cross**:

- Christ “**destroyed**”, demolished or broke down, [Greek – *lyo*] “**the dividing wall of hostility**” or the “**barrier**” which symbolized the commandments and regulations of the Law and which separated Jew from Gentile. Christ did this “**in His flesh**”, that is, while dying for the sins of both Jew and Gentile on the cross, and thereby, “**abolished**” or reduced to inactivity [Greek – *katargeo*] “**the law with its commandments and regulations**” as well as the “**hostility**” [the enmity or hatred] between Jew and Gentile [2:14b-15a].
W. E. Vine sums up this truth with this brief statement: “By the death of Christ the **barrier** between Jew and Gentile is rendered **inoperative** as such.”
- Christ’s primary purpose in “**abolishing**” the law was to “**create**” [Greek – *ktizo*] in himself “**one new man out of the two**”, that is, making **the two**, Jew and Gentile, **one** [2:14-15].
F. F. Bruce states that “the new man --- is the Christian community viewed corporately”.
[The Apostle Paul will give us more understanding of this truth in 2:19-22 and in chapter three.]
- Now, “**in this one body**”, Christ “**reconciled both Jew and Gentile to God through the cross**” [2:16]. The word “**reconcile**” [Greek - *apokatallasso*] means “**to change** from one condition to another”. In reconciling Jew and Gentile to God, Christ **removed** all enmity [hatred] and **left no impediment** to unity and peace.
- In 2:13-18, there are yet **two more results** emanating from Christ and His blood shed on the cross.
The **first** is “**peace**” [Greek - *eirene*]. As used in verses 2:14 [Christ is our peace], 15 [Christ made peace], and 17 [Christ proclaimed peace], “**peace**” means that **through Christ** “a harmonized relationship between God and man exists”, and in this context [2:13-18], “a harmonized relationship between Jew and Gentile” **now exists**.
- The **second result** is “**access**” [Greek - *prosagoge*]. In verse 2:18 “**access**” carries the thought of “**freedom** to enter through the assistance or favor of another”. As it relates to **both Jew and Gentile**, it means “that through Christ and the Holy Spirit **we both** have access unto the Father”, i.e., a means or way of approach into the very presence of God.

In summary: At the cross Christ **abolished** the law, making it **inoperative**, and thereby **releasing** the Jew from its obligations [its commandments and regulations]. Christ **purpose** was to **create** one new man out of Jew and Gentile, thus, ending the **hostility** between them; bringing **peace** or a harmonized relationship to them; and provide both with **access** to the very presence of God.

After The Cross 2:19-22 [“What Believing **Gentiles**, along with believing **Jews**, are now.”]
“*Consequently, you are no longer foreigners and aliens, but fellow citizens with God’s people and members of God’s household, [20] built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, with Christ Jesus himself as the chief cornerstone. [21] In him the whole building is joined together and rises to become a holy temple in the Lord. [22] And in him you too are being built together to become a dwelling in which God lives by his Spirit*” [2:19-22].

Previously, the Apostle Paul revealed what Gentiles “**once were**” - that is [compared to Jews], what their **status** or **position** was with God **Before The Cross** and how God dealt with “what they once were” **At The Cross**.

Now, at the onset of the **third part** of his trilogy Paul begins with the word “**consequently**” [2:19] in order to **emphasize the effect** Christ’s death had in relation to what Gentiles “**once were**” and what they “**are now**”, **After The Cross**. Paul begins by saying that:

Because Christ destroyed the “**barrier**” thereby abolishing the law with its commandments and regulations; created “**one new man**” out of the two [Jew and Gentile]; “**reconciled**” both unto God; made “**peace**” between them; and provided “**access**” unto God for both of them;

- Believing Gentiles “*are no longer foreigners*” [strangers] “*and aliens*” [sojourners – one who lives nearby, like a neighbor, but not in the same house]. 2:19
- Believing Gentiles are “*fellow citizens with God’s people*” [possessing the **same** citizenship as believing Jews with all the rights of said citizenship]. 2:19
- Believing Gentiles “*are members of God’s household*” or family. They live in the same house with God. They belong to the household of the redeemed. 2:19
- **Metaphorically**, believing Gentiles are referred to as “**a building**” [2:21], “**a holy temple**” [2:21], and “**a dwelling**” [2:22]. These **are not** three different structures, but “**one building** in which believers in Jesus Christ [Gentiles and Jews alike] rise to become a **holy temple**, a **dwelling** in which God lives by His Spirit”. 2:22

Illustration:

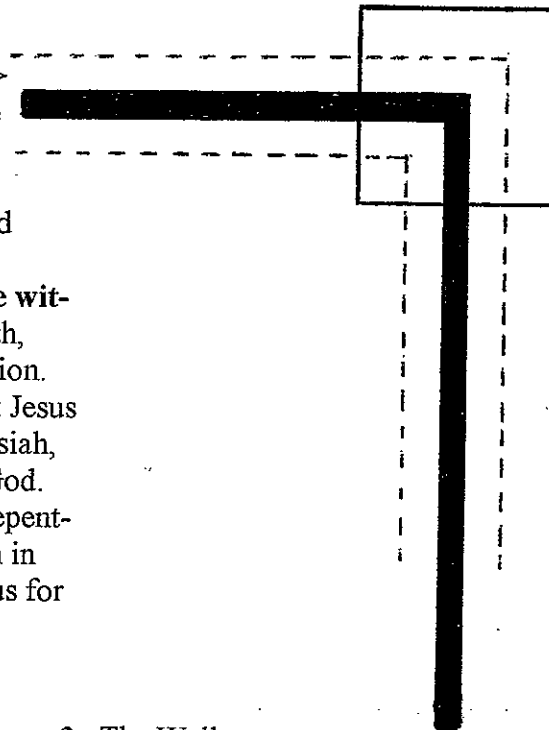
2. The Foundation >>>

The “**aggregate**” in the foundation is a mixture composed of the New Testament **Apostles** and **Prophets**.

The Apostles were “**eye witnesses**” of Christ’s death, resurrection and ascension.

The first to **believe** that Jesus Of Nazareth is the Messiah, the Christ, the Son of God.

The first to **proclaim** repentance, faith, and baptism in or into the name of Jesus for the forgiveness of sins.



>>> **1. The Chief Cornerstone**
Christ is the Chief Cornerstone, the **external angle** upon which the whole building is **squared up** or **lined up** so that all materials used in its construction are properly **joined** [fitted or framed] **together** Throughout the whole structure.

As cornerstones were laid So as to give strength to the two walls with which they were connected, so Christ **unites Jew & Gentile** in **one body** or **one building**, The Church.

3. The Walls

As Jews and Gentiles [“*the living stones*” – I Peter 2:5] **are added**, the building **rises** to become a **Holy Temple** [Sanctuary] in the Lord. The whole building [or The Church] as well as the individual stones are **indwelt** by God through the agency of the **Holy Spirit**.

The word “**temple**” [Sanctuary] is a translation of the Greek word *naos* which refers to **the place or location where God dwells** among His people.

In the **Old Covenant**, that **one place or location** was called by **several names**: The Tent of Meeting, The Tabernacle, The Sanctuary, The Holy Place, and The Holy of Holies. God **manifested** His presence through a cloud by day and a pillar of fire by night that hovered over this Holy place [see Exodus chapter 40]. Later, King Solomon built **The Temple** in Jerusalem which incorporated all the material furnishings mentioned in Exodus chapter 40, and, until the time of the New Covenant, this temple was God’s dwelling place among His people.

In the **New Covenant**, the place or location of the “*naos*”, that is, where **God dwells** among His people, **is different**, as is the **manifestation of God’s presence**. In the New Covenant the “*naos*” [the Temple or Sanctuary] is the **believer in Jesus Christ** and the **assurance of God’s presence** with the believer is the **indwelling Holy Spirit**.

There are **two applications** of this truth along with **warnings / admonitions** concerning **abusing** God’s Temple that we need to heed.

- The **individual** believer indwelt by God the Spirit is the “*naos*”, the Temple or Sanctuary of God.

“Do you not know that your body is a temple [naos] of the Holy Spirit, who is in you, whom you have received from God” [I Corinthians 6:19].

As believers in Jesus Christ, God has promised that the Holy Spirit will be in us forever [John 14:16]. That’s 24 / 7 **from** the time we personally trusted Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior **until** the end of our earthly life. **What a solemn thought**. Partly, it means that wherever **we go**, whatever **we do**, however **we act**, the Holy Spirit has to “**suffer**” or “**bear**” with us. It shames me to think how many times I have personally **grieved Him** [Ephesians 4:30]. How about you?

Warnings / Admonitions:

Is it any wonder then that the Apostle Paul gives us the following warnings / admonitions?

“Do you not know that your bodies are members of Christ himself? Shall I then take the members of Christ and unite them with a prostitute? Never! --- Flee from sexual immorality” [I Corinthians 6:15-18].

“Do not be yoked together with unbelievers.”

For we are the temple of the living God. As God has said: “I will live with them and walk among them, and I will be their God, and they will be my people.” “Therefore come out from among them and be separate, says the Lord. Touch no unclean thing, and I will receive you.” “I will be a Father to you, and you will be my sons and daughters, says the Lord Almighty.” [II Corinthians 6:14-18].

- The **local body of believers collectively**, such as, “*the church of God in Corinth*” or “*the saints in Ephesus*” [when they are **assembled** for instruction and worship], is the “*naos*”, the Temple or Sanctuary of God.

“Don’t you know that you yourselves [plural, collectively] are God’s temple [naos] and that God’s Spirit lives in you?” I Corinthians 3:16

Warning:

“If anyone destroys God’s temple, God will destroy him; for God’s temple is sacred, and you are that temple” [I Corinthians 3:17].

“*Phtheiro*” is the Greek word translated “**destroys**” and “**destroy**” in I Corinthians 3:17.

In this context, “it **signifies** to destroy by means of **corrupting**, and so bringing into a worse state; it is used of marring a local church by leading it away from that condition of holiness of life and purity of doctrine in which it should abide, and of God’s retributive destruction of the offender who is guilty of this sin.” W. E. Vine [See also II Peter 2:12]

O, The Blessing of Citizenship! To think that you and I [Gentiles] who were once **excluded** have been **included** as **fellow citizens** with God’s people [Israel] having, through faith in Jesus Christ, been **transformed** by God into “*living stones*” perfectly shaped and unblemished and placed in the walls of God’s building, temple, or dwelling [The Church] according to His will or desired plan for us. **There, to function for the glory of God.**

#12 THE INHERENT BLESSINGS IN UNDERSTANDING “THE CHURCH” 3:1-13

Introduction 3:1

One of the great struggles of New Testament Believers was over The Law of Moses and circumcision in relation to salvation or a person’s acceptance by God. Acts 15:1, 5



It was this struggle that paved the way for convening the first Church Council in Jerusalem as recorded in Acts 15:2, 6. The Apostle Peter [Acts 15:7-11] and the Apostle Paul and Barnabas [15:12] were the main spokesmen. The Council’s decision was rendered through James [15:13-21], the brother of our Lord Jesus [Mark 6:3; Galatians 1:19; Jude 1].

The decision was then circulated by letter to the existing local churches in Antioch, Syria and Cilicia [Acts 15:22-32].

The Apostle Paul, Silas and Timothy revisited the churches in Syria and Cilicia [Galatia] and shared with them the letter from the Jerusalem Council [Acts 15:41 – 16:4]. In addition, Paul wrote his own “inspired by God letter” to the churches in Galatia [Galatians 1:1-3] which theme was Christian Liberty or Freedom from The Law of Moses.

In Acts 21:21 the Apostle Paul was accused by Jerusalem Jews, and in 21:27-28 by Jews from the Province of Asia, of teaching against The Law of Moses. This led to Paul’s arrest in Jerusalem and imprisonment in Caesarea, Samaria [2 years] and Rome [2 years] – from where, “**for the sake of you Gentiles**” he writes this letter to the Ephesians [3:1] in which he unfolds or reveals the **mystery** of the church.

Unfolding The Mystery Of The Church 3:2-13

- The Word “**Administration**” [3:2]

*“Surely you have heard about the **administration of God’s grace** that was given to me for you [Gentiles].”*

Oikonomia, the Greek word translated as “administration” here in verse 3:2, is made up of *oikos* [a house], and *nomos* [a law], and signifies “the management or administration of the property of others, and so a **stewardship**”. W. E. Vine

Therefore, in 3:2, the Apostle Paul is saying that a “**stewardship**”, that is, the management or overseeing of the **message** of “*God’s grace for the Gentiles*” was **given to him** by God. Paul calls this aspect of God’s grace “*the mystery*” made know to him by revelation from God. Imagine being **entrusted** with the responsibility to **accurately convey** to the Gentile world of his day [as well as to us] the **message** of God’s grace as it **pertains** to them. This was Paul’s “**stewardship**”. This is what he “**administered**” as an Apostle of Jesus Christ.
[See Acts 9:15, 26:15-18; Galatians 2:7-8]

- The Word “**Mystery**” [3:3-5]

“In reading this, then, you will be able to understand my insight into the mystery of Christ” –
[3:4].

F. B. Meyer states that “A **mystery** is a hidden secret. The word does not imply that there is no solution, but that the solution has not yet been communicated. God has many secrets, which unfold as the ages are ripe for them, but not before.”

In approximately 60 A. D. the time was **ripe** for the Apostle Paul to exercise his “stewardship” and unfold the **mystery** of **The Church**. **Prior** to this time, “*in ages past*”, “*this mystery was hidden in God*” [3:9b] and therefore, “*not made known to men in other generations*” [3:5a].

“In the **New Testament** the Greek word *musterion* [mystery] denotes, not the mysterious [as with the English word], but that which is **outside** the range of unassisted natural apprehension.”

W. E. Vine – Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words

Therefore, this being true, Paul states that “*the mystery was made known to him by revelation*” [3:3]. The Greek word *apokalupsis*, here translated “revelation”, means “from” [apo] “cover” [kalupsis]. In other words, in order for Paul to know the **hidden** or **unknown** mystery of the church, God had to “uncover” or “unwrap”, if you will, the meaning of it **to him** and to the Apostles and prophets [3:5].

- The **Mystery** – Nature Of The Church [3:6]

“This mystery is that through the gospel the Gentiles are heirs together with Israel, members together of one body, and sharers together in the promise in Christ Jesus.”

In the New Testament, the Greek word “*ekklesia*” refers to “the church” or “an assembly” or “a congregation”. It means, “a calling [*klesis*] out of [*ek*]” or “called out ones”.

“It was used among the Greeks of a **body of citizens** gathered [or called out] to discuss the affairs of state [Acts 19:39]. W. E. Vine

“In the Septuagint [a Greek translation of the Old Testament Scriptures] it is used to designate the **gathering of Israel**, summoned for any definite purpose, or a gathering regarded as representative of the whole nation” [see Acts 7:38 – Israel gathered at Mount Sinai]. W. E. Vine

Concerning believers in Jesus Christ, “*ekklesia* refers to the **whole company of the redeemed** throughout the present era, the company of which Christ said, ‘*I will build My Church*’ [Matthew 16:18], and which is further described as ‘*the Church which is His Body*’” [Ephesians 1:22; 5:23]. W. E. Vine

Although “*ekklesia*” referred to Israel as an assembly or congregation of God’s people in the Old Covenant, and thereby claimed by some to have continued to be the “*ekklesia*” of the New Covenant, **this cannot be**. For the **scriptural use** of “*ekklesia*” in the Old Covenant applied to **Israel** as the “**assembly**” whereas in the New Covenant it applies to a “**new assembly**”, “to the **one new man** [or one new body] **created in Christ**” [Ephesians 2:15b].

Also, we must **remember** that “The Church” [*ekklesia*] as “The Body of Christ” is a **New Testament concept**. This concept was “**hidden**” [3:9] or “was **not made known** to men in other generations” [3:5]. It was only made known by **revelation** to the Apostle Paul [3:3] and by the Holy Spirit to the apostles and prophets of the New Testament [3:5b]. Therefore, “*ekklesia*” as applied to the New Covenant “Church” is quite different than “*ekklesia*” as applied to Old Covenant Israel.

There are **three thoughts** in chapter 3:6 that **reveal the nature** or “**oneness**” of The Church. All of which, were made possible or brought to light **through the gospel**.

“Believing Gentiles are heirs together [joint heirs] with Israel”;

“Believing Gentiles are members together [with Israel] of one [new] body”;

“Believing Gentiles are sharers together [with Israel] in the promise in Christ Jesus”.

[I take this promise to be the one given to Abram or Abraham in Genesis 12:3 that “*all peoples on earth will be blessed through you*”, that is, through Abraham’s seed or offspring, who is Jesus Christ [Galatians 3:16].

In The Church, “*We are all sons of God through faith in Jesus Christ. – There is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, for we are all one in Christ Jesus*” [Galatians 3:26, 28].

The **nature** of the New Covenant “*ekklesia*”, The Church or The Body of Christ, is such that **all ethnic-racial distinctions** [Jew or Greek-Gentile], **all social distinctions** [slave or free], and **all gender distinctions** [male or female] **are lost**, for all who believe in Jesus Christ **have become “one” in Him**. PTL [See also I Corinthians 12:12-13]

- Paul The “**Servant**” Of The Mystery 3:7-9

“I [Paul] became a servant of this gospel by the gift of God’s grace given me through the working of his power” [3:7].

In verses 3:7-9 Paul **explains by what authority** he makes such **bold statements** as in 3:6.

He begins in 3:7 by defining his ministry ---

As being “*a servant*” of “*this gospel*” [3:7];

The Greek word “*diakonos*”, translated “*servant*” in 3:7, stresses **the ministry** given to Paul rather than **the person himself**.

In 3:7, the expression “*this gospel*” refers back to the “good news” in 3:6 – that, through the gospel, believing Gentiles and believing Jews **become one in Christ**.

“The Gospel is the means by which the mystery was made known, and it was made known to Paul in order that he might make it known to others.” H. S. Miller

As “*preaching to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ*” [3:8];

John Calvin made this comment about “*the unsearchable riches of Christ*”. They are “the astonishing and boundless treasures of [God’s] grace”.

The word “unsearchable” means “**past finding out**”. It refers to that which cannot be **traced out**, that which cannot be **comprehended** except it be revealed. It was revealed to Paul that he might proclaim it to us.

And, As “*making plain to everyone the administration of this mystery*” [3:9].

The phrase “*making plain to everyone*” carries the thought of “**enlightenment**”, that is, “to bring

to light” or “to make all see” or “understand” [something]. In 3:9, that something is “the mystery brought to light through the Gospel”. It is this mystery [“believing Jews and Gentiles together in one new body called The Church”] which is Paul’s **administration or stewardship**. Making this mystery or truth known to all, became Paul’s **lifelong passion**.

I love Romans 15:14-24a. **Please** read all of it a couple of times. It is the most challenging portrait of Paul’s passion for the Gospel that I know of anywhere in the New Testament. Here’s a little taste of it.

“So from Jerusalem all the way around to Illyricum [Albania], I have fully proclaimed the gospel of Christ” [15:19b]. So that, *“There is no more place for me to work in these regions” [15:23a].* This covers the territory of about 10 Roman Provinces. **Now, that’s passion!**

Paul continues by saying ---

That although [because of his pre-conversion life of persecuting members of the Body of Christ, Acts 7:59-8:1; 9:1-2] he considered himself *“less than the least of all God’s people”* he was **“graced”**, that is, he was **equipped and empowered** for **“this gospel”** ministry [to make plain the mystery], through a supernatural ability or **“gift”** from God [3:7-8a].

As New Testament believers, **we also have been entrusted** with the gospel message.

“We are therefore Christ’s ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ’s behalf: Be reconciled to God. God made him who had no sin to be sin for us, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” II Corinthians 5:20-21
May we, like the Apostle Paul, be faithful to our trust.

- God’s **Intent** For “The Church” 3:10-11

*“God’s intent was that **now**, through the church, --- the manifold wisdom of God --- should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms,--- according to his eternal purpose which he accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

These two verses contain **three basic thoughts** [identified by the dashes --- between them] of which the meaning and application are not easily grasped.

The first thought is that of **“intent”**. God intended or purposed to make something known **through** the establishment of **“The Church”**. The word **“now”** represents **the beginning** of the New Covenant Church in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost in 33 A. D. The **Church** consists of believing Jews and believing Gentiles in one new body, The Body of Christ. It is through this entity that something will be made known.

The second thought, “the manifold wisdom of God”, represents **all that God did** in bringing together in one new body two diverse entities, Jews and Gentiles.

The one was the covenant people of God; and the other, idolaters. The one was near to God; the other far away from God. One group were citizens in God’s household; the other foreigners and aliens to that household and therefore without God and without hope [2:12]. **To us**, this depth of disparity between Jews and Gentiles presents an insoluble situation.

However, this seemingly irreconcilable situation **was no match** for **“the manifold** [many sided or diversified] **wisdom of God”**. For, in **eternity past**, God, in His wisdom, had **prepared a solution**, for this situation, to be **accomplished or fulfilled** in the coming of Jesus Christ.

God’s solution was that *“through the blood of Christ”* [2:13b] *“to reconcile both of them [Jew and Gentile] to Himself through the cross”* [2:16a] thereby *“creating in Himself one new man out of the two, thus making peace”* [2:15b] and, *“providing both access to the Father”* [2:18].

This is the “manifold wisdom” God intended to make known through The Church.

The third thought is in reference to “*the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms*” [3:10b]. In Ephesians 1:21, 3:10, and 6:12 these “*rulers and authorities*” refer to Lucifer, Satan or the devil, and his “angels” – angels that sinned against God and which are also called “demons”.

Now, allow me to share with you in a “story telling fashion” what I believe is meant by “*through the church, the manifold wisdom of God should be made known to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms*” [3:10b].

When Adam and Eve, at the **instigation** of the “serpent” or Satan, sinned and thereby incurred God’s judgments against themselves [Genesis chapter three], the “*rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms*” **scornfully gloated** saying “**humanity is ours**, we have **triumphed** over God”. **Likewise**, when God made a Covenant with Abraham, Isaac and Jacob and a Covenant of Law and a promised New Covenant with Israel, Jacob’s descendants, these same “*rulers and authorities*” **gloated again** saying “God is welcome to have believing Israel, this small pittance of humanity, as **His own**, **but** the idolatrous Nations, the masses of Gentiles, called ‘**uncircumcised**’ and ‘**dogs**’, and **hated** by the Jews, **are ours**. For since the time of Adam and Eve God has never succeeded [nor will He ever succeed] in winning them en masse to Himself, **for they are ours**”.

However, these “*rulers and authorities*” were ignorant of God’s **eternal purpose in Christ**. God’s **purpose** was a “**not known** [3:5] **hidden mystery**” [3:9] until it was **accomplished** in Christ on the cross [3:11] and **made known to us** by God through the Apostle Paul [3:2-3].

God’s purpose, which He had **determined** from eternity, was to create “**one new body**” [The Church or The Body of Christ] “*and in this one new body to reconcile both of them [Jew and Gentile] to God through the cross*” [2:15-16]. So that, **now**, it is possible for believing Gentiles “*to be heirs together with Israel and members together of one body*” [The Church – 3:6].

It was **this purpose**, God’s creation of one new body, The Church, through which both believing Jews and believing Gentiles have access to God, --- **that is** “*the manifold wisdom of God*”. And, it was **this masterpiece of God’s wisdom** that was made known to the “*rulers and authorities in the heavenly realms*”, saying in effect, “**My wisdom and power have triumphed through My entity called ‘The Church’**”. Let us always remember that ---

“the foolishness of God is wiser than man’s [or Satan’s] wisdom, and the weakness of God is stronger than man’s [or Satan’s] strength.” I Corinthians 1:25

- **Membership Privileges** 3:12

“In him [Jesus Christ] and through faith in him we may approach God with freedom and confidence.”

“In classical Greek, the Greek word *parrhesia*, herein translated ‘freedom’, **signified the free speech** which was the right of every citizen of a democratic state.” F. F. Bruce

In Ephesians 3:12, the word “**freedom**” is applied in two ways.

First, this word has reference to the **acceptance** believers in Jesus Christ have **with God**. For “*In him [Jesus Christ] and through faith in him we may approach* [or have freedom to access] **God**” at any time. F. F. Bruce states it as “the freedom [or liberty] of believers to approach God directly with no intermediary apart from Christ”. **PTL**

Second, this word “freedom” denotes the **absence of fear** in speaking to God. Hence, we may have “**confidence**” or boldness in approaching and speaking with God. However, in the words of Wilbur Fields, “let us come with reverential boldness, not with impudence, reckless demands, and irreverence”.

- **Conclusion 3:13**

"I ask you, therefore, not to be discouraged because of my sufferings for you, which are your glory."

Verse 3:13 implies that because, of the sufferings of the Apostle Paul and his present imprisonment in Imperial Rome [3:1; 4:1; 6:20], for the sake of Christ and for the sake of the Gospel of Christ for the Gentiles, believers in Ephesus were **in danger of losing heart** thinking that now God's great plan "*for one new body*" [the church], the proclamation of which is Paul's "stewardship", might be hindered. To confront this danger and to reassure the Ephesian believers of God's faithfulness to complete His plan [New Covenant] Paul makes this concluding statement with its emphasis on the words "therefore", "discouraged", "sufferings" and "glory".

Paul's statement begins with the words "*I ask you, therefore*". The word "**therefore**" refers to what the Apostle Paul revealed in verses 3:1-12, namely, the mystery of Christ [through the gospel - verse 6] and the blessings he expounded about The Church [verses 10-12], particularly as it pertained to the Gentiles.

Now, with this meaning of the word "therefore" in mind, let's look at the word "**discouraged**". This word is a translation of the Greek word "*enkakeo*" meaning, "to lack courage"; "to lose heart"; or, "to be fainthearted". Paul is saying in effect, "do not allow my present sufferings cause you to **lose heart** concerning what God has revealed through me in 3:1-12".

The word "**sufferings**", a translation of the Greek noun "*thlipsis*", carries the thought of being under the pressure of physical afflictions.

The verb form "*thlibo*", "has reference to sufferings due to the pressure of circumstances, or the antagonism of persons" [W. E. Vine], of which Paul was no stranger.

[Please see page 4, the first and second paragraphs, and also, read II Corinthians 11:21b-27 for an understanding of the physical afflictions that Paul suffered - all of which the Ephesian believers were aware.]

This is Paul's argument. The Ephesian believers **are not to lose heart**. They are not think that Paul's present sufferings in any way hinder God from fulfilling His purposes for them through Christ and the gospel [3:1-12]. Why? That answer will be found in the phrase "*which are your glory*".

In 3:13, the word "**glory**" [Greek - "*doxa*"] carries the thought of "honor" or "blessing" which the Ephesian believers had received [*your glory*], in part, as a result of Paul's sufferings.

Here is F. F. Bruce's **explanation** of this thought "**glory**" as well as **all of 3:13**.

"The Ephesian converts might be tempted to think that, if Paul were really in the path of God's will, he would not have so many trials to endure. Paul therefore tries to convey to them his own assurance that his tribulations [sufferings] are the direct consequence and a certain token of his obedience to God's eternal purpose. Since that purpose includes the blessings of the Gentiles, the hardships which befall Paul in the course of his ministry are hardships which he suffers for them [3:1]. If they can be brought to appreciate that, far from finding cause for discouragement in the spectacle of Paul's sufferings, they will glory in them as he himself has learned to do, seeing in them the proof that God's purpose was advancing towards its consummation."

There most certainly is **this lesson** for us in this verse. Don't be **discouraged** [through sufferings, failures, etc.] to the point where you think God's will or promises can be **thwarted** or **never happen**. "*The word of the Lord stands forever*" [I Peter 1:25]; "*For nothing is impossible with God*" [Luke 1:37]; "*No word from God shall be without power*" [a free translation of Luke 1:37]. Amen

PAUL'S SECOND PRAYER 3:14-21

Introduction 3:14-15

"For this reason I kneel before the Father, from whom the whole family in heaven and on earth derives its name."

"When Paul stated, '*For this reason*', then we must conclude that his prayer relates to something he had **already written** and is, thus, a necessary part of this epistle". Lehman Strauss

The phrase "*For this reason*" [Greek - *charin toutou*] is only used in Ephesians 3:1, 14 and Titus 1:5. It literally means "for the grace of this" or "**for the grace to accomplish this.**"

The Apostle Paul **has just explained** in chapter 2:11- 3:13 that, through Christ's death on the cross [2:13], the "*barrier*" or the "*dividing wall of hostility*" [*the law with its commandments and regulations* - 2:14-15] which separated Jews from Gentiles had been "*abolished*" [2:15] and that Christ has made "*one new man*" [2:15] or one new body, The Church [3:6], "*out of the two*" [2:15] uniting them together as "*members of God's household*" [2:19].

In other words, Paul is saying that the Old Covenant of Law has **run its course** and that God's provision in Christ for the **transition** of believing Jews and Gentiles to the **blessings** of the promised New Covenant, **has taken place.**

Now then, in order for believing Jews and Gentiles to live out or to accomplish **these truths** [2:11-3:13] in practical ways, and in order for them "*to live a life worthy of this calling*" [4:1], which is the subject of chapters 4-6, Paul, "*kneels before the Father*" and **prays** that the Ephesian believers, as well as **all**, who from among the Nations have been born into the Father's Family, will have "**the grace to accomplish this**" [their transition into The Church].

Illustration: In the Oxboro Evangelical Free Church of America that I attend in Bloomington, MN there are Gentiles from Africa, Canada, India, the Philippines, the Scandinavian Countries, Viet Nam, and the United States. Now consider for a moment all the "**cultural and religious baggage**" they brought with them, as they began to attend this church, this "**local**" **body of Christ**. Some brought "infant baptism" as being valid before God and therefore see no need of a "believer's baptism by immersion". Doctrinally, some brought their "Calvinistic" persuasion, others their "Armenian"; some came as "Pre-Tribulationists" others as "Post-Tribulationists". We have only one worship service. Some prefer a "traditional service" [with proper "dress" and "hymns"] others a "contemporary service" [with its casual style of dress, lively repetitious music, and the privilege of sipping coffee during the service]. Some are "quiet" before the Lord others "emotional". And the list goes on and on. **Now**, recognizing the **variety** of our differences and the inescapable fact that **some changes** will occur as we "**transition**" into this "**new local church body**" called Oxboro Free Church, the Apostle Paul says, "*For this reason I kneel before the Father*" [3:14], that is to say, I pray that all of you will have "**the grace to accomplish this**" [change / transition].

Paul's Second Prayer 3:16-19

There are **two prayers** in Paul's Letter To The Ephesians. The **first one** is found in chapter 1:15-19 and emphasizes **knowledge** or **enlightenment** [*"So that you may know"* - something]. The **second one**, found here in 3:16-19, emphasizes **power** or **enablement** [*"So that"* - you may accomplish something].

Strictly speaking, in Paul's **second prayer** there is but **one petition** followed by a series of **purpose clauses.**

The Petition

"I pray that out of his [the Father's] glorious riches he may strengthen you with power through his Spirit in your inner being" [3:16].

The actual petition is *“that you may be strengthened”*. This is then **“fleshed out”** through the accompanying “who”, “what”, “when”, “where”, “why” method so familiar to us. We begin with **“who”**.

Who is the strength **intended for**? It is intended for the Ephesian believers [“you”] and by extension to all believers in Jesus Christ. Therefore, for believers in Christ, allow me **to personalize** the remaining questions.

Where does **your strength**, [this particular strength that Paul is praying for], **come from**? It comes, **“out of the Father’s glorious [Greek - *doxa*] riches [Greek - *ploutos*”**. This phrase is saying that “The Father gives **according to** the riches of His glory” and W. E. Vine states that in 3:16, the **particular “riches of His glory”** being asked for is that **“of its manifestation in grace towards all believers”**. Paul is praying “that **out of the Father’s glorious riches of grace** He may strengthen you” --- with something.

What are you to be **strengthened with**? With **spiritual power or might** [Greek - *dunamis*] in your inner being. As used here in 3:16, **“*dunamis*”** means “power in action; power to carry something into effect”.

How are you **strengthened**? How are you **empowered or enabled** by God? It is through **God’s Spirit**, the indwelling **Holy Spirit**, Who is at work in you.

Why? The word **“why”** directs our attention to the **purpose clauses**. By His **grace**, your **Heavenly Father**, through the **Holy Spirit** Who lives in you, **strengthens you with spiritual power** in order for you to put His Will **into effect** in your life.

The **“so that” Purpose Clauses** in this context [3:16-19] reflect the will of God that He desired the Ephesian believers [Jews and Gentiles] to put into effect in their lives. **Particularly**, as it pertains to their **transition** to the **“one new body”**, The Church.

The Purpose Clauses

- **So that** *“Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith”* [17a].

In this “purpose clause”, what God-given **“grace”** will **strengthen or empower** you as a believer in Jesus Christ? It is **to believe** that **Christ lives in you**. In Greek, the verb **“dwell”** is in the aorist tense, meaning, that once for all Christ has made you or your heart His home, His dwelling place.

- **So that** *“You, being rooted and established in love, may have power, together with all the saints, to grasp how wide and how long and high and deep is the love of Christ, and to know this love that surpasses knowledge ”* [17b-19a].

This “purpose clause” speaks of God **strengthening or empowering** believers so that they might **“grasp”** [Greek - *katalambano*] and **“know”** [Greek - *ginosko*] something. Namely, to be **mentally empowered** to “grasp”, “appropriate”, or “take possession of” the **immensity** of the love of Christ, that is, the width, length, height, and depth of this love [in bringing believing Jews and Gentiles together in **“one new body”**, The Church], and to be **empowered “to know”, to keep progressing** in the knowledge of Christ’s love even though it *“surpasses knowledge”*.

- **So that** *“You may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God”* [19b].

This is the final “purpose clause”. “This clause **does not** teach that the whole fullness of God can be contained in a believer’s life. Rather, the preposition **“to” or “unto”** [Greek - *eis*] suggests that believer’s in Christ might be **progressively filled** or made full **unto** God’s fullness” [F. F. Bruce].

Positionally, “*believers have already been given “fullness” [or “completeness”] in Christ*” [Colossians 2:9]. **Experientially**, or progressively, the **goal** of the believer is to be **made full** with the fullness of God. That is, **God’s moral excellence and perfection**.

Summary: Out of the riches of His grace, **God is able** to strengthen you with His power in your inner being, so that **you will be able** to accomplish these “**purpose**” clauses.

The Doxology 3:20-21

“Now to him who is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus throughout all generations, for ever and ever! Amen.

Doxologies are literally “**glory words**”. A “doxology” ascribes praise, honor, and glory to God and exalts Him “*for his goodness and for his wonderful works to the children of men*” [Psalms 107:8 - KJV].

I sense that this doxology in 3:20-21 has reference to the immediate context [3:14-19] as well as the overall context [chapters 1 through 3] which comprise “Part One” of Paul’s Letter.

As to the **immediate context** [3:14-19], we are given this **comment** about the doxology.

“No human or angel [3:10] would ever think that Jews and Gentiles could function together in one body. But with God’s power of love in each believer’s life, Paul was confident that Jewish and Gentile believers can function and love one another. This is astounding and though it is not naturally possible, God is able to accomplish it. **Paul therefore ascribed to God glory** which is to be manifest **in the church**, where the miracle of love will occur, **and in Christ Jesus**, who made the union of Jewish and Gentile believers possible.” The Bible Knowledge Commentary [page 632]

As to the doxology in relation to the **overall context** [1:3 - 3:19], there is **this thought**.

Since God has the **ability** or **power** to “*bless us in the heavenly realms with every spiritual blessing in Christ*” [1:3], twelve of which He has already revealed to us in 1:4 - 3:12, then, **Praise God**, “*He is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine*” [3:20a].

Here are the inspiring comments of Lehman Strauss on this doxology. He is using the King James Version of the Scriptures.

“Yes, He is able to do *all* that we ask or think;
He is able to do *above all* that we ask or think;
He is able to do *abundantly above all* that we ask or think;
He is able to do *exceedingly abundantly above all* that we ask or think.”
“Think of it! The **power** and **ability** of God [*that is at work within us*] **surpasses by far** our highest aspirations, our most concentrated thinking, and our most earnest petitions.”

O, LORD, for all of the spiritual blessings / privileges you have showered upon us, and for your power that is at work within us, **may praise, honor and glory be given to you throughout all generations, forever and ever, amen.**

Praise to the Lord; O let all that is in me adore Him!
All that hath life and breath, come now with praises before Him!
Let the Amen sound from His people again; Gladly for aye [ever] we adore Him.
[Quoted from The Epistle To The Ephesians by F. F. Bruce, page 71]

PART TWO

[Chapters 4:1 – 6:24]

THE BELIEVER'S WALK / LIFE IN CHRIST

Introduction

The Book of Ephesians is comprised of **two natural divisions**. Chapters 1-3 are **doctrinal**. In our study, we titled this division "The Believer's Blessings / Privileges In Christ". Chapters 1-3 emphasized what Christ **did for us, what we are in Christ**, and the **blessings we have** by virtue of **belonging to Him**. Chapters 4-6 are **practical**. They emphasize the believer's **walk** [conduct or behavior], that is, **how he is to live his life** within the Body of Christ.

"Be very careful, then, how you live" [Ephesians 5:15a].

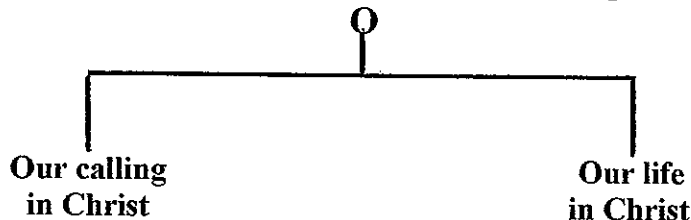
GOD'S PLAN FOR MATURING US: 4:1-16

A. Through A Standard for Christian Conduct; 4:1

"I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received" [4:1].

The word "live" [or walk] has to do with **conduct** or **behavior**; the word "**worthy**" [or **worthily**] means, "of the **same measure** or of the **same weight**". Using an old fashioned merchant's scale as an illustration [see below], it depicts that there must be an equal emphasis [equal weight / balance] between the "**calling**" [vocation] we have received in Christ and how we **actually live out** our Christian life [our walk, conduct, behavior]. This calling not only has reference to **salvation** or the **forgiveness** of our sins, but also to our calling to be **separated** unto God and to live **responsively** within the family or household of God, which is The Church, or The Body of Christ. **Remember**, that in your Christian walk [conduct, behavior], ---

"The Lord detests differing weights, and dishonest scales do not please him" [Proverbs 20:23].



The scale **also depicts** that we must learn to "**put off the old self**", our sinful way of living [4:22], and to "**put on the new self**", our new way of living in Christ [4:23-24], so that our Christian lives **continue** to be **in balance** or **of equal weight** with what we were called to be in Christ. "**Remember**, that the **honor of Christ** is involved in our daily lives" [F. F. Bruce].

Notice the **frequency** of this **same emphasis** in other Letters written by the Apostle Paul. The use of **repetition** means, **that this emphasis** ["*living lives worthy of your calling*"] **is a vital Christian necessity**.

"Whatever happens, conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ."

Philippians 1:27

I (Paul) pray --- "*That you may live a life worthy of the Lord and may please him in every way.*"

Colossians 1:10

I (Paul) urge you --- "*To live lives worthy of God, who calls you into his kingdom and glory.*"

I Thessalonians 2:12

God's Standard of Conduct for you is that **you** "*Live a life worthy of the calling you have received*".

B. Through A Standard of Christian Unity: 4:2-6

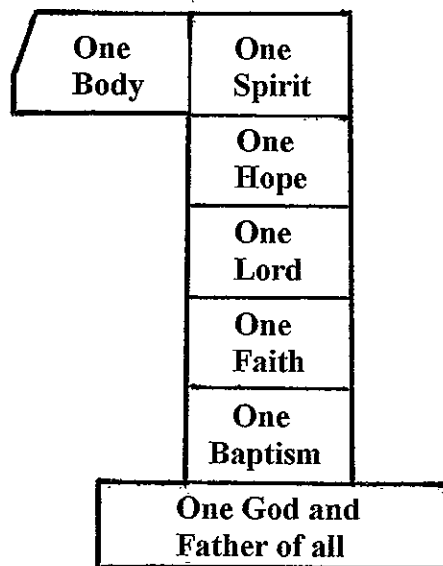
“*Make every effort [give haste] to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace*” [4:3].

Believers in Christ are not asked to “**make**” unity but to “**keep**” [to guard, preserve] their unity [oneness] through the **unifying practices** and / or the **distinguishing doctrines** already **revealed** through the Holy Spirit. **Keeping** these practices and doctrines act like “**bonds**” of peace which **bind** the church together.

First of all, verse 2 admonishes believers to **practice** or to **exercise** the following **four virtues** or **graces** in their **relationships** with one another within the Body of Christ, thus, “**keeping** the unity of the Spirit”.

- **Humbleness** or Lowliness of Mind - [Greek noun - *tapeinophrosune*] means “having a humble opinion of one’s self: a deep sense of one’s moral littleness: humility” [Thayer].
- **Gentleness** or Meekness - [Greek noun - *prautes*] is the opposite of self-assertiveness and self-interest [W. E. Vine]. “It is to esteem others higher than one’s self” [Lehman Strauss].
- **Patience** or Longsuffering - [Greek - *anochē* and *makrothumia*]: “Patience does not succumb under trial, it is the opposite of despondency and is associated with hope”; “Longsuffering is that quality of self-restraint which does not hastily retaliate; it is the opposite of anger & associated with mercy”.
W. E. Vine
- **Bearing** or Forbearing - [Greek verb - *anēcho*] means “to hold up”. It signifies – “bearing with, forbearing, enduring and sustaining one another in love” [W. E. Vine].
“Mutual forbearance among believers means that we pray one for the other in each other’s weaknesses and offences, and while we are called upon to forbear - it is to forbear in love” [L. Strauss].

Next! We live in a world where political correctness, tolerance, big time government socialism, spiritual compromise, etc., are seen as that which **promotes equality/unity**. **However**, in **4:4-6**, regarding Biblical Christianity, the Apostle Paul states that there are “**7 spiritual unities**” or “**7 distinguishing teachings**” that form **the basis** for Christian Unity and truly **bind together** believers in Jesus Christ. **They are:**



The Glorious Church by Wilbur Fields, page 115

These **7 non-negotiable spiritual unities** are the “**hallmark**”, the seal or symbol of **authentic Christian unity** or oneness. Those who “**keep**” [guard, preserve], “**hold to**” or “**live by**” these **distinguishing teachings / doctrines** will **spiritually mature**, and in so doing, give evidence that they are **brothers** and

sisters in Christ and members of His body, the one, true universal church.

Now, let's take a closer look as to the meanings of these "7 spiritual unities".

- **One Body** - Although there are many religions in our world, many church denominations, and many differing spiritual practices, there is but **One**, True, Universal Church; The Spiritual **Body of Christ**. "The members of this body differ in color, nationality, ability, mentality, and outlook; but through **faith** in the Lord Jesus Christ, they were 'all baptized by one Spirit into **one body**'" [Lehman Strauss]. "*So in Christ we who are many form one body*" [Romans 12:5a]. This **one body** is the Family of God.
- **One Spirit** - Unquestionably, this refers to God the Holy Spirit the third member of "The Holy Trinity of God" [Father, Son, and **Holy Spirit**]. It is He who **indwells** the **individual believer** in Jesus Christ [John 14:16] and, **collectively**, The Body of Christ or The Church as a **whole** [Ephesians 2:21-22]. The Holy Spirit is the believer's **Counselor** who **guides him into all truth**, especially about the things of Christ [John 16:7-14]. Also, by His power indwelling the believer, "*those who live by the Spirit*", will triumph over the activities of evil [Galatians 5:16-18] "*because the Holy Spirit who is in the believer is greater than the [evil] one who is in the world*" [I John 4:1-6]. Allowing ourselves to be taught, guided, and lead by the Spirit is how we keep "the unity of the Spirit".
- **One Hope** - This word "hope" refers to **future things**, things that are ahead of us or beyond us in time. It is not the "**I hope so**" of wishful desires. **This hope** is "*the blessed hope - the glorious appearing of our great God and Savior, Jesus Christ*" [Titus 2:13]. For, when Jesus Christ comes again, **He will fulfill all of God's promises relating to the believer's eternal life beyond the grave**: his new body, new home, new character, etc. This hope of fulfillment is a Christian's **assured expectation**.
- **One Lord** - Jesus Christ is Lord! He is the Son of God, the second member of "The Holy Trinity of God" [Father, **Son**, and Holy Spirit]. He is God who became flesh [John 1:1-14]. "He is the image of the invisible God; He is before all things; He is the Creator of all things and by Him all things hold together; He is he Head of The Body, The Church" [Colossians 1:15-18]. In Acts 2:36, the verb "**made**", a translation of the Greek verb *poieo*, carries the thought of "the creative acts or creative power of God". In speaking to the people of Israel in Jerusalem on the Day of Pentecost Peter said, "*Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: [by God's power in raising Jesus Christ from the dead and seating Him with God in the heavenly realms] God hath made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ*" [Acts 2:32-36]. Jesus Christ is the believers Lord and Savior. He is the One Lord and Master whom believers **follow and obey**. "It is the recognition of His Lordship that preserves the unity of the Spirit" [Lehman Strauss].
- **One Faith** - "Faith may denote **the act** and attitude of believing, or it may mean **the substance** of one's belief. It is true if we think of the one faith as the faith which they place in Christ as their Lord and Savior; it is [also] true if we think of it as '*the faith which was once for all delivered [entrusted] to the saints*' [Jude 3]. In **both senses** it is true that Christians have but **one faith**" [F. F. Bruce]. There is only **one source** upon which spiritual faith **stands or rests**. It is The Holy Scriptures. "*All Scripture is God-breathed*" [inspired or given by God - II Timothy 3:16-17] and therefore **infallible** [incapable of error]. It is "*the living and enduring word of God - that stands forever*" [I Peter 1:23-25]. Also, there is but **one source** upon which personal faith is to **stand or rest**. It is in the **Atoning Sacrifice** of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of sins. "*Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to men by which we must be saved*" [Acts 4:12]. Jesus Said, "*I am the way and the truth and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me*" [John 14:6].
- **One Baptism** - This baptism has reference to **water baptism**. This baptism is the **outward rite** by which believers declare the **inner reality** of their faith in Jesus Christ **alone**. It is through this rite that

a believer **signifies** his faith in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ for the **forgiveness of sins** and of their **new life in Him**. [See Matthew 28:16-20; Acts 2:38a, 41, and 19:1-5; and Romans 6:1-4].

- **One God and Father of all - First**, this “7th spiritual unity” emphasizes the “**trinity**” or the “**tri-unity**” of God. As you look upwards in the “**oneness**” diagram on page 50, we have the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. “So the Father is God; the Son is God; and the Holy Spirit is God and yet there are not three Gods but one God” [The Athanasian Creed].
Second, this “7th spiritual unity” emphasizes the **Father** or the **Fatherhood** of God. He is the Father of all who have accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior. It is “*in Him that we live and move and have our being*” [Acts 17:28a]. As we recognize the Father as being “*over all [of us] and through all [of us] and in all [of us - Ephesians 4:6]*” we preserve the unity of the Spirit.

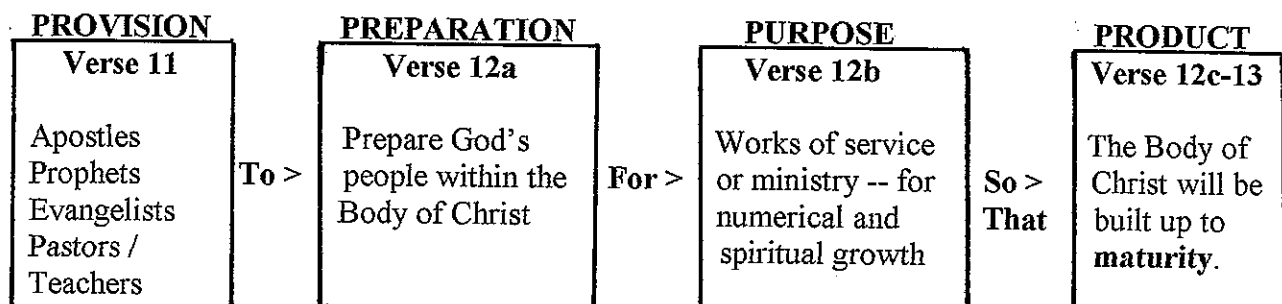
C. Through Spiritual Gifts / Graces and Spiritual Mentors 4:7-16

“When Christ ascended on high --- he gave gifts to men” [4:8].

There are **three aspects** of **spiritual gifts** or **graces**, which contribute to the **maturing** of the believer.

- **The first aspect** relates to **all believers**.
“But to each one of us grace has been given as Christ apportioned [Greek - metron] it” [4:7]. This “gift of grace” is **apportioned to us** on the basis of God’s will, which is, - “*by grace you have been saved through faith - and this is not from yourselves, it is the gift of God*” [Ephesians 2:8]. If you have **believed** in Jesus Christ, you have **received** salvation as a “gift of God’s / Christ’s grace”.
- **The second aspect** also relates to **all believers**.
“We have different gifts, according to the grace given us” [Romans 12:6a]. These individual spiritual gifts or graces are listed in Romans 12:4-8; I Corinthians 12:4-11; Ephesians 4:11; and I Peter 4:10-11. As each believer **exercises** his or her gift (s) of grace or gift (s) of service within the Body of Christ, both the individual believer as well as the collective Body of Christ grows or **matures**.
Questions: Do you know what spiritual gift (s) Christ and the Holy Spirit have given you?
If so, are you **exercising** your spiritual gift (s) within the Body of Christ?
If not, your spiritual growth or spiritual maturing will be **stunted**.
 For more information on these **gifts** go to [www.BasicBiblicalTruths.com] and click on The Doctrine of the Holy Spirit and look for the Gifts of the Spirit.
- **The third aspect** of spiritual gifts relates to Ephesians 4:11-16 and **certain individual believers**.
*“It was Christ who gave **some** to be apostles, **some** to be prophets, **some** to be evangelists, and **some** to be pastors and teachers”* [4:11].

These are **spiritually gifted individuals** given as “**gifts**” or “**mentors**” to the church for the purpose of **maturing** the Body of Christ. The following diagram illustrates their ministry within the Body.



- **Explanations and Comments on verses 11-16**

1. Who are these **spiritually gifted individuals** mentioned in verse 11?

Apostles: Originally there were 12 apostles called to be followers of Jesus Christ [Mark 3:13-19]. Then, Matthias was chosen to replace Judas who had betrayed Jesus [Acts 1:15-26]. Lastly, while traveling on the road to Damascus [Acts 9:1-19, 22:1-16, 26:1-19], Saul or Paul of Tarsus was also called to be an Apostle of Jesus Christ [I Corinthians 1:1, 9:1-2, 15:8-9; Ephesians 1:1a; I Timothy 2:7; II Timothy 1:11]. These apostles verbally communicated and then placed into written form the New Testament or New Covenant message from God through His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. The word “apostle” means “sent one”. Today, they are called “missionaries”.

Prophets: Prior to the written Scriptures, prophets were “foretellers” - revealers of what was to come. Since the completion of the written Scriptures, prophets are “forth-tellers”, proclaimers of what the Scriptures reveal did happen and will yet happen.

[Note: Ephesians 2:20 speaks about the “household” of God being built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, hence, they are sometimes referred to as the “**Foundation**” Gifts of God to the Church. Normally, every believer had someone who laid the foundation for their faith by sharing what Jesus Christ did for them. My “apostle / prophet” was Jack Voronyak.

Evangelists: These are the bearers of The Gospel who bring us the “Good News” of salvation or of deliverance from the penalty of sin. They call, invite, or beseech people to repent and to place their faith in Jesus Christ for forgiveness of their sins.

Pastors / Teachers: These are not two gifts or two individuals. Rather, this is one individual, “a teaching pastor”. The pastor of a local church is the **under-shepherd** of that church, Christ being the **Chief Shepherd**. Teaching is the method by which the pastor feeds his “flock”, even as Christ leads His people into green pastures.

2. The overall purpose of these **spiritually gifted individuals** is to “prepare” or equip God’s people for “works of service so that the body of Christ may be built up” [4:12].

As used in verse 4:12, the word “prepare” means “to make fit or equip fully”. It was used of fishermen who mended [made fit] the holes in their nets and of doctors who mended or set broken bones and is applied to these spiritually gifted individuals in verse 11 whose “gift” is to prepare or equip immature non-functioning believers for “service” within the Body of Christ.

Every believer must keep in mind that they began their spiritual life as a “new born baby”. Therefore, as a believer, you need to be fed from the Word of God so that you “grow up” or “mature” in your salvation [I Peter 2:2-3]. You must be prepared, by spiritually equipped individuals, to do “works of service” or ministry [Ephesians 4:12] that contributes to the numerical, spiritual, etc., growth of the Body of Christ.

3. 4:13 states that this preparation or equipping of believers for “works of service” continues “until we all reach” three goals of attainment in God’s plan for us.

- a. **Unity in the faith** - [Greek - *pistis*]. In this verse, the faith we are all to “reach” or attain is to be firmly convinced or persuaded about God, Christ, and spiritual things. F. F. Bruce gives us this understanding. “The ‘unity of the faith’ to which the Apostle Paul desires his readers to attain, along with himself, depends not simply on the initial act of faith by which one enters into the family of God, but on that ever-increasing appreciation of all that is involved in Christian living and thinking. This appreciation is best reached in fellowship with one another”.

- b. **Unity in the knowledge** [Greek - *epignosis*] of the Son of God. *Epignosis* means “to fully perceive” or “to understand completely”. J. Armitage Robinson points out “that *epignosis* is knowledge directed towards perceiving or discerning a particular object.” Here in verse 4:13 that object is the Son of God. As a believer in Jesus Christ, **you** are to become **mature** [Greek - *teleios*], that is, to “**reach**” or **attain** like unto a **fully grown person in the knowledge or understanding** of the Son of God.
- c. **Unity in the fullness** [Greek - *pleroma*] of Christ. The **last** of the three attainments is that of “**reaching**” or **attaining** the whole measure [Greek - *metron*], the required or fixed measure of the fullness [*pleroma*] of Christ, i.e., all of His moral virtues and excellencies. **Positionally**, that is, by virtue of being “**in Christ**” or belonging to Christ, “*you have [already] been given fullness [or completeness] in Christ*” [Colossians 2:9-10]. But **experientially**, that is, in our present spiritual experience in the Body of Christ, we have not yet attained **this fullness** or completeness. This unity or oneness in the fullness of Christ “will not fully appear until the day when believers in Christ are glorified together with Him; but the expectation of that day will act as a powerful incentive to spiritual development in the present time” [F. F. Bruce]. Please read Paul’s testimony of this truth in Philippians 3:10-16.

4. Verses 4:14-16

Verse 14 begins with the word “**Then**”, which intimates that **without** the spiritual **input** or **preparation** from Apostles, Prophets, Evangelists, and Teaching Pastors, **you**, as a believer in Jesus Christ, will remain an “**infant**”, a mere spiritual babe in Christ. In that unstable infantile state, **without spiritual perception**, the Apostle Paul says you will be “*tossed back and forth by the waves, and blown here and there by every wind of teaching [false doctrine] - by the cunning and craftiness of men in their deceitful scheming*” [i. e., cunning or deceptive men who trick you into wandering or straying from the truth].

Verse 15 begins with the word “**Instead**”, which presents an **alternative possibility**. That is, **with** the spiritual **input** or **preparation** from the above mentioned four **spiritually gifted individuals**, [as well as individual contemporary believers in the Body of Christ], “*you will no longer remain an infant*”, a mere spiritual babe in Christ. **Instead**, “*You [as an individual believer] will in all things grow up [increase] into him who is the Head, that is, Christ*”.

R. A. Knox shares this illustrative **analogy** in relation to verse 15. He points out, “that a baby’s head is very large in relation to his body, and that his body, as it develops, is really growing up more and more into a due proportion with the head” [Saint Paul’s Gospel, page 84 – 1953]. “It is by growing up to match the head that the Body of Christ - the believing community - attains ‘*the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ*’” [F. F. Bruce].

Verse 16 is like a **summary statement** - “*From whom [or through the ‘Head’ Jesus Christ] the whole body [The Church], joined and held together by every supporting ligament [every believer], grows [matures] and builds itself up in love, as each part [every spiritually gifted believer] does its work*”.

Conclusion: There is only **one way** that **you**, a believer in Jesus Christ and a member of His Body, The Church, will “**reach**” or “**attain**” the goals He laid out for you [i. e., the 3 unities in the above #3]. You must be **in fellowship** with a Bible believing church; that church must have a God gifted “**Teaching Pastor**” whose ability in communicating the Word of God is able to prepare or equip **you** [mature you] for “**service**” [serving others]; and, **you** in turn must discover **your** God given spiritual gift (s) so that in using **your gift (s)** you contribute to the numerical and spiritual growth of the church. Without engaging in this process, you will remain an “**infant**”, a mere spiritual babe in Christ. **Let us go on!**

We have been discussing “**God’s Plan for Maturing Us** - through a Standard for Christian Conduct; a Standard for Christian Unity; and through the Spiritual Gifts and Spiritual Mentors God has given to us. **Now, we want to look at God’s Plan for Changing Us.**”

PART TWO: THE BELIEVER’S WALK / LIFE (continued)

GOD’S PLAN FOR CHANGING US. 4:17 – 5:20

“*So I tell you this, and insist on it in the Lord, that you must no longer live as the Gentiles do ---” [4:17].*

Figuratively, the word “**live**” signifies “the whole round of the activities of the individual life of a regenerated person”. When by faith a person believes in Jesus Christ as his Lord and Savior, that person is “re-born”, he becomes a new creation. The **evidence** that a new-birth has taken place, **is change** [II Corinthians 5:17]. God is **insistent** that believers in Jesus Christ **live different lives** - different from what they **lived before being re-born**. In 4:17 - 5:20 the Apostle Paul shares **five different ways** in which God brings about **change** in the lives of born-again believers in Jesus Christ.

1. Change, Through A Different Way of Thinking 4:17-24

These verses **compare the results of two different thought processes** which I have titled “The Old Mindset” and “The New Mindset”. The Old Mindset governs the life lived by the **Gentiles**, the people, nations, or idolaters of this world. The New Mindset governs the life lived by **believers** in Jesus Christ through the enabling power of the Indwelling Holy Spirit. Therefore, as believers in Christ, the Apostle Paul is challenging us **to live out our faith** by **putting off** the old way of thinking and **putting on the new way** that has come through Christ.

The Old Mindset - “*Living as the Gentiles do*” [4:17-19].

Paul **begins** his description of this mindset as it related to Gentile believers in Christ. He says that this “old mindset” governed “*your former way of life*” in which all manner of lustful desires, excited by deceit, led you to **moral corruption** or rottenness [4:22].

Next, “with no holds barred”, Paul **explains** how this Old Mindset **came to be** and **why** “*Gentiles live* [are governed] *by its futile* [spiritually vain, empty, fruitless] *way of thinking*” [4:17b]. In 4:18b Paul says that it was “*due to the hardening of their hearts*”. The word “*hardening*” is a translation of the Greek word “*porosis*” which has reference to “a callus” or “thick covering” which, figuratively speaking, in relation to God and His Word, Gentiles allowed to grow over their “**hearts**” or **minds**. In other words, **they shut God and His Word out of their thinking**.

The results: “*Due to the hardening of their hearts*” [4:18] ---

- **Their minds were darkened**, i., e., deprived of spiritual understanding [4:18].
- **Their spiritual ignorance** [willful blindness, a dulled spiritual perception] separated or alienated them from life that comes from God [4:18].
- **They lost of all moral sensitivity**. They became “past feeling”, insensible to honor & shame [4:19].
- **They gave themselves over to sensuality** [lasciviousness] i., e., indecency; the absence of restraint [4:19].
- **They indulged in every kind of impurity**. The word “indulged” [Greek *-ergasia*] means, “to work” or “make a trade of” hence, “a trademark”. A “trademark” of the Gentiles was to “indulge” in every kind of impurity [moral uncleanness] “*with a continual lust* [an insatiable appetite] *for more*” [4:19].

The New Mindset - “*You must no longer live as the Gentiles do*” [4:20-24].

The Apostle Paul describes this mindset as “*being made new [renewed] in the attitude of your minds*” [4:23]. “The verb, ‘*being renewed*’, is in the present tense [i. e., ‘be being renewed’ or, an on-going renewal] denoting progression and growth” [H. S. Miller]. The word “*attitude*” is a translation of the Greek word *pneuma* which means “spirit” and in verse 4:23 has the thought of “purpose” or “aim”.

Here are W. E. Vine’s comments on this verse.

“The renewal here mentioned is **not** that of the mind itself in its natural powers of memory, judgment and perception, but the ‘**spirit [attitude] of the mind,**’ which under the controlling power of the indwelling Holy Spirit, directs its bent and energies Godward in the enjoyment of ‘fellowship with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ’, and of the fulfillment of the will of God.”

As a believer in Jesus Christ, you are to have a “New Mindset”, that is, a “**renewed spirit [attitude, purpose, desire or aim]**” to live your life according to the “**truth**” taught in person by the “**incarnate**” Christ [God who became flesh] or the “**truth**” taught in the Scriptures by selected men [Apostles, etc.] about or concerning Jesus Christ [4:20-21].

So then, “*You were taught [instructed], with regard to your former way of life, to put off your old self* [4:22]”, that is, all that Paul described the “Old Mindset” to be [page 55].

And, in contrast to the “Old Mindset”, you were also **taught** [instructed] “*to put on the new self [the “New Mindset”], created [in Christ] to be like God [Christlikeness] in true righteousness and holiness*” [4:24]. These two infinitives, “to put off” and “to put on”, are in the Greek aorists tense, which, **denotes a single action.** A once for all time **decision** to be done with your “old self” [your life of sin] and a once for all time **dedication** or **surrender** to your “new self” the new life God has prepared for you to live. “*For, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come*” [II Cor. 5:17].

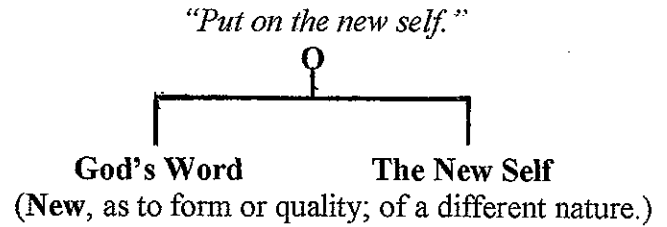
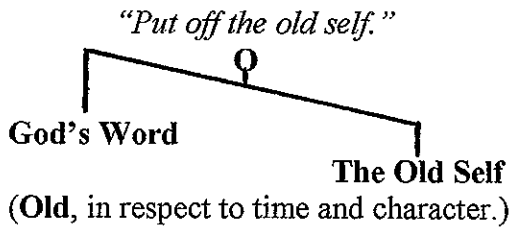
Here’s something to think about: At the time of Paul’s writing to the Ephesians, the oldest Christians in Ephesus were 7 or 8 years “**in Christ**” but they are still being challenged to “put off the old” and “to put on the new”. How about you and me? How long have you been a believer “in Christ”? “*In the attitude of your mind*”, have you ever made it your aim or purpose to **earnestly decide** to be done with your old life of sin? Likewise, have you ever made it your aim or purpose to **dedicate** yourself to live the new “Christ-like” life that God has prepared for you to live? **If not,** then you, like the Ephesians, need this **reminder to do so.**

Paul continues to say in 4:24, that this Christ-like life, that God has created us for, is to be lived in “*true righteousness and holiness*”.

The word **Righteousness** (Greek - *Dikaiosune*) is a legal term that, as used in verse 4:24, denotes conformity to a given standard or norm [“*the new self*”]. It means, “the state of being right, **being as one ought to be,** having right moral conduct” [according to God’s standard or norm as revealed in His Word].
H. S. Miller

The word **Holiness** (Greek - *hosiotes*) **is not** the common Greek word used for “holiness” and / or “sanctification”. That word is *hagiasmos*, whose root meaning is “separation”. *Hosiotes*, denotes the thought of “piety”, being “pious” or devoted to “the **obligations** of holiness” [H. S. Miller]. It means, “that quality of holiness which is manifest in those who have **regard equally to grace and truth**” [W. E. Vine]. As we have **regarded** or **given respect** to salvation as a free gift of **God’s grace** through faith in Jesus Christ, we must **equally regard** or **respect the truth** concerning our “**obligations to holiness**”. That is, we must “**put off**” our old self [the Old Mindset] and “**put on**” our new self [the New Mindset] and live our lives as God intends us to live as believers / followers of Jesus Christ.

2. Change, Through A Different Way of Living 4:25-32



The only reliable indicator of an inward change is a **new life**, or **new actions**.

The following verses, indicate what believers are to "**put off**" [disrobe themselves of] concerning their old life [self], i., e., "The Old Mindset", and what they are to "**put on**" [clothe themselves with] in relation to their new life [self] in Christ, i., e., "The New Mindset".

As I study these verses [4:25-32] I sense that **their emphasis** is more than "putting off" and "putting on" just for the sake of "**separation**" or "**holiness**" unto God. That truth is emphasized in II Corinthians 6:17 - 7:1 [please read]. **Here, however**, there seems to be an **additional emphasis**, i., e., believers are to "put off" their old [Gentile] life style and to "put on" their new life style [true righteousness and holiness] in order to live together harmoniously within the Church or the Body of Christ. **Notice**, 4:25 ["*we are all members of one body*"]; 4:28b ["*that he may have something to share with those in need*"]; 4:29b ["*only what is helpful for building others up*"]; 4:32 ["*Be kind and compassionate to one another, forgiving each other just as in Christ God forgave you.*"]. You will find this **same emphasis** in Colossians 3:5-14. **Now**, keep this emphasis of "**harmony between believers**" in mind as we look at verses 4:25-32.

"Put off" therefore ---

1. **Falsehood** [4:25a]

We are to be **completely and finally done with** all conscious and intentional lies, and falsehood in every form [exaggeration, false impressions, fraud, etc.].

2. **Sinful Anger** [4:26a]

Here, the thought is about "**being provoked by some thing**". That "**some thing**" is anger [a flare up] that is the mere expression of a wounded personality. That anger is sinful.

3. **Stealing** [4:28a]

Stealing, is "**obtaining unjustly what is not one's own**". At the time of this Letter, **stealing was an on-going sin among the Ephesians**. Paul writes, "*He who has been stealing must steal no longer*".

"Put on" therefore ---

1. **Truthful Speech** [4:25b]

The grammar used in this thought is in the present tense, meaning "speak the truth and continue to do so". Note the **emphasis** Paul places on **speaking truthfully** to members of "**the family**", i., e., the Body of Christ.

2. **Righteous Anger** [4:26b-27]

That anger, which is a pure expression of repugnance to wrong in loyalty to God, is sinless. Here is a comment by Pythagorais about not letting the sun go down while you are still angry. "If betrayed into angry revilings, they must shake hands before the sun sets".

In the exercise of "righteous anger" we must be careful not to give the devil a "foothold" or a "place" by which to effect or control our lives.

3. **Work** [4:28b]

This word "work" carries the thought of "honest labor unto toil or weariness" [instead of stealing] in order to **have something to share** with the one in need.

4. **Unwholesome Talk** [4:29a]

Unwholesome talk is defined as “**corrupt speech**; speech unfit for use; rotten words”. Paul writes, “Do not let any of this kind of speech come out of your mouth”.

4. **Helpful Talk** [4:29b]

Helpful talk is spiritually edifying beneficial speech that promotes **another’s** spiritual growth.

Intermission – In the middle of these instructions as to what believers should “put off” and “put on” in relation to their spiritual life in Christ, the Apostle Paul inserts this appeal “*and do no grieve the Holy Spirit of God, with whom you were sealed for the day of redemption*” [4:30].

Remember, that when you believed in Jesus Christ you were “*marked with a seal*”, signifying that the Holy Spirit came to **dwell** or to live in you [Ephesians 1:13-14 - see pages 20-21]. At the time of your “sealing” the Holy Spirit also became your **Counselor** [John 14:16-17, 26; 16:12-16], the **One** to lead you, guide and direct you until you receive your new body on the “*day of redemption*”, i., e., the day of resurrection.

Now, with this in mind, Paul says “*do not grieve the Holy Spirit*” [Greek - *lupeo*] meaning, “do not cause Him to suffer grief, pain or distress” by **refusing** His counsel to “**put off** your Old Self” and to “**put on** your New Self” as He **instructed you** on page 57 and now **continues** to do so here on page 58.

F. F. Bruce contributes this helpful comment about verse 4:30: “So, lest the Spirit be grieved, let everything be put away which menaces unity of heart and purpose among believers”.

Therefore, “**Get rid of all**” [4:31] ---

And “**be**” [4:32] ---

5. **All Bitterness**

Bitterness is the **opposite of sweetness**. “It is every form of irritability, resentful disposition against others, and hardness of spirit” [Liberty Bible Commentary].

5. **Kind**

In 4:32 the Greek word *chrestos* primarily signifies “**fit for use**” or “**serviceable**”. In respect to people, it refers to them as being “good, gracious, kind, virtuous, mild and pleasant in **contrast** to what is hard, harsh, sharp and bitter. “The word ‘**kind**’ comes from such words as ‘**kin**’ and ‘**kindred**’, so that to deal kindly with others is to deal with them as our own kin. **After all**, believers are brethren” [Lehman Strauss].

6. **All Rage** [or “wrath”]

“This is becoming **boiling mad** resulting in furious outbursts of temper and passionate expressions of rage”.

6. **Compassionate** [or “tenderhearted”]

The Greek word *eusplanchnos* is an interesting word. “It is a compound word, literally meaning, ‘well’ [*eu*] ‘boweled’ [*splanchnos*] or ‘**having strong bowels**’. The Greek poets believed that the bowels were the seat of the more violent passions, such as love and hate; the Hebrews held that they were the seat of the tender affections, such as kindness and compassion. Hence, ‘**bowels of mercies**’ is used where we would use ‘**a heart of compassion**’” [H. S. Miller]. Believers, are “**to be moved with compassion**” at the spiritual and physical needs of others.

7. **All Anger** [Greek - *orge*]

“Orge” came to signify anger, **as the strongest of all passions**. It suggests a more settled or abiding condition of mind, frequently with a view to taking revenge. Orge is less sudden in its rise than [*thumos* - wrath] but more lasting in its nature” [W. E. Vine].

8. **All Brawling** [or “clamour”]

“Clamour is the **audible expression** of anger. It is the cry of one’s passions in railing against others while asserting one’s own rights” [Lehman Strauss].

9. **All Slander** [“evil speaking”]

The word “slander” is a translation of the Greek word “*blasphemia*”. It means, “**injurious speech**” - speech with abusive

7. **Forgiving**

In 4:32, the words “forgiving” and “forgave” are translations of the same Greek word *charizomai* the root word of which is “*charis*” meaning, “to

words meant to hurt, harm, and insult.

The word “blasphemy” is practically confined to speech **defamatory** of the Divine Majesty [W. E. Vine].

10. **All Malice**

“Malice” refers to a vicious disposition of character that desires to **injure** or **malign**.

bestow a favor **unconditionally**”; “to give **graciously and freely**”.

It is worthy of note to realize that the writer, the Apostle Paul, applies **this same Greek word** to **both** believers and God. We are to “*forgive each other [graciously and freely] just as in Christ God forgave you*” [graciously and freely]. F. F. Bruce states that “we can neither seek nor enjoy God’s forgiveness so long as we cherish an unforgiving spirit to others”.

Please read Matthew 6:12, 14; 18:21-35.

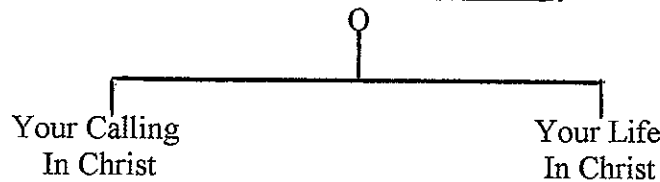
H. S. Miller, using the KJV, gives this **summary statement** about the above **six sins** [#5-10].

“Thus, bitter speech leads to wrath [rage], wrath to anger, anger to clamor [brawling], clamor to railing [slander], railing to malignity [malice] and a desire to injure”. Therefore, Paul says, “**get rid of it all**” [4:31].

P. S. By the way, in your professed life as a believer in Christ, have you progressed [for it is your responsibility to do so] in “**putting off**” from yourself your old sinful life style and in “**putting on**” or clothing yourself with your new life style in Christ [righteousness and holiness]???

We have already looked at God’s Plan For Change in “**The Way We Think**” (4:17-24) and in “**The Way We Live**” (4:25-32). As we continue into **chapter 5:1-20**, we discover **three more things** about the believer’s walk or life in relation to change. **Remember**, Paul’s over-riding principle is **always** ---

“I urge you to live a life worthy of [equal to] the calling you have received” [4:1].



3. **Change, Through Walking In Love 5:1-7**

Command: “*Be imitators of God, therefore, as dearly loved children*” [5:1].

Question: Can believers in Christ **really imitate** or mimic God [5:1]?

God is omniscient. Certainly we cannot know everything.

God is omnipresent. Certainly we cannot be everywhere present at the same time.

Answer: What believers in Christ are called to imitate **are not** God’s Non-Moral Attributes, like Omniscience and Omnipresence but His **Moral Attributes**, such as, Love, Grace, Mercy, Truth, Faithfulness, Holiness, etc.. We were **created** with the capacity or the ability to **imitate these**.

The word “**and**”, which begins verse 2, should be translated “**that is**”, in order to convey the idea of **how** believers **will be able to imitate** or mimic God. The particular moral attribute of God that we are admonished to imitate [in verse 2] is “**love**”, “*live a life of love*” [Greek - *agape*].

Verse 2 depicts the **quality** of “*agape love*” as that which Christ exercised when “*He loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God*”. And now, **we**, as believers in Christ, are to

become **imitators** of this love, so that, just as Christ **offered Himself** to God for us, we are to yield or **offer ourselves** to God for the purpose of “*living a life of love*” towards God and man. Living a life of love is **one of the changes** God has planned and desires for our lives.

This love has **God / Christ** for its **primary object**, and expresses itself by **living a life of** “*obedience to His commands*” [John 14:15], “*teachings*” [John 14:23a-24], and “*holiness*” [“*Be holy, because I am holy*”, I Peter 1:15-16].

In relation to man, this love “seeks the welfare of all [Romans 15:2], and works no ill to any [Romans 13:8-10]; this love seeks opportunity to do good to ‘*all men, and especially toward them that are of the household of faith*’, [Galatians 6:10]”. W. E. Vine

In relation to **offering ourselves to God** for the purpose of “walking or living in love”, the Apostle Paul says that our offering is to “**smell good**”, that is, it is to be “**fragrant**” - “just as Christ’s offering of Himself was **fragrant** to God” [5:2]. Paul continues to say that there are some things that **are not fragrant**, that **do not “smell good”**, in fact, **they stink**. Paul defines them as being morally “**improper**” [5:3] and “**out of place**” [5:4] for God’s holy people. Therefore, if we are to be “**imitators**” of God and live a life of love in “**obedience**” to Him, we must allow God to change the morally “**improper**” and “**out of place**” practices in our lives so that the offering of ourselves unto Him will be [spiritually speaking] as a **fragrant aroma**. In **each** of these verses, 5:3-4, Paul presents practices that need to be “**radically changed**” for they have no part in a Christian’s life. They are:

Improper Sexual Relationships [verse 5:3]

- Immoral - illicit sexual intercourse
- Any kind of sexual impurity [filthiness]
- Any kind of sexual greed [a lust or desire to have more]

Out-of-Place Speech [5:4]

- Obscenity - filthiness [all that is contrary to purity in speech]
- Foolish talk [“The talk of fools which is foolishness and sin together”. Trench]
- Coarse joking [vulgar or indecent speech; low, obscene language]

Question: Just **how improper** are these “sexual relationships” and “out-of-place speech”?

Answer: “*But among you* [believers in Christ] *there must not be even a hint of them*”.

The word translated “**hint**” [Greek - *onomazo*] could also be translated as “not even a **mention**” or, “never **once** named” among you.

Warnings: “*For of this you can be sure* [Greek - *ginoskos* and *oida*, meaning “fullness of knowledge”]; *No immoral, impure or greedy person - such a man is an idolater - has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God*” [5:5].

“*Let no one deceive you with empty words* [Greek - *kenos*, meaning, “words that convey erroneous teaching”] *for because of such things* [Improper Sexual Relationships and Out-of-Place Speech] *God’s wrath comes on those who are disobedient*” [5:6].

Comments: In my words, Paul is saying something like this: “Beyond all doubt, you can surely count on this fact [which devious errant teachers cannot change], those engaged in ‘improper sexual relationships and out-of-place speech’ have **no inheritance** in the Kingdom of Christ and of God. Rather, God’s **wrath** or **judgment** abides upon them”.

“**Therefore do not be partners with them**” [5:7].

4. Change, Through Walking In Light 5:8-14

- “You were once darkness” [5:8a]

The pronoun “**you**” has reference to the Ephesian believers [as well as to **all believers** in Jesus Christ]. The word “**darkness**”, as used in 5:8a, is symbolical of **sin**. “The statement, ‘**you were once darkness**’ [that is, **formerly**, before converting to Christ] **does not** mean they were ‘in the dark’ **nor** ‘in darkness’, but they were **so low in heathenism** as to be **darkness itself**” [H. S. Miller].

Thayer gives this further explanation: “They were persons in whom ‘**darkness**’ becomes visible and holds sway.”

The Apostle Paul speaks of these “**disobedient**” people as being engaged in “**fruitless deeds** [works] of **darkness**” [sins done in secret], so base, as to be too “**shameful**” [Greek - *aischros*, immodest or impure] to mention publicly [5:11-12].

In Galatians 5:19-21a, Paul, while speaking about man’s sinful nature [the seat of our **spiritual darkness**], says that the **actions** [deeds or works] of the sinful nature **are obvious**. He then proceeds to name some of these “**fruitless deeds of darkness**”.

They are: “*sexual immorality, impurity and debauchery* [absence of restraint, indecency]; *idolatry and witchcraft; hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions and envy; drunkenness, orgies and the like*”.

Illustration concerning idolatry: The most “**spiritually darkened**” country I have ever visited is Taiwan. The following is a “**news flash**” from Dr. Cary Perdue as to what went on in that country from September 12-22, 2013. “The Matsu Temple in Beigang, Taiwan sponsored ‘The World Matsu Meet’ in which idols from all over Taiwan and **twenty nine other countries** were brought together for this major event. Their goal was to parade **ten thousand idols** throughout the city of Beigang, claiming that city as their territory.”

Men and women, those who participated in this event are living in “**spiritual darkness**”. They have rejected the one, true, living, eternal God for a lifeless idol. Paul said that “**you were once darkness**”. You **also lived** in “**spiritual darkness**” [living in rebellion against God and His Word] **reflecting** the immoral character of that “**darkness**”.

- “But now, you are light in the Lord” [5:8b]

“There are two great kingdoms, in one of which every man is to be found. There is the kingdom of Satan, which is the kingdom of **darkness**; and there is the kingdom of our Lord, which is the kingdom of **light**. Every Christian was at one time in darkness. But when Christ, who is the Light of the world [John 8:12], came into our hearts, we were immediately delivered from the power [or kingdom] of **darkness** and translated into the kingdom of **God’s dear Son** [Colossians 1:13].” Lehman Strauss

In 5:8-14, the word “**light**” appears **five** times and each time it is a translation of the same Greek word - *phos* which has reference to the **illuminating power** of God’s Word. So that in our **spiritual birth**, “*God who said, ‘Let light [*phos*] shine out of darkness [as in creation, Genesis 1:3], made his light shine in our hearts to give us the light [*photismos*] of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ*” [II Corinthians 4:6].

Therefore, as believers in Jesus Christ, **we** have become **receptacles** for the “**light**”. **It has shined upon us**. “*We are now light in the Lord*” [5:8b]. God has **given us** the capacity for receiving and retaining **spiritual “light”** [spiritual wisdom and understanding] and for being “**light bearers**” to others.

- **“Live [then] as children of light”** [5:8c]

In 5:8 the Apostle Paul exhorts **you**, as a believer in Jesus Christ, to *“Live as a child of light”*. In so doing, you will *“find out what pleases the Lord”*. As the *“deeds of darkness”* are spiritually *“fruitless”* and therefore *“shameful”* and displeasing to the Lord [5:11-12], *“the fruit of the light”*, goodness, righteousness and truth, *“pleases”* Him [5:9-10].

F. F. Bruce says, that “the **fruit** of the light is simply **the manner of life** produced in believers by the **true light** which dwells in them - a manner of life **marked by** ‘goodness, and righteousness and truth’”.

Goodness [5:9] “is **kindness in action**. It is the fruit whereby believers [in Christ] are **distinguished** from those who **dwel in darkness**. **Active goodness** is the natural result of light” [Lehman Strauss].

Righteousness [5:9] “is the state of being right, being as one ought to be, having **right conduct**” [H. S. Miller]. “In verse 9, righteousness has reference to **moral uprightness**, i. e., **right thinking** and **right doing**” [Lehman Strauss].

Truth [5:9] in sincerity and integrity of character. It is “**moral truth** as opposed to **falsehood** and **hypocrisy**” [H. S. Miller].

Up to this point [verses 5:8-10], Paul has **stated three things about you** as a believer in Christ: *“You were once darkness”*; *“You are now ‘light’ in the Lord”*; and you are to *“Live as children of light”*. Paul also said, that, as used in 5:8-14, the word **“light”** has reference to the **Word of God** and that **you**, as a **receptacle** for that **“light”** and a **“reflector”** of that **“light”**, are **“light bearers”** to others.

Now, in verses 5:11-14, Paul states that the **purpose** of the **“light”** or the Word of God that **believers bear**, is to *“expose [or make visible] the fruitless deeds of “darkness”* [5:11]. This being true, we can easily understand why **believers** who do not **actively live** according to the **“light”** of God’s Word have so little **impact** on the **“darkness”**. Therefore, Paul **admonishes us** as believers in Christ to **walk or live out** the **“light”** that is in us, and thereby become the **instruments** God uses to **expose** [or make visible] the **“darkness”** [5:11].

Digging Deeper: The following is an attempt to **rightly understand** the meaning of Paul’s teaching in verses 5:11-14. Remember, this Letter is addressed to the “Saints” or believers in Jesus Christ at Ephesus [1:1] to which Paul is saying in 5:11, *“Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness”*. The Greek **present imperative verb**, *“Have nothing to do [with]”*, means “stop having joint participation with the barren works of darkness” [Liberty Bible Commentary, page 2422] which leads us to believe that Paul is referring to **believers** in Ephesus. Notice **something similar** in 5:12 which states *“It is shameful even to mention what the disobedient do in secret”*. The Bible Knowledge Commentary, page 639, gives us this insight about the word translated “disobedient”. It states that “The term **‘the disobedient’** in the NIV wrongly suggests that this refers to unbelievers. However, the Greek has ‘what is done **by them**’, thus indicating that Paul may be referring to **believers** who commit ‘deeds of darkness’”.

Therefore, the **emphasis** in 5:8-14 is that **believers** in Christ are to *“live as children of light”*, that is, live in accordance with the Word of God. “In so doing, they will **expose** or **make visible** [uncover, reveal, lay bare] to other believers any works of darkness that is in them. Seeing these works as evil, a believer will then cleanse himself of them [I John 1:5-7], realizing they are detrimental not only to him but also to other believers” [The Bible Knowledge Commentary, page 639].

Finally, in 5:14, Paul uses Old Testament Scripture [Isaiah 60:1-2, 26:19, 51:17, 52:1] as an **exhortation** to those believers in the church at Ephesus, and to all such believers, in whom “*fruitless deeds of darkness*” have been **exposed** or **made visible**. It reads:

“*Wake up, O sleeper, rise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you*” [5:14].

This exhortation is addressed to “*sleepers*”, that is, to those believers in Ephesus who exhibit a carnal indifference towards spiritual things. The exhortation has **three parts**.

- a. “*Wake up, O sleeper*” is a **wake-up call**. As used in 5:14, the verb “**wake up**” [Greek - *egeiro*] means “**to arouse**” and is applied to believers whose abnormal spiritual drowsiness or slumber [sleepers] suggests that their spiritual faculties and senses are deadened so that the manner in which they live [deeds of darkness] is “**scarcely discernable from the unsaved**” [Lehman Strauss].
- b. “*Arise from the dead*” is a **command**. It literally means to “**stand up** [Greek - *anistemi*] **out of the dead ones**” or, in its poetical form, “**from the dead arouse thee**”. The “**dead**” are unbelievers, the unsaved. This command calls for a decisive decision by believers whose “**deeds**” have been **exposed** as being “**deeds of darkness**”. Paul’s God given advice is: “**Have nothing to do with the fruitless deeds of darkness**” [5:11a]; “**Come out from them and be separate, says the Lord**” [II Corinthians 6:17].
- c. “*And Christ will shine on you*” is a **promise**. The verb “*will shine*” [Greek - *epiphausko*] is used **only this one time** in the New Testament. “It is used figuratively of Christ upon the slumbering believer who awakes and arises from among the dead” [W. E. Vine]. The promise “*and Christ will shine on you*” means, that the slumbering believer who **awakes** and **arises** from among the dead once again becomes a **reflector** or a **bearer** of the “**light**” [the Word of God] to those who remain in “**darkness**”.

Men and women, today, **right now**, let us surrender or yield ourselves to Paul’s urging that we “**live as children of light**” [5:8c].

5. Change, Through Walking In Wisdom 5:15-20

We have now come to the 5th way in which God brings about **change** in a believer’s life. It is through “**Walking in Wisdom**”. The Apostle Paul begins this section with **three exhortations** and the **reasoning** that prompted him to give the exhortations, all of which are **connected to the exercise of wisdom**.

The first exhortation: “*Be very careful, then, how you live*” [5:15]. “The word ‘*careful*’ [Greek - *akribos*] expresses that **accuracy** which is the outcome of **carefulness**” [W. E. Vine]. The words accurate, cautious, circumspectly, diligent, and exacting are synonyms which give a broader understanding of “**careful**”.

“*Not as unwise but as wise*” expresses the **reasoning** for giving the exhortation. The word “**unwise**” [Greek - *asophos*] means, “**not endowed** with spiritual and / or practical wisdom” while the word “**wise**” [Greek - *sophos*] means just the opposite, “**endowed** with spiritual and / or practical wisdom”.

Paul is saying, “be careful”, “wise-up”! You cannot “**walk in wisdom**” or live a “**wise**” Christian life unless you be endowed with **God given wisdom**. You must seek that wisdom through God’s Word.

The second exhortation: “*Make the most of every opportunity*” [5:16]. The Greek word “*kairos*”, here translated “**opportunity**”, portrays the thought of “**time**” as a period or season [like our four seasons] in which opportunities [like harvest time] pass swiftly by. Thayer, defines “*kairos*” as “a definitely **limited**”

portion of time, with the added notion of **suitableness** [a limited, suitable, portion of time]. Therefore, we are to “*make the most of every opportunity*”, that is, to **redeem** the time, “turning each opportunity to the best advantage since none can be recalled if missed” [W. E. Vine].

The phrase “*Because the days are evil*” [5:16] expresses Paul’s **reasoning** behind this exhortation. The word “**evil**” is a translation of the Greek word *poneros*, meaning “**evil that causes pain**”. The word “**days**” characterizes “**evil**” as “days that are painful, sorrowful and toilsome”.

From a **historical perspective**, F. F. Bruce gives us this insight concerning the “**evil**” believers were facing. “The days were ‘evil’; persecution and distress threatened the churches throughout the Roman Empire; signs were not lacking of the impending fall of the Second Jewish Commonwealth [70 AD], with all the incalculable implications which that might have for the Christian cause”.

Paul is saying, therefore, this is the **wisdom** God intends us to **utilize**: Because we live in “**days**” [a period or season of time] characterized by “**evil**” we need to grasp or buy up **every opportunity** and avail ourselves of **every means** to spread the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ **while there is still time**.

O, I pray that all of us who are believers in Jesus Christ will **walk in this wisdom**.

The third exhortation: “*Therefore do not be foolish [senseless, unwise], but understand [perceive or comprehend intelligently] what the Lord’s will is. Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit*” [5:17-18].

Verses 5:17-20 present a **contrast** between the “**unwise**” and the “**wise**” [5:15]; between the “**foolish**” and the “**understanding**” [5:17]; and between being “**drunk**” [or controlled] **with wine**, and being “**filled**” [or controlled] with the **Holy Spirit** [5:18]. On the **negative side**, the “**unwise**” and “**foolish**” are **aligned** with those controlled with **wine** and on the **positive side**, the “**wise**” and “**understanding**” are **aligned** with those controlled with the **Holy Spirit**.

F. F. Bruce stirs our thinking about “**contrasts**” with these remarks. “The effects of being filled with the Spirit were mockingly misinterpreted on the day of Pentecost as being the result of new wine [Acts 2:13]; but neither there nor here [Ephesians 5:17-18] is it to be inferred that the Spirit is a **substance** with which man’s personality [his soul and spirit] can be filled just as his body can be filled with wine. Paul does not say, ‘Become full of the Spirit’ but [literally], ‘Be filled in Spirit’ by which he means, let your fullness be that which the Holy Spirit [**a person**] produces [in you]”.

Negatively, The **Unwise and Foolish** become **drunk** [or controlled] with wine [**a substance**], which **leads to debauchery** [5:18], **not to God’s will**.

Debauchery can be **defined** or **explained** in the following ways:

- As an excessive indulgence in sensual pleasure.
- To be indifferent to moral restraint.
- To be utterly and shamelessly immoral.
- To be broken down in character - degraded, abandoned.
- To be addicted to intoxicating beverages to such a degree that a person is beyond salvage / saving.

If you are **involved** in the degrading actions of drunkenness **you are outside** the perimeter of God’s will. It is “*foolish*” [senseless] to think otherwise. To be in such a state calls for **repentance**, seeking Christ’s **forgiveness**, and surrendering one’s self to the **control** of the Holy Spirit.

Positively, The **Wise and Understanding** become **filled** [or controlled] with the Holy Spirit [**a person**].

Verses **5:15-20** reveal **six things** we should know about the “**filling**” with the Holy Spirit.

- a. The “**filling**” is **not an option**, it is the **will of God** for every believer. The “**filling**” is not something you can live with or without. It is absolutely necessary. For without the empowering of the Holy Spirit you have no means or ability to live a Christian life. Therefore, “*Be wise, - understand what the Lord’s will is - be filled with the Spirit*” [5:17-18].

- b. The “filling” is **a command** – “*Be filled with the Spirit*” [5:18]. A believer is not **automatically** filled with the Holy Spirit even though the Holy Spirit indwells him. But in obedience to God’s command, the believer must **ever pursue** the “filling” until it becomes the **normal pattern** of his daily Christian life and experience. **To not pursue** its fulfillment in our lives is a sin.
- c. The “filling” is described as **a control**. When the Apostle Paul says “*Be filled with the Spirit*” [5:18], it means, **to surrender** every part of one’s life to the control of the Holy Spirit. As a **sponge** soaks up water into every pore or tiny hole in its body, so we are to give the Holy Spirit **control** over every niche, every recess or inner space, in our lives.

The Holy Spirit is not a **material substance** which fills a container, but a **person** sent to be the **enabling power** of God in the life of the believer. “The Holy Spirit has come to do **in you** everything that Jesus came to do **for you**” [Don Lessin].

- d. The “filling” is described as **a contrast**. 5:18 says, “*Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit*”.
- The Apostle Paul **contrasts** being drunk, or being under the control of alcohol, which affects a person’s senses towards debauchery or immoral practices --- with being drunk or under the control of the Holy Spirit, who affects or directs a person towards moral and godly practices. This **contrast** is seen most vividly in Galatians 5:16-26. Look at 5:16-17, 19 in contrast with 5:22-25.
- e. The “filling” is **a continuous action**. We do not speak of the “filling” with the Holy Spirit in the **past tense**, such as, I am “**filled**” with the Holy Spirit”. Because, “*Be filled with the Spirit*” in Ephesians 5:18 indicates a **present continuous action**, and therefore, could also be translated “Be-being filled with the Spirit”.
- Jesus illustrates this truth when He said: “*Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water [the Holy Spirit] will flow from within him*” [John 7:38-39]. In order for the Holy Spirit to **over flow** or **flow out** from within you to others, there must be a **continuous action** of “*being filled with the Spirit*”.
- f. The “filling” brings about **change** – from a “**human**” norm to a “**spiritual**” norm.
- From being spiritually “**unwise**” to being spiritually “**wise**” [5:15].
 From being spiritually “**foolish**” to being spiritually “**understanding**” [5:17].
 From being spiritually “**joyless**” to being spiritually “**joyful**” [5:19]
 “*Speak to one another with psalms, hymns and spiritual songs. Sing and make music in your heart to the Lord.*”
 From being spiritually “**unthankful**” to being spiritually “**thankful**” [5:20].
 “*Always giving thanks to God the Father for everything, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*”
 “*And whatever you do, whether in word or deed, do it all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through him*” [Colossians 3:17].

We have been looking at **six things** every believer should know about the “**filling**” [control] with the Holy Spirit. Now for a moment I would like to **digress** from Paul’s teaching in Ephesians in order to **discuss two other questions** about the Holy Spirit.

Question #1: If a Christian asked you “**how can I be filled with the Holy Spirit**” what would you tell them?

In John 7:37-39a, Jesus said “*If anyone is thirsty, let him come to me and drink. Whoever believes in me, as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him. By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believed on him were later to receive.*”

In these verses, Jesus “**paints**” three “**word pictures**” that describe how a person can be “**filled**” with the Holy Spirit.

1st - You Must Thirst – “*If anyone is thirsty*”

The word thirst or thirsty is used **figuratively** of spiritual thirst or spiritual hunger. Spiritual thirst **indicates** that you have a situation in your life that is beyond your ability to control or that you have an inner longing or desire that you cannot fulfill. It **indicates** that you have tried to do everything you know to do, but nothing helps – so you have given up trying to do anything more. You have come to the end of your “**self**” effort.

2nd - You Must Ask – “*Let him come to me and drink*”.

In your thirst you must come to Christ and drink, that is, **cry out to Him** to quench your thirst. You must **yield your situation to Christ** and ask Him to find a solution for the situation **you cannot solve** and the inner desire **you cannot fulfill**. And **figuratively**, Christ **will** quench your thirst. He will bring your thirst under control, for **He fulfills** the things you thirst for through the “**living water**”.

3rd - You Must Believe – that the “**living water**” is the Holy Spirit whom the Father and Son have given you “*To live with you and be in you forever*” [John 14:16-17].

For, “*Whoever believes in me as the Scripture has said, streams of living water will flow from within him. By this he meant the Spirit, whom those who believe in him were later to receive*” [John 7:38-39a].

As water **revives** a dry, drooping, dying flower plant so that it blossoms and radiates the beauty for which it was created, **so likewise** the Holy Spirit, as the “**living water**”, can control the **situations** in your life that are **beyond your ability** to control and can **fulfill** the unfulfilled inner longings and desires of **your heart**.

Question #2: If a Christian asked you “How can I know “**if**” or “**when**” I am **filled** with the Holy Spirit” what would you tell that person?

Through the Apostle Paul, the Lord provides us with a **three-fold answer** to this searching question.

1st - You Can Know It By Your “Mind Set”.

“*Those who live according to the sinful nature have their minds set on what that nature desires; but those who live in accordance with the Spirit have their minds set on what the Spirit desires*” [Romans 8:5-9].

What is your **mind set** on? The **desires** [lust] of your sinful human nature **or** on your new nature and what the Holy Spirit **desires**?

2nd – You Can Know It By Your “Fruit”, i. e., The Spirit’s Fruit In You.

“*The fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, and self-control*” [Galatians 5:22-23]. Is this “fruit of the Spirit” seen or **demonstrated** in your life? **If so**, then **you know** you are **being filled** or **controlled** by the Holy Spirit.

3rd – You Can Know It By Your “Relationships” With Others.

The relationship between wives and husbands; between parents and children; between employers and employees, to name a few, and which leads us to **our next area of discussion in 5:21 - 6:9**.

Remember, the section we have just completed was about “**God’s Plan For Changing You**”.

The last “**change**” that we discussed was “**Change, Through Walking In Wisdom**”.

The **wise** understand “*what the Lord’s will is*” - “*be filled [controlled] with the Spirit*”.

INTER - PERSONAL RELATIONSHIPS 5:21 - 6:9

“Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ” [5:21].

The word “**submit**” or “**subject**” [Greek - *hupotasso*] is primarily a **military term** meaning “To rank under”; “To put in subjection under”; or “To arrange under.” Here, in Ephesians 5:21 - 6:9, the Apostle Paul defines God’s “**arrangement**” for **three inter-personal relationships**. **Submission** to one another in these inter-personal relationships is **motivated** out of a **reverence** for Christ [a wholesome dread or fear of displeasing Christ], and through **yielding our lives** to the control of the Holy Spirit [5:17-18].

In his book, *The Glorious Church* [page 164], Wilbur Fields gives us this **insight** about submission:

“You must be subjecting yourselves to one another according to the various relationships in which you stand to one another. And this you must do because you **fear** [reverence] **the authority of Christ** who has **appointed** these relationships.”

“This submission is reciprocal, mutual, voluntary, and personal. It is opposed to rudeness, haughtiness, and selfish preference of one’s own opinions” [Liberty Bible Commentary, page 2424].

A. The Wife - Husband Relationship 5:22-33

As you study this **relationship**, remember the man / husband as **symbolic of Christ**, and the woman / wife as **symbolic of the church**.

The Wife [5:22-24]

The “**arrangement**” --- “*Wives, submit to your husbands as to the Lord*” [5:22a and 24b].

The words “*as to the Lord*” [5:22] **make submission** on the part of the wife **workable** or **do-able**. The **evidence** of being **in submission “to the Lord”** on the part of the wife **is seen** in her **submission to her husband**. “Her submission to her husband **is her service** rendered ‘*to the Lord*’” [The Bible Knowledge Commentary, page 640].

The **reason** given for submitting, is the **God given role** of the husband. “*For the husband is the head of the wife as Christ is the head of the church, his body, of which he is the Savior*” [5:23].

I Peter 2:13 - 3:1-7 is a potent portion of Scripture in relation to **submission**. **Verses 3:1-6** relate to the submission of **the wife** in the marriage relationship. Wives, and wives to be, please take the time to “**digest**” the **positive aspects of submission** presented in these verses. There are **three** of them.

#1 - “*Wives, in the same way [as Christ was submissive] be submissive to your husbands so that, if any of them do not believe the word, they may be won over without words by the behavior of their wives, when they see the purity and reverence of your lives*” [3:1-2].

These are **very interesting** verses. Peter is saying that “**actions** speak **louder** than words”. How so? Because, it is possible for an **unbelieving** husband to be won over to faith in Christ through the **behavior** [conduct] of a believing wife when he sees her “**purity**” [her marital fidelity in their relationship] coupled with her “**reverence**” [her reverential fear of God in relation to submission to her husband] as a controlling motive **in her life**. Wives, the **possibility** of winning an unbelieving husband over to Christ is one of the **positive aspects** in “*being submissive to your husbands*”.

#2 - *“Your beauty should not come from outward adornment, such as braided hair and the wearing of gold jewelry and fine clothes. Instead, it should be that of your inner self, the unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is of great worth in God’s sight. For this is the way the holy women of the past who put their hope in God used to make themselves beautiful. They were submissive to their own husbands, like Sarah, who obeyed Abraham and called him her master”* [I Peter 3:3-6a].

I’m sure you have heard the saying **“all that glitters is not gold”**. I believe that is what Peter is getting at in these verses. He is saying the beauty that comes from the **“glitter / sparkle”** of outward adornment, and which may please your husband, has a **diminishing value**. That kind of beauty **changes** over time. However, *“the inner unfading beauty of a gentle and quiet spirit is of great worth in God’s sight”* in that, it being God’s will for wives, the effect of a gentle and quiet spirit **will never change**.

The words **“gentle”** and **“quiet”** are quite similar. **“Described negatively**, the word **‘gentle’** [or meekness] is the opposite of self-assertiveness and self-interest. **Positively** [in relation to I Peter 3:3-6a], it is that temper of spirit in which a wife accepts God’s dealings with her [submissiveness] as good, and therefore without disputing or resisting. The word **‘quiet’** indicates **inward tranquility**, that is, a freedom from emotional disturbance or agitation” [W. E. Vine].

Wives, allowing God to cultivate a **“gentle”** and **“quiet”** spirit within you is another **positive aspect** in relation to **“being submissive to your husbands”**. Having a gentle, quiet, submissive spirit in relation to your husband demonstrates the **real beauty** of a woman.

#3 - *“You are her [Sarah’s] daughters if you do what is right and do not give way to fear”* [I Peter 3:6b].

As we **look again** at Ephesians 5:22-24 you will notice that **5:24 could possibly** strike a note of **fear** in some wives. It reads ---

“Now as the church submits to Christ, so also wives should submit to their husbands in everything”.

“Does **‘everything’** really mean **‘everything’**? “Are there **no exceptions**”? **“If not”** you may say, “then as a wife and mother, I have **reason** to fear”. **“What if** my husband is addicted to drugs or alcohol and is physically and / or orally abusive with me and a threat to my children”? “Does God really mean **‘everything’**, even the **‘what if’** circumstances I have just described”?

In writing this book, I am consulting **eight** reference books and commentaries yet **not one of them** deals with this thought about **“everything”**. Surely it is not God’s will or intention to leave us **“hanging”** or **“in the dark”** concerning such an important concept. Therefore, the answer must lie within the context of the **“wife - husband relationship”** in 5:22-33. To be sure, the thought of enduring the threats and physical abuse of a husband is not part of the **“everything”**. The following are some **principles / teachings** that I feel will make the thought of **“everything”** more palatable.

To begin with, remember that this Letter is addressed **“To the saints in Ephesus, the faithful in Christ Jesus”** [1:1b]. Therefore, the **wives and husbands** being addressed in 5:22-33 are **“born-again”** believers in Jesus Christ and each one has been **entrusted** with **a mandate** from God.

“Wives, are to submit to their husbands”. That’s their mandate. **“As to the Lord”** [5:22], the meaning of which we have covered on page 67, is the **manner** in which **their mandate is realized**.

“Husbands, are to love their wives”. That’s their mandate. **“Just as Christ loved the church”** [5:25], the meaning of which is covered on pages 69-71, is the **manner** in which **their mandate is realized**.

I recognize that the Apostle Paul is painting a picture of an **“ideal”** Christian marriage between **two “born- again”** believers. Never-the-less, **honoring the mandates** are the **“ideal”** which both parties should strive to **fulfill**. When there are disagreements, arguments, regrettable words, etc., **“contrition”** [a feeling of remorse for sins or guilt], **“admitting the wrong”**, and **“asking for forgiveness”** from God and

one another becomes the “**game plan**”. The tears, forgiveness and embraces that follow, indicate a renewed acceptance, by both parties, of their **individual mandates**. As a result, your Christian marriage will move ahead. It will be “**back on track**”.

Now, wives, with the **mandates in mind**, let’s go back to the thoughts we were exploring about “**everything**”, “**fear**”, and the “**positive aspects**” of submission”.

The Apostle Peter admonished you to “*Do what is right and do not give way to fear*” [I Peter 3:6b].

“*Submitting to your husbands as to the Lord*” [Ephesians 5:22] is **God’s will** for you. It is what Peter calls “*doing what is right*” [I Peter 3:6b]. The **positive aspect** in obeying this admonition is, you need “*not give way to fear*” in respect to the marriage relationship. The New Bible Commentary, in quoting Cranfield, gives this understanding of I Peter 3:6b. “**Fearing God** [doing what is right by **honoring God’s mandate** of submissiveness] **wives** are to be **free** from **other fears**”. The word “**fear**” in I Peter 3:6b is a translation of the Greek word “*ptoestin*”. It is used only this one time in the New Testament. It carries the thought of “let nothing **terrify** you”. The Phillips translation states the meaning in this way: “Do not give way to **hysterical fears**”.

Conclusion: Wives, “*In doing what is right* [honoring your mandate from God] *there is no need to give way to fear*” [“terror”, “hysterical fears, anxieties”] concerning the marriage relationship. For when you are doing God’s will, which you are when you honor your mandate, you can live in “**freedom from other fears**”. “There is nothing to fear except fear itself.”

[Extra Curriculum Information! I have stated on the bottom of page 68 that I believe Paul, in Ephesians 5:22-33, was addressing **born-again believers** concerning **their** marriage relationships. **However**, when Paul wrote this letter, the **oldest believers** in Ephesus were only **7 to 8 years old** “**in Christ**”. Therefore, there were **undoubtedly** a number of questions about marriage which Paul **chose not to discuss** in his Letter to The Ephesians including “**mixed**” marriages, that is, where one spouse was a believer and the other an unbeliever. However, in writing **from** Ephesus **to** The Church in Corinth, Paul answers **seven questions** about marriage in I Corinthians chapter 7, including the question about “**mixed**” marriages [question #4, I Corinthians 7:12-16]. To **grow** or **increase** in your understanding about **various aspects** of marriage, **please read chapter 7 carefully** along with **II Corinthians 6:14 - 7:1.**]

The Husband [5:25-30]

The “**arrangement**” --- “*Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ loved the church and gave himself up for her*” [5:25].

Husbands, you are to “**love your wives**”. That is your “**mandate**”. “*Just as Christ loved the church*” is the **manner** in which your mandate **will be realized**.

“The **measure** of Christ’s love for the church [5:25] is to be the **measure** of the husband’s love for his wife. Husbands, you owe your wives the **same kind of love and loyalty** as **Christ has for His bride**; supreme, self-forgetting, self-sacrificing love” [Liberty Bible Commentary, page 2424].

The wife is not to be the **subject** for love but the **object** for love. **Note:** The Greek words “*Eros*” (passion, sex) and “*Stergo*” (satisfaction), are translated “**love**”. However, they **are never used** in the New Testament. The Greek verb translated “**love**” in Ephesians 5:25 is “*agapao*”, which means “seeking the highest good for another person”. This is the love husbands are to have for their wives. W. E. Vine states that “this love is a love which can be known only from **the actions** it prompts”.

Verses 5:28-30 present the following **comparison** or **analogy**.

"In the same way [as Christ loved the church], husbands ought to love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. After all, no one ever hated his own body, but he feeds and cares for it, just as Christ does the church - for we are members of his body."

The following **quotations** give us a **spiritual understanding** of this analogy.

"Christ and the husband are both **heads**. Christ is Head of His own body, the church, which is a part of Himself; the husband is head of the wife, who is, as his own body, a part of himself. The husband, therefore, is to love his wife as being his body, as Christ loves the church as forming His body."

The Book of Ephesians by H. S. Miller, page 204

"As the church is an extension of Christ, so is the wife an **"extension"** of her husband. Thus as Christ loves the church, **His body**, so should husbands love their wives as **their own bodies**."

The Bible Knowledge Commentary, page 641

"Husbands are not to love their wives in the same degree that they love their own bodies, but they are to love their wives as being **one body with themselves**. The wife is part of the husband. The two are one flesh. The idea that the two are one makes **love a compelling necessity**, and not just a **matter of condescension**." The Glorious Church by Wilbur Fields, page 170-171

I Peter 3:7 offers this **advice** to husbands.

"Husbands, in the same way" --- this has reference to the **context**, which in I Peter 2:13 - 3:7 is **"submission"**. As **wives** are to submit or be subject to their husbands, **husbands** are to **submit** to or **subject themselves** to the following:

To, *"Be considerate as you live with your wives"*. The word **"considerate"** has reference to **"knowledge"**. The KJV has this translation. *"Husbands, dwell with them according to knowledge"*. "Husbands, are to **"seek"**, **"inquire"**, and **"investigate"** so as to have an **intelligent understanding** of the **marriage relationship** as God intended it to be, and thus **live accordingly**.

To, *"Treat your wives with respect as the weaker partner [vessel]"*. Wives are also God's vessels or instruments. **Comparatively speaking**, they are the weaker vessel. Not morally or intellectually but physically. Husbands are to treat or give their wives **"respect"**, that is, to **"esteem"** or **"value"** them and give them a special place of **"honor"** in their marriage partnership.

To, *"Treat your wives with respect [see meaning above] as heirs with you of the gracious gift of life"*. This gift of life has reference to the *"gift of eternal life which came through Jesus Christ"* [Romans 6:23]. Peter is saying that Christ died for the wife as well as the husband. Her soul is as precious in God's sight as is his. As believers in Christ, they are spiritually equal for they are **heirs together** of the **gift of eternal life**. Therefore, husbands, *"treat your wives with respect"*. **They are daughters of God**.

"So that nothing will hinder your prayers". The word **"hinder"** [Greek - *enkopto*] means **"to cut into"**, **"to interrupt"**, or **"to place an obstacle in the path"** so as to detain or impede progress. As it relates to prayer, Peter is saying that **improper conduct** in a marital relationship places an **obstacle** in the **"path"** of prayer, and **interrupts** fellowship with God. In verse 3:7, Peter encourages husbands not to allow that to happen. Rather, husbands are to **submit** or **subject** themselves to this **"discipline"**: *"Be considerate as you live with your wives"* and *"treat them with respect"*.

Conclusions: [Ephesians 5:31-33]

In verse 5:31, the phrase *"For this reason"* [Greek - *anti houtos*] could be translated **"for this cause"**.

That is, in comparing the truths stated concerning the wife-husband relationship in 5:22-30, and their **fulfillment**, we have “**reason**” or “**cause**” for the following **conclusions** about marriage as first given by God in Genesis 2:24 and repeated by Jesus in Mark 10:6-9.

Verse 5:31

“A man **will leave** his father and mother”, that is, he will leave his parental home and **establish** a new home [family] over which he is to be the “**head**”.

“Be **united** to his wife”, that is, the husband will **cleave** or **adhere** to his wife above all other earthly relationships.

“The two [the husband and wife] will become **one flesh**”, that is, the sexual union between the husband and wife consummates their “**oneness**”.

Verse 5:33

“Each one of you also must **love his wife** [with a **self-sacrificing** love] even as he loves himself”.

“The wife must **respect** [have a godly reverence for] her husband” as her “**head**”.

B. The Child - Parent Relationship 6:1-4

Children [6:1-3]

The “**arrangement**” --- “Children, **obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right**” [6:1]. “**Honor your father and mother**” [6:2].

In verse 6:1 and again in verse 6:2, there is a God-given **command** to children. In relation to 5:21, these are the commands that children are to **submit to**. What are these commands?

Verse 6:1 “Children, **obey your parents**”.

The Greek word translated “**obey**” means, “To hear; To listen to; To submit to.” It refers to the one hearing [the children] as being under the **authority** of someone else [the parents]. The imperative tense, [in which this command is given], indicates **habitual** or **constant** obedience [to parents]. Whereas disobedience to parents is listed **as sin** in Romans 1:30 and II Timothy 3:2.

Questions:

What does “**obey your parents in the Lord**” mean?

It does not mean, to obey only if parents are **believers**, as some young people with unbelieving parents might claim. Rather, **it means** “to obey your parents **as you would God**”.

The phrase, “**in the Lord**” or “**as you would God**”, defines the **quality** of the obedience. The phrase “**obey your parents**” is the **sphere** within which the **obedience** is exercised.

What does “**obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right**” mean? It means that **obedience** to parents is a “**just**” or “**proper**” course to follow, for “**it pleases God**” [Colossians 3:20]. Even the law of nature itself gives **authority** to the **parent** and **demand**s **obedience** from the **offspring**.

Verse 6:2 Children, “**Honor your father and mother**”.

The word “**honor**” means, “To respect; To highly esteem.” Someone has said that “**Obedience** is the command or duty, and **honor** is the disposition of which the obedience is born.”

“Honor your father and mother” is the first commandment with a **promise**. What promise? “That it may go well with you and that you may enjoy long life on the earth” [6:3].

Question: Do you have a problem with this promise in verse 3?

Does it mean that those who **die young** have **disobeyed** and **dishonored** their parents?

Does it mean that those who **die of old age** do so because they have **obeyed** and **honored** their parents? If not, **what does it mean?** The **answer** is found in Exodus 20:12 which is the 5th of the 10 commandments and from which the promise in Ephesians 6:3 is quoted.

The Ten Commandments were a part of the Covenant of Law given to Israel **as a nation**. Therefore, when Exodus 20:5, Deuteronomy 5:16 and 5:32-33 state “that you may live long and that it will go well with you” it refers to Israel as a **nation** and God’s promise, that if they will **obey God**, “they would live and prosper and prolong their days [as a nation] **in the** [promised] **land**”.

“However, if they **do not obey the Lord their God** [Deuteronomy 28:15a] --- *then the Lord will scatter them among all nations, from one end of the earth to the other* [Deuteronomy 28:64a].

Now, in Ephesians 6:1-3, the Apostle Paul applies this same principle to children. If they will “**obey and honor their parents**” they will enjoy **this same quality** of life: “*It will go well with them and they will enjoy long life*, that is, **not a long life of years**, but live long in real worthwhile living.

Fathers [Parents - 6:4]

The “**arrangement**” --- “*Fathers, do not exasperate your children; instead, bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord*” [6:4].

While traveling in Iowa, the author was told the following by two sets of Christian parents.

“We were **uninvited** to the college graduation of our child.”

“We were **forbidden** to attend the wedding of our child.”

Question: Why this kind of **response** from adult sons and daughters? What **causes** this kind of rebellion against parents, even Christian parents?

In Chicago, out of 1000 cases of juvenile delinquency, 97% received no discipline from mothers and 98% received no discipline from fathers. Yet, **obedience** on the part of the child is largely dependent upon the proper **exercise of authority** (discipline) on the part of parents.

Here in Ephesians 6:4 and in Colossians 3:21 the Apostle Paul gives Fathers (parents) a **negative** and **positive** approach in fostering a good **Parent - Child Relationship**

- **Negatively**, what are Fathers (parents) **not to do?**

“*Fathers, do not exasperate your children*” [Ephesians 6:4a].

“*Fathers, do not embitter your children, or they will become discouraged*” [Colossians 3:21].

The word **exasperate** in Ephesians 6:4 and **embitter** in Colossians 3:21 have a same or similar meaning. Fathers (parents) are **not** to provoke, irritate, arouse or stir-up their children to **anger** and **discouragement**. The word **discouraged** in Colossians 3:21 means, “To lose heart; To make depressed; To break in spirit.” It also means “To fume”, to show or give way to **anger**.

Fathers (parents) **are not to** exasperate or irritate their children through injustice, and severity, so as to make them rebellious to filial obedience and honor. **Irritation** is the first consequence of being too

exacting with children, and irritation leads to **morosness** - going about in a listless, moody, sullen frame of mind.

- **Positively**, what are Fathers (parents) to do?
“*Bring them up in the training and instruction of the Lord*” [Ephesians 6:4b].

The phrase, “*bring them up*” means, “To spiritually nurture, nourish.”

The word “*training*” refers to the mind, “a putting-in-mind.”

It is the Christian discipline which cultivates **character /morals**.

It is the training by word - whether by **encouragement** or **correction**.

The word “*instruction*” means through “**affectionate persuasion**.”

Remember, “Sons are a **heritage** from the Lord, children a **reward** from Him.
Blessed is the man whose quiver is **full of them**” [Psalms 127:3-5].

C. The Slave (Employee) - Master (Employer) Relationship 6:5-9

These are **Christian** slaves and masters being addressed. Two relationships existed between them. The Slave (Employee) - Master (Employer) relationship, and their “brothers-in-Christ” relationship where there is neither bond nor free. Supposedly, in this later relationship, a male slave could have been a leader in the church and consequently have a spiritual position higher than that of his master. No wonder the Apostle Paul includes this relationship in his admonition in 5:21, “*Submit to one another out of reverence for Christ.*”

Slaves [Employees - 6:5-8]

The “**arrangement**” --- “*Slaves, obey your earthly masters with respect and fear, and with sincerity of heart, just as you would obey Christ*” [6:5].

In verses 6:5-8 there are **two predominant words**, which along with their **meanings** and **spiritual applications** reveal how **believing** slaves are to serve their earthly masters.

The **first** word is “**obey**”.

Here in 6:5, the word translated “**obey**” [Greek – *hupakouo*] means “to listen or harken to a command” and so to submit to or obey that command. Paul then **amplifies** this meaning through **four applications**.

1. Obey with “**Respect**” [Greek - *phobos* - 6:5].

The word “**respect**” carries the thought of “reverential fear of God as the **controlling motive** of the life, in matters spiritual and moral. It is a wholesome dread of **displeasing God**”

2. Obey with “**Fear**” [Greek - *tromos* - 6:5].

This Greek word actually means “**trembling**”. “It is the **anxiety** of one who **distrusts** his ability completely to meet all **requirements**, **but** religiously does his utmost to **fulfill** his duty” [Thayer].

3. Obey with “**Sincerity of Heart**” [Greek - *haplotes* - 6:5].

The thought here is that of a **simple singleness of heart** or mind in contrast to double-mindedness. According to H. S. Miller, the phrase, “*just as you would obey Christ*” [6:5], means “to obey your **masters** as you obey your **Master**. Obedience to **them** is obedience to **Him**” [H. S. Miller].

4. Obey without “Eye” Service [Greek - *ophthalmodoulia* - 6:6].

Duplicity is the thought being conveyed in 6:6. It denotes service performed **only** under the **master’s** eye, diligently performed when **he is looking**, but neglected in **his absence**.

The **second** word is “serve” [To serve as a servant; Greek - *douleuo* - 6:7].

H. S. Miller gives this definition of “*douleuo*”. It means, “being well disposed to your masters, having their interests at heart, and a desire to do them good”.

F. F. Bruce says, “In serving an unbelieving master, the [believing] slave would serve him the more faithfully because the honor of Christ and the gospel was bound up with the **quality** of his service”.

Summary:

“*Sincerity of heart*” [verse 5] and “*wholeheartedly*” [verse 7] summarize a slave’s [employee’s] attitude toward their master [employer]. It means to be consistently obeying / serving with inner **godly motivation** as one who is accountable to God; just as you would obey Christ; or as if you were serving the Lord, not men. “*Knowing, that the Lord will reward everyone [slave or free] for whatever good he does*” [6:8].

By the way, if you are a believer in Christ and an employee, **what kind of a work ethic do you practice?** Colossians 3:23 gives you this additional **God-given model** to follow:

“Whatever you do, work at it with all your heart, as working for the Lord, not for men”.

Masters [Employers - 6:9]

The “**arrangement**” --- “*And masters, treat your slaves in the same way*” [6:9].

Two admonitions are given to masters [Employers].

1. “*Treat your slaves in the same way*” [the same way as Paul instructed slaves to obey / serve their masters].

The word “*treat*” [Greek - *poieo*] is used 568 times in the New Testament. Its basic meaning is “**to do**” [something] and is applied to a variety of thoughts. Here in 6:9, “*treat*” signifies “to adopt a way of expressing by act / action one’s thoughts and feelings.” H. S. Miller gives this understanding of the phrase “*in the same way*”. He states that “as the **servant** serves the master by [faithfully and with good will] working for his benefit and best interests, so the **master** serves the servant by [faithfully and with good will] looking after his welfare with care and consideration”.

2. “*Do not threaten them*”.

The phrase “*do not threaten*” [Greek - *aniemi*] means “to relax, loosen, or metaphorically, to desist from”. In Ephesians 6:9 it carries the thought of “forbearing threatening” or “giving up or omitting your threatening” “Masters are not to rule servants by terror but by kindness and reason” [H. S. Miller], knowing that both the servants [employees] and the masters [employers] have “*one Master in heaven with whom there is no favoritism*”. Colossians 4:1 is a companion verse with Ephesians 6:9. It states, “*Masters, provide your slaves with what is right and fair, because you know that you have a Master in heaven*” [who will render unto you that which is just and equal].

Masters [Employers] are to please the Lord in their dealings with Slaves [Employees] and treat them justly and fairly as one who is **accountable** to God.

Question: As a Christian Employer, do you treat your Employees “*rightly*” [justly, without prejudice or partiality] and “*fairly*” [equally, or in an equitable way]? **You should**, for God **requires** that of you.

FINALLY, TAKE YOUR STAND 6:10-18

Introduction

You will notice that each division of thought in chapters 4:1 - 6:9 was introduced by the Greek particle "*oun*" [meaning **therefore** or its equivalent] and the word "*Live*" or "*Walk*" [4:1, 17; 5:1-2, 7-8, 15]. This last division, 6:10-18, is signaled by the word "**Finally**". It means, "In respect to the rest", or "For the rest", or "For the remainder". So, for the **remainder** of Chapter 6, verses 10-18 the Apostle Paul **discusses** a believer's use of **God's resources** to help him stand against **evil powers**.

"There is no possible way to deny that Jesus Christ and His chosen apostles believed in a literal devil, demons, and a host of other evil, supernatural beings" says Randy Russ. "These beings are commissioned and empowered for one thing, the **destruction** of everything supporting God and His plan for history. The Apostle Paul ends this powerful letter with his **most complete warning and exhortation**. It is about how to **wage war** with these unseen powers."

Our Struggle [6:10-13]

The Enemy 6:12

Negatively --- Our struggle "*is not against flesh and blood*" [human powers].

Positively ---- Our struggle "*is against the rulers, against the authorities, against the powers of this dark world and against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly realms*".

Our Contest [struggle - wrestling match] 6:11-12

As you consider **the whole book of Ephesians**, what do you think this **spiritual struggle** is all about? Let's begin our **investigation** through the use of the following **questions and answers**.

1. **Where** does the contest [struggle] **take place**? - "*In the heavenly realms*" [6:12b].
2. **Who** are our spiritual **opponents**? - "*The rulers, authorities, powers, and spiritual forces of evil*" [in the heavenly realms - 6:12].
3. **Who else** is in the "**heavenly realms**"? - "*Our risen Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ* [1:20] *and those, [who by faith in Jesus Christ], belong to Him*" [2:6].
4. **What else** is in the "**heavenly realms**"? - "*Every spiritual blessing in Christ with which God the Father has blessed every believer in Jesus Christ*" [1:3].

Now, as you consider **who** and **what** are in the "*Heavenly Realms*", what do you think the devil **schemes to do** [6:11] against believers in Jesus Christ?

As we consider the whole context of the Book of Ephesians there are two general parts. In Part One, chapters 1-3, the Apostle Paul deals with the believers **spiritual blessings** in Christ. In Part Two, chapters 4-6, he deals with the believers **walk** or **life** with God [*"I urge you to live a life worthy of the calling you have received"* - 4:1].

While **it is true** that "*Our enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour*" [I Peter 5:8], that is, to bring believers into **spiritual defeat and ruin** in every aspect of their Christian **life and walk** with God, I believe that in **6:10-12** the devil's **scheme** [his method or strategy]

is to **rob believers** of their **spiritual blessings in Christ**, which is the context of chapters 1-3, & it is in this context that we learned of God's "*incomparable great power which he exerted in Christ when he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion [demonic powers], and every title that can be given, not only in the present age but also in the one to come*" [1:19-21]. See "The Blessing of God's Power" pages, 24-29. Men and women, the devil does not want believers in Christ to "**possess their possessions**", that is, their "**spiritual blessings in Christ**"

In chapter 6:10-18, the Apostle Paul teaches or instructs the believers in Ephesus [as well as we who believe] how to hold the territory won by God for us [our spiritual blessings in Christ] against the "*schemes of the devil*" [6:11].

Our Resources 6:10-11, 13

1. The Lord 6:10

"Be strong in the Lord and in his mighty power" [6:10].

In our struggle against "*the spiritual forces of evil*" [6:12] we must remember that **in or of ourselves** we are **powerless**. It is **only** the strength and power **inherent in the Lord** that is able to defeat "*spiritual forces of evil*". "*The battle is the Lord's*" [1 Samuel 17:47].

Therefore, the Apostle Paul admonishes believers to "*be strong in the Lord*", that is, to **access** the Lord's strength [His divine enabling] and power **available "for us who believe"** [1:19]. For He "*is able to do immeasurably more than all we ask or imagine, according to his power that is at work within us*" [3:20]. This "*strength*" and "*power*" does not **automatically** or **permanently remain yours** when once gained. It becomes available to us **if and when we believe**, i., e., **when we constantly depend upon the Lord for it.**

2. God's Armor 6:11, 13

"Put on the full armor of God so that you may take your stand against the devil's schemes" [6:11].

The verb "*put on*" in verse 6:11 is an **imperative**, a command. It is a "**must**".

Believers in Christ are **responsible** for putting on the "**full armor of God**". The word "*ful*" is a translation of the Greek word "*panoplia*" which means "the whole, or complete covering" --- the "Panoply" which God has provided.

The pieces of armor of a **Roman Soldier** [see insert]→ are used metaphorically / symbolically by the Apostle Paul to **depict** the "**full armor of God**".

God's strength and **power** enables the believer to **utilize** what the pieces of armor symbolize.

Having put on the "**full armor of God**", one is then **ready** and **enabled** [spiritually strengthened and empowered] to stand **in defense** against the **devil's schemes**.

[Note: The "**crest**" on the helmet of this soldier **signifies** that he is an Officer or a Centurion [one in charge of 100 soldiers] in the Imperial Roman Army.]



Take Your Stand [6:14-18]

The First Imperative --- "Stand firm then" 6:14-16

In verses 6:14-16, there are **four participles**. A participle is "a verbal form used as an adjective" and which **participates** in the action of the verb. In 6:14, the main verb is "stand firm." The four participles tell us or show us **how to stand firm.**

1. The **first** participle is "Buckled".

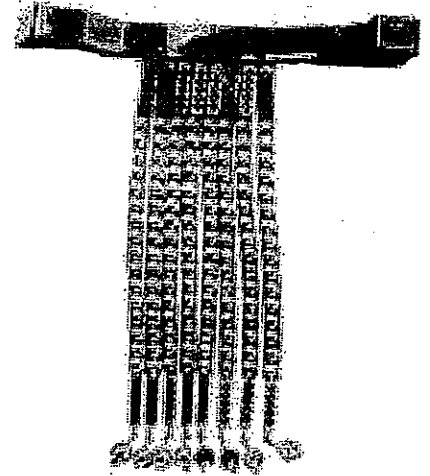
"Stand firm then, with the belt of truth buckled around your waist".

6:14a

"The belt, called the 'Cingulum', was used in anatomy for an encircling girdle-like structure. It served as a gathering place to girdle the tunic, secure the breastplate, & held the sheath or the sword. It gave the soldier freedom in movement which contributed to confidence in battle." Pastor James Petersen

The word "**truth**" in 6:14a **does not** refer to the **facts of the Gospel**, but to **subjective truth**, that is, to a believer's **submission to truth**. There is nothing more rewarding than to live a life of integrity, honesty, faithfulness, etc. before God and men.

The Apostle John said "*I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth*" [III John verse 4].



2. The **second** participle is "In Place".

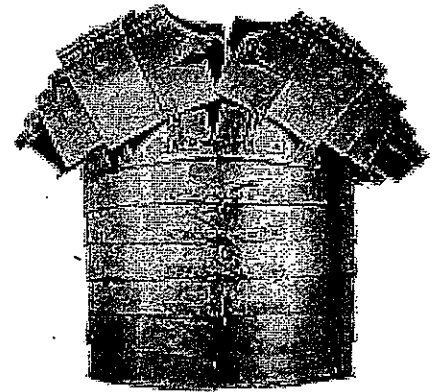
"Stand firm then, with the breastplate of righteousness in place".

6:14b

"The **breastplate**, called the 'thorax' in Greek, and referred to as the '**heart protector**' was made from strips of iron laid in an overlapping fashion, secured by leather straps. When these strips were attached in such a fashion, it made for an extremely strong, yet flexible defense against enemy swords and spears".

Pastor James Petersen

In 6:14b, the word "**righteousness**" **does not** refer to the justification or righteousness received at conversion through Christ's Atoning Sacrifice for our sins, but to the **purifying righteousness of Christ's character** practiced in a believer's life.

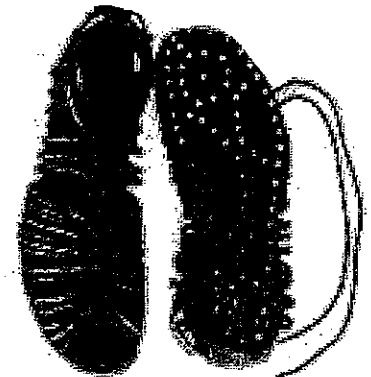


3. The **third** participle is "fitted".

"Stand firm then, with your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace" [6:15].

"**Roman military sandals**, called '**caligae**', were as important as armor, because the Roman Legions won wars by fast marches as much as by battle. These boots were strong and well ventilated with patterns of iron hobnails especially designed to take weight and withstand miles of marching". Pastor James Petersen

In 6:15 the Apostle Paul uses the **symbol** of a "well fitting" military sandal, which provided a firm footing or "**readiness**" in battle, to a believer being "**fitted**" or shod for their spiritual battle with the



“readiness” or preparation “that comes from the gospel of peace”. Not the preaching or spreading of the gospel, but the believer’s steadiness or stability which comes from the gospel which gives him an enduring peace or assurance.

4. The fourth participle is “take up”.

“Take up the shield of faith, with which you can extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one” [6:16].

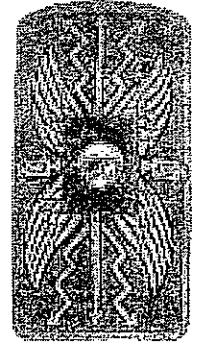
“The Roman shield, called the ‘scutum’, was curved to fit around the body and large enough to shield the entire body when crouched. Most shields were made of plywood, in two or three layers, laid at 90 degrees to each other. They were usually covered with a layer of leather and banded with iron.”

Pastor James Petersen

One weapon of war during Paul’s day “were arrows tipped with “tow” [fibers] dipped in “pitch” [a tar like or oily substance] and set on fire. When these arrows struck the soldiers shield, the leather covering extinguished the flame”.

H. S. Miller

Paul is saying that a believers implicit unwavering **faith** in the Lord Jesus Christ can **stop** and **extinguish all** or **everything** the evil one directs against them.



The Second Imperative --- “Take” 6:17

In verse 6:17, there are **two** participles.

1. The first participle is “take”.

“Take the helmet of salvation” [6:17a].

“The **helmet** worn by Roman soldiers was made of bronze and designed to protect the head, face and neck without blocking vision. Centurions and other officers wore crests on their helmets, so that their men could see them and follow them into battle. The head is the most vital in battle for it contains the brains. Thinking clearly and decisively when the battle intensifies is essential for victory”. Pastor James Petersen

Spiritually, Paul likens a Roman soldier’s helmet to a helmet of salvation. That is, to our **present gift** and **assurance** of salvation as well as our **future hope** of salvation, i., e., **deliverance** from the coming wrath / judgment of God. I Thessalonians 5:8-9



2. The second participle is also “take”.

“Take the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God” [6:17b].



“The ‘**gladius**’ or short sword, had a double edged blade and was an effective stabbing weapon, short enough to wield easily in the crush of battle, and devastatingly effective.” Pastor James Petersen

Up to this point we have looked at **five defensive** weapons. Although the sword can be used as a **defensive** weapon, it is also the first **offensive weapon** introduced by Paul. It is as though we are defending ourselves with an offensive weapon. The “sword” is the Word of God supplied / given by the Holy Spirit. See Matthew 4:1-11[verses 4, 7, 10] as examples.

“The significance of the Greek word *“rhema”* [word] is **exemplified in the injunction** to take *‘the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God’*. In 6:17b, the reference is not to the **whole Bible** as such, but to the **individual scripture** which the Spirit brings to **our remembrance** for use in time of need, a prerequisite being the **regular** storing of the mind with Scripture” [W. E. Vine].

F. F. Bruce states it this way: “The *‘word’* [Greek - *rhema*] is that **utterance** of God **appropriate** to the **occasion** which the Spirit, so to speak, puts into the believer’s **hand** to be wielded as a **sword** which will put his spiritual assailants to **flight**”.

In 6:18 Their Are Two Final Participles.

1. The **first** participle is *“pray”*.

“Pray in the Spirit on all occasions” [6:18a].

Praying in the Spirit means to pray or to speak out the **in-wrought supplications** brought about under the direction and dynamic of the Holy Spirit.

Pray on all occasions, that is, in **critical times** and with **all kinds** of prayers and requests.

2. The **second** participle is *“be alert”*.

“Be alert and always keep on praying for the saints” [6:18b]. Vigilance [in prayer] is the price one pays for spiritual safety.

Always, in all times -- Keep on praying, **persistently** -- For all saints, *“the faithful in Christ Jesus”*.

Practical Illustration

I stated on the bottom of page 75 and the top of page 76 that “I believe that in **6:10-12** the devil’s scheme [his method or strategy] is to **rob** believers of their **“spiritual possessions”**, that is, **their spiritual blessings in Christ** outlined for us in Ephesians 1:3 - 3:21. Also, that a believers defense against the devils scheme lies in The Lord and in the armor He has provided us as outlined in 6:10-18 [pages 75-79]. Now, in a **practical way**, I would like to **illustrate** these truths.

My family and I had only been in the Philippines for a month and a half when in January, 1955 I made my first trip to the Province of Ifugao, one of several primitive tribal provinces in northern Luzon. Here, men still wore “g-strings” to cover themselves and women wore wrap-around skirts.

One night, at the conclusion of a men’s Bible study, I offered to carry Tony, a polio victim, piggyback to his house in Banaue. From where the Bible study met, Banaue was downhill on a narrow dirt road cut out from the mountain side and about one half to three quarters of a mile away. Going down everything went well. Coming back was a different story.

I was now alone. That meant I had no one to guide me, no light for the darkness, and in Ifugao there were still headhunters. I was a perfect **set-up** for the devil’s **scheme**. Soon, **fear** began to grip me. I began to visualize headhunters waiting for me in every crevice along the mountain road or a landslide pushing me over the ledge of the road. Sad to say, **I was truly fearful**. As I prayed I confessed to the Lord how **ashamed** I was. Had He not promised: *“Never will I leave you; never will I forsake you”*. *So we say with confidence, “The Lord is my helper; I will not be afraid. What can man do to me”* [Hebrews 13:5-6]; and yet, I was **afraid**. This thought kept going through my mind: **“Did I really believe the Lord and His Word”?** If not, how could I ever minister *“the unsearchable riches of Christ”* to others when I was such an easy push over for the devil? You see, the devil was **robbing me** of my **spiritual possessions**, my **spiritual blessings in Christ**. What particular blessing? The Blessing of **God’s Power** [pages 24-29].

[Now, allow me to “**paraphrase**” the rest of my experience in **story-form** so as to **incorporate** the “**spiritual warfare**” materials in Ephesians 6:10-18, pages 75-79, into the story and to demonstrate how **you also** can “**take your stand**” against the devil’s scheme.]

I knew that this **kind of fear** I had did not come from God, and therefore, it could only have come from **the devil**. He was “trying to get into my head”, that is, to **control me**, to make me **spiritually ineffective**. So, what does one do in such circumstances? We recognize that **in or of ourselves** we are **powerless**, and **by faith**, we access the Lord’s **power and armor**, and **take a stand** against the devil’s scheme [6:10-11].

Spiritually speaking, I **drew** the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God [Ephesians 6:17b]. In so doing, the Holy Spirit **directed** my thoughts to God’s “*incomparably great power --- by which he raised Christ from the dead and seated him at his own right hand in the heavenly realms, far above all rule and authority, power and dominion*” [all demonic powers - Ephesians 1:19-23]. And, Praise God, this power is also “*for us who believe*” [1:19]. It was **exerted in us** when “*God made us alive with Christ; raised us up with Christ; and seated us with Christ in the heavenly realms*”, **far above all** demonic power, [Ephesians 2:4-6]. When I **grasped** that, by virtue of my faith in Christ Jesus and my belonging to Him, I **was blessed** with “The Blessing of God’s Incomparable Power” [pages 24-29], **my fear was gone**. The truth concerning God’s power over the spiritual forces of evil that I experienced in that encounter, has been a **staying power** in my spiritual life for the last 58 years.

Men and women, when you access the Lord’s **power and armor**, and **take a stand** against the devil’s **schemes** [his flaming arrows - 6:16], you **will be victorious** over anything the devil thrusts at you. PTL

PAUL’S PERSONAL REQUEST and CLOSING GREETINGS 6:19-24

The Apostle Paul, the writer of this Letter to The Ephesians, is in prison in Rome. He is awaiting trial on the charges of preaching against Moses and the Law of God, and for proclaiming that in Christ Jesus, Jews and Gentiles are brought together as members in one new body, the Church. [See Acts, 21 and 22]

Paul’s Request [6:19-20]

“Pray also for me, that whenever I open my mouth, words may be given me so that I will fearlessly make known the mystery of the gospel, for which I am an ambassador in chains. Pray that I may declare it fearlessly, as I should” [6:19-20].

In verse 19, “*fearlessly*” [Greek - *parresia*] means, “without ambiguity; plainly; without figures of speech.”

In verse 20, “*fearlessly*” [Greek - *parresiazomai*] means, “boldly; without fear.”

Closing Greetings [6:21-24]

1. A Courier ----- **Tychicus** will come to Ephesus to inform the church of everything that is happening to Paul in Rome [6:21-22].
2. A Blessing --- “*Peace and love with faith from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ*” [6:23].
3. A Promise ---- “*Grace to all who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an undying love*” [6:24].
The word “**undying**” [Greek - *aphtharsia*] means **incorruptness**. Paul is saying, may your **love** for Christ be a **love** that is **uncorrupted or incorruptible**.
So be it Lord Jesus, AMEN

AN INTERESTING POSTSCRIPT
The Letter To The Church In Ephesus - Revelation 2:1-7

“Ephesus, [whose name means ‘desired’], was the largest city in the Roman Province of Asia. Here Paul founded the church which became the center for evangelizing the rest of the province, and here resided the Apostle John. The Ephesian Church, accordingly, must have become by this time [in the Book of Revelation] the foremost one in the East, with the possible exception of Antioch. Kiddle suggests that this letter was placed **first** [among the seven churches in Revelation 2:1-3:22], not so much because of the importance of the church as of the **warning** delivered to it” [The New Bible Commentary, page 1172].

“Most of the Ephesian Christians were now [in Revelation 2:1-7] second generation believers, and though they had retained purity of doctrine and life and had maintained a high level of service, they were lacking in deep devotion to Christ. How the church today needs to heed this same warning, that orthodoxy and service are not enough. Christ wants believers’ hearts as well as their hands and heads. The church continued and was later the scene of a major church council [431 B.C.], but after the 5th century both the church and the city declined. The immediate area has been uninhabited since the 14th century” [The Bible Knowledge Commentary, pages 933-944].

“In spite of all the commendable qualities of this church, there was one vital lack: **they had left their first love** [Revelation 2:4]. Their hearts were drifting away from Christ. The first love is marked by its all-engrossing quality, fervency, and constancy. The first danger sign for any believer is to grow cold toward Christ” [Liberty Bible Commentary, page 2659].

In Revelation 2:4, the word “*left*” [KJV] and the word “*forsaken*” [NIV] are translations of the Greek word *aphiemi* which, according to W. E. Vine, “has three chief meanings”. However, the **only meaning** of the three that **fits the context** of Revelation 2:1-7 is found in the words “leaving, forsaking, and abandoning”. “*You have left, or forsaken, or abandoned your first love*” [2:4]. Whatever was **entailed** in the expression “*first love*”, they were now doing the **opposite** of **cleaving** to it.

Acts 19:17b-20 gives us **insight** as to what their **initial actions** or “*first love*” was like:

“The name of the Lord Jesus was held in high honor. Many of those who believed now came and openly confessed their evil deeds. A number who had practiced sorcery brought their scrolls together and burned them publicly. When they calculated the value of the scrolls, the total came to fifty thousand drachmas. In this way the word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power”.

Now, in Revelation 2:5a, we **learn** that they “**had fallen**” [Greek - *pipto*], that is, moral or spiritual failure was prevalent among them. They **did not continue** to do “*the things they did at first*” [as recorded in Acts 19:17b-20]. They find themselves **in danger** of losing their status as a “**lampstand**” or as a “**light bearer**” for God [Revelation 2:5b].

CAUTION, DO NOT ALLOW THIS TO HAPPEN TO YOU!

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Bill and Pat Arvan served as Christian missionaries for 36 years in the Republic of The Philippines with SEND International, a mission organization located in Farmington, Michigan, in the United States of America.



Since retirement from ministry in the Philippines in 1990, Mr. Arvan continued to teach Bible in Eastern European countries, Russia and Ukraine, making 10 trips from August, 1992 until October, 2007.

His teaching experience, both in the Philippines as well as in these Eastern European – Asian countries, has convinced him of the need for practical “grass roots” teaching in the Scriptures. This conviction led him to devote his “retirement years” to help meet this need by preparing and publishing basic Bible teaching materials for Christian Workers --- particularly in Ukraine and Russian speaking countries.

This book, **Paul’s Letter To The Ephesians**, is the latest of these publications. Other materials are ---

*Principles of Biblical Faith; Principles of Biblical Giving;
God’s Offer [God’s Gift of Salvation]; “Keys” To Spiritual Growth;
7 Basic Bible Doctrines; and Paul’s Letter To The Romans.*

Bill & Pat have two children. Their son, Bill, is a non-resident missionary in Ukraine. Their daughter, Jane, ministers in evangelism and Bible teaching through her local church and women’s organizations. Bill and Pat also have two granddaughters serving in full time Christian ministry; Rebecca Arvan in Latvia and her sister, Bethany, in Chicago, Illinois plus four other grandchildren and their spouses - most of whom are also involved in ministry in their local churches.

“My earnest desire and fervent prayer is that this book, *Paul’s Letter To The Ephesians*, will be used for the Glory of God.” William G. Arvan