

**THE
BOOK OF
EPHESIANS**

**LIFE FOR TODAY
BIBLE COMMENTARY**

A N D R E W W O M M A C K

SPECIAL NOTE

These commentary ebooks are just the footnotes from Andrew's Life for Today Study Bible And Commentary. Because these footnotes appear without change from the printed books, there are certain things that may not make sense. For example, the footnotes are numbered in a way that seems confusing in the ebooks; there are references to page numbers and marginal references, etc. These all serve a purpose in the **printed books**, but not in the ebook. Understanding that the footnotes originated in a printed book will help avoid confusion.

CONTENTS

SPECIAL NOTE

INTRODUCTION TO EPHESIANS

EPHESIANS CHAPTER 1

EPHESIANS CHAPTER 2

EPHESIANS CHAPTER 3

EPHESIANS CHAPTER 4

EPHESIANS CHAPTER 5

EPHESIANS CHAPTER 6

INTRODUCTION TO THE EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS

OVERVIEW

Paul's letter to the Ephesian church is full of some of the most wonderful revelations about the believer's union with Christ found anywhere in Scripture. Paul said that the truths he was presenting in this letter were mysteries, previously unknown (Eph 3:3-6). For this reason, Paul included two prayers (Eph 1:15-23 and 3:14-21) in this letter, asking the Lord to grant the readers wisdom.

In contrast to Paul's letter to the Romans, which masterfully expounds the method of salvation (see Life for Today Study Bible Notes, Introduction to Romans), this letter reveals the benefits of salvation by grace through faith. The letter to the Galatians was harsh (see Life for Today Study Bible Notes, Introduction to Galatians); this letter is uplifting. The two letters to the Corinthian church were personal, addressing specific problems and questions; this letter is impersonal, advancing doctrine in much the same way a book would do.

The impersonal nature of this letter might be explained if Paul intended this letter to be circulated among other churches. He clearly stated that this was to be done with the letter to the Colossians (Col 4:16) and the letter to the Thessalonians (1Th 5:27). Therefore, there is some reason that this letter is nonspecific, with Ephesus being mentioned because it was the principal city from which Paul spent three years evangelizing. This could possibly make this letter the unknown letter to the Laodiceans mentioned in Col 4:16.

The letter to the Colossians and this letter are remarkably similar. Just a few of the many similarities are Eph 1:1-2 and Col 1:1-2; Eph 1:7 and Col 1:14; Eph 1:9 and Col 1:26; Eph 1:10 and Col 1:20 and 25; Eph 5:19 and Col 3:16; Eph 5:22-6:4 and Col 3:18-21; and Eph 6:5-9 and Col 3:22-4:1.

The overall messages of Ephesians and Colossians are basically the same with some differences. This provides Paul with a good reason to have the Colossians and Ephesians share their letters with each other. The same message with different emphases would help them understand the points even better. This would further strengthen the argument for this letter to the Ephesians being the same letter that Paul referred to in Col 4:16 as the letter to the Laodiceans.

The first three chapters of Ephesians deal with our position and calling in Christ. The last three chapters (Eph 4-6) are practical and speak of our life in this world that demands a conduct inspired by this new calling of grace. It has been said that on the practical side, the book of Ephesians is "the Gospel walked out in shoe leather," for it talks of relationships between husbands and wives, masters and servants, parents and children, etc.

On the doctrinal side (Eph 1-3), we find that everything has been done and is complete in Him. A true understanding of Christianity does not begin by doing but begins with what has been done. We are invited to sit down and enjoy all that God has done for us in Christ. We are to rest in Him. It's only from this revelation that true works of faith spring; otherwise practical Christianity can turn to the works of the Law--a danger that Paul himself warned us about (Eph 2:15 and Ga 3:3).

BACKGROUND

Paul briefly visited Ephesus on his second missionary journey as he purposed to go to Jerusalem (Ac 18:19-21). According to Ac 20:31, during his third missionary journey, he remained in Ephesus for three years. The book of Acts mentions several things that happened to Paul in Ephesus: Twelve disciples of John the Baptist were baptized in the Holy Spirit and with Christian water baptism (Ac 19:1-7). Paul preached boldly in the synagogues and taught disciples in the school of Tyrannus (Ac 19:8-10). Many special miracles were done by God through the hands of Paul (Ac 19:11-12). Evil spirits spoke of knowing Paul (Ac 19:13-17). Many practicing magic repented and burned their books and charms (Ac 19:18-20). Paul's message caused a riot to break out because the worship of the goddess Diana was being forsaken (Ac 19:21-41). Paul spoke to the Ephesian elders and encouraged them to guard, oversee, and feed the church as he visited them for the last time (Ac 20:17-38). Later, in John's letter to the seven churches of Asia, the Lord rebukes the pastor of the church in Ephesus for leaving his first love (Re 2:1-4).

AUTHORSHIP

Ephesians was indisputably accepted in the history of the early church to have been penned by the Apostle Paul. Two times in this letter, Paul claimed to have been its author (Eph 1:1 and 3:1).

RECIPIENTS OF THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

Ephesus was a leading seaport city on the Aegean Sea. It was famous in the ancient world for its worship of the goddess Diana, the goddess of fertility. It was in this setting of Greek culture that Paul was able to build a strong, Christ-honoring church. Some extra-biblical sources estimate that as many as 100,000 Christians may have been in the Ephesian church, of which Timothy became the first bishop (subscript at 2Ti 4:22 [found in some Bibles]). See note 3 at Ac 18:19 for more background on the city of Ephesus.

DATE AND PLACE OF WRITING

Paul stated three times in this letter that he was a prisoner (Eph 3:1, 4:1, and 6:20). Most scholars believe that it was during his imprisonment in Rome that Paul wrote Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. For this reason, these letters are referred to as the Prison Letters.

Following the dating for Paul's second and third missionary trips given in note 1 at Ac 18:22 and note 2 at Ac 18:23, Paul could not have been arrested in Jerusalem before A.D. 58. Then he spent two years imprisoned by Felix (Ac 24:27) before beginning a sailing voyage to Rome, which was lengthened by a shipwreck. Therefore, the earliest date that could be attributed to this Roman prison epistle would probably be A.D. 61. Some scholars have thought it could have been written as late as A.D. 64. Ac 28:30 says Paul was imprisoned two whole years in Rome.

ABOUT THE AUTHOR

Some facts about Paul's persecution of the church, his conversion, and the intervening time until the beginning of his ministry are dealt with in note 4 at Ac 7:58, note 1 at Ac 9:1, and note 1 at Ac 9:26. Information about Paul's life after the close of the book of Acts is included in note 1 at Ac 28:30. Many notes about Paul's exploits, character, and hardships are found throughout the book of Acts.

EPHESIANS

CHAPTER 1

EPHESIANS 1:1

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

Note 1 at Eph 1:1: Paul made special mention of the fact that he was an apostle "by the will of God." People appoint themselves to positions and sometimes gain the recognition of others, but only those whom God appoints carry His authority and anointing. If believers know that they are in God's will, it makes whatever hardships that come their way bearable. It's not good enough for people to become ministers just because their mothers always wanted a preacher in the family (see note 1 at 1Co 1:1).

Note 2 at Eph 1:1: Paul first preached at Ephesus on his second missionary journey. Later he returned there on his third missionary journey and spent more time there than with any other congregation, a total of three years (Ac 20:31).

Ephesus was the chief city of the Roman province of Asia, in what is now known as Turkey (see note 3 at Ac 16:6). It was the site of the temple of Diana, also known as the many-breasted goddess, Artemis, who was worshiped through the act of prostitution. Through this chief city, Paul was able to evangelize almost all of Asia.

His letter to the Ephesians was possibly a circular letter reaching to all churches in this Roman province (see Life for Today Study Bible Notes, Introduction to Ephesians). See note 3 at Ac 18:19, note 1 at Ac 20:18, and note 12 at Ac 20:31 for more details about Ephesus and Paul's ministry there.

Note 3 at Eph 1:1: Paul made a distinction between the saints that were in Ephesus and the faithful in Christ Jesus. It is possible that the phrase "and to the faithful in Christ Jesus" broadened the audience beyond the Ephesian church, showing that Paul intended this epistle to be circulated (see Life for Today Study Bible Notes, Introduction to Ephesians). It is also possible that "the faithful" was designating a group within the saints in Ephesus.

It is true that in every church, there is a core group who carry the load. They are always present, always give, and are the ones who propagate the faith. While we are all one in the Lord, not all of us live up to our potential. We need to strive to be among the faithful (see note 19 at 1Co 15:10).

Note 4 at Eph 1:1: "In Christ Jesus" was a descriptive phrase used forty times in the New Testament, sometimes meaning "through Christ." Generally speaking, this phrase implied a vital union with Christ. Just as the life of a root is found in the soil, or a branch in the vine, or a fish in the sea, so the believer's true life is found to be in union with Christ.

For every verse that speaks of Christ being in the believer, there are at least ten that speak of the believer being in Christ. Eph 1:6 states that our acceptance with God the Father is not ours through some merit of our own, but because we are "in the beloved." It is God's acceptance of Christ that has become ours because of our vital union with Christ through salvation.

EPHESIANS 1:2

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

Note 5 at Eph 1:2: Grace and peace are gifts to be received by faith. But Peter revealed that grace and peace can be multiplied through the knowledge of God (2Pe 1:2). God's gifts are available to everyone, but only those who know and understand will reap the full effects.

EPHESIANS 1:3

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

Note 1 at Eph 1:3: After a short greeting, Paul got right to the point. He started praising God for the great spiritual blessings that we already have in Christ. This is his theme throughout Eph 3.

Note 2 at Eph 1:3: The phrase "who hath blessed us" is in the aorist tense in the Greek; this means that there was a point in the past when all these blessings were obtained and given to us. Paul was describing what is already ours. These are not blessings to be sought after but rather blessings to be discovered and enjoyed. We who have put our faith in Christ are not headed to a victory; we are coming from a victory that is already accomplished.

Note 3 at Eph 1:3: "In heavenly places" carries the idea of in the spiritual realm (see note 25 at 1Co 14:37). "In Christ" we have been blessed with all spiritual blessings. These things are now spiritual realities. Our spiritual selves are already complete (see note 3 at Mt 26:41). As we believe and act in faith, these spiritual blessings become physical realities (see note 50 at Mt 7:8).

The phrase "in heavenly places" is used four times in this letter to the Ephesians (this verse, 1:20; 2:6; and 3:10). In the other three references, it is clear that Paul was speaking about real places that are beyond the Earth's atmosphere.

Here is a partial list of some of the blessings that Paul mentioned in the first two chapters of this letter: We have been adopted as God's children (Eph 1:5), we have redemption through Jesus' blood and the forgiveness of our sins (Eph 1:7), we have obtained an inheritance (Eph 1:11), have been sealed with the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13), have been given the same power that raised Christ from the dead (Eph 1:19-20), have been made the one new man (Eph 2:15), have been made fellow citizens with the saints and of the household of God (Eph 2:19), have become a holy temple in the Lord (Eph 2:21) and a habitation of God (Eph 2:22), etc.

EPHESIANS 1:4

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

Note 4 at Eph 1:4: The phrase "according as" means "corresponding to the way in which" (American Heritage Dictionary). Paul was explaining to what degree we have been blessed with all spiritual blessings (Eph 1:3). It goes beyond our ability to conceive.

We were chosen in Christ before the world began. We are holy and

without blame because God sees us through Christ. We have had it predetermined that we will be God's children (Eph 1:5). We have been accepted by God (Eph 1:6). We are redeemed and forgiven (Eph 1:7). We have all of God's wisdom and prudence (Eph 1:8). The mysteries of God have been revealed to us (Eph 1:9). We are truly blessed!

Note 5 at Eph 1:4: The Lord did not choose us on our merit, but solely on our acceptance of Christ. His foreknowledge (see note 1 at Ro 8:29) allowed Him to make before that choice the foundation of the world. In the strictest sense, we were not personally chosen; Christ was chosen, and all those who are "in Christ" partake of His being chosen by His Father. Just as we are the beneficiaries of the covenant between God the Father and His Son, Jesus (see note 4 at Ga 3:29), so are we chosen because we chose God's chosen; i.e., Christ. The Father would no more reject us than He would reject Jesus, because we are accepted by the Father through Christ (Eph 1:6).

Note 6 at Eph 1:4: This verse reveals that God the Father had the plan of salvation worked out before He even created the world. Most of us would not have created the world and man if we knew the heartache and terrible sacrifice that act would cost. God is not man, and in His judgment (which is the correct judgment), the prize was worth all the cost.

Note 7 at Eph 1:4: None of us can claim that we are without blame in the sight of man, because man looks on the outward appearance (1Sa 16:7) and all of us have sinned (Ro 3:23). The Lord looks on our born-again spirits, which have been regenerated in Christ, and He sees us holy and without blame.

If you look through a red glass, everything becomes red. The same thing would happen if you looked through a green glass; everything would become green. In a similar way, God looks at us through Christ, and everything in our lives becomes covered by the blood of Jesus. We are holy and without blame before Him because of His love expressed through His Son.

EPHESIANS 1:5

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

Note 8 at Eph 1:5: The Greek word that was translated "predestinated"

here was used twice in Ephesians (this verse and Eph 1:11) and twice in Romans (Ro 8:29-30). Predestination and foreknowledge go hand-in-hand, and there are detailed notes on these words in my note at Ro 8:29. A misunderstanding of predestination being based on God's foreknowledge has led some people to believe God predestines some to damnation. That is not so (see note 3 at Ro 9:11). See note 11 at Joh 12:39 and note 1 at Lu 22:22 for more information on predestination.

Note 9 at Eph 1:5: "Adoption" was a term used only by the Apostle Paul in Scripture. It found its roots in Roman culture rather than Jewish. Through adoption, old ties were severed, and the new father became full owner of the child with all legal rights. In Rome, a slave could have the full rights as that of a Roman citizen through adoption. Through adoption, believers now have had all ties severed from their old master and have now become the property of their heavenly Father as heirs and joint-heirs with Jesus Christ.

Note 10 at Eph 1:5: The Lord didn't just save us out of pity or a sense of obligation as our Creator. He saved us because He loved us (Joh 3:16). It was the "good pleasure of his will" for us to become adopted sons. We are wanted and accepted (Eph 1:6) by our Father!

EPHESIANS 1:6

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

Note 11 at Eph 1:6: It is through the grace of God that we have been accepted in Christ. It is not due to any effort of our own, outside of putting faith in Christ as our Savior.

Note 12 at Eph 1:6: What a wonderful thing this is! It would have been more than any of us deserve to be forgiven by God, but then to be given certain rights and privileges would have been more than we could have expected. The Lord went further than that--He has actually accepted us.

The American Heritage Dictionary defines "accept" as "2. To receive (something offered), especially with gladness or approval. 3. To admit to a group, organization, or place." The Lord does not just tolerate us. He actually loves us. He even likes us. He rejoices over us with joy (Zep

3:17).

Most religions share the belief in a supreme being and the possibility of our being reconciled to him (see note 3 at Joh 6:28), but only Christianity presents the truth that God can actually be pleased with us (Heb 11:5-6).

EPHESIANS 1:7

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

Note 13 at Eph 1:7: The Greek word used here for "redemption" is "APOLUTROSIS," and it was used ten times in the New Testament (Lu 21:28; Ro 3:24, 8:23; 1Co 1:30; this verse, Eph 1:14, 4:30; Col 1:14; Heb 9:15, and 11:35). This word literally means "a releasing effected by payment of ransom...liberation procured by the payment of a ransom" (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon).

Mt 20:28 and Mr 10:45 make it clear that the price paid for our redemption was the life of Jesus; that is, Jesus' blood (Col 1:14). This redemption, according to Heb 9:12, was eternal and intended to purify us from all iniquity (Tit 2:14) and bring us to serve the living God (Heb 9:14).

Note 14 at Eph 1:7: Paul was saying that it is through the riches of God's grace that we have received forgiveness for our sins. There is nothing we can do to obtain forgiveness, except humble ourselves and receive forgiveness as a gift through faith in Christ (see note 21 at Eph 2:8).

EPHESIANS 1:8

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

Note 15 at Eph 1:8: It is only through grace that God has been able to abound toward man. Two of the ways God has done this is through giving us wisdom and prudence. Wisdom may be defined as "the broad and full intelligence...of things both human and divine" (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon). Prudence is "knowledge and holy love of the will of God" (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon). In 1Co 1:19, the word

"understanding" was used to describe the prudent. Knowledge is informative, and wisdom is the application of knowledge. Knowledge is in knowing, and wisdom is in doing.

In this scripture, we see God abounding toward us in wisdom and insight to reveal to us the mystery and will of His eternal purpose. In other words, God has not "left us in the dark" concerning His eternal purposes for our lives.

EPHESIANS 1:9

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

Note 16 at Eph 1:9: The Greek scholar A.T. Robinson said the Greek word "MUSTERION," translated "mystery" here, means "something that could not be known by men except by divine revelation, but that, though once hidden, has now been revealed in Christ and is to be proclaimed so that all who have ears may hear it" (Handbook to Ephesians, p. 19).

The specific mystery that Paul was speaking about is explained in the (Eph 1:10). The truths of God are mysterious only to those who do not soften their hearts (see note 3 at Mr 8:17) by seeking God with their whole hearts. As Jer 29:13 says, "And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."

The truths of God are hidden for His children, not from them (see note 1 at Mt 13:11). The Holy Spirit has been instructed to teach us all things (Joh 14:26) and has given us an unction so that we know all things (1Jo 2:20). We only have to appropriate what is ours (see note 6 at 1Co 2:16).

EPHESIANS 1:10

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

Note 17 at Eph 1:10: A dispensation is simply a period of time during

which God deals with mankind in a certain way. Some scholars have designated seven different dispensations of God's dealings with mankind (see note 4 at 1Co 9:17). The two dominant dispensations in Scripture are the dispensation of Law and the dispensation of grace, or as some call it, the "church age," in which we now live (see note 1 at Lu 16:16).

Here, Paul was speaking about the end of this dispensation of grace, or the Millennium, when Christ will rule supreme over all.

Note 18 at Eph 1:10: The New International Reader's Version translates Eph 1:9-10 as "He showed us the mystery of his plan. It was in keeping with what he wanted to do. It was what he had planned through Christ. It will all come about when history has been completed. God will then bring together all things in heaven and on earth under one ruler. The ruler is Christ." Today's English Version translates the end of Eph 1:10 as "to bring all creation together, everything in heaven and on earth, with Christ as head."

These translations are in keeping with what Paul was saying because the phrase "gather together in one" comes from one compound Greek word that means "to sum up" (Strong's Concordance). The last part of this Greek word "ANAKEPHALAIOMAI," "KEPHALAIOMAI," is derived from the word "KEPHALE." KEPHALE means "the head" (Strong's Concordance). The thought is that God is bringing everything together under the headship or Lordship of Jesus. That has always been God's purpose and plan, and it will be accomplished. Those who do not make Jesus Christ preeminent and Lord over their lives are entirely out of focus with the eternal purpose of God.

Note 19 at Eph 1:10: The things that God will bring together and subjugate under Christ are not spelled out for us, but certainly, they include angels and man, as well as the government of heaven and the government of earth. All of these will be ruled by Christ from one throne. We will live together with all of God's creation (angels included) on the new earth (see note 2 at Mr 12:25).

EPHESIANS 1:11

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

Note 20 at Eph 1:11: This inheritance is one of the blessings Paul mentioned earlier in Eph 1:3. This inheritance is ours now. It includes everything that belongs to Christ, because we are joint-heirs with Him (Ro 8:17). Although we won't see the fullness of this inheritance until Christ personally takes the reins of government (Re 11:15), we can pray for things to be done here on earth as they are in heaven (Mt 6:10). As much as we can release our faith, we can enjoy our inheritance now.

EPHESIANS 1:12

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

Note 21 at Eph 1:12: God is working all things together so the end result will bring praise to His glory. Anytime we are in doubt about what the Lord is leading us to do, all we have to decide is whether or not this will bring praise to His glory. If our motive is to bring praise to ourselves, we can scratch that off the list. If we are truly seeking to glorify God, then we've passed the first hurdle in discerning the Lord's will.

EPHESIANS 1:13

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

Note 22 at Eph 1:13: The word "gospel" literally means "the good news" (Vine's Expository Dictionary). News is not something that is yet to happen. News is something that has already taken place. Salvation is news. Christ paid everyone's debt thousands of years ago. There is nothing that has to happen on God's part. That's the good news. All we have to do is believe and receive what God has already provided.

Note 23 at Eph 1:13: The Greek word "SPHRAGIZO," translated "sealed" here, means "to stamp (with a signet or private mark) for security or preservation" (Strong's Concordance). The meaning clearly relates to the Holy Spirit protecting our salvation (see note 16 at 2Co 1:22).

This verse requires two actions that must occur before the Spirit's sealing can take place: (1) The Gospel must be heard ("And how shall they hear without a preacher?" [Ro 10:14]), and (2) they must believe and trust the message of the Gospel; that is, Jesus Christ (Ac 16:31 and Ro 10:9-10).

At salvation, we each receive a brand-new spirit (see note 9 at 2Co 5:17). It is free from sin and totally pure. Then we are immediately sealed by the Holy Spirit (this verse). That's like vacuum-sealing or canning food for the purpose of preservation. A barrier is formed to keep sin out and retain the purity of our born-again spirits. When we Christians sin, it is in the soulish and physical realm. The born-again spirit (see note 2 at Joh 3:3) doesn't participate. It cannot sin (1Jo 3:9).

EPHESIANS 1:14

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

Note 24 at Eph 1:14: The American Heritage Dictionary defines "earnest" as being "1. Money paid in advance as part payment to bind a contract or bargain. 2. A token of something to come; a promise or an assurance." The Holy Spirit in the lives of us believers is the pledge, guarantee, promise, and assurance that we shall enter into our inheritance with all its benefits.

Note 25 at Eph 1:14: Our glorified bodies have been purchased through the sacrificial payment of Jesus, but they are not yet redeemed. That may shock some people who equate redemption with salvation. However, there is a difference between the two. Redemption is salvation completed (see note 11 at Ro 8:23).

Salvation begins with the born-again experience (see note 2 at Joh 3:3), but it will not be completed until we receive our glorified bodies and assume our position in eternity with Christ. Paul was saying that until we see these bodies glorified, the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit is our guarantee that the rest of our salvation is secure and coming.

EPHESIANS 1:15

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

Note 1 at Eph 1:15: Paul was not praying for these Ephesians because they were in terrible shape. He commended them for their faith in Jesus and love unto all the saints, yet there was more that Paul wanted them to receive.

There is more to being saved than just having our sins forgiven. The new birth ushers us into the kingdom of God, which is infinitely greater in wonder and benefits than our finite minds can comprehend. But to the degree that we do begin to understand how God's kingdom works and apply our lives to it, we can experience heaven here on earth (see note 32 at Mt 6:10).

This doesn't happen automatically, and it doesn't happen all at once. We are progressively changed as we renew our minds (see notes 6-9 at Ro 12:2). All of us Christians are the same in our born-again spirits (see note 3 at Mt 26:41), but there are many different levels of understanding and accompanying victories that we manifest in our lives.

Therefore, Paul prayed that the Ephesians would come to experience in their flesh what was already theirs in their spirits. This prayer is still valid for every believer today. You can personalize this prayer and receive the same wisdom and revelation that Paul was praying for the Ephesians to receive.

EPHESIANS 1:16

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

Note 2 at Eph 1:16: Paul's giving of thanks for the Ephesians was part of his prayers for them. Thanksgiving to God is prayer, and it is a very important part of prayer. Ps 100:4 says, "Enter into his gates with thanksgiving, and into his courts with praise: be thankful unto him, and bless his name." Paul said in Php 4:6, "Be careful for nothing; but

in every thing by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God." According to Jesus' teaching on prayer in Mt 6:9-13, we are to start and end our prayers with thanksgiving and praise.

It is easy to take our burdens to the Lord in prayer and actually spend our time complaining instead of praying. Making thanksgiving an integral part of every prayer will prevent this. If we start our prayer with praise and thanksgiving, we will have to remind ourselves that God is bigger than our problems. And if we close with praise and thanksgiving, we will have to move beyond the problem to the answer. Faith always focuses on the answer, not on the problem (see note 25 at Col 2:7).

Note 3 at Eph 1:16: Paul prayed two prayers for the Ephesians in this letter (Eph 1:15-23 and 3:14-21). They are both similar in content. Paul was praying that they would receive the revelation of the mystery that he was sharing with them (see note 16 at Eph 1:9).

EPHESIANS 1:17

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

Note 4 at Eph 1:17: Just a few verses earlier (Eph 1:8), Paul said God had already abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence, and had made known unto us the mystery of His will. Here, Paul was praying that we would receive the "spirit of wisdom and revelation." Isn't that contradictory? Not at all.

The word "spirit" is used in different ways in Scripture. The dominant usage is to refer to either the Spirit of God or the spirit of man. In that context, it denotes the person of the Holy Spirit or identifies a part of our three-part being (1Th 5:23). The word "spirit" can also describe a "mental disposition" (Strong's Concordance). This is the same thing that we mean when we refer to "team spirit" or "school spirit." That is the way Paul was using "spirit" here and also in Eph 4:23.

We already have wisdom and prudence in our born-again spirits. These things came as part of the "package deal" of salvation. We have

to draw these things out of our spirits and get them into our minds and bodies to receive any of the benefits in this life. Therefore, Paul was praying that what is already true in our spirits will become our mental disposition. He was praying for a release into the physical of what is already present in our spiritual being.

Note 5 at Eph 1:17: You cannot get a revelation of something that doesn't already exist. The Greek word "APOKALUPSIS," translated "revelation" here, means "disclosure" (Strong's Concordance). It is derived from the Greek word that means "to take off the cover" (Strong's Concordance). Paul wasn't praying for the Lord to give us anything new. He was praying for us to receive a revelation of what is already ours (see note 6 at this verse).

Note 6 at Eph 1:17: Notice that Paul didn't pray that God would give them more and more things, but rather that they would get a revelation (see note 5 at this verse) of what had already been freely given to them in Christ.

The Christian life is not an attempt to get more faith, more anointing, or to get closer to the Lord. We already have these things in their fullness (see note 16 at Ro 12:3). We just need a revelation of what is already ours.

Understanding this takes a lot of frustration and doubt away. It's much easier to release something we already have than to try to get something that we don't have. And why would any of us doubt that we would receive what we already have? Through Christ, we are already blessed with all spiritual blessings (see note 2 at Eph 1:3). All we have to do is appropriate what is already ours, through the renewing of our minds (see notes 6-9 at Ro 12:2). That's exactly what Paul was praying for these Ephesians. Insert your name in this prayer and get ready to receive.

EPHESIANS 1:18

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

Note 7 at Eph 1:18: The phrase "eyes of your understanding" is a metaphor referring to the ability to perceive with the mind. Just as we

can't see with our physical eyes if we have them closed, so none of us can see with our understanding if our minds are closed. We have to have our understanding opened by the Lord to perceive spiritual truth (Lu 24:45, see note 5 at Eph 4:17 and note 3 at Mr 8:17).

Note 8 at Eph 1:18: Wisdom and revelation can only be received as the eyes of our hearts are enlightened. Several modern translations have rendered the English word "understanding" in this verse as "heart" (see New International Version and Revised Standard Version). The actual Greek word for "understanding" is "DIANOIA," and it was translated in the King James Version as "mind," "understanding," and "imagination." Our way of thinking has to be illuminated in order to come to a more accurate and thorough knowledge of God. In fact, spiritual mindedness is the only way to true life and peace (Ro 8:5-6 and Isa 26:3), and the renewing of the mind is the way to knowing the perfect will of God (Ro 12:2).

Note 9 at Eph 1:18: The end result of this wisdom and revelation was that the Ephesians might know (1) "the hope of his calling," (2) "the riches of the glory of his inheritance," and (3) "the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward." Without a revelation from God, no one can realize these blessings.

Someone might ask, "Didn't the Ephesians already know these things?" There are several Greek words in the New Testament for the word "knowledge." The particular Greek word used in this passage is "EPIGNOSIS" (Eph 1:17). Its verb counterpart, "EPIGINOSKO," carries the idea of full, accurate, expert knowledge (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon). It's one thing to know about car engines; it's quite another to have the expert knowledge of a mechanic. Paul's prayer was that through a spirit of wisdom and revelation, the Ephesians would come to know the Father in a deeper, more perfect way than they had before.

Note 10 at Eph 1:18: Notice that Paul said "the hope of His calling" (emphasis mine), not our calling. Through our faith in Christ, we have become partakers of everything that Christ deserves (see note 4 at Ga 3:29). It takes a divine revelation to understand this, and that is exactly what Paul was praying for in this verse.

Note 11 at Eph 1:18: Once again, it is important to notice that the inheritance that is within us is His inheritance. Everything we have is all through Christ. It came through His holiness, not ours, and it remains because of His faithfulness, not ours. That's good news!

Note 12 at Eph 1:18: Notice that "the riches of the glory of his inheritance" are in the saints. Most people picture the streets of gold and the wonders of heaven when they think of the glories of God's riches. The treasures that are within every believer right now would bankrupt heaven (see note 1 at Ro 8:18).

EPHESIANS 1:19

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

Note 13 at Eph 1:19: Paul wanted us to know not only God's power but also the greatness of God's power and then the exceeding greatness of God's power. God is infinitely greater in every way than our little minds can comprehend. We must receive a revelation through our spirits to grasp even a little of God's exceeding, great power.

Note 14 at Eph 1:19: This exceeding greatness of God's power is toward us. That means that it is for us and our benefit. Some people get glimpses of God's power, but very few have the revelation that it is for us and at our disposal. It doesn't do us any good to believe that God has power if we don't believe that it will work for us.

Note 15 at Eph 1:19: This great power of God is effectual only for those who believe. We must believe to receive, and if we doubt, we'll do without.

Note 16 at Eph 1:19: The phrase "according to" means "in keeping with; in agreement with" (American Heritage Dictionary) (see note 4 at Eph 1:4). The point being made is that the power that we believers in Christ now have is the same power that God the Father used to raise Christ from the dead. We don't just have a little bit of power from God. We have the same power that God used to raise Jesus from the dead. It is more than enough power to accomplish God's will in our lives.

EPHESIANS 1:21

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

Note 17 at Eph 1:21: The power that is now working in us as believers is the same power that worked in Christ to raise Him from the dead (see note 16 at Eph 1:19). Everything we have as believers in Christ comes from our union with Him. Therefore, what is true of Him is true of us too. So, in the same way that Jesus is now "above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion," so are we.

This is one of the greatest passages in the New Testament on the authority of the believer. In this passage, we see that we have come to share in Christ's throne, to partake in the authority that throne represents, and to exercise divine power and dominion. There is no place in the N.T. where we are told to ask God to do something about the devil; rather, the church is told to do something about the devil. This is because delegated authority has been given to the church over the works of the Enemy. Paul's prayer is that the church may be enlightened to this fact.

EPHESIANS 1:22

And hath put all [things] under his feet, and gave him [to be] the head over all [things] to the church,

Note 18 at Eph 1:22: Paul also used this analogy of the church being the body of Christ in his letter to the Corinthians (1Co 12:12-27 and 15:25-28). Here, Paul expounded on this by placing Christ as the head and the church as the body. This is emphasizing the Lordship of Christ over the church, just as the head dictates and controls the physical body.

When anything is placed under the feet of a person, then every single part of that person's body is positioned above it. This illustrates that resurrection power is not just a reality for Christ, our Head, but that every member of Christ's body has "raising-from-the-dead" power and authority within them too.

EPHESIANS 1:23

Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

Note 19 at Eph 1:23: What an amazing statement we find here of our union with Christ Jesus. Paul stated, "The church is Christ's body, the completion of him" (Today's English Version). Just as a ship is not complete without its crew, just as a king is not complete without his kingdom, Jesus Christ has chosen to be incomplete without His church, "his body, filled with himself" (The Living Bible).

EPHESIANS

CHAPTER 2

EPHESIANS 2:1

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

Note 1 at Eph 2:1: It is important to remember that the chapter and verse divisions were added to the Bible for reference purposes; they do not necessarily designate a change of thought. In this verse, Paul was continuing his thoughts about Christ being raised from the dead and being given all dominion and power (Eph 1:19-23). He was saying that we have been raised from the dead, too, and share in all of Christ's victory and authority.

Note 2 at Eph 2:1: In the King James Version, the phrase "hath he quickened" is in italics, indicating this phrase is not found in the original manuscripts. The phrase "hath quickened us," however, is found in Eph 2:5 and makes this verse in total agreement with the context.

Note 3 at Eph 2:1: We see in this verse a description of all of us in the past having been "dead in trespasses and sins." When people are dead, they lose communication with those who are alive. There is a separation. Just as there is separation of the spirit from the body in physical death (Jas 2:26), so a separation occurred between God and man in spiritual death. Man was no longer able to fellowship with God. There was a loss of spiritual life (Eph 4:18) and communion with God.

This death (separation) took place in the spirit and resulted in death being passed on to the soul and physical body. The "dead" human spirit of a lost person still functions; it just functions independently of God. As Paul explained in Eph 2:3, the lost human spirit actually became united to Satan so that man was "by nature the children of wrath."

God told Adam and Eve that in the day they ate of the forbidden fruit, they would surely die. They didn't die physically that day, but they died spiritually. Their spiritual death resulted in emotional misery all of their days and, eventually, physical death centuries later (Ge 5:5). So, death started in the spirit and eventually manifested itself in the physical. Likewise, the new life takes place in the spirit and eventually

manifests itself in the physical, proportional to how much believers renew their minds (see note 9 at Ro 12:2).

EPHESIANS 2:2

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

Note 4 at Eph 2:2: As a result of spiritual death, mankind began to walk opposite of the ways that God had intended. It didn't happen all at once; it was a step-by-step departure. But it has been absolute and all-inclusive. Dead people help themselves. They must have a Savior.

The Contemporary English Version translates this verse as, "You followed the ways of this world and obeyed the devil. He rules the world, and his spirit has power over everyone who doesn't obey God." The Simple English Bible says, "That evil spirit...is now working in those who disobey God." Today's English Version says, "Actually all of us were like them [the world]...we, like everyone else, were destined to suffer God's anger."

Note 5 at Eph 2:2: The American Heritage Dictionary defines "course" as "a mode of action or behavior." All of us can relate to walking "according to the course of this world." We all were headed down the same path, bound by habits and desires that we could not break on our own. It was our nature to live in sin (Eph 2:3). In the same way that this bondage to sin was universal, our resurrection with Christ (Eph 2:1) and victory over sin is universal for all who believe (Eph 1:19). It is a great mistake to identify with our old sin nature and not identify with our new righteous nature.

Note 6 at Eph 2:2: Many sinners think that they are making their own decisions, but that is not so. This verse and many others reveal that Satan is the one controlling the unsaved. Not all demonic activity is as obvious as it is in those who are demon possessed. However, those who are given to pride and selfishness are being controlled by Satan too.

Satan seeks to turn people from God. He doesn't have to turn them all the way to worshipping him. If they are living for themselves, that's enough to damn them to hell. Those who are not born again (see note 2

at Joh 3:3) are deceived and controlled by "the prince of the power of the air." There is literally a spirit (the spirit of Satan) working in them.

In praying for the lost, we need to remember this truth and bind (Mt 18:18-19) "the prince of the power of the air" that is working in the lost. Paul said in 2Co 4:4 that "the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ...should shine unto them."

Note 7 at Eph 2:2: Vine's Expository Dictionary defines "APEITHEIA," the Greek word that was translated "disobedience" here, as "literally, 'the condition of being unpersuadable'...denotes 'obstinacy, obstinate rejection of the will of God'; hence, 'disobedience.'" This word was also translated "unbelief." Therefore, this is not denoting anyone who ever disobeys. It is specifying the unbelievers--those who have not put their faith in Christ for salvation. Those who are not born again (see note 2 at Joh 3:3) have the spirit of Satan working in them (see note 6 at this verse).

EPHESIANS 2:3

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

Note 8 at Eph 2:3: In Scripture, the word "conversation" means more than just the words we speak. The Greek word from which "conversation" was translated is "ANASTREPHO," and it means "'to conduct oneself,' indicating one's manner of life and character" (Vine's Expository Dictionary).

Note 9 at Eph 2:3: The American Heritage Dictionary defines "nature" as "the essential characteristics and qualities of a person or thing." Here, Paul was saying that before salvation, all of us have a natural disposition to sin. It is not our individual acts of sin that make us sinners. It is our sin nature that makes us commit individual acts of sin (see note 6 at Ro 5:19). Therefore, salvation is not a matter of stopping sin. We are powerless to do that completely. Even if we had the ability never to commit a sin again, that still wouldn't change our nature. That's why we must be born again (see note 2 at Joh 3:3).

EPHESIANS 2:4

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

Note 10 at Eph 2:4: Eph 2:3 describes the hopeless condition of the entire world, but thanks be to God that Paul didn't stop there. He said in this verse, "But God." Without God, every person and every situation is hopeless. "But God" has intervened, and now there is an answer to every problem through Christ. Regardless of how bad the report is in the natural, we need to remember "But God."

Note 11 at Eph 2:4: This verse reveals God's motive for providing salvation for us. God wasn't motivated to save us through pity or even a sense of obligation as our Creator. He was motivated solely by love. God loves us. Therefore, accepting salvation is accepting God's love. Anyone who prays only to escape hell and doesn't receive God's love is missing the whole point of salvation (see note 94 at Joh 17:3).

EPHESIANS 2:5

Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;)

Note 12 at Eph 2:5: This is an amazing, unconditional act of love performed by God in Christ. This didn't happen after we had straightened up our lives, but while we were dead in sins, we were raised in Christ. The following is a literal paraphrase based upon Greek and English meanings of Eph 2:4-5:

"Even when we were spiritually dead because of our sins, God's forbearance was working on our behalf. He was tolerant, patient and kind towards us. God abounded in excessive proportion with good will, compassion, and desire to help us. His disposition was kind, compassionate, and forgiving in His treatment of us. He wanted in abundant supply to alleviate our distress and bring relief from our sins. He did this by giving us life in place of death. It was with Christ

that this salvation was secured. By grace, kindness, and favor we are saved. All of this was the result of God's extremely large degree of love wherewith He loved us, always seeking the welfare and betterment of us. God likes us" (Don Krow).

Note 13 at Eph 2:5: Notice that this verse stresses the fact that "by grace ye are saved." This is clearly illustrated by Paul's description of us as being dead. Dead people can't help themselves. They can't move, talk, or respond in any way, because they have no life. We were given life through Christ when we were dead in our sins. This was an act of grace independent of our efforts and works (Ro 3:27 and 11:6). God gave Christ's life to us who were dead in sin. Truly, salvation rests in the work of God through Christ alone.

EPHESIANS 2:6

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

Note 14 at Eph 2:6: The word "together" was used three times in Eph 2:5-6. It is describing our union with Christ in being "quickened" (Eph 2:5), "raised" (this verse), and seated "in heavenly places" (this verse). None of these things are possible on our own. It is only through our union with Christ that any of this is attainable. Our victory in the Christian life is dependent on our dependency on Christ and not on ourselves. There is nothing more frustrating than trying to live for Christ. Instead, we need to recognize our weaknesses and let Him live through us.

Note 15 at Eph 2:6: "Made us sit" (this verse), "raised" (Eph 1:20 and this verse), and "quickened" (Eph 2:1 and 5) are all in the aorist tense. This indicates something that God has already accomplished in Christ, not something that is off in the future.

To be raised up together with Christ and made to sit together "in heavenly places" indicates not only location but also a position of authority. It's because of our position of being raised up with Christ that all things, including the demonic realm, are put under our feet (Eph 1:22-23). We are to exercise this authority in this present evil age through preaching the Gospel, including healing the sick and casting out devils (see note 4 at Ac 4:30, note 4 at Lu 5:24, and note 2 at Mr 16:20).

Since we are resurrected with Jesus and seated with Him in heavenly places, what is true of Him is also true of us in our born-again spirits. We can and should do the same works that Jesus does (see notes 17-18 at Joh 14:12).

EPHESIANS 2:7

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

Note 16 at Eph 2:7: God's motive in saving us and raising us up together with Christ was "his great love" (Eph 2:4). His purpose in salvation was to show us the exceeding riches of His grace and how very, very great His kindness is toward us (this verse). This kindness will be expressed and shown to us throughout eternity because of Jesus Christ. As the Living Bible translates this verse, "And now God can always point to us as examples of how very, very rich his kindness is, as shown in all he has done for us through Jesus Christ."

EPHESIANS 2:8

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

Note 17 at Eph 2:8: Eph 2:8-9 states that the basis of our salvation is grace--that is, God's undeserved, unmerited favor toward us as expressed in providing redemption through Christ Jesus. The means of God saving us is through faith. Through faith we accept God's free gift of salvation that was provided by grace. So, we are saved "by grace through faith."

Note 18 at Eph 2:8: In previous notes, I have explained that the word "saved" means much more than just forgiveness of sins; it includes healing, prosperity, and deliverance in every area of our lives.

In this verse, the Greek word that was translated "saved" is in the

perfect tense; this means that something was done and completed in the past yet continues to have present results. God's grace has already provided all spiritual blessings in Christ (Eph 1:3), and our faith reaches out to God and receives the benefits (Ro 5:2). The Greek scholar Kenneth S. Wuest translated this verse, "For by grace have you been saved in time past completely, through faith, with the result that your salvation persists through present time; and this (salvation) is not from you as a source."

Note 19 at Eph 2:8: Notice that we are not saved by grace alone. We are saved by grace through faith. Faith grants us admission to God's grace (see note 3 at Ro 5:2). Without faith, God's grace is wasted, and without grace, faith is powerless. Faith in God's grace has to be released to receive what God has provided through Christ (see note 19 at 1Co 15:10).

God's grace is the same toward everyone. Tit 2:11 says, "For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men." Therefore, "all men" (mankind) have had salvation provided for them (1Jo 2:2) and extended toward them by God's grace, but not all are saved. Why? Because not all people have mixed faith with what God has done for them by grace.

Failure to understand the necessity of both grace and faith working together has led to many problems. Some people emphasize God's grace to an extreme that renders faith useless. They say everything is up to God's grace and is controlled sovereignly by Him alone. That's wrong. It's just as wrong to emphasize faith apart from God's grace. That's legalism. Faith doesn't move God. God moves of His own free will by grace, and faith only appropriates what God has already provided through His grace.

Just as sodium and chloride are poisonous by themselves, so grace or faith used independently of each other is deadly. When you mix sodium and chloride together in the proper way, you get salt, which you must have to live. Likewise, putting faith in what God has already provided by grace is the key to victorious Christian living.

Note 20 at Eph 2:8: Most people assume the word "that" in this verse is referring to our salvation. Our salvation is not of ourselves. It is the gift of God. That is certainly a true statement. However, it is also true that the faith we use for salvation is not of ourselves. It is the gift of God too.

There is a human faith and a supernatural, God-kind of faith. Human

faith is based on physical things that we can see, taste, hear, smell, or feel. God's kind of faith believes independently of physical circumstances (see note 6 at Ro 4:17). To receive God's gift of salvation, we have to use this supernatural, God-kind of faith that isn't limited by our five senses. This is because, to be saved, we must believe for things that we can't see or feel. We haven't seen God or the devil. We haven't seen heaven or hell. Yet, we have to believe that all of these things exist. Human faith can't believe what it can't see.

We are so destitute that we can't even believe the Gospel on our own. To receive God's gift of salvation, we have to receive the supernatural, God-kind of faith first. Where does this faith come from? How do we get it? Ro 10:17 says, "So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God." God's Word contains His faith. As we hear the Word of God about our salvation, God's faith comes so that we can believe the good news of our salvation. We actually use God's faith to get saved.

This God-kind of faith doesn't leave us after the born-again experience. God's faith becomes a fruit of the Spirit that is in our hearts. We never lose this supernatural faith. We just have to renew our minds to the fact that God's faith is in us, and then learn how to use it (see note 16 at Ro 12:3).

Note 21 at Eph 2:8: Salvation is described as a gift. The American Heritage Dictionary defines "gift" as "something that is bestowed voluntarily and without compensation" (see note 4 at Ro 6:23). When someone gives you a present, you don't ask "How much do I owe you?" Your only response should be "Thank you very much." Many Christians, after receiving the gift of salvation, still think they must work to pay for their acceptance. The only acceptable response to salvation is gratitude and praise to God for His indescribable gift (2Co 9:15). Salvation is a gift to be received (Ro 6:23), not a wage to be earned.

Note 22 at Eph 2:8: These verses explain in detail the nature of grace. If it's by grace, then (1) it is not of ourselves (this verse, Ro 3:28, and Tit 3:5), (2) it is a gift (this verse and Ro 5:17), (3) it is not of works or human effort (Eph 2:9, Ro 11:6, and Tit 3:5), and (4) it excludes man's boasting (Eph 2:9 and Ro 3:27).

EPHESIANS 2:9

Not of works, lest any man should boast.

Note 23 at Eph 2:9: No one deserves salvation. It cannot be earned by what the Bible calls "dead works" (Heb 6:1 and 9:14). Dead works include all religious activities, good deeds, and/or charity that one may do as a means of being justified before God. Faith toward God and what He has done through Christ Jesus is the only means of receiving His free gift of salvation.

To trust in any human work or effort as a means of salvation is to fall from grace and to sever one's self from the Savior (Ga 5:4). No one can be saved by the combination of grace and works, for they exclude each other (Ro 11:6). You must be saved by grace through faith alone (see note 17 at Eph 2:8), or your works must meet the standard of God's perfection set down by His holy Law (Ro 2:13). "Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by faith without the deeds of the law" (Ro 3:28, see note 9 at Ga 2:16).

Note 24 at Eph 2:9: God has designed salvation in such a way as to eliminate any boasting from man. If salvation was by works, either partially or wholly, then man could boast, but grace and faith eliminate man's boasting altogether (see note 11 at Ro 3:27). Salvation by grace brings praise and glory to God. If we could save ourselves, either partially or wholly, we would take the credit for it. That is not the case. All the glory goes to God.

EPHESIANS 2:10

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

Note 25 at Eph 2:10: The Greek word for "workmanship" used here is "POIEMA," and it means "that which is made" (Vine's Expository Dictionary). The word signifies that which is manufactured, a product, a design produced by an artisan (Word Wealth, Spirit-Filled Life Bible). It is the word from which we get our English word "poem." We are God's poem--His work of art. It is just as foolish for us to boast of our part in salvation as it would be for a masterpiece painting to boast of

painting itself.

Note 26 at Eph 2:10: There is a vast difference between being saved by good works and being saved unto good works, as stated here. Good works do not gain us salvation, but they do affirm that salvation has been received into our lives. Good works cannot produce a new nature, but a new nature should produce good works.

Note 27 at Eph 2:10: Today's English Version translates this verse as "God has made us what we are, and in our union with Christ Jesus he has created us for a life of good deeds, which he has already prepared for us to do." God has ordained a perfect plan for each of our lives (Jer 29:11), but He does not force that plan to come to pass (see notes 1-2 at Ro 8:29). We have the choice (De 30:19).

Ephesians 2:11

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

Note 1 at Eph 2:11: Paul began these verses by the statement "Wherefore remember." It is always good to remind ourselves of what we were, apart from God's saving grace. It is an antidote for pride and self-righteousness.

Memory is a powerful force that we often neglect. Four times in his second epistle, Peter referred to our memory as a way of stirring ourselves up (2Pe 1:12-13, 15; and 3:1). One of the main purposes of the Old Testament Sabbath was to cause the children of Israel to remember (De 5:15). Those of us who remember what we used to be will have a clearer understanding of who we are now (see note 4 at Eph 2:13).

EPHESIANS 2:12

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

Note 2 at Eph 2:12: In these verses (Eph 5:11-12), Paul described the complete hopelessness of all Gentiles before Jesus opened the door of salvation unto them. The reason for this was to remind them (see note 1 at Eph 2:11) of how their salvation was completely a work of God's grace (see note 20 at Eph 2:8). They had no covenant with God that promised them redemption. They were foreigners to God's kingdom with no hope of the situation ever changing. It was totally God's mercy and their response of faith to the grace they were offered that brought them salvation. How could they ever think they obtained salvation through some virtue of their own?

Note 3 at Eph 2:12: Of course, God is everywhere. When Paul said they were "without God in the world," he was speaking of the effect God was having on their lives. As far as their experience was concerned, it was as though God didn't exist. The Lord doesn't impact people's lives sovereignly. The Lord's deliverance has to be invited into their lives through faith. No faith equals no invitation and no intervention.

Notice that Paul linked the separation from the covenant of God with being "without God in the world." This illustrates that God deals with us through His covenant words. Those who seek to find the Lord apart from the revealed Scripture will wind up "without God."

EPHESIANS 2:13

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

Note 4 at Eph 2:13: Paul had just described the totally hopeless situation of an unbeliever before salvation (see note 2 at Eph 2:12). "But now" begins the description of the total transformation that takes place at salvation. To really appreciate the "but now" of these verses, we need to clearly understand the complete desperateness of Eph 2:11-12 (see note 1 at Eph 2:11).

Note 5 at Eph 2:13: The Gentiles, who were at one time separated from the promises of God and therefore "far off" from God Himself (see note 3 at Eph 2:12), are now "made nigh" unto God by the blood of Christ (see note 6 at this verse). The phrases "far off" and "made nigh" are figurative, describing our relationship with the Lord. The truth is, God is "not far from every one of us" (Ac 17:27). Before being "born again"

(see note 2 at Joh 3:3), though, it was as if the Lord was very far away. There was little or no communication with Him and no benefit of His presence. After salvation, it is as though the Lord has come very near to us. We can speak to Him at any time and always feel His presence.

For the purpose of describing how our relationship with the Lord is going, it is okay to use the symbolism of "far off" and "nigh," but we born-again believers all need to remember this is just figurative. After salvation, the Lord promised that He would never leave us or forsake us (Heb 13:5). It is only our perception of the Lord's presence that changes. Regardless of how we feel, the Lord is always present and watching over His promises to fulfill each and every one.

Note 6 at Eph 2:13: The blood of Jesus is a central theme of the New Covenant. When spoken of in Scripture, it refers to Christ's death as a means of securing salvation and of the institution of the New Covenant between God and man. Under the New Covenant, the blood of Jesus has provided the forgiveness of sins (Eph 1:7), a new heart (Jer 31:33-34), mercy toward unrighteousness (Heb 8:12), justification (Ro 5:9), eternal redemption (Heb 9:12), intimate relationship with God (Heb 8:11), deliverance from a worthless kind of life (1Pe 1:18-19), peace with God (Col 1:20), the putting away of sin (Heb 9:26), continual cleansing (1Jo 1:7), a cleansed conscience (Heb 9:14), deliverance from the Law (Eph 2:15), reconciliation (Eph 2:16), access to the Father (Eph 2:18), a perfect standing before God (Col 1:22), the spoiling of principalities and powers (Col 2:15), Christian liberty (Ga 5:1), and healing for the physical body (Mt 8:17).

EPHESIANS 2:14

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

Note 7 at Eph 2:14: Anytime two opposing groups are joined together, it is a great testimony of unity and peace. In the body of Christ (see note 14 at 1Co 12:27), it is Christ and Christ alone who has created this peace. He did this by breaking down the middle wall of partition that divided Jew and Gentile.

In the Jerusalem temple, there was a physical wall of partition that symbolized this division. The Gentiles could come into a designated area of the temple known as the Court of the Gentiles, but a five-foot

stone wall allowed them to go no farther. A sign standing before the wall stated, "No man of another nation is to enter, and whosoever is caught will have himself to blame for his death!"

Many regulations and rules had separated Jews and Gentiles for centuries (Ac 10:28). Christ's work on the cross abolished that separation by removing the Law (see note 9 at Eph 2:15) and thus the barrier between these two groups. Instead of making the Gentiles Jews, or the Jews Gentiles, God did a brand-new thing. It's like crossing a horse and a donkey. The result is not a horse or a donkey. You get a brand-new animal--a mule.

In the New Testament church, there is no such thing as Jew or Gentile, bond or free, for God has created something absolutely new. It's the "one new man," the new creation in Christ Jesus, the church, Christ's body, the fullness of Him that filleth all in all (Eph 1:23). The prejudice caused by racial and religious distinctions has been dissolved. Enmity, hostility, and hatred are over by the blood of His cross. Believers are now only Christians. It's only man and religion that want to rebuild what Christ has torn down.

Note 8 at Eph 2:14: In context, Paul was speaking about the differences between Jew and Gentile being done away with in Christ. The thing that separated Jew and Gentile was the Old Testament Law with all its laws and ceremonies. Jesus abolished these laws (see note 9 at Eph 2:15) and thereby broke down the partition that was between Jew and Gentile. He further made all believers new creations, making Jewish and Gentile distinctions no longer applicable. Believers are all new creations in Christ Jesus with heavenly citizenship.

This unity is not limited to Jew and Gentile, although that is the subject Paul dealt with here. In Ga 3:28, Paul said, "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither bond nor free, there is neither male nor female: for ye are all one in Christ Jesus." Therefore, not only are national and religious divisions done away with; social standings that divide (bond and free), as well as gender differences, are dissolved in Christ. All believers are united to each other regardless of race, sex, or social standing.

EPHESIANS 2:15

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

Note 9 at Eph 2:15: The word "abolished" is a very strong word. The Greek word translated "abolished" here is "KATARGEÓ," and it means "to be (render) entirely idle (useless)" (Strong's Concordance). The American Heritage Dictionary defines "abolish" as "to do away with; annul." Paul was saying that the Old Testament Law, which made a division between Jew and Gentile, was entirely useless in relating to God now (see notes 3-4 at Ro 3:19).

Some people proclaim that only the ceremonial parts of the Law, such as feast days, dietary laws, etc., were done away with, but that is not so. Jas 2:10 says, "For whosoever shall keep the whole law, and yet offend in one point, he is guilty of all." The O.T. Law had many ordinances, but combined they made one Law. Failure to comply with any one point of the Law was failure to comply with all of the Law. Likewise, doing away with any one point of the Law was doing away with all of the Law.

Of course, it must be understood that the O.T. Law still has a purpose. The purpose of the Law always was and continues to be showing us our sin and leading us to a Savior (see note 4 at Ro 3:19). When used for this purpose, the Law is good (see note 14 at Ro 3:31). To use the Law as a standard by which we can make ourselves worthy to receive from God is wrong.

The Law did provide justification for one man--Jesus. He kept every detail of the Law and was justified by His actions. But having obtained justification for us through the Law, He abolished that function of the Law forever and now offers justification with God on the basis of faith in His grace (see note 19 at Eph 2:8).

Note 10 at Eph 2:15: Paul clearly stated here that in Christ, we are new creatures (2Co 5:17). There is no longer the distinction of Jew and Gentile; we are all one new creation in Christ. We believers are all Christians. It is okay to enjoy and appreciate our physical heritage in its proper place, but when it comes to our relationship with the Lord and with other members of the body of Christ, there should be no ethnic distinctions. Those who promote ethnic distinctions in the body of Christ are not following the spirit of what Paul said here (see notes 1-2 at 1Co 1:10).

EPHESIANS 2:16

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

Note 11 at Eph 2:16: This verse is making the same point that the previous verse made (see note 9 at Eph 2:15). The enmity being spoken of is the division that the Old Testament Law created. The O.T. Law is as though it has been killed, because it no longer applies to those who seek to be justified with God (see notes 3-4 at Ro 3:19).

EPHESIANS 2:17

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

Note 12 at Eph 2:17: This verse seems to be an allusion to Isa 57:19. Through Jesus, mankind can now be reconciled (see note 11 at 2Co 5:18) to God and to each other.

It is "through him"--Jesus Christ (Eph 2:18) and His death--that Jew and Gentile alike may now come boldly unto His throne of grace (Heb 4:16). The Gentiles, who were far off "having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph 2:12), and the Jews, who were near because of the covenants of promise, are now in Christ Jesus (Eph 2:13). How much better it is to be in Christ Jesus than just to be near.

Prior to this, Jews could approach God through their mediator, the high priest, and Gentiles could approach God by their conversion to Judaism. But now Jesus has become the door whereby all people may come to God solely on the basis of faith in what He has done for them.

EPHESIANS 2:18

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

Note 13 at Eph 2:18: "Through him" (i.e., Jesus), God credits people to

be perfect even at a moment when they are ungodly in themselves. Charles Swindoll, in his book "The Grace Awakening," states that justification "is the sovereign act of God whereby He declares righteous the believing sinner while still in his sinning state" (p. 36). "Through him," people--though sinners in the flesh, but justified in the spirit--may come boldly before the heavenly Father.

Note 14 at Eph 2:18: The Greek noun for "access" used here is "PROSAGOGE," and it was used three times in the New Testament (Ro 5:2; this verse, and Eph 3:12). It literally means "admission" (Strong's Concordance) (see note 3 at Ro 5:2). "In oriental courts there was a [PROSAGOGE] who brought a person into the presence of the king" (Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, brackets mine). Jesus provided the admission price unto the Father with the shedding of His blood, the Holy Spirit is the one who escorts us unto the throne of God, and God the Father Himself receives us.

EPHESIANS 2:19

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

Note 15 at Eph 2:19: Gentiles were strangers and foreigners ("aliens") to God and His people (Eph 2:12). "Strangers" were neither friends nor acquaintances, but rather outsiders. "Foreigners" were aliens who were permitted to reside in a country but who lived without any rights of citizenship and could be expelled without appeal.

Because of Christ's reconciling work on the cross, Paul used three metaphors in describing both the Jews' and the Gentiles' new position before God: (1) fellow citizens with God's people (this verse [New International Version] and Php 3:20 [NIV]), (2) of the same household (this verse; Mt 12:48-50, 23:8-9; Lu 8:21; Ro 8:29; Heb 2:11-12; Ga 6:10; Eph 3:15; and Phm 16), and (3) part of God's building (Eph 2:20-22, 1Co 3:9, and 1Pe 2:5).

Those who are now united with Christ through the new birth (see note 2 at Joh 3:3) are inseparably a part of God.

EPHESIANS 2:21

In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord:

Note 16 at Eph 2:21: The saints as the "household of God" (Eph 2:19) are built upon the foundation of the teachings of the apostles and prophets. We are told that the early church "continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers" (Ac 2:42). Christ Himself is called the chief cornerstone on whom every structure is aligned perfectly. This metaphor depicts believers as a carefully joined, constantly growing temple inhabited by God. The Jews and Gentiles are now an ever-growing spiritual structure indwelt by God. Whereas a church building is sometimes called the house of God, in reality believers are the temple of God (1Co 3:9 and 6:19, see note 7 at 1Co 3:16). "For ye are the temple of the living God; as God hath said, I will dwell in them, and walk in them; and I will be their God, and they shall be my people" (2Co 6:16).

EPHESIANS

CHAPTER 3

EPHESIANS 3:1

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

Note 1 at Eph 3:1: In this verse is a subtle glimpse of one of the things that enabled Paul to endure extreme suffering for the cause of Christ. Paul saw differently than most of us do. He wasn't a prisoner of Rome; he was a prisoner of Jesus Christ. Paul used this same terminology in Eph 4:1; 2Ti 1:8; Phm 1, and 9. In Eph 6:20, he referred to himself in his imprisonment as "an ambassador in bonds."

By just about everyone else's evaluation, Paul was a prisoner of Rome, but that's not the way Paul saw it. It really doesn't matter how other people see you; it's how you view yourself that determines your actions. If Paul had viewed his situation from a merely human perspective, he would have been depressed and probably very fearful. But he had a heavenly perspective. He knew he was a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ, and it was his devotion to the Lord that landed him in jail, not some fault of his own. Therefore, Jesus was in control and not Rome.

The Lord was using Paul's imprisonment to give him an all-expense-paid trip to Rome to witness to the caesar and his entire house (Php 1:13). Paul refused to give Rome or the devil the victory. God was at the controls, and Paul expressed that conviction by calling himself "the prisoner of Jesus Christ."

EPHESIANS 3:2

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

Note 2 at Eph 3:2: The word "dispensation" is used four times in the New Testament (1Co 9:17; Eph 1:10, this verse; and Col 1:25). The same Greek word used for "dispensation" was also translated as "stewardship" three times (Lu 16:2-4). In the Revised Standard Version, the word "dispensation" was translated as "the stewardship of God's

grace." This word has to do with the oversight and administration of another's property.

In the context of this verse, it has to do with the act of dispensing, or giving out, an understanding of God's grace toward man. Paul stated that the revelation of grace was "given me to you-ward." In other words, "It was given to me (Paul) that I might give it to you (the Gentiles)." The Greek word "HUMAS" ("you-ward") was also translated as "for your sake." God's grace and gifts are always given to us for others.

EPHESIANS 3:3

How that by revelation he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words,

Note 3 at Eph 3:3: "Mystery" can be defined as the quality or air of being unexplained, secret, or unknown. The biblical mystery spoken of here is something that is secret or unknown until it is revealed, and can only be known by divine revelation. Paul stated in Ga 1:12 that the Gospel he preached was not after man: "For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ."

According to Eph 3:6, the mystery spoken of here involves not only the Gentiles sharing in the promise of the Messiah but also the Jews and Gentiles being joint-heirs with the Messiah and incorporated into His one body. This is the mystery that was unknown in the Old Testament and revealed in the New Testament unto His apostles and prophets by the Spirit.

EPHESIANS 3:4

Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ)

Note 4 at Eph 3:4: Paul stated here that through reading his words, the mystery of the Gentiles and Jews being one body could be understood. It is through the reading of the Word and the enlightenment of the Holy Spirit that Christ in His fullness is known. What a privilege it is today to have God's Word in our own language. Six hundred years ago there was no English translation of the whole Bible. Thanks to the efforts of John Wycliffe and William Tyndale, we now can read and understand the writings of Paul for ourselves. People gave their lives to bring us God's Word. We should take advantage of this wonderful privilege.

EPHESIANS 3:5

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

Note 5 at Eph 3:5: Paul's statement here raises new questions. Why wasn't this truth of Jew and Gentile being united in one new body revealed in the Old Testament? He didn't explain here. However, in 1Co 2:14, Paul said, "But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned." Surely one reason this mystery was not revealed to O.T. people is because they were not born again (see note 2 at Joh 3:3); therefore, they could not grasp spiritual truth as readily as New Testament believers can (see notes 1-3 at 1Co 2:14).

Note 6 at Eph 3:5: Revelation knowledge (see note 1 at Lu 2:26, note 1 at Mt 13:11, note 2 at Mt 13:12, and note 9 at 1Co 14:26) comes from the Holy Spirit. One of the primary ministries of the Holy Spirit is to give us understanding (see note 35 at Joh 14:26). Those who do not have the Holy Spirit, or do not yield to the Holy Spirit, are cut off from revelation knowledge.

EPHESIANS 3:6

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

Note 7 at Eph 3:6: Believers are united not only to Christ but also to each other. The Gentiles did not become part of some Jewish body, but Jew and Gentile became part of the new body of Christ.

EPHESIANS 3:7

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

Note 8 at Eph 3:7: True ministers are made, not self-appointed. How are they made? It's according to God's gift. There are some things that we can't do. We can't call ourselves into the ministry or choose what gifts we operate in (1Co 12:11). We have to be called and anointed of God.

Once we have received God's call and anointing for service, there are things that we can and must do. We have to labor to receive the full benefit of God's grace and calling, but the labor is not to obtain God's call and anointing. That has to come first as a gift. Then we labor against our flesh so that we can let God's gift flow through us unhindered (see note 19 at 1Co 15:10).

EPHESIANS 3:8

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

Note 9 at Eph 3:8: Paul's statement that he was "less than the least of all saints" was not a statement of false humility. He meant this. How could

this be? This was the Apostle Paul. In relation to other saints and apostles, Paul was certainly not least in his accomplishments and devotion. Even Paul admitted that (2Co 11:5 and 12:11).

From our human perspective, we unwisely compare ourselves with others who are also less than what God wants them to be, and we smugly think we are okay. Those of us who have viewed ourselves in the light of God's perfect standard (see note 6 at Ro 3:23) know that at our best, we are infinitely below God's standard of holiness. It is only the grace and mercy of God that the Lord loves any of us. A true revelation of this will cause us to say with Paul that we are "less than the least of all saints."

Paul didn't see himself as "less than the least of all saints" because he had persecuted and murdered Christians. Others have done that too. Paul was less not because of what he did but because of the revelation he had. Those of us who see ourselves as superior to others have never truly seen ourselves next to Jesus. A true revelation of ourselves next to Christ will forever change the way we see others in relation to ourselves.

EPHESIANS 3:9

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

Note 10 at Eph 3:9: Paul's stated purpose here was "to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery." He sought to accomplish this through his preaching and teaching ministry and was very successful. His writings have been canonized as Scripture and have gone far beyond his "pulpit" ministry in accomplishing his goal. For nearly 2,000 years, Paul's writings have touched multitudes more than he did during his personal ministry and opened their eyes to the mystery of Christ. His goal is still being fulfilled more than he ever imagined.

Note 11 at Eph 3:9: In context, the mystery Paul was speaking of is that the Gentiles are equal heirs with the Jews in the body of Christ (Eph 3:6, see note 3 at Eph 3:3). In Colossians, which is a companion teaching to the book of Ephesians (see Life for Today Study Bible Notes, Introduction to Ephesians), Paul said the mystery was "Christ in you, the hope of glory" (Col 1:27).

Note 12 at Eph 3:9: This verse states that all things were created by Jesus Christ. Isa 44:24 states, "I am the LORD that maketh all things; that stretcheth forth the heavens alone; that spreadeth abroad the earth by myself."

Since Jehovah stretched forth the heavens alone and spread abroad the earth by Himself, and since Jesus created all things (Joh 1:3, 10; 1Co 8:6; Col 1:16; and Heb 1:2), this again proves the deity of Jesus Christ and the unity of the Godhead.

The following are some passages in the Old Testament referring to Jehovah that in the New Testament are made to refer to Jesus Christ: Isa 44:6 with Re 1:17-18, Isa 40:3 with Mr 1:3, Nu 21:5-6 with 1Co 10:9, Joe 2:32 with Ro 10:13, Isa 45:23 with Php 2:10-11, Isa 6:1 with Joh 12:41-42, and 2Ki 17:35 with Col 3:24.

EPHESIANS 3:10

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

Note 13 at Eph 3:10: The particulars of the church were a mystery in the Old Testament, but in the New Testament, every detail of this mystery is intended to be fully revealed, even to the demonic powers (see note 14 at this verse). God's church is like a city set on a hill for all the world to see (Mt 5:14).

Note 14 at Eph 3:10: In this letter, Paul used the same terminology ("principalities and powers") to refer to the demonic realm (Eph 6:12). Therefore, he was saying here that we the church are to instruct the demonic realm about the many features or forms (see note 15 at this verse) of God's wisdom. Of course, this is not to benefit them; it is to "rub their noses" in the defeat that Jesus won over them. As we walk in the power and victory that Jesus provided, we constantly show Satan and his demons their folly, and God's infinite wisdom.

Note 15 at Eph 3:10: The American Heritage Dictionary defines "manifold" as "1. Many and varied; of many kinds; multiple. 2. Having many features or forms." God's wisdom is multifaceted and unable to

be comprehended by human intellect alone. We need the revelation knowledge (see note 6 at Eph 3:5) of the Holy Spirit to grasp God's infinite wisdom (Ps 147:5, Ro 11:33, and Eph 3:8).

EPHESIANS 3:11

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

Note 16 at Eph 3:11: God's plan of redemption was not an afterthought of man's sin. Scripture reveals that Jesus was "the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world" (Re 13:8). Ac 15:18 says, "Known unto God are all his works from the beginning of the world." Before the world began, God promised eternal life to those who would believe (Tit 1:2). Peter said Jesus was foreordained before the foundation of the world (1Pe 1:20). In Eph 1:4, Paul said we were chosen in Christ before the foundation of the world. Here, in this verse, he made it clear that the plan of redemption was God's eternal purpose (see note 3 at 1Co 2:7).

EPHESIANS 3:12

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

Note 17 at Eph 3:12: It would be wonderful to have access to God even if we had to approach Him groveling in the shame of our sin. To be able to approach Him with boldness and confidence, however, is beyond what any of us could have hoped for. God is good, and He has provided a truly great salvation (Heb 2:3).

EPHESIANS 3:13

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

Note 18 at Eph 3:13: Paul was taking full advantage of his access to the

Father (Eph 3:12). He was so blessed in the presence of God that he could tell the Ephesians not to be bothered about his imprisonment; he wasn't.

If we fully appropriate what is ours in Christ, no problem here on earth can overcome us. As Ps 139:8 says, "If I make my bed in hell, behold, thou art there." No problem here is worthy to be compared to the glory of God by which we now "have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him" (Eph 3:12; see note 1 at Ac 7:55, note 17 at 2Co 4:16, notes 18-19 at 2Co 4:17, and note 20 at 2Co 4:18).

EPHESIANS 3:14

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

Note 1 at Eph 3:14: In the previous verse, Paul desired that the Ephesians would not be discouraged because of the things that were happening to him (i.e., his imprisonment). Here, he followed that desire with a prayer to God for their strength and fullness.

Note 2 at Eph 3:14: Eph 3:14-19 forms one complete sentence. This sentence is Paul's second prayer in this epistle (see note 3 at Eph 1:16). Here, he prayed that the Ephesians would be granted spiritual strength by God's Spirit (Eph 3:16) and that Christ might make His home in their hearts by faith (Eph 3:17). He also prayed that through their being rooted and grounded in love, the Ephesians would comprehend, or get revelation knowledge (Eph 3:17-18). Last, he prayed that by experiencing Christ's love, they would be filled with all the fullness of God (Eph 3:19).

The remaining two verses of this chapter (Eph 3:20-21) are praise to God in anticipation of His answering this prayer.

Note 3 at Eph 3:14: Kneeling is an indication of an attitude of worship, reverence, adoration, and praise. This posture is mentioned in Scripture numerous times: Solomon knelt before the altar of the Lord to pray (1Ki 8:54 and 2Ch 6:13). Ezra fell upon his knees to pray (Ezr 9:5). Daniel prayed upon his knees three times daily (Da 6:10). Jesus knelt down to pray in the Garden of Gethsemane (Lu 22:41). Stephen knelt as he forgave his enemies (Ac 7:60). Peter kneeled down to pray

before raising Dorcas from the dead (Ac 9:39-42). At his farewell speech to the elders of Ephesus, Paul and those he was addressing knelt down and prayed together (Ac 20:36). Paul did this again with other disciples (Ac 21:5).

Ps 95:6 instructs us to come and bow down as we worship. The Scriptures prophesy that God will make every knee bow to Him (Isa 45:23 and Php 2:10).

Other postures of prayer include standing (Mr 11:25), lying prostrate (2Sa 12:16), and lifting up of holy hands (1Ti 2:8).

Other things that accompany prayer include fasting (Mt 17:21; Ac 13:3, and 14:23), forgiveness of others (Mr 11:25), agreement (Mt 18:19), faith (Jas 5:14-15), treating one's mate with respect (1Pe 3:7), the Holy Spirit (Eph 6:18), and the laying on of hands (Ac 6:6 and 13:3).

We are encouraged to pray: always (Lu 18:1), in the day of trouble (Ps 50:15), constantly (1Th 5:17), in everything (Php 4:6), at all times in the Spirit (Eph 6:18), when suffering (Jas 5:13), in tongues (1Co 14:2 and 14), for our enemies (Mt 5:44), for those who harm us (Lu 6:28), for those who persecute us (Mt 5:44), for a brother who sins (1Jo 5:16), for friends (Job 42:8-9), for others to receive the Holy Spirit (Ac 8:15), for healing (Ac 28:8), for laborers to be sent into the harvest (Mt 9:38 and Lu 10:2), and for the saints (Ro 1:9-10, Eph 1:16, Php 1:3-4, and 2Ti 1:3).

EPHESIANS 3:15

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

Note 4 at Eph 3:15: Paul was speaking of the saved, both Old and New Testament, those alive and those already in heaven. This is the only time in Scripture where the term "family" is used to describe the saints, although that idea is implied many times by the use of the word "brother" or "sister" when referring to a fellow believer.

One of the most common ways of describing the corporate group of saints is to refer to them as the body of Christ (see note 14 at 1Co 12:27). They are also referred to as a holy temple of God (see note 16 at Eph 2:21).

Some people consider their church or denomination as comprising the

entire family of God. How foolish to limit God's family to the few in their select group. Many of God's family members have preceded us by hundreds and even thousands of years. Most likely they knew nothing of our denominational brand of Christianity, yet they are definitely part of God's family.

EPHESIANS 3:16

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

Note 5 at Eph 3:16: Paul's prayer is a sermon in itself on how to walk in the fullness of God. The first thing Paul mentioned is the Lord strengthening believers through the power of the Holy Spirit. Many well-meaning Christians fall quite short of what God wants them to be and what they want for themselves, because they are trying to live for God instead of letting God live through them (see note 1 at Ro 7:15). The key to all victory in the Christian life is learning how to depend on the Holy Spirit for strength (see note 14 at Ga 2:20).

Those who are not born again can never be victorious in the Christian life, because God is not indwelling them. Even Christians who have the Lord inside of them will not experience victory apart from dependence upon the Holy Spirit. All power for the believers originates from the Holy Spirit (see note 5 at Ac 1:8).

Note 6 at Eph 3:16: This strengthening of the believer is done not in the spirit, which is complete and perfect in Christ (1Co 6:17, see note 3 at Mt 26:41), but within the heart (see note 3 at Mt 12:34); i.e., the soul and personality of the believer (see note 17 at 2Co 4:16). The "inner man" referred to in this verse is also called "the inward man" in 2Co 4:16. There, Paul said his inward man was being renewed day by day. This was not speaking of his spirit, since that was complete in Christ Jesus (Col 2:10).

A born-again spirit has already been strengthened with might through the power of the Holy Spirit. Paul was praying that this strength would manifest itself in the Ephesians' character as well. This is not speaking of the initial indwelling of Christ at conversion (Ro 8:9) but rather the indwelling of Christ within the believers' whole personality. This happens by faith as the believers invite Christ to be at home within

their souls, thus resulting in the Spirit's control of both attitude and conduct.

This happened throughout the book of Acts. Believers who were already baptized with the Holy Spirit were filled and strengthened with God's might. One of the more notable examples of this was in Ac 4:31.

EPHESIANS 3:17

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

Note 7 at Eph 3:17: Christ indwells every believer at the moment of salvation (Ro 8:9). So, why then was Paul praying that Christ would dwell in their hearts by faith? The answer lies in the fact that the heart is comprised of the soul and the spirit (see note 3 at Mt 12:34).

The instant people make Jesus their Lord (see note 9 at Ro 10:9), the Father sends forth the Spirit of His Son (Ga 4:6) into their hearts (i.e., spirit, see note 9 at 2Co 5:17). They have to believe with all their hearts (spirit and soul) to see or feel the result in their bodies. Therefore, Paul prayed that the presence of Christ, which is already a reality in the spirit, will become a reality in believers' souls (through the renewing of the mind - see note 9 at Ro 12:2). This is a matter of faith (see note 8 at this verse).

Note 8 at Eph 3:17: Most people would like this prayer much better if Paul had not put in the little phrase "by faith." The truth is, most Christians don't like doing anything "by faith." They would rather have Christ in their hearts by feeling rather than by faith. There is a difference.

Faith will sometimes produce feelings, but feelings are not faith. If the average Christians don't feel the presence of the Lord, they don't believe He's really there. This is illustrated in some of the silly prayers people pray, like "Lord, we ask that You would be with us today" or "We ask You to go with us throughout this week." What prayers of unbelief! The Lord promised that He "will never leave thee, nor forsake thee" (Heb 13:5). Any prayer that assumes His absence and asks Him to come or remain is wrong.

This all goes back to feelings. We know that He promised He would

never leave us, but we don't feel His presence at times. Paul was praying that instead of being dominated by feelings, we would renew our minds and perceive by faith, not feeling, that Christ is in our souls.

Note 9 at Eph 3:17: Paul wasn't describing just a casual acquaintance with God's love. He was speaking of an intimate understanding and experiential knowledge of the depths of God's love. Just as a tree's roots provide it with stability and nourishment, so also our revelation of God's love is the foundation on which everything else we receive from God is built.

EPHESIANS 3:18

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

Note 10 at Eph 3:18: Comprehension comes through "being rooted and grounded in love" (Eph 3:17). Understanding love opens up the door to understanding our Father because "God is love" (1Jo 4:8).

Note 11 at Eph 3:18: Paul's use of the word "all" makes it clear that this understanding of God's love is not reserved for just a few. The Lord wants us all to know "the breadth, and length, and depth, and height" of His love.

Note 12 at Eph 3:18: God's love is not one-dimensional. There is width, length, depth, and height to it; this can only be comprehended through the revelation knowledge (see note 1 at Lu 2:26 and note 9 at Joh 6:45) of the Holy Spirit. Having only a superficial knowledge of God's love is like looking at a one-dimensional picture of a real object.

EPHESIANS 3:19

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

Note 13 at Eph 3:19: How can we know the love of God if it passes knowledge? This sounds like a contradiction.

The Greek word that was translated "know" in this verse is "GINOSKO." It is a verb expressing experiential knowledge. The Greek word that

was translated "knowledge" here was "GNOSIS," a noun denoting the act of knowledge. Simply put, Paul was praying that we would experience the love of God that passes mere knowledge about it.

Note 14 at Eph 3:19: The end result of having understanding and experiential knowledge (see note 13 at this verse) of God's love is that we will be filled with all the fullness of God. God's love is the key that opens the door to everything that God is. God is love (1Jo 4:8).

Since a true revelation of God's love makes us full with the fullness of God, then not being full of God must mean there is a lack of understanding and experiencing God's love.

EPHESIANS 3:20

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

Note 15 at Eph 3:20: Many use only the first part of this verse and omit "according to the power that worketh in us." That changes the whole meaning. It is not true that God will do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, period. He has that power, but this verse ties the use of His ability to the power that works in us. No power working in us means there will be no power of God coming through us.

Jesus told us in Ac 1:8 of the power that we would receive when the Holy Ghost comes upon us. Ro 1:16 says the Gospel is the power of God unto salvation (see note 1 at that verse). However, Christ is called the power of God (1Co 1:24), and in context (Christ dwelling in our hearts, Eph 3:17), this is Paul's probable meaning here. The power of God could also be referring to all the operation of God in our lives including Christ, the power of the Holy Ghost, faith, the Word, love, etc.

EPHESIANS 3:21

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

Note 16 at Eph 3:21: In this doxology, the Apostle Paul was exalting Him who has the power to do exceeding abundantly above all that we could ask or think. God's power has no limits and is restricted only by what

we say and think.

Paul exalted Him who is able (Eph 3:20) and Him who is to be glorified in the church (this verse) for "the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe" (Eph 1:19). This power is not external; it is internal, within the believer. It is working according to the faith that we exercise in the indwelling Savior. It was this principle that Paul was stating when he declared, "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me" (Php 4:13). Unto Him be glory in the church throughout all ages.

EPHESIANS

CHAPTER 4

EPHESIANS 4:1

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

Note 1 at Eph 4:1: The book of Ephesians can roughly be divided into two sections. In Eph 1-3, Paul presented theological, positional, and doctrinal truths. In Eph 4-6, the practical, experimental, and outworking of Christ's life through the believer is the focus.

At Paul's conversion, he asked two questions: "Who art thou, Lord?" (Ac 9:5) and "Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?" (Ac 9:6). The first question was doctrinal, and the second question was practical. It's not enough to merely learn about God. That knowledge has to be translated into practical actions in our everyday lives. It won't work to try to just live for God, either. We need to come to know Him intimately before we can accurately represent Him to a lost world. The theological and practical have to be merged. That's what Paul did in this letter to the Ephesians.

Beginning in Eph 4, the conduct of the children of God is spoken about in at least five areas: the believers' conduct in relation to fellow believers (Eph 4:1-16), their conduct in relation to the unbelievers around them (Eph 4:17 and 25), their relationship and conduct toward the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:30 and 5:18), their conduct in relation to their homes and families (Eph 5:22-33 and 6:1-4), and their conduct in relation to the devil (Eph 6:10-18).

Note 2 at Eph 4:1: Paul described the glorious things that are ours in Christ in the first three chapters of this letter. At the end of Eph 3, he prayed for a revelation of these truths to come to the Ephesians that would cause them to have all the fullness of God manifested in them (see note 14 at Eph 3:19). Therefore, because of all the goodness of God, Paul called the Ephesians to a life totally committed to Him.

This is the same reasoning that he used with the Romans when he said, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice" (Ro 12:1). Many people serve the

Lord through the negative motivation of fear, but Paul used the positive motivation of love to get people committed to God. It's better to serve the Lord out of fear than not to serve the Lord at all, but "fear hath torment" (1Jo 4:18). Those who do not move beyond fear into love as their motivation for serving the Lord will be tormented with the fear that they may not be doing enough.

Those who walk in love serve the Lord out of thankfulness for what God has already done. Those who serve out of fear are trying to get God's blessing or avert God's judgment. The motivation of love rests in what's already been done. The motivation of fear is predicated on the assumption that the verdict has yet to be decided. Love rests. Fear frets.

Note 3 at Eph 4:1: The word "worthy" is defined as "1. Having worth, merit, or value; useful or valuable. 2. Honorable; admirable. 3. Having sufficient worth; deserving" (American Heritage Dictionary). We often apply the third meaning to this word "worthy," but no one, saved or lost, can truly be deserving of what Jesus has done for us or what He has called us to do. This must be understood to be talking about honoring the Lord through our actions.

The phrase "walk worthy" is used three times in the New Testament (this verse, Col 1:10, and 1Th 2:12).

EPHESIANS 4:2

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

Note 4 at Eph 4:2: In Eph 4:1, Paul gave the challenge. In Eph 4:2-3, he told the Ephesians how to accomplish this goal of walking worthy of their vocation. There are four great virtues of the Christian life presented here.

First, Paul spoke of "lowliness." Lowliness is "having a humble opinion of oneself" (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon). It was translated in the King James Version as "humility of mind" (Ac 20:19), "lowliness" (this verse), "lowliness of mind" (Php 2:3), "humility" (Col 2:18, 23; and 1Pe 5:5), and "humbleness of mind" (Col 3:12).

Second, he mentioned "meekness." Meekness is being kind and gentle (1Co 4:21; 2Co 10:1; Ga 5:23, 6:1; this verse; Col 3:12; 1Ti 6:11; 2Ti 2:25; and Tit 3:2).

The third virtue is "longsuffering." Long-suffering is patient endurance (Ro 2:4, 9:22; 2Co 6:6; Ga 5:22; this verse; Col 1:11, 3:12; 1Ti 1:16; 2Ti 3:10, 4:2; 1Pe 3:20; and 2Pe 3:15). This same Greek word, "MAKROTHUMIA," was also translated "patience" in Heb 6:12 and Jas 5:10.

The fourth thing Paul mentioned is "forbearing." That is tolerance, restraint, and patience (this verse and Col 3:13). This same Greek word, "ANECHOMAI," was also translated in the King James Version as "shall I suffer" (Mt 17:17 and Mr 9:19), "suffer" (Lu 9:41 and Heb 13:22), "that I should bear" (Ac 18:14), "we suffer it" (1Co 4:12), "ye could bear" and "bear" (2Co 11:1), "ye might...bear with" (2Co 11:4), "ye suffer" (2Co 11:19-20), "ye endure" (2Th 1:4), and "they will...endure" (2Ti 4:3).

EPHESIANS 4:3

Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Note 5 at Eph 4:3: The word "endeavor" means to make a "conscientious or concerted effort toward an end.... To attempt...by employment or expenditure of effort" (American Heritage Dictionary). The unity of the Spirit has not been kept in the body of Christ, and in fact, there is very little unity among believers today. This has taken thousands of years to occur, and it probably won't be fixed overnight. We are to strive toward unity but not be overwhelmed by the problem.

Note 6 at Eph 4:3: Notice that this scripture doesn't tell us to produce unity. It says "keep the unity." We Christians have all already been joined to each other through the body of Christ, and God the Father sees us all as His children. All divisions among Christians are made by man, not God. For a brief period of time, the church enjoyed unity here on earth. Regardless of what strife and division have occurred, we believers are still one in Christ, and we will live in perfect oneness throughout all eternity. We are now one in the Spirit. We just need to experience that unity here on earth. "Thy kingdom come. Thy will be done in earth, as it is in heaven" (Mt 6:10).

In the next few verses, Paul gave seven arguments that prove that we truly are one in Christ Jesus.

EPHESIANS 4:4

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

Note 7 at Eph 4:4: Disunity among believers was unacceptable to the Apostle Paul. He made this a major issue in his letter to the Corinthians. The reasons for his intolerance of disunity are listed in Eph 4:4-6.

We all are "one body" in Jesus Christ, we all have "one Spirit" giving us life, and we all have the same "hope" of seeing Christ and being transformed into His likeness (this verse). We all have "one Lord" who is our Master, and there is only "one faith" in Christ and His atonement, and "one baptism" into Jesus Christ (Eph 4:5). We are all one family because we all share "one God and Father" (Eph 4:6). One God is above all, through all (i.e., working through us), and in us all (indwelling every believer).

EPHESIANS 4:5

One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

Note 8 at Eph 4:5: The Greek word that was translated "Lord" here is "KURIOS." Many times it was translated in a way that would correspond to our use of "mister" or "sir" today. In this instance, the context makes it very clear that this is speaking of the supreme Lord God (see note 3 at Lu 1:43). There are hundreds of examples in the New Testament where this exact Greek word was applied to Jesus and many others where it was applied to God the Father. Since there are not two Lords, then this has to be another tribute to the fact that God the Father and Jesus are one.

Note 9 at Eph 4:5: Many times we will hear people ask the question "What faith are you?" and the reply will come "I'm of the Catholic faith" or "I'm of the Baptist faith" or any one of the other

denominational groups. This implies that there are different faiths or different ways of believing that will all get us to heaven. That's not true. There is only one saving faith.

It is true that there are many different sects within Christianity that can all be distinguished by different beliefs. But if the foundational faith in the true Gospel is not adhered to, then whatever belief system people have will not save them. There is only one saving faith.

God has not initiated or condoned all the different beliefs in the body of Christ. He delivered just one faith to His followers, and any deviation from His Word is not according to the faith spoken of here.

Note 10 at Eph 4:5: Heb 6:2 clearly mentions that there are baptisms (plural). There is the baptism into the body of Christ that is performed by the Holy Spirit at salvation (see note 2 at 1Co 12:13 and note 5 at Ro 6:3). Water baptism is to be administered after conversion (see note 9 at Mr 16:16 and note 2 at Ac 2:38). Jesus spoke of His suffering as a baptism (Mt 20:22-23). John the Baptist spoke of the baptism of the Holy Ghost and fire (Lu 3:16, see note 5 at Ac 1:8 and note 6 at Ac 2:4).

The Greek word "BAPTISMA" comes from the word meaning "to makewhelmed (i.e. fully wet)" (Strong's Concordance) (see note 4 at Mt 20:22). We can be immersed into Christ, water, suffering, or the Holy Spirit. So, there are many baptisms spoken of in the New Testament.

However, Paul was singling out one specific baptism here. He was probably speaking of the first baptism mentioned in this note, when the Holy Spirit takes all of us who are truly saved and places us into the body of Christ at the moment of salvation. This fits the context well and helps make Paul's point about unity. There is only one person who administers this baptism (the Holy Spirit), and there is only one thing that we are all baptized into (i.e., the body of Christ). Since we are all one body through this baptism, we ought to function as one body.

EPHESIANS 4:6

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

Note 11 at Eph 4:6: The Scriptures proclaim Jesus as God and the Holy

Spirit as God (see note 4 at Ac 5:4), yet Paul proclaimed that there is just one God. The answer lies in what Christians call the Trinity (see note 8 at 1Co 8:4 and note 2 at Mr 1:10).

EPHESIANS 4:8

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

Note 12 at Eph 4:8: This phrase, "led captivity captive," is referring to Jesus liberating the Old Testament saints. O.T. saints who died went to a place in the center of the earth called "SH@'OWL" in the Hebrew language (see note 3 at Mt 12:40 and note 3 at Lu 16:22). This word SH@'OWL was translated "hell" in Ps 16:10 where, prophesying of Jesus, it says, "For thou wilt not leave my soul in hell; neither wilt thou suffer thine Holy One to see corruption" (compare with Ac 2:27-30).

The ungodly dead also went to Sheol (SH@'OWL), but Jesus' teaching in Lu 16:19-31 shows that there was a great gulf fixed between the two. Those in torment (hell) envied those who were enjoying the blessings of the Lord in the part of Sheol that was called Abraham's bosom or paradise (see note 4 at Lu 23:43).

Even though these O.T. saints were blessed, they were not able to enter into the presence of the Lord Himself, because the atonement of Christ had not been completed. So, in that sense, they were captives. At the death of Jesus, He descended into Sheol and took these captives captive. He then took them to heaven, into the very presence of God, and vacated that part of Sheol. Now all that's left in Sheol is hell. In the New Testament, the Greek word that is used to refer to this area is "HADES," and it is only applied to a place of torment.

Note 13 at Eph 4:8: The gifts that this Old Testament quote are referring to are mentioned in Eph 4:11. Eph 4:9-10 are a parenthetical phrase expounding on Jesus descending "into the lower parts of the earth" (see note 14 at Eph 4:9).

EPHESIANS 4:9

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

Note 14 at Eph 4:9: This phrase, "the lower parts of the earth," is referring to the place in the center of the earth where all the spirits of people who died went prior to the sacrifice of Jesus. The Hebrew word for this place was "SH@'OWL" (see note 12 at Eph 4:8).

EPHESIANS 4:10

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

Note 15 at Eph 4:10: Paul made it crystal clear that Jesus died, went to Sheol (see note 12 at Eph 4:8), was resurrected, and ascended to the right hand of God the Father.

EPHESIANS 4:11

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

Note 16 at Eph 4:11: This verse is a continuation of the statement Paul made in Eph 4:8. He went on to explain that the gifts Jesus gave to man were the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. God gifted individuals with these callings and then gave these people to the body of Christ as gifts. These are not the only gifts God gave to mankind (see note 16 at 1Co 12:8).

Note 17 at Eph 4:11: There are two different ways people have interpreted this word "some." There are those who think this is referring to some individuals receiving the gifts, and there are those who think this is referring to some churches who receive these ministry gifts.

The first interpretation would describe the individuals who were called to be apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers. God gave some people the gift of being an apostle, some people the gift of being a prophet, etc. The second view is saying that God gave some churches apostles, while He gave other churches prophets, others evangelists, and others pastors and teachers.

Note 18 at Eph 4:11: This is the only time the word "evangelists" is used in Scripture. The word "evangelist" is used twice (Ac 21:8 and 2Ti 4:5). In Ac 21:8, Philip, one of the first six deacons chosen by the Jerusalem church, was called an evangelist. However, there is no explanation of what he did that made him an evangelist. In 2Ti 4:5, Timothy—who was the first bishop, or pastor, of the church at Ephesus—was told to do the work of an evangelist. This implies that even those who may not be gifted with that specific calling can function as an evangelist.

It is commonly thought that an evangelist is someone who has a passion to lead people to the Lord. But every believer should have a passion for souls. It is more probable that an evangelist is someone who has a supernatural gift to bring people to the Lord. All believers should share their faith with others, drawing on the power of the Holy Spirit. But an evangelist ministers under a special anointing and does this as a vocation.

All believers are to teach (1Pe 3:15), but that doesn't make them teachers. All believers can prophesy (1Co 14:31), but that doesn't make them prophets. Likewise, all believers can and should minister to the lost, but that doesn't make them evangelists.

Note 19 at Eph 4:11: This is the only time the word "pastors" is used in the New Testament. In the Old Testament, the word "pastor" was used once (Jer 17:16), and the plural "pastors" was used seven times by Jeremiah (Jer 2:8, 3:15, 10:21, 12:10, 22:22, and 23:1-2).

The Greek word "POIMEN" was translated "pastors" here. This word means "a shepherd" (Strong's Concordance), and it was translated "shepherd" or "shepherds" seventeen times in the N.T. Each time Jeremiah used the word "pastor" or "pastors," he used it in conjunction with sheep, reflecting the origin of the word.

We can see from this that the word "pastor" was not commonly used in the first-century church. It is probable that the words "bishop" (used four times [1Ti 3:1-2, Tit 1:7, and 1Pe 2:25]) and "bishops" (used once [Php 1:1]) were the common way of referring to the overseer of the local church. Therefore, the qualifications of a bishop listed in 1Ti 3

would be the qualifications of what we would call a pastor.

Note 20 at Eph 4:11: The use of the word "some" and the punctuation in this verse are interesting. After the first three gifts listed in this verse, there is a semicolon. However, between the words "pastors" and "teachers," there is no semicolon. The word "some" precedes apostles, prophets, evangelists, and pastors. But "teachers" seems to be grouped with "pastors." This has led some to believe that "pastor and teacher" is one gift, making this list contain only four gifts instead of five. It could be that pastors are also teachers. If that is so, then this could clarify why pastors were not mentioned in the "chain of command" list given in 1Co 12:28 (see note 17 at 1Co 12:28). The mention of teachers could have been referring to pastors.

EPHESIANS 4:12

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

Note 21 at Eph 4:12: These ministry gifts (Eph 4:11) are to equip the saints, and then the saints are to do the work of the ministry. The Amplified Bible translates this verse as "His intention was the perfecting and the full equipping of the saints (His consecrated people), [that they should do] the work of ministering toward building up Christ's body (the church)."

It is a mistake to place the burden of ministry on what we call "the clergy." Full-time ministers are to minister the Word to the saints, but the saints are to go out and reach the lost and carry the bulk of the ministry within the church. Shepherds don't have sheep; they tend the sheep, and the sheep reproduce.

It has been a big mistake to "hire" ministers to do what the individual members of the church are supposed to do. Apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers are simply leaders who equip average saints so that they can be successful in the ministries God has given them.

As explained in note 2 at Ac 2:38, the word "for" can mean because of, as a result of, since, or it can mean so as to obtain. It is the latter

definition that is meant here. The apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers of Eph 4:11 minister "so as to obtain" the saints being equipped so that they can do the work of the ministry, which in turn obtains the edifying of the body of Christ. The clergy doesn't do all these things. They start the process through leadership, and the body edifies itself in love (Eph 4:16).

Note 22 at Eph 4:12: The Greek word that was translated "perfecting" here is "KATARTISMOS," and it means "a fitting or preparing fully" (Vine's Expository Dictionary). It does not denote the absence of all flaws. The Lord gave the gifted ministers listed in Eph 4:11 to help fully prepare the saints so that they could do the work of the ministry (see note 21 at this verse).

EPHESIANS 4:13

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

Note 23 at Eph 4:13: The duration of the gifts listed in Eph 4:11 is given here in this verse: "Till we all come in the unity of the faith"; i.e., until every Christian sees and believes alike on the fundamentals of the faith. These gifts will also continue to function until we all come into "the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man"; i.e., unto a perfect knowledge that results in maturity. These gifts will continue until we come "unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ." This phrase contains the idea of a child developing into maturity.

The result of all this should be that we are no longer immature, tossed to and fro by every teaching, caught by the sleight and cunning craftiness of others. It is certain that this result hasn't happened yet, so apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers must still be around today.

Note 24 at Eph 4:13: Many people think that all Christians coming into unity and a maturity approaching that of Christ will never happen. This verse, however, makes it very clear that this is the purpose and design of God in giving these gifts to man. He anticipates the church growing up (Eph 4:14).

Note 25 at Eph 4:13: It is amazing that Paul proclaimed that Christians should come to the full stature of Christ. That was the design of the Lord when He gave gifts to man (Eph 4:11). This isn't considered possible by most Christians today, and therefore, it certainly is not their goal. However, if this is what the Lord intended, we should at least be striving toward this mark (Php 3:14).

EPHESIANS 4:14

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

Note 26 at Eph 4:14: The Lord doesn't want His saints to remain in the nursery forever. He wants us to mature. From this verse, we can see that one of the characteristics of children is that they are easily deceived. They are gullible. They are not stable. This means the body of Christ today must be pretty immature, because it's not uncommon for some of us Christians to follow every new "fad" that comes along. One of the things that must take place to move from childhood into son-ship is spiritual discernment. This comes from being grounded in the Word of God.

Note 27 at Eph 4:14: The Greek word that was translated "tossed to and fro" here is "KLUDONIZOMAI." It means "to surge, i.e. (figuratively) to fluctuate" (Strong's Concordance). It comes from the root word "KLUDON," and this describes a wave of the sea (Strong's Concordance). Paul was speaking of being tossed about the way something floating in the sea would be. Mature Christians are not "like a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed" (Jas 1:6). That's double-mindedness, and it prevents us from receiving from God (Jas 1:7-8).

Note 28 at Eph 4:14: The word "sleight" was translated from the Greek word "KUBEIA." This Greek word comes from the word "KUBOS," the name for a cube for dice playing, and KUBEIA literally means "gambling" (Strong's Concordance). In the same way that "card sharks" deceive with sleight of hand, Paul was saying people can deceive immature Christians, promising them everything but delivering nothing. This is the only time this word--English or Greek--was used in the Bible.

EPHESIANS 4:15

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

Note 29 at Eph 4:15: How is it that believers grow out of the immaturity Paul spoke of in Eph 4:14? The answer is, they must speak the truth in love. Truth without love is like a club, and love without truth is powerless. One reason for such immaturity in the body of Christ is because ministers (Eph 4:11) haven't been faithful to speak the truth in love as they should. The clergy was "politically correct" long before it was "cool." Many ministers preach on the things people want to hear instead of what they need to hear. "You shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (Joh 8:32, New King James Version).

EPHESIANS 4:16

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

Note 30 at Eph 4:16: The phrase "fitly joined together" comes from the Greek word "SUNARMOLOGEO," and it means "to render close-jointed together, i.e. organize compactly" (Strong's Concordance). It is a word picture taken from the way our physical bodies function. In the same way that every part of our bodies contributes toward the good of the whole, so the body of Christ should function as one to serve the Lord Jesus Christ, who is our head (Eph 1:22-23).

Note 31 at Eph 4:16: The word "compact" means "to press or join firmly together" (American Heritage Dictionary). It's descriptive of the way particle board is made from joining small wood scraps in such a way that they become as strong as a solid piece of wood. The strength comes from each piece being in union with the other pieces. Separately, each small piece cannot bear much stress, but when

compacted with many other scraps of wood, great strength can be achieved.

Note 32 at Eph 4:16: This joining (see note 30 at this verse) and compacting (see note 31 at this verse) can only be achieved by that which every joint supplies. That is to say, every member of the body of Christ (see note 14 at 1Co 12:27 and note 3 at 1Co 12:14) has to be doing his or her part for the whole to reach the fullness of the stature of Christ (Eph 4:13). It must be a joint effort of all believers. Only when believers all function where God has placed them can they truly perform as Christ's body. No one person or group can do it alone. It takes a collective effort. This is one reason unity among all believers is so important.

Note 33 at Eph 4:16: Through a number of analogies in this verse, Paul was stressing that every part of the body of Christ (see note 14 at 1Co 12:27 and note 3 at 1Co 12:14) has to function properly for the whole body of Christ to reach its full potential (see notes 31 and 32 at this verse). This has not been true of Christ's church up to now.

Very few believers in any generation seem to live up to their God-given abilities. To continue Paul's analogy, this would be like a man who has well-developed legs, but other parts of his body, such as his arms and hands, are so weak as to be useless. In this condition, there is no way he could perform as well as he could if every part of his body was working properly. That's the way it is with Christ's body. We've only had a few individuals manifesting God's power while the majority of the church is powerless. The end result is a body at less than its full vigor and giving a less-than-desirable witness to the world.

The maturing of every part of the body of Christ must be a priority if we are ever to accomplish the Lord's instructions. Reaching the stature of the fullness of Christ (see notes 24 and 25 at Eph 4:13) must be a collective effort.

EPHESIANS 4:17

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

Note 1 at Eph 4:17: The Greek word used for "say" in this verse is

"LEGO." It was used 1,343 times in the New Testament and was translated a variety of ways. However, it usually referred to speaking in a "systematic or set discourse" (Strong's Concordance). That is the way Paul used it here. Eph 4:17-20 describes the lifestyle of the unbeliever in an orderly progression. In this example, Paul admonished that Christ and His doctrine do not in any way reflect this kind of conduct. To the Ephesians, he stated, "But you have learned nothing like that from Christ" (Eph 4:20, Phillips New Testament Bible).

Such evil conduct is the result of (1) the vanity of the mind (this verse), which is the absence of any purpose; (2) having the understanding darkened (Eph 4:18), of which purposelessness is a direct result; (3) separation from God's life (Eph 4:18), which is spiritual death; (4) blindness, or hardness, of heart (Eph 4:18); (5) being past feeling (Eph 4:19), which means having no conscience; and (6) given over to lasciviousness, uncleanness, and greed (Eph 4:19).

Note 2 at Eph 4:17: The word "therefore" refers back to Paul's previous statements (see note 2 at Ga 5:1). Paul had stated that the only way Christ's body would ever reach its full stature was through every individual member doing his or her part (see note 32 at Eph 4:16). That's the reason Paul was arguing for the believers to "straighten up." If they won't do it for themselves, they should think about the other believers and a lost world that needs them.

Note 3 at Eph 4:17: The word "Gentile" literally means anyone who was not a Jew (see note 45 at Mt 6:32). Before Christ's atonement, Gentiles were "without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world" (Eph 2:12, see note 2 at that verse). They were lost. These Ephesians had been lost Gentiles, but they had become saved Gentiles. Paul was telling them not to live like their lost neighbors.

The application for us today is that we should not live like unsaved people. Paul proceeded to explain the root areas where unbelievers are ensnared.

Note 4 at Eph 4:17: The Greek word "PERIPATEO" was translated "walk" twice in this verse. The figurative meaning of this word, employed here, is "to live, deport oneself, follow" (Strong's Concordance). Paul was speaking of lifestyle.

Note 5 at Eph 4:17: The Greek word that was translated "vanity" here is "MATAIOTES." It means "inutility; figuratively, transientness; morally,

depravity" (Strong's Concordance). Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon describes it as "what is devoid of truth and appropriateness...perverseness, depravation."

The word "inutility" is a compound word that literally means not to utilize. Paul was saying that lost people don't use their brains. This is quite a statement. In fact, one of the criticisms against Christians by those who are unsaved is that faith is foolish. We are the ones who are often characterized as brainless. But faith isn't foolish. In fact, a truly thinking person would have to come to the conclusion that there is a God and that He intervenes in the affairs of man (see note 6 at 1Co 1:21).

People who really thought things through would embrace the truths of Scripture even if they didn't do it because of a reverence or love for God. Sin isn't smart; it's stupid. Ask those who are in jail, or who have destroyed their marriages or ministries because of sin, what they were thinking when they did such things. They will tell you they weren't thinking. At the moment, they were driven by passions, not logic.

The word "transientness" is talking about passing through or over things, such as transient workers. It's the opposite of abiding or dwelling. Paul was saying that lost people don't focus on anything for long. They don't meditate. They love to be entertained by others so that they don't have to think. They can't stand to be still or quiet and confront the issues. The word "amuse" is a compound word consisting of "a," which is an absolute negative, and "muse," which means to think. The word literally means absolutely no thinking. They have to be amused so that they don't have to listen to their pain inside.

These things that Paul said about the lost are all too true of us Christians also. If we think like the world, we will get the same results as the world. We need to change the way we think. As Christians, our hearts are perfect. It's our heads that give us problems. The battle is in the mind.

EPHESIANS 4:18

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

Note 6 at Eph 4:18: The English word "understanding" was translated from the Greek word "DIANOIA," and this Greek word means "deep thought" (Strong's Concordance). This word is specifying more than just thought; it is referring to comprehension, discernment, and judgment. People can function without understanding but not very well.

Ps 32:9 says, "Be ye not as the horse, or as the mule, which have no understanding: whose mouth must be held in with bit and bridle, lest they come near unto thee." A horse thinks, but it doesn't seem to have any understanding. People who have their understanding darkened live like animals.

The word "understanding" is mentioned fifty-four times in the book of Proverbs. Wisdom is the principal thing, and understanding is next unto it (Pr 4:7). Walking in the vanity of our minds (see note 5 at Eph 4:17) leads to clouding the understanding, with the end result being the hardening (see note 10 at Mr 6:52 and note 3 at Mr 8:17) or blinding (see note 9 at this verse) of our hearts.

Note 7 at Eph 4:18: Paul spoke about our understanding in 1Co 13:11. Then, in 1Co 13:12, he said we all "see through a glass, darkly," describing us at our best as being very limited in understanding. If we are already restricted in our understanding, we sure don't need anything to darken it further. We should avoid walking in the vanity of our minds at all costs (see note 5 at Eph 4:17).

Note 8 at Eph 4:18: Notice that this alienation wasn't God's choice. It is the ignorance within people that alienates them from the life of God. The Lord "so loved the world, that he gave" (Joh 3:16). His grace has appeared to all (Tit 2:11), but not all receive it, because of the ignorance within them.

Note 9 at Eph 4:18: The blindness of the heart that Paul was speaking of here is the same thing that the Gospel writers spoke of as "hardness of heart." Vine's Expository Dictionary defines the Greek word "POROSIS," translated "blindness" here, as "'a covering with a callus,' a 'hardening.'" Joh 12:40 describes spiritual blindness and hardness of heart as adversely affecting our understanding.

EPHESIANS 4:19

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

Note 10 at Eph 4:19: This verse makes it very clear that lasciviousness, uncleanness, and greed don't just happen. People have to "give" themselves over to these things. They willfully ignore (2Pe 3:5) this truth that sin has to be conceived (see note 17 at Mt 5:28) and indulge in all manner of things that engender results they don't want. Those who don't want to sin need to be just as concerned about the conception as they are the actual birth, or committing of sin.

EPHESIANS 4:20

But ye have not so learned Christ;

Note 11 at Eph 4:20: Paul ought to have known how these Ephesians learned about Christ; he's the one who taught them. He hadn't instructed them to live like the lost (see note 3 at Eph 4:17). He had taught them to glorify God with their actions. He was reminding them of their training.

EPHESIANS 4:21

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

Note 12 at Eph 4:21: The phrase "If so be" is what is called a conditional clause. It is not expressing doubt that these Ephesians had heard the Lord speak to them and teach them. It's just the opposite. The statement could be paraphrased, "You did hear (Jesus), didn't you? You were taught by Him, weren't you? The truth is in Jesus, and if that is so, you know there is no room for the conduct or behavior of the world [see note 3 at Eph 4:17] in the Christian life!"

EPHESIANS 4:22

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

Note 13 at Eph 4:22: In every other place in the New Testament where the Scripture speaks of the death of the "old man," it is spoken of as having already taken place (Col 3:9-10, Ro 6:6, 2Co 5:17, and Ga 2:20). Therefore, the putting off of the "old man," spoken of here, is to be taken as the turning from the habits and lusts that our old selves deposited in us (see note 8 at Ro 6:6). In fact, Paul qualified his statement in this very verse. He said he was speaking of our former manner of conduct (see note 8 at Eph 2:3), not the old sin nature itself. In effect, he was saying, "Don't go on living as if that old self was still alive."

Just as in Eph 4:24, putting on the "new man" is not speaking of getting a new self but rather letting that new self dominate our actions. Likewise, in this verse, putting off the "old man" is not speaking of still having an "old man." It is referring to denying the lusts that were taught us by our old selves when they were still alive.

EPHESIANS 4:23

And be renewed in the spirit of your mind;

Note 14 at Eph 4:23: The word "spirit" here is not designating the Holy Spirit or even the born-again spirit. In fact, it is not referring to a part of us at all. It is speaking of our attitude. The New International Version translates this as "to be made new in the attitude of your minds." Strong's Concordance says that the Greek word "PNEUMA," which was translated "spirit" in this verse, can mean "mental disposition." That's the way it is used here.

Paul was saying that we have to not only reprogram our minds with new information but also allow these new truths to change our attitudes. Synonyms for "attitude" are outlook, feeling, sentiment, and disposition. Our perspectives have to change.

Many people have heard biblical truths and can recall them, but often they don't dwell upon them to the degree that those truths change their attitudes. For instance, they can know that it is God's will to prosper them financially, but if they don't start seeing themselves with their needs met, then their attitude hasn't changed. A poverty attitude will cause them to stay poor even though they know God wants them to prosper.

So, it is not good enough to just learn facts from God's Word and store those facts so that we can recall them. We have to meditate on the truths of God's Word until our outlook, feelings, sentiments, and dispositions have been renewed to God's way of thinking.

EPHESIANS 4:24

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

Note 15 at Eph 4:24: The Greek word that was translated "put on" in this verse is "ENDYO," and it means "to sink into (clothing), put on, clothe one's self" (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon). This is a word picture describing the way we should wear our new, born-again selves on the outside, through our actions, in a way that all can see. In the same way that people see our clothes instead of our nakedness, so our new attitudes and actions should be visible instead of our flesh (see note 3 at Ro 7:18).

Note 16 at Eph 4:24: The New International Version translates the phrase "which after God" as "created to be like God." Today's English Version translates this same phrase as "which is created in God's likeness." That's the point Paul was making. Our "new man" was created just like Jesus (see note 9 at 2Co 5:17). In our spirits, we are right now as Jesus is (1Jo 4:17).

Note 17 at Eph 4:24: Notice the use of the word "created." As believers, our righteousness and holiness is not something that we grow into. We were created that way when we were born again (see note 2 at Joh 3:3). This righteousness and holiness is in our new spirits that we received from God (see note 9 at 2Co 5:17). We are still working out this righteousness and holiness in our actions (Php 2:12), but our born-again spirits were created that way.

Note 18 at Eph 4:24: By specifying "true holiness," Paul was implying that there is false holiness. False holiness is assumed from the good we do. While it is important to act holy in our relationships with others (see note 56 at Joh 15:10), we need to remember that anything other than the "true holiness" that is the gift of God is inadequate when relating to God. God is a Spirit (Joh 4:24), and we must worship Him in spirit (see note 17 at this verse) and in truth (true holiness). God looks at us through our spirits and deals with us based on this true holiness that is in the "new man."

EPHESIANS 4:25

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

Note 19 at Eph 4:25: The word "wherefore" means "for what purpose or reason" (American Heritage Dictionary). Paul was detailing the consequences of putting off the old man (Eph 4:22) and putting on the new man (Eph 4:24). The old man lied. The new man doesn't. The old man used anger for selfish purposes (Eph 4:26). The new man has a godly anger (see note 21 at Eph 4:26). The old man stole (Eph 4:28). The new man works in order to bless others. The old man spoke vile things (Eph 4:29). The new man only speaks things that edify and encourage others.

Note 20 at Eph 4:25: All believers are united to each other through the body of Christ (see note 14 at 1Co 12:27). Lying to a member of the body of Christ is like lying to yourself. You will be damaged."

EPHESIANS 4:26

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

Note 21 at Eph 4:26: This has been one of the most misapplied scriptures in the Bible. This verse is commonly quoted to say that the Lord knows we are just human and that we will get angry from time to time. He just asks us to settle all our disputes before the sun goes down

each day. In other words, we can be angry if we don't let it last longer than one day. That is not even close to what Paul was saying.

Paul was commanding us to have a righteous anger that is not sin. Jesus got angry without sinning, and we should too (see notes 5-6 at Mr 3:5). We are commanded to hate evil (Ps 97:10, Pr 8:13, Am 5:15, and Ro 12:9). Paul was speaking of a good type of anger--an anger that is not directed at people but at evil. We need to keep this righteous type of anger stirred up. We can't ever let it take a rest or go to sleep ("let not the sun go down upon your wrath"). We have to work at not being passive.

Eph 4:27 goes on to talk about not giving place to the devil. Being passive instead of angry at the devil gives place to him. We are supposed to resist, to actively fight against him, and this righteous anger is an important part of a violent attitude (see note 2 at Mt 11:12).

EPHESIANS 4:28

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

Note 22 at Eph 4:28: Paul instructed those who were thieves before their conversion to labor so that they could start giving to others. This is the real issue with stealing. A thief is a taker instead of a giver. This violates the very heart of God (Joh 3:16) and the way He intended man to be (Ac 20:35).

If this is used as a true definition of stealing, then there are many more thieves than most realize. Many people live for themselves in more areas than just money. They are like vacuums, always taking and never giving. Those who live to receive instead of living to give violate the spirit of what Paul was speaking of here. In that sense, selfishness of any kind is stealing. Covetousness is idolatry (Col 3:5).

EPHESIANS 4:29

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

Note 23 at Eph 4:29: The Amplified Bible translates this verse as, "Let no foul or polluting language, nor evil word nor unwholesome or worthless talk [ever] come out of your mouth, but only such [speech] as is good and beneficial to the spiritual progress of others." There is no doubt that this is speaking of more than just cursing or profanity. Gossip, slander, and jesting that is not appropriate (Eph 5:4) would be included also. Certainly, griping and complaining would not be considered speech that would encourage others either.

Note 24 at Eph 4:29: All of our speech is supposed to edify and encourage others in the goodness of God. If some Christians would take this verse to heart, they would have to develop a whole new vocabulary. Profanity is obviously wrong, but many Christians think gossip, criticism, and complaining are God-given rights. That's not what Paul promoted here.

EPHESIANS 4:30

And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Note 25 at Eph 4:30: The Holy Spirit is a person who can be grieved (see note 7 at 1Co 6:11 and note 4 at Ac 5:4). Certainly, any actions or circumstances contrary to God's perfect plan for us grieve the Holy Spirit. More specifically, all the things listed here (Eph 4:25-31) grieve the Spirit of God.

EPHESIANS 4:31

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

Note 26 at Eph 4:31: Bitterness, wrath, and anger are related to each other and at times may be so interdependent that they are hard to distinguish from each other. Bitterness is the mildest of these three words. It could describe just resentment toward another person. Bitterness does not have to be expressed. Wrath is describing a violent

anger, or rage, that is expressed. Anger, like bitterness, can be concealed; it does not have to be expressed.

Note 27 at Eph 4:31: Strong's Concordance defines "clamour" as "an outcry (...tumult or grief)." It comes from a word that means "to scream" (Strong's Concordance). Wuest Word Studies from the Greek New Testament defines it as "the outcry of passion, the outward manifestation of anger in vociferation or brawling."

EPHESIANS 4:32

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

Note 28 at Eph 4:32: The basis of our ability to forgive others is the fact that we have been forgiven ourselves. We can't give what we don't possess. If we aren't walking in the forgiveness of God, we won't minister it to others. Since we have been forgiven, we can forgive others in the same way that God, for Christ's sake, forgave us.

He forgave us before we repented or asked for forgiveness. The offense against Him was infinitely greater than any offense we have ever suffered. So, since He forgave us, we can forgive anyone.

EPHESIANS

CHAPTER 5

EPHESIANS 5:1

Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children;

Note 1 at Eph 5:1: Paul used a different reason for serving God than most people would use. He encouraged the Ephesians to walk in love (Eph 5:2-4), because they were God's children and it was their nature to act like their heavenly Father. He wasn't using the motivation of fear that is so commonly used today. When fear is the motivation for serving God, it brings torment (1Jo 4:18). If Christians had a true revelation of who they are and what they have in Christ, they would live holy lives out of love without the negative side effect of fear (see note 15 at Eph 5:8).

Note 2 at Eph 5:1: Paul had just spoken in the previous verses that we should put off (see note 15 at Eph 4:24) the "old man" and put on the "new man" (see note 8 at 2Co 5:17). He detailed some of the ways we are supposed to do that and culminated by saying we should love others by walking in forgiveness "even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you" (see note 28 at Eph 4:32). In other words, we should imitate God.

How can we imitate God? We can do it because we are God's children. Children of God act like God because of who they are. Children imitate their fathers. If we are dear or good children, we will imitate God. As much-loved children seek to please their father, so also the children of God should seek to please their heavenly Father.

The Living Bible renders this verse as "Follow God's example in everything you do just as a much loved child imitates his father." Believers should do and exhibit the likeness of their Father.

EPHESIANS 5:2

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

Note 3 at Eph 5:2: Six times in the epistle of Ephesians, Paul used the term "walk." Walk in good works (Eph 2:10), walk worthy of the calling you've received (Eph 4:1), walk no longer as the Gentiles do (Eph 4:17), walk in love (this verse), walk as children of light (Eph 5:8), and walk circumspectly (Eph 5:15).

This verb "PERIPATEO" (walk) occurs a total of ninety-six times in the New Testament. It is translated "walk" ninety-three times, "go" one time, "walk about" one time, and "be occupied" one time. This word contains the idea of regulating, conducting, and living one's life in a particular manner. In this verse, Paul's admonishment to believers is to conduct their lives continually in love, for God is love (1Jo 4:8).

Note 4 at Eph 5:2: The love described here is "AGAPE" love (see note 4 at Joh 13:35) and seeks only the best for its objects regardless of feelings. As described here, the cross is the ultimate definition of love: "God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us" (Ro 5:8, New International Version).

Note 5 at Eph 5:2: The phrase "for us" in this verse comes from the Greek words "HUPER HEMON." According to the Greek scholar Kenneth S. Wuest, "HUPER is the great preposition of substitutionary atonement in the New Testament, and means, 'instead of, in behalf of.' It does not merely mean that Christ died for us, for our benefit. He died instead of us, in our place. He substituted for us, receiving the full impact of the divine wrath against sin."

EPHESIANS 5:3

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

Note 6 at Eph 5:3: The New International Version translates this verse as follows: "But among you there must not be even a hint of sexual immorality, or of any kind of impurity, or of greed, because these are improper for God's holy people." Paul was simply emphasizing that sexual impurities and covetousness should not ever be a part of the Christian life. Sad to say, many Christians today have abandoned the belief that Christians can live differently than the world. That may be the way we see things in the body of Christ today, but that is not the way it has to be or the way God wants it to be.

Note 7 at Eph 5:3: The reason for the holiness Paul had just advocated in the first part of this verse, is that we are saints. The very word "saint" denotes separation (see note 5 at Ac 9:13 and note 102 at Joh 17:17). It is the nature of a saint to be separate from the sin the world lives in.

EPHESIANS 5:4

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

Note 8 at Eph 5:4: As Paul listed the things that are unbecoming to saints (Eph 5:3), he included some things in this verse that come as a surprise to many Christians today. He told us not to use "foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient."

The Greek word that was translated "foolish talking" literally means "silly talk, i.e. buffoonery" (Strong's Concordance). Paul basically repeated a statement he made in Eph 4:29. Silliness is not a godly trait. This is not to say that there is no place for joy and fun in the Christian life. Jesus Himself was anointed with the oil of gladness more than anyone around Him (Heb 1:9). Jesus had a good time, but He was never silly.

Next Paul mentioned jesting, but he qualified this by specifying jesting that is not convenient. That means there is some jesting that is convenient. The word "convenient" can mean "fitting and proper; suitable" (American Heritage Dictionary). Synonyms for "convenient" are appropriate, good, suitable, and useful. Joking with a person in an appropriate, good, and suitable way can be very useful to building relationships. Jestng with a person in an inappropriate way can be very damaging. It is not always easy to know what type of jesting is appropriate, but it can definitely be said that if the person you are kidding doesn't like it, it is inappropriate.

The New Revised Standard Version translates this verse as "Entirely out of place is obscene, silly, and vulgar talk; but instead, let there be thanksgiving." The New International Version translates it as "Nor should there be obscenity, foolish talk or coarse joking, which are out of place, but rather thanksgiving."

Note 9 at Eph 5:4: Paul was saying that thanksgiving is the opposite of the filthiness, foolish talking, and inappropriate jesting he had just

condemned. Thanksgiving takes humility. Proud people aren't thankful; they only think of themselves. All the things Paul was condemning in these verses are rooted in selfishness. If the motive is to bless others, then jesting will always be appropriate and not the type Paul was rebuking here.

EPHESIANS 5:5

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

Note 10 at Eph 5:5: One of the main false teachings of Paul's day came from the Gnostics. They taught that the indulgence of sinful appetites meant nothing, because the inner spirit was pure. It is true that as believers, our inner spirits remain pure despite our sins of the flesh (see note 9 at 2Co 5:17 and note 23 at Eph 1:13), but Paul made it very clear in this passage that we are not to live in sin (see note 5 at Ga 5:15). The whoremongers, the unclean, and the covetous are idolaters. Idolaters do not have Christ as their God. They also don't have a place in God's kingdom.

Note 11 at Eph 5:5: On the surface, this verse may look contrary to the grace that Paul taught in other places, but that's not so. For one thing, there is a difference between a person who commits an act of whoredom and a whoremonger. The word "whoremonger" (the same with "unclean" and "covetous") is describing the character or nature of a person. The American Heritage Dictionary defines "character" as "the combination of qualities or features that distinguishes one person, group, or thing from another...moral or ethical strength." Paul was saying that those who are by nature whoremongers, unclean, and covetous do not have any inheritance in the kingdom of God.

Christians can and sometimes do commit sexual sins and operate in covetousness, but it's not their nature. In a parallel passage of Scripture from 1Co 6:9-11, Paul listed the same sins but went on to say, "And such were some of you: but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God." He expressed this same thought in Eph 5:8 by saying, "For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord." Christians do not lose their righteous position in Christ and become whoremongers even though they may have sexual relations with

whores. Sin doesn't make Christians sinners any more than good acts make sinners saints (see note 1 at Ro 6:20).

That is not to say that it is therefore unimportant to live holy. That is the false teaching Paul was countering here (see note 9 at Eph 5:4). It is important to be holy but not so that we can be accepted with God. God accepts us based on our faith in Christ. However, a lack of holiness is a bad witness and a direct inroad of Satan into our lives (see note 7 at Ro 6:15 and note 8 at Ro 6:16). Satan will make sure that we do not prosper if we yield to him.

So, Paul was stating the characteristics of unbelievers here and admonishing the Christians not to act like them. The very fact that Paul instructed the believers not to partake of these sins shows that Christians can partake (see note 13 at Eph 5:7).

EPHESIANS 5:6

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

Note 12 at Eph 5:6: Notice that God's wrath comes on "the children of disobedience." This is specifying the non-Christians. God's wrath is reserved for His enemies (Na 1:2, see note 13 at Eph 5:7).

EPHESIANS 5:7

Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

Note 13 at Eph. 5:7: Paul is warning the Christians not to commit sin like the lost do. But if they do, does God's wrath come on them? The answer is yes and no.

Note 13 at Eph 5:7: Paul warned Christians not to commit sin like the lost do. But if they do, does God's wrath come on them? The answer is yes and no.

God's wrath against our sin was placed on Jesus (Ro 5:9; 2Co 5:21; 1Th

1:10, and 5:9). Therefore, God's wrath does not come directly or intentionally on believers, even when they sin. However, true believers love God and do not want to do anything to displease Him (1Jo 3:3, see note 8 at 1Co 6:12 and note 16 at Ro 5:9). Knowing that God's wrath comes on the unbelievers for such actions (see note 12 at Eph 5:6) reveals that these actions are not pleasing to God, and therefore, true believers are motivated not to sin.

Christians can, however, indirectly experience the wrath of God through sin. In the book of Revelation, God warns His people to come out from among Babylon lest they become partakers of her sins and receive her plagues (Re 18:4). Moses told the children of Israel to depart from the tents of the wicked (Korah) so that they would not be consumed in their judgment (Nu 16:26). God's wrath is directed toward His enemies (see note 12 at Eph 5:6), but if Christians are sleeping with the enemy, they might get caught in the line of fire. Lot was a righteous man (2Pe 2:7-8) whom God sought to deliver from His wrath directed at the sinners in Sodom and Gomorrah (Ge 19). Lot's association with Sodom and Gomorrah caused his wife to disobey, and as she was turned into a pillar of salt, Lot suffered greatly. God's wrath did come into Lot's life but not by God's choosing.

It is not God who punishes us, His children, when we sin. Our punishment has been placed on Jesus. But sin will punish us. Therefore, we need to avoid sin as much as possible but realize that when we do sin, God still loves us and has delivered us from His wrath by placing our punishment on Jesus.

Note 14 at Eph 5:7: Paul did not say that we should stay away from all unbelievers. Even Jesus was called a friend of publicans and sinners (Mt 11:19 and Lu 7:34). When Jesus was asked, "Why do ye eat and drink with publicans and sinners?" He answered, "They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance" (Lu 5:30-32).

What Paul was stating here is that we should not adopt the lifestyle and behavior of unbelievers by having a part or share in their evil deeds. It is possible to have relationships with the lost that are positive, where we are influencing them, but relationships where we are being influenced by unbelievers are spiritually unhealthy.

EPHESIANS 5:8

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

Note 15 at Eph 5:8: In Eph 5:7, Paul admonished the Ephesians not to become partakers with unbelievers in their sins. Why? What was the motive for living separate? He gave that motive in this verse. It is because the nature of the believer has been changed. It was darkness; now it is light (see note 16 at this verse).

Many people argue for holiness in order to obtain relationship with God. Paul was advocating holiness because of the relationship with God that we already have. It's the nature of Christians to walk in the light and not in darkness. If Christians were rightly informed of who they are and what they have in Christ, holiness would just naturally flow out of them. It's their nature.

Note 16 at Eph 5:8: Paul did not say that we were getting more and more light from the Lord, but that we are, right now, light in the Lord. True believers become light (signifying all the goodness of God versus darkness, which is the evil of the devil) the moment they are born again in their inner selves. That is a positional truth that doesn't fluctuate with their performance. It needs to be more than just a positional truth, however. It needs to become an experiential reality in their physical lives.

That's what Paul was saying here. Before we were born again, we were not just part-time children of the devil; we were lost all the time, even when we were acting good. Now we have become full-time children of light. That's who we are. That's our nature. It needs to become our experience.

EPHESIANS 5:9

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

Note 17 at Eph 5:9: In Eph 5:8, Paul was promoting holiness, because that's the nature of a Christian (see note 15 at Eph 5:8). Here, he gave us another reason for living godly lives. It's because the fruit of the Spirit is borne in all goodness, righteousness, and truth.

Ungodliness inhibits the growth of the fruit of the Spirit in our lives. That's not because God's love is conditional. His love for us is unconditional. But just as seeds cannot grow without light, so the darkness of ungodliness in our lives limits the production of the fruit of the Spirit. If we cultivate a life of hatred, the fruit of love (Ga 5:22) will not manifest. If we are truly born again (see note 2 at Joh 3:3), that love is present in our spirits, but it cannot flow while we are operating in hatred.

EPHESIANS 5:10

Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

Note 18 at Eph 5:10: The word "proving" as used here is speaking of making manifest to the physical realm, or showing openly to the world, our new natures as children of light, spoken of in Eph 5:8. Paul had spoken of Christians as children of light in their hearts (see note 16 at Eph 5:8). Here, he said, "Display that new nature through your actions so that everyone can see the type of actions that are pleasing to God." This goes along with the old saying, "Your life is the only Bible some people will ever read." Make sure they are being presented the truth.

EPHESIANS 5:11

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

Note 19 at Eph 5:11: The Greek word that was translated "fellowship" here is "SUGKOINONEO." This is a rare Greek word for "fellowship" and was only used three times in the New Testament (this verse, Php 4:14, and Re 18:4). This is the only time of the three where it was translated "fellowship." The more common Greek word for "fellowship" ("KOINONIA") was used twenty times in the N.T.

The Greek word used in this verse is denoting the actual partaking of others' ungodly deeds, as can be seen by the way it was translated in Re 18:4. There, the Lord told His people to separate themselves from

the ungodly religious system lest they become partakers (SUGKOINONEO) of her sins and receive of her plagues.

The instruction in this verse is not to shun unbelievers, but rather not to participate in their ungodly deeds. In fact, it is important to notice that the "works of darkness" are what we are to avoid, not the people who are doing these acts. Of course, there are many arguments for having godly associations (see note 6 at 1Co 15:33), but it is not following the example of Christ to totally avoid contact with the lost. We are to reject the sin, not the sinner.

Eph 5:11-13 gives us a simple way of judging whether or not our contact with the lost is in a godly fashion. We are supposed to reprove (see note 20 at this verse) their actions. If we can do that and still maintain relationship, then we are probably relating to them in the proper way. If we are not exposing their deeds to the light, we should question whether the relationship is really God's will. Care has to be taken that we are the ones ministering righteousness to them, and not the other way around, where they are ministering ungodliness to us.

Note 20 at Eph 5:11: This English word "reprove" was translated from the Greek word "ELEGCHO." It was translated "rebuke" (1Ti 5:20), "tell [him] his fault" (Mt 18:15, brackets mine), and "convince" (Tit 1:9). These uses, combined with Eph 5:12-13, leave no doubt that this is speaking of shining the light of God's righteousness on the ungodly darkness of the lost. We must take a stand against ungodliness.

Yet there is a right and wrong way of letting our light shine. The Pharisees were hypocritical in their proclamation of what was light. They also missed the issues of the heart and only dealt with the external. They totally omitted love and were self-serving in their rebukes. The truth without love is like a club (see note 29 at Eph 4:15), and tradition ministered in a judgmental attitude is even worse.

EPHESIANS 5:12

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

Note 21 at Eph 5:12: This scripture is exactly opposite of the practice of many Christians and even some ministers today. Some feel the best way of countering ungodliness is to bring before the believers every

demonic, gory detail of what the ungodly are doing. They portray it in videos and in graphic speech. Their intent is to shock and inform the body of Christ so that they can take action against these things, but often they just provide a platform for Satan to expose his vileness to those who otherwise would have known nothing about it.

Satan can and should be exposed in a way that does not glorify his actions or expose the listeners to temptation. One of the sad things going on in our society today is the open display and discussion of things that used to be considered unspeakable. There are certain things that are a shame to even speak of.

EPHESIANS 5:13

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

Note 22 at Eph 5:13: It is a deception of the devil to think that our lives alone will shed God's light on the darkness of the world. It is true that speech without a life to back it up is hypocritical and often turns people away from the truth. But a godly lifestyle without openly expressing the source of our goodness only brings glory to ourselves. These verses instruct us to verbally express our witness.

EPHESIANS 5:14

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

Note 23 at Eph 5:14: There is no Old Testament verse that says exactly what is quoted here. It is possible that Paul was paraphrasing Isa 60:1-3.

EPHESIANS 5:15

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

Note 24 at Eph 5:15: "Circumspect" comes from a word that means "to take heed" (American Heritage Dictionary). The New International Version translates Eph 5:15-16 as "Be very careful, then, how you live--not as unwise but as wise, making the most of every opportunity, because the days are evil." The point being stressed is that we need to be alert. We are the only light that will come into the darkness of some people's lives. We need to make the most of each day.

EPHESIANS 5:16

Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Note 25 at Eph 5:16: This phrase, "redeeming the time," could be taken two different ways, either of which would be consistent with Scripture. We can redeem the time in the sense of making the best use of our time (see New International Version quote in note 24 at Eph 5:15). This seems to be the obvious meaning and fits the context of this verse.

This could also be speaking of the time in which we live or our social climate. In that sense, this would be speaking of having a sanctifying effect on our society. We could buy back (redeem) our culture from the ungodly direction it is headed.

EPHESIANS 5:17

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

Note 26 at Eph 5:17: The only way we can effectively manifest God's light in our generation is to know the will of God for us individually (see note 12 at Ro 12:2) and for all mankind generally. It is God's will for everyone to be saved (2Pe 3:9). It is God's will for everyone to be free from the bondage of the devil (1Jo 3:8). God wills that we prosper in every area of our lives (3Jo 2). Once we really see the heart of God and His will to set people free, we will walk circumspectly (see note 24 at Eph 5:15) and redeem the time (see note 25 at Eph 5:16).

EPHESIANS 5:18

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

Note 27 at Eph 5:18: Just as it is a command not to be drunk with wine, it is a command to be filled with the Holy Spirit. This was not intended as an option.

Note 28 at Eph 5:18: Numerous scriptures speak against drunkenness, but wine itself is not forbidden. Jesus drank wine (Mr 14:23-25) and turned water into wine so that others could drink (Joh 2:3-11). Paul instructed Timothy not to drink the water but to use a little wine for his stomach's sake (1Ti 5:23).

In our day, many places have good water, so there is no health reason to drink wine instead of water. However, wine or strong drink cannot be forbidden on the basis of Scripture. It is drunkenness that is wrong. Fermented beverages in moderation are not violating any scripture.

Note 29 at Eph 5:18: Being filled with the Holy Spirit is in the present tense, making it a continual command for the believer. In the book of Acts, the same people who were filled with the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost were filled again (compare Ac 2:4 with Ac 4:31). Most people don't get drunk on just one drink. Likewise, being filled with the Holy Spirit is not just a one-time experience. There is an initial filling of the Holy Spirit and many subsequent fillings (see note 5 at Ac 4:31).

Note 30 at Eph 5:18: Just as drunkenness can change people's personalities and make them act totally different, being filled with the Holy Spirit can make people act just like Jesus.

Some of the effects of being filled with the Holy Spirit are listed in Eph 5:19-21. They include instruction from the Scriptures, worshiping with spiritual songs, giving thanks unto the Lord, and submission to one another.

Note 31 at Eph 5:18: It is easy to say we are filled with the Spirit because of some emotional feeling that we have, but Paul related the filling of the Spirit to life's relationships. Those of us who are truly filled with the Holy Spirit will have godly actions to show for it. Three areas are mentioned--the husband-wife relationship (Eph 5:22-33), the child-parent relationship (Eph 6:1-4), and the slave-master relationship

(Eph 6:5-9). Each relationship calls for a submission toward one another as being service rendered unto the Lord.

EPHESIANS 5:19

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

Note 32 at Eph 5:19: The Greek word that was translated "songs" here is "ODE." This Greek word has been transliterated into the English language, and "ode" is still used to denote "a lyric poem usually marked by exaltation of feeling and style" (Merriam-Webster Dictionary). The word "songs," as used here, is speaking of uplifting songs that exalt the Lord. The connection with the word "spiritual" is specifying non-carnal, or songs that deal with spiritual truths. The Greek word used for "hymns" comes from the word that means "to celebrate," and the word for "psalms" is specifying a poem set to music and/or the book of Psalms.

Therefore, this verse is instructing us to praise the Lord with songs from the Scripture, hymns of a traditional nature, and other songs about spiritual things that uplift the Lord.

Note 33 at Eph 5:19: The English phrase "making melody" was translated from the Greek word "PSALLO," and this Greek word means "to twitch or twang, i.e. to play on a stringed instrument" (Strong's Concordance). This symbolism is probably where we get the idea of striking a chord in someone's heart. When we worship the Lord from our hearts, it is like playing a musical instrument to the Lord. Regardless of our physical ability to play an instrument, all of us can make melody in our hearts to the Lord.

EPHESIANS 5:20

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

Note 34 at Eph 5:20: Giving thanks and praise are very closely related.

It is impossible to really praise the Lord without being thankful for all that God has done and will do. If we remove thankfulness from our spiritual songs (see note 32 at Eph 5:19), then it is easy to descend into depressing songs that glorify our problems instead of praising the Lord. This scripture is not encouraging us to sing "Christian blues."

Note 35 at Eph 5:20: This is one of those verses that has been used to teach that everything that happens to us, especially bad things, come from God. Otherwise, why would Paul instruct us to give thanks to God for them? That is not what this verse is saying.

Paul expected the Ephesians to understand that they were not to praise God for evil in their lives. That would void many other teachings in which they were already established (see note 7 at Ro 8:28). It is appropriate to praise God always and in every situation, but not for every situation.

In this very verse, Paul said we are to give thanks "unto God and the Father." Does that mean our heavenly Father is someone other than God? Was he talking about two different personalities? Certainly not! The wording is a little awkward, but nobody uses this verse to teach that there is a God and a Father. Clear teaching elsewhere in Scripture forbids rational people from coming to those conclusions.

We often say words that, if dissected and analyzed too literally, would give the wrong impression. For instance, in an effort to justify our actions, most of us have said, "Everyone is doing it." Do we really mean that every single person in the world has done what we are talking about? Certainly not! And anyone who would try to base an argument against us on that reasoning would be considered foolish. It is understood by everyone that this is not a literal statement (see note 6 at Mr 1:5).

In Paul's wildest imaginations, he probably never anticipated people believing that rape, murder, and a multitude of other problems are all blessings from God for which we are supposed to give thanks, and he therefore saw no need to make his statement any clearer.

Once again, the epistle to the Colossians is a twin letter to this one written to the Ephesians (see Life for Today Study Bible Notes, Introduction to Ephesians). In Col 3:16, Paul said the same thing that he said in Eph 5:19. Then, he followed in Col 3:17 by expressing the same thought that is made here in Eph 5:20. In Colossians, it is very clear that he was just encouraging thanksgiving to God and not teaching that every terrible thing that happens in our lives is the will of God. That is

the point he also made here in Eph 5:20.

EPHESIANS 5:21

Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

Note 36 at Eph 5:21: In the remainder of this chapter, Paul went on to teach about marriage. One of the important lessons he gave is on the submission of wives to their husbands. Before he mentioned that, however, he said we are supposed to submit ourselves one to another in the fear of God (see note 37 at this verse). That means that submission is not a one-sided thing. Even husbands are to submit to their wives.

Note 37 at Eph 5:21: Notice that this submission is "in the fear of God." The Scripture does not teach anyone ever to disobey God in an attempt to submit to someone else (see note 2 at Eph 5:22).

EPHESIANS 5:22

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

Note 1 at Eph 5:22: In Eph 5:21, Paul said we were to submit "one to another in the fear of God" (see note 36 at Eph 5:21). Husbands are to submit to their wives, and wives are to submit to their husbands. The Scriptures teach, however, that there is a greater degree of submission on the wife's part. Actually, husband and wife should submit to God's will in every situation, but anytime you have two people together, there is opportunity for disagreement on what God's will is. Therefore, there has to be a final authority in a marriage, or deadlock will be the result. The man has that final authority.

Note 2 at Eph 5:22: The meaning of the word "submit" has to be clearly understood or else many problems can arise. The dictionary defines "submit" as "to yield or surrender (oneself) to the will or authority of another" (American Heritage Dictionary). There are at least two major things about submission that need to be pointed out.

First, submission is voluntary. There are many ways that people can be forced to obey, but true submission is an attitude of the heart that cannot be dictated. Employees may be forced to obey the instructions of an employer, but if there is resentment and bitterness in their hearts, they are not in submission. Every parent knows that children can be made to obey out of fear of punishment, but true submission, where the child lovingly yields to the instructions of the parent, is a totally different thing.

Likewise, in the marriage relationship, the submission of the wife to her husband is an attitude that the wife must voluntarily choose. A husband cannot demand that his wife submit. Men who have tried to use this verse to force their wives into submission have never succeeded. They may have intimidated or condemned their wives into some measure of compliance, but that's not the submission Paul was promoting here. Notice that Paul instructed the wives to submit, rather than instructing the husbands to make their wives submit. Submission is a choice, not a punishment.

Second, submission and obedience are not synonymous (see note 3 at Ac 4:19). This can be seen by comparing Peter's actions with his teaching in 1Pe 2:13 (see note 7 at Ac 5:29). We are never to disobey God in an effort to obey someone else (see note 1 at Ro 13:1). Paul was not commanding wives to obey any ungodly command their husbands give (see note 4 at this verse).

Note 3 at Eph 5:22: Notice the use of the word "own" in this verse. This is specifying that a wife is to submit to her own husband, not to men in general. There are some people who have interpreted Scripture to teach that women in general are to submit to men in general. That is not the message of the Scripture (see note 2 at 1Co 11:3). Other passages such as 1Ti 2:12 use the definite article "the" in front of the singular word "man" when referring to a woman's submission. And 1Co 14:34 refers back to the Old Testament curse of Ge 3:16 where the Lord made Eve subject to her husband, Adam (see note 22 at 1Co 14:34). Women are not inferior to men, and men do not have authority over women. The husband has been given authority over his wife only.

Note 4 at Eph 5:22: This phrase, "as unto the Lord," has been taken by some to mean that wives are to submit to everything the husband wants in the same way that we as believers are to be subject to God in everything. That comparison won't work, because God doesn't make mistakes or sin. Husbands do both. Wives are not being told to obey ungodliness (see note 2 at this verse). Paul was simply stating that the

wife should submit herself unto her husband and should see that as an act of submission unto the Lord. This could be summed up in the words of Col 3:23, which says, "And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men."

Once again, Paul's letter to the Ephesians and his letter to the Colossians are so similar, they are like twin letters (see Life for Today Study Bible Notes, Introduction to Ephesians). In a parallel verse, Col 3:18, Paul said wives should submit to their husbands "as it is fit in the Lord." There is an unfitting type of submission, and that is the type where a woman does whatever the man says, even if it is sin. That is not what Paul was teaching.

EPHESIANS 5:23

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

Note 5 at Eph 5:23: Some people have interpreted this verse to teach that the headship of the husband over the wife is absolute, even in spiritual issues. It has been taught that the man is the high priest of his home and that the woman cannot rise above the spiritual condition of her husband. Observation, as well as Scripture, teaches us this is wrong. This violates the very heart of the freedom Jesus brought us. In Jesus there is neither male nor female (Ga 3:28), and we are all kings and priests unto the Lord (1Pe 2:9).

As explained in note 35 at Eph 5:20, Paul never anticipated that people would take his instructions here and teach that a lost husband was the spiritual head of a Christian wife. That's crazy. The headship of a man over his wife is in physical matters (see note 6 at this verse). The submission of the wife to her husband taught here in Eph 5 is establishing the leadership of the man in carnal (see note 16 at Ro 8:7) matters.

Note 6 at Eph 5:23: The word "saviour" has become so synonymous with Christ that most people just suppose that this is speaking of Christ being the Savior of the church, which is called His body (see note 3 at 1Co 12:14, note 4 at 1Co 12:15, note 5 at 1Co 12:17, note 6 at 1Co 12:21, note 7 at 1Co 12:22, and note 8 at 1Co 12:23). However, the word "saviour" is conspicuously not capitalized here, inferring that this is

not speaking of Jesus. The only other subject in this sentence is the husband. It would appear that the husband is the savior of his wife's body.

Some argue that in the Greek language, there are no capital and lowercase letters; therefore, no debate can be made for the lower case "s" in this verse referring to the husband. Although it is true that capital letters don't exist in Greek, they do in English, and it is significant that out of the twenty-four times that the Greek word "SOTER" was translated "Saviour," this is the only verse where the translators didn't capitalize the "s." The Greek language conveys the same thought through context and tense that our English language conveys through the use of capital letters, and the translators put a lowercase "s" in this verse for the specific purpose of identifying the husband as the "saviour" of the wife.

The Merriam-Webster Dictionary defines "savior" as "one that saves from danger or destruction." "Save" is defined as "1. To rescue from harm, danger, or loss.... 2. To keep in a safe condition; safeguard" (American Heritage Dictionary). Anyone who rescues, preserves, or safeguards can be called a savior. This word was used in the Old Testament to describe the men who brought deliverance to Israel from the oppression of the enemy (2Ki 13:5 and Ne 9:27). The Hebrew word that was translated "deliverer" in reference to Othniel and Ehud (Jdg 3:9 and 15) was also translated "saviour" thirteen times in the O.T. So, Scripture referred to natural men as saviors also.

This passage is referring to the husband as being the savior of the wife. This further establishes the headship of the man over his wife as a physical head and not a spiritual head. The husband is supposed to provide for, defend, and protect the wife in physical matters. He is not the spiritual head of the wife. In Christ, every born-again person, male or female, is in direct relationship with the Father through Jesus and does not depend on a priest go-between (see note 2 at 1Co 11:3).

EPHESIANS 5:24

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

Note 7 at Eph 5:24: From the context, it is to be understood that this

submission is in physical matters. A man does not have spiritual headship over the woman (see notes 5-6 at Eph 5:23). Also, remember that submission and obedience are not synonymous (see note 2 at Eph 5:22). Paul was not saying that a wife has to obey her husband if he is commanding her to sin. Paul was saying that the wife should voluntarily yield to the authority of the husband in physical matters.

EPHESIANS 5:25

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

Note 8 at Eph 5:25: It is interesting to note that the Lord commanded the men to love their wives and the wives to respect (Eph 5:33) their husbands. This is because women tend to relate to others more on the emotional level of love, while men relate to others more on the level of mutual respect. Men don't have to like their associates in the business world to get along with them. If mutual respect is present, men can tolerate big differences. In general, women are not that way. They are more concerned with having a good relationship with others than men are.

Because of this, if not warned, men will give women what they themselves naturally crave, which is respect, while women will give men what they naturally crave, which is love. In doing this, the basic need of the partner will be lacking and the spouse will not understand why. The wife will say, "I love him," not understanding that he needs respect, and the man will say, "I respect her," not understanding that the wife wants to be loved.

Men often equate respect with love. Husbands may think that because they honor their wives, provide for them, and protect them, they are loving them. But the average wives want to be loved on a more intimate level. Likewise, women think that because they are affectionate to their husbands, that is enough. Yet men also want to be respected.

A man who has everyone at the office say "Yes, sir" to him and show him respect, has a hard time coming home and being criticized over and over for some failure in his performance, even if he knows his wife loves him. Likewise, the woman who has others lavish her with

compliments on her looks or personality has a hard time coming home to a man who ignores her, even if he is a good provider.

It is very appropriate that Paul instructed the husband to love his wife and the wife to reverence her husband. Left to ourselves, we would fail to understand the different needs of our mates and give them what we are personally looking for, thereby leaving their needs unfulfilled without realizing it.

Note 9 at Eph 5:25: Husbands are to follow the example of Christ in the way they love their wives. How did Christ love us?

First, the love of Christ was extended to us before we requested it or changed our actions. Ro 5:8 says, "But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us." Therefore, men should love their wives independently of whether they deserve it or not. Wives should not have to earn their husbands' love.

Second, Jesus took our blame and bore our punishment. Men should protect their wives by taking their shame and sharing their pain. It is never appropriate for men to tell their wives, "That's your problem. You made your bed, now you lie in it." That is not the way Jesus treated us.

The Lord also promised us that He would never leave us or forsake us (Heb 13:5). A wife craves the security of knowing that her husband is committed to her "till death do us part." Failure to impart this sense of security is a breeding ground for all kinds of fears and imaginations that Satan uses to destroy marriages. There is no excuse for men deserting their families.

There are many other lessons to be learned from our Lord about the way husbands should love. Jesus loved us with the greatest sacrifice possible. He died in our place. If men would love their wives as Christ has loved the church, many marriage problems would not exist.

EPHESIANS 5:26

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

Note 10 at Eph 5:26: This verse is saying that the way the Lord

sanctifies and cleanses us is through His Word. The Word of God is the water that cleanses. Jesus spoke of the Word cleansing us in Joh 15:2-3 (see note 48 at Joh 15:2).

Note 11 at Eph 5:26: Christ loved the church and gave Himself for it. He set it apart and cleansed it by His Word. The Greek word used here for "word" is "RHEMA," and means "thing spoken, word" (Thayer's Greek-English Lexicon). What a wonderful illustration this is of a man setting his wife apart by honoring her with his words. A wife will try to live up to that which her husband speaks over her. If his words are words that edify and build her up, she will want to live up to those words. If his words are words that tear her down, he will discourage her and cause her to be unresponsive in their relationship.

EPHESIANS 5:27

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

Note 12 at Eph 5:27: Some people see the church as getting weaker and weaker with Jesus snatching it out of the earth just before it dies. That's not what Paul presented here. The Lord is not coming back for a weak, pathetic, and defiled bride. He's coming back for a glorious church (see note 7 at 1Co 15:25).

Certainly, we are supposed to be as chaste and holy as possible in the flesh for the Lord, but the gloriousness and victory described here is beyond our actions. This is describing the spiritual condition of the church that exists regardless of our performance (see note 10 at 2Co 5:18).

Note 13 at Eph 5:27: The Greek word "RHUTIS" was translated "wrinkle" here, and it means "a fold (as drawing together), i.e. wrinkle (especially on the face)" (Strong's Concordance). So, this is not talking about a wrinkle as in clothes, but a wrinkle as on the face. It is a word picture that describes the body of Christ as not being worn and weather-beaten. We are glorious in the spirit realm and in the sight of God.

Note 14 at Eph 5:27: A good wife wants to be glorious, without spot or

wrinkle for her husband. She will stop at nothing to make herself beautiful. In this passage, the difference is that the bride can do nothing to make herself beautiful. It was the work of Christ upon the cross, as He gave Himself for the church, that made her washed, cleansed, glorious, without spot or wrinkle, and set apart to Him.

EPHESIANS 5:28

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

Note 15 at Eph 5:28: Paul used the way Jesus loves us and views us, as an example of how husbands should love their wives. The Lord doesn't see the church as glorious because of its actions (see note 12 at Eph 5:27). He is seeing by faith. Likewise, men ought to love their wives in the same way. Bad actions on the part of the wife are not an excuse for the husband to walk out of love.

Note 16 at Eph 5:28: This chapter gives us two examples of how marital love should be. Paul used the example of Christ's love for His bride, the church (Eph 5:25 and 29), and the example of a man's love for his own body (Eph 5:28-29 and 33). A man may not like the way he looks or may hate his personality, but he does cherish his body. He'll go to great lengths to cool his body when it is hot and warm it when it is cold. He avoids pain, and he is well aware of how he indulges his appetite. He ought to love his mate with such devotion.

Note 17 at Eph 5:28: There is one major difference between a man loving his own body, and a husband loving his own wife. To love one's own body is natural; to love one's own wife is not. The reason that loving one's wife is unnatural is because the essence of sin is selfishness.

The prophet Isaiah tells us, "All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned every one to his own way" (Isa 53:6, emphasis mine). Because of sin, love for someone else is abnormal. Most of us have not grown up with godly examples of loving others, so we just naturally continue on in the selfishness that seems to come effortlessly. Good intentions won't break this tendency. God's kind of love must be learned. It requires God, the author of love (1Jo 4:8), to teach us to love others the way we naturally love ourselves.

EPHESIANS 5:29

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

Note 18 at Eph 5:29: The words "nourisheth" and "cherisheth" in this verse are interesting. They are terms usually associated with raising children. According to Strong's Concordance, the Greek word for "nourisheth" is "EKTREPHO," and it means "to rear up to maturity, i.e. (genitive case) to cherish or train." The Greek word that was translated "cherisheth" is "THALPO," and it means "to brood, i.e. (figuratively) to foster" (Strong's Concordance). We use the word "brood" to describe a hen incubating an egg at a great cost of time and comfort to herself. Likewise, people all pamper their own bodies. Men should treat their wives with as much commitment.

1Th 2:7 uses the word "cherisheth" to describe a mother nursing a young child. 1Ki 1:1-4 uses "cherish" to describe Abishag, the Shunammite, as "taking care of" all of King David's needs and waiting on him. "Cherish" means "1. To treat with affection and tenderness; hold dear. 2. To keep fondly in the mind" (American Heritage Dictionary). So ought men to love their wives.

EPHESIANS 5:31

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

Note 19 at Eph 5:31: In this verse, we have a quotation from Ge 2:24 describing the first marriage union established by God. Marriage begins by leaving behind, forsaking, and abandoning all other relationships, then cleaving and bringing forth a new and lasting relationship of oneness.

The Hebrew word for "leave" in Ge 2:24 is "AZAB," and it actually means to "leave, leave behind, depart from, let alone, abandon, forsake, to desert, to let alone" (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament). The Hebrew word for "cleave" (rendered "be joined" in

Eph 5:31) is "DABAQ," and it means "to cling to, to stick to, keep close, stay close, follow close and be joined together" (Theological Wordbook of the Old Testament). Anything that separates or divides your relationship in marriage is a failure to "cleave." The Hebrew word for "cleave" is a verb and suggests a continuing action on your part to adhere to your mate in love and loyalty. This involves the forsaking of all others so that you may continue to be united to each other.

What really constitutes marriage is the joining of male and female by covenant (Mal 2:13-15 [Revised Standard Version], Eze 16:8 [The Living Bible], and Pr 2:16-17 [The Amplified Bible]). Covenant in Scripture represents a final, irrevocable commitment between two parties. The covenant of marriage can be described as the solemn and binding pledge (vow) before God that joins a male and female in a wholehearted commitment to be one with, and live as one for the duration of their natural lives (Ro 7:2).

EPHESIANS 5:32

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

Note 20 at Eph 5:32: In this verse, Paul compared the marriage union between a man and woman to the relationship that God Himself has with us, His people. Marriage is a small-scale model of what an enduring and lasting relationship with Christ should be, and our union with Christ is the supreme example of what a marriage should be.

EPHESIANS 5:33

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

Note 21 at Eph 5:33: In the previous verse, Paul revealed that the real purpose of this teaching was not for married couples but for each member of the body of Christ. He was drawing on the marriage relationship to actually teach on our union with Christ. Here, he clarified that this does not excuse anyone from following the things he said about marriage. These truths he spoke about marriage are true of our relationship with the Lord as well as with our mates.

The New International Version translated this verse as "However, each one of you also must love his wife as he loves himself, and the wife must respect her husband."

EPHESIANS

CHAPTER 6

EPHESIANS 6:1

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

Note 1 at Eph 6:1: Notice the difference between the instructions to the wife in Eph 5:21-33 and these instructions to children. Children are to obey; wives are to submit. Submission and obedience are not always the same (see note 2 at Eph 5:22).

Even the obedience commanded here has the limitation that children are to obey their parents "in the Lord." This doesn't mean that only children with believing parents have to obey. It means that children don't have to obey any instruction that would take them out of the Lord's will (see note 2 at this verse).

Note 2 at Eph 6:1: This phrase "in the Lord" is very important. This is not teaching blind obedience, even to the point of obeying ungodly commands. Children are only to obey their parents if what their parents are demanding is "in the Lord," or inside of the will of God. However, this needs further explanation.

This exemption clause does not give children the right to disobey any instruction that they feel isn't right. Only in matters where parents are instructing their children to commit flagrant violations of clearly stated commands in God's Word would the children be justified in not obeying. Stealing, lying, murder, committing sexual acts, and other such examples would be things that children do not have to do even if their parents told them to do so.

Jesus gave us a good example. When He was twelve years old, He stayed behind in Jerusalem when His parents left so that He could talk to the Jewish elders. Three days later, His parents found Him and mildly scolded Him for not going with them. He replied that He had to be about His Father's business (Lu 2:42-51). Jesus was Mary and Joseph's Creator. Surely, if any child ever had the right to disobey his or her parents, it was Jesus. He was totally and completely in His Father's will, yet Lu 2:51 says that Jesus made Himself subject unto them and obeyed.

The parents were the ones who were wrong in this situation. Jesus was doing His Father's will, but they didn't understand. They were trying to fulfill their roles as parents out of a pure heart. However, since it wasn't time for Jesus to start His ministry, He submitted unto them.

In cases where children may feel their parents are demanding more than what is right, they should ask themselves some questions: Is what they are being asked to do morally wrong? Even if they are being denied some privilege unjustly, will it cause them to sin if they obey? If the answers are no, then obedience to their parents has to be a higher priority than just getting their way, even if their own way would have been right in that situation.

Children in today's society may find this a hard pill to swallow. Few, if any, of their peers will agree, and social agencies will back children's rebellion almost without question. God gives a promise of blessing to those children who obey the spirit of this command, and that far outweighs any temporary advantages the children might gain through disobedience.

Note 3 at Eph 6:1: The reason for this command about children obeying their parents is because this is right; it's just the proper thing to do. God established order. Bad government is better than anarchy. If all children were free to decide for themselves what was right and wrong, they would never be toilet trained, they would all be malnourished, and they would never go to school. No work would ever get done; it would just be all play. The world would not last very long that way. God says it is good for children to obey their parents in the Lord (see note 2 at this verse).

EPHESIANS 6:2

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

Note 4 at Eph 6:2: Children are to honor their parents even after they become adults, but the command to obey is temporary (Ga 4:1-2). Honor naturally leads to obedience if nothing is asked contrary to God's laws, but honor and obedience are not synonymous.

The Scriptures teach that when children marry, they are to leave their fathers and mothers and cleave unto their mates (Ge 2:24). Parental dominance that extends into marriage has been the source of many divorces and much marital strife. Yet, children are to honor their parents for all of their lives.

The word "honor" means "hold in respect; esteem" (American Heritage Dictionary). The Greek word "TIMAO," from which "honour" was translated, means "to prize, i.e. fix a valuation upon" (Strong's Concordance). There are many applications of children honoring their parents. Certainly, one of the violations of this today is children esteeming and respecting the opinions of their peers above those of their parents. The idea that parents are out of date, and therefore out of touch, is a devaluation of parents. Children should value the experience and wisdom of their parents more than their peers.

Note 5 at Eph 6:2: Paul quoted from Ex 20:12 and De 5:16 and said that this is the first commandment with promise. This is referring to the fact that this command about honoring parents was the first one of the Ten Commandments that gave a promise of blessing to those who obey it. The promised blessing is long life and things going well (Eph 6:3).

EPHESIANS 6:4

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

Note 6 at Eph 6:4: After instructing children, Paul turned to parents and, more specifically, to fathers. It is interesting that he singled out fathers to address this command to. Fathers tend to be more stern and authoritative than mothers, and therefore more prone to provoking their children to wrath (see note 7 at this verse).

Those who have children will also find it interesting that Paul omitted telling the children not to provoke their parents to wrath. It seems like he missed a good opportunity to set things straight. However, it is to be assumed that parents are the ones who are supposedly more mature and, therefore, more accountable for their actions.

Note 7 at Eph 6:4: This command is critical. In an effort to train children up correctly, some parents, especially fathers (see note 6 at this verse), are overbearing. Part of a parent's responsibility is to point

out mistakes the children make. However, if not balanced with love and positive statements, this can provoke wrath in the children and discourage them (Col 3:21). Children can easily feel like "I can't do anything right" or "I can never please them." This leads to discouragement and an attitude that drives children in the other direction.

The phrase "provoke...to wrath" came from one Greek word, "PARORGIZO." It literally means "to anger alongside, i.e. enrage" (Strong's Concordance). It was translated in the following ways: "do not exasperate your children" (New International Version), "never drive your children to resentment" (The Jerusalem Bible), "do not provoke your children to anger" (Revised Standard Version), "don't keep on scolding and nagging your children" (The Living Bible), and "don't over-correct your children or make it difficult for them to obey the commandment" (Phillips New Testament Bible).

Note 8 at Eph 6:4: The Greek word from which "nurture" was translated is "PAIDEIA," and it denotes "disciplinary correction" (Strong's Concordance). This same word was translated "chastening" in Heb 12:5, 7, and 11, and "chastisement" in Heb 12:8. The word "admonition" was translated from the Greek word "NOUTHESIA," and this Greek word refers to a "mild rebuke or warning" (Strong's Concordance). Notice that Paul specified "the nurture and admonition of the Lord" (emphasis mine). There is a godly way to administer discipline and rebukes; therefore, there must be an ungodly way to do it.

EPHESIANS 6:5

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

Note 1 at Eph 6:5: Eph 6:5-9 is speaking of a master/servant relationship. We could interpret this in the twenty-first century by speaking of labor and management. In a modern paraphrase, we could say, "Give your employer your very best work. Don't just work hard when he or she is around, but do your work as unto Christ. Remember, whatever good thing you do, God will repay you. And employers, treat your employees right, for we all have the same Master in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him."

Note 2 at Eph 6:5: It is very important to notice what Paul said and did not say about slavery in these verses. He did give instructions on master-and-slave relationships. He did not say anything against the practice of slavery. This is not an endorsement for slavery (see note 6 at 1Co 7:21), but it shows that Paul's emphasis was not on social issues.

Paul certainly had enough influence to limit or possibly outlaw slavery among the believers, but he never took that approach. Paul dealt with matters of the heart. As hearts change, societies change. Trying to bring change to society without changing the hearts of people is how revolutions and wars begin.

EPHESIANS 6:6

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

Note 3 at Eph 6:6: Eph 6:5-8 instructs servants, which would be comparable to us as employees today (see note 1 at Eph 6:5), to serve their employers genuinely from the heart. We should not only do what's right or expected when our bosses are watching, but also do just as well when no one is watching. Failure to do so means we are menpleasers. Our work should be unto Christ and not unto man (Eph 6:7). Those who have two standards, or two speeds of work (one for when they are being watched and one for other times), are liars and thieves. They are stealing from their employers and intentionally giving a false impression.

Note 4 at Eph 6:6: Notice that serving our employers (see note 1 at Eph 6:5) is called "doing the will of God." It is true that the Lord will show us overall goals and direction for our lives, but doing a good job for our bosses is also the will of God. There are thousands of everyday, practical ways that we fulfill the will of God in our relationships and actions. It would seem logical that until we begin to fulfill God's will in these small yet important ways, there is no point in the Lord showing us His long-term will (Lu 16:10-12).

EPHESIANS 6:7

Good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men:

Note 5 at Eph 6:7: The Lord said to do this service with good will. That means that we are to serve our employers (see note 1 at Eph 6:5) without grumbling and complaining. It is not enough to just do a good job; the attitude with which we do it is important.

Someone might say, "I can't have a good attitude when my boss is a jerk." Paul didn't make any comments about serving with good will as long as our bosses are wonderful. It is implied that this is supposed to be our conduct even toward those bosses who are less than perfect. How can that be? It's because our attitude is not determined by others. This is a total shock to most people today, but it's true. Others influence us and present us with opportunities, but how we feel and how we act is our choice. We can choose to serve others with good will regardless of whether or not they deserve it.

EPHESIANS 6:8

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

Note 6 at Eph 6:8: In the previous verses, Paul had instructed servants (employees - see note 1 at Eph 6:5) to serve their masters (employers) faithfully, with a good attitude. Some people might think, "Why should I do that? They don't care and will never notice my attitude or performance anyway." Paul made it clear in this verse that the reason for diligence is not the recognition of man but the recognition of God.

The Lord rewards us for the way we serve others; it doesn't matter if our deed is large or small (Mt 10:42). He looks at the heart and rewards us accordingly. Understanding this keeps us from being servants to man (1Co 7:23). If our service is really unto the Lord (Eph 6:7), then we will not be motivated by the threats of others. God is our source, and our service is to Him. The boss may sign the checks, but it is God who promotes us (Ps 75:6-7).

The Lord has rewards that come in this life, but the record will never be completely set straight in this life; there are just too many injustices.

In eternity, however, every wrong will be righted and every deed brought out into the light. Those who have served others as unto the Lord with good will from the heart will shine like the sun (Mt 13:43).

EPHESIANS 6:9

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

Note 7 at Eph 6:9: In Eph 6:5-8, Paul gave instructions to servants (employees - see note 1 at Eph 6:5) on how to serve their masters (employers). He told the masters, or employers, that they are supposed to do the same things that he had instructed the employees to do. In other words, just as the employees were supposed to be faithful to their employers, so employers are supposed to be faithful to their employees. Employees are supposed to act like they are serving Christ. Employers are supposed to act as if Christ is their employee.

Note 8 at Eph 6:9: Employers (see note 1 at Eph 6:5) are not supposed to rule by intimidation. The Lord taught that if people want to be great, they need to be the servant (Mt 20:27). Someone might say, "How can this be? If I served instead of ruled, no one would respect me, and therefore no one would obey me. It would never work."

That would be true if there were no God. If God did not intervene in the affairs of man, then the strong would rule the weak. There would be no exceptions. That would be it. But God does exist, and He has promised that if people humble themselves, He will exalt them (1Pe 5:6). If believers want God's help, the way up is down.

Love is a stronger (1Co 13:8) force than fear (1Jo 4:18). It may not be as familiar, but it is stronger. Those who do not respond through love can be forced to obey through fear, but they cannot be forced to submit (see note 2 at Eph 5:22). True submission is something that has to be won through love, not conquered by fear.

Note 9 at Eph 6:9: According to man's laws, slaves are the property of their masters. The masters can do anything with them that they want. Paul reminded the masters in this verse that they have a Master who holds them accountable for the way they treat their slaves, and that heavenly Master will not bend His judgment for anyone.

Likewise today, we may be in positions of authority that we think entitle us to treat others however we please. But we need to remember that every one of us has someone over us (i.e., God) and He will reward us based on how we reward those under our authority (Jas 2:13).

EPHESIANS 6:10

Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

Note 1 at Eph 6:10: Paul told us how we may live victoriously in this present evil age (see note 9 at Ga 1:4) in spite of satanic opposition; it is through God's ability. We become victorious Christians when we live by the power of God's might. Our weaknesses are not an issue if we are drawing on the divine power of God. One of the greatest secrets of victorious Christian living is not just a "changed life" but an "exchanged life" (see note 15 at 1Co 1:30 and note 14 at Ga 2:20).

EPHESIANS 6:11

Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Note 2 at Eph 6:11: Paul said to put on the whole armor of God. Just using part of God's armor will not fully protect us. Many of us Christians have been running around with our helmets of salvation on and nothing else. There is more to overcoming the devil than just being saved. We have to understand our righteous position (see note 12 at Eph 6:14) in the Lord, faith (see note 14 at Eph 6:16), the Word (see note 18 at Eph 6:17), and the Gospel of peace (see note 13 at Eph 6:15).

Note 3 at Eph 6:11: Notice that this is the armor of God that we are told to put on. God didn't just provide us with armor; He gave us His armor. Isa 59:17 specifically mentions the Messiah wearing the helmet of salvation and the breastplate of righteousness. Certainly, God's armor is more than sufficient if we will just wear it and let it work.

In Eph 6:10, Paul said we were to use God's power and might. Here, he told us to use God's armor. If we are dressed like God and fight like Him, we'll look like God to the devil. The devil won't realize we are not God unless we tell him through some statement or act of unbelief.

Note 4 at Eph 6:11: The American Heritage Dictionary defines "wile" as "1. A stratagem or trick intended to deceive or ensnare. 2. A disarming or seductive manner, device, or procedure." This word is denoting trickery and deceit. The word "wiles" is an old English word that is similar to such words as "methods," "strategies," "schemes," "tactics," and "devices." Just as the success of football players, boxers, or soldiers depends partly on how well they know their opponents, so believers must not be ignorant of Satan's devices.

Jesus stripped Satan of all his authority (Mt 28:18). The power that Satan uses against man now is deception. Those who ascribe other powers to him have already fallen prey to one of his lies. The devil deceives people and uses their own power and authority against them. The thing that makes deception so deadly is that those who are deceived don't know it. Once they realize they are deceived, they aren't deceived anymore. The truth of God's Word will remove the deception of the devil and thereby break his power in people's lives.

EPHESIANS 6:12

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

Note 5 at Eph 6:12: Paul made it very clear that our warfare is not against people but against the spiritual powers that operate behind the scenes through people. Therefore, we cannot win a spiritual battle with carnal weapons. We must realize who the real Enemy is and fight with the spiritual weapons the Lord has given us (see note 8 at 2Co 10:4 and note 9 at 2Co 10:5).

We often think that anger will put people in their place. But "the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God" (Jas 1:20). Anger against people makes us play right into the hand of the devil. The way to overcome the spiritual powers that come against us through people is to turn the other cheek (Mt 5:39). That makes the demons flee in terror.

Our natural tendency when we are poor is to hoard or even steal. However, we are not engaged in a physical battle. Through giving when we are in need, we frustrate all of Satan's plans and loose the power of God on our behalf.

Note 6 at Eph 6:12: Four ranks of Satan's hierarchy are mentioned in this verse. "Principalities" seem to be the rulers in Satan's hierarchy. The Greek word used for "principality" in this verse is "ARCHE," and it may possibly be referring to fallen archangels. One archangel that is mentioned in Scripture is Michael, who is referred to in Da 10:13 as being one of the chief rulers. Angels of this type many times seem to have a ministry over the affairs of entire nations.

"Spiritual wickedness in high places" (sometimes referred to as wicked spirits in the earth's atmosphere) is the most frequently engaged enemy that we deal with. The purpose of these spirits is to work against and destroy all that is of Jesus Christ. They do this in the following ways: by hindering God's work (1Th 2:17-18, Ac 17:1-9, Lu 4:5-6, and Re 2:10); blinding people's minds (2Co 4:4); beguiling, misleading, and deceiving people (2Co 11:3); tempting people (1Co 7:5); buffeting God's people (2Co 12:7); and attempting to corrupt and infiltrate the church of Jesus Christ (2Co 11:15 and 1Ti 4:1).

It is supposed by many that the higher echelons of the devil's spiritual authority take more power to rebuke or remove. That's not true. There is no demonic power, including the devil himself, that will not flee at the name of Jesus when faith is put in that name (see note 4 at Mt 17:21).

In recent years, a misapplication of this verse has led some to believe that the only way to battle against the "spiritual wickedness in high places" is to climb tall mountains or buildings, or even rent airplanes and intercede from these heights. That is ridiculous and voids the very context of this verse. Spiritual forces can't be fought in physical ways. Intercession will work on any demonic power from right where the believer is.

EPHESIANS 6:13

Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Note 7 at Eph 6:13: We have already been told to put on the whole armor of God in Eph 6:11 (see note 2 at that verse). Paul told us to do it again here, and this time gave us a reason for doing so. It is because we are fighting a spiritual battle (Eph 6:12). Physical defenses are useless in spiritual matters. We must have God's armor to defend ourselves.

Note 8 at Eph 6:13: These verses are saying that using the whole armor of God will enable us to stand against all the devices of the devil. Therefore, it is implied that if we fail to withstand Satan's attack, we are not using all the armor of God that is available to us.

Note 9 at Eph 6:13: The armor of God doesn't protect us automatically; we have to use it. That's what Paul was referring to here by saying we must do all to stand.

EPHESIANS 6:14

Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness;

Note 10 at Eph 6:14: To be standing in the evil day (Eph 6:13), we must be standing clad in the armor of God. Seven pieces of armor are mentioned: five are defensive and two are offensive, with one being preparatory. The armor is mentioned as being: a belt, a breastplate, shoes, a shield, a helmet, a sword, and prayer.

Note 11 at Eph 6:14: In old English, the "loins" denoted the mid-section, or waist (New International Version), of a person. In some cases, it specified the reproductive ability of the man (Ge 35:11, 46:26; Ac 2:30; Heb 7:5, and 10).

In Bible days, men wore robes or gowns. When they fought or ran, they had to gird up their loins (2Ki 4:29, 9:1; and 1Pe 1:13). This was done by tucking their robes into their girdles, or what we would call belts (see note 2 at Lu 12:35). Therefore, Paul was saying that truth is the belt that allows us to fight without being entangled in our garments. Those who do not surround themselves with truth will become entangled in their own webs of deceit and will fall.

The first and preparatory piece of armor that a soldier wore was the

belt. Centuries ago men would wrestle with only a belt. The object of the match was to remove the opponent's belt. If Satan can disarm us of our belt of truth, he will defeat us, for his greatest weapon is deceit and lies. If we are under his control, it is because we have believed one of his lies instead of the truth of God's Word. Jesus said, "I am...the truth" (Joh 14:6). To have the belt of truth on is to look to Jesus to lead the way, to have your eyes focused only on Him.

When the Divine Warrior, Jesus Christ, returns to claim His kingdom, He will be wearing "the belt of truth." It is described in Isaiah as "faithfulness the girdle of his reins [waist]" (Isa 11:5, brackets mine). Christ will have on the belt of faithfulness and truthfulness. "Faithful" means "adhering firmly and devotedly, as to a person, cause, or idea; loyal" (American Heritage Dictionary). "True" suggests steadiness, reliability, and, in a closely related sense, genuineness.

In Paul's day, corrupt pottery vendors would take pottery that had cracks or defects and fill the flaws with wax. After painting the pottery, they would sell it as genuine, intact pottery. If the pottery was put up to the light, however, one could see the flaws. The honest salesman would advertise his pottery as pottery without wax--sincere, genuine, true pottery. Paul was saying that the Christian must be sincere, genuine, and true, presenting no false appearance; not hypocritical; real. If Christ is not a reality in Christians' lives, they are not ready for battle.

Note 12 at Eph 6:14: The next piece of armor mentioned is "the breastplate of righteousness." The main reason for this piece of armor is for the protection of the heart and vital organs of the body. The breastplate was usually made of interlinking chain mail, metal, or bone, or of metal disks that gave the appearance of a scale, or metal coat. The breastplate was attached to the belt, as was the sword. The breastplate was one of the most important pieces of armor; a soldier would never think of going into hand-to-hand combat without it. It was also one of the heaviest pieces of equipment worn by the soldiers. Historians say that Goliath, the giant killed by David, wore a breastplate that weighed around 150 pounds (1Sa 17:5).

What the breastplate was to the Roman soldier, righteousness is to the Christian soldier. In the spiritual realm, righteousness functions as a breastplate. In fact, the breastplate is righteousness.

There are two basic kinds of righteousness mentioned in the Scriptures. First is man's righteousness--the righteousness that mankind can accomplish and perform without Christ. Isaiah tells us that all of man's righteousnesses are as filthy rags (Isa 64:6). This self-

righteousness has no value to God, but people do have to maintain a certain amount of this righteousness to get along with others here on earth.

Second, there is God's own righteousness that is imputed to us at salvation. Its source is God Himself. God's kind of righteousness comes only through faith. It is a gift and appropriated through Christ. Righteousness gives us total acceptance before God through Christ. This righteousness, which is a gift from God, produces the practical righteousness evident in the actions of the mature believer.

EPHESIANS 6:15

And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

Note 13 at Eph 6:15: Paul drew this metaphor from the Roman military soldier. Roman warriors, as well as Greek ones, would wear sandals with very thick soles that were fastened to the feet by leather thongs. The Roman soldier's shoes had thickly studded nails, or cleats. One historian said the reason that Julius Caesar was such a success as a general was because his men wore military shoes that made it possible to cover long distances in short periods of time.

These military shoes, which are similar to football cleats, not only allowed soldiers rapid movement but also gave them stability in hand-to-hand combat. In the spiritual realm, the shoes of the Gospel of peace make a messenger prepared to share the glad tidings of peace. The Living Bible describes this as "shoes that are able to speed you on as you preach the Good News of peace." The New International Version translates this as "your feet fitted with the readiness that comes from the gospel of peace."

Isa 52:7 describes these shoes similarly: "How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of him that bringeth good tidings, that publisheth peace; that bringeth good tidings of good, that publisheth salvation."

The Gospel of peace being spoken of here is not peace among mankind; that is a byproduct. Rather, this is speaking of peace between God and mankind. Understanding that God is no longer mad at us

keeps us going (see note 2 at Ro 5:1).

EPHESIANS 6:16

Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

Note 14 at Eph 6:16: "Above all" means overall and in front of all. Some have suggested from this statement that the shield of faith is the most important piece of armor.

We exercise faith almost daily in such things as sitting on chairs and driving cars, but our faith is no better than the object in which it is placed. If I were to sit in a chair made of cardboard, I would go crashing to the ground. Regardless of how much faith I had, my faith would fall flat because the object of my faith was faulty.

Scripture tells us in Heb 12:2 that we are to be "looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith." We must transfer our faith from human self-reliance and dependence to relying upon, clinging to, and trusting Jesus Christ in all areas of our lives. Faith in its simplest definition is to trust, to rely, and to depend upon the resource of another. God's Word declares that the object of our faith, Jesus Christ, can never fail or disappoint us.

Note 15 at Eph 6:16: The shield in the Old Testament was referred to as "the buckler." Several types of shields were used in the Apostle Paul's day. A small shield was used when fighting with the sword, and it covered over the whole area of the soldier's arm. There was a second type of shield that was about two-and-a-half feet wide and four feet high. It was usually about as thick as the palm of a man's hand. This great, massive shield came to be known as a door shield. Sometimes it was made of bronze or gold, but most of the time, it was made of heavy wooden planks glued together; covered with linen, canvas, or animal hides; and trimmed with solid iron or metal. When Roman soldiers would advance in battle, they would overlap these large shields, making a wall that would be able to stop the most modern weapons of the time.

One of the most advanced weapons of that time was the flaming arrow.

It contained a little ball of linen dipped in pitch and ignited. The intention was to ignite the linen under the opposing soldier's breastplate and thereby consume him. This massive door shield created a wall to protect the Roman soldier from every fiery dart. The counterpart of this is the shield of faith that protects the Christian soldier. This verse states, "Above all, taking the shield of faith" (see note 14 at this verse).

Note 16 at Eph 6:16: Some people get very angry when anyone advocates total victory in the Christian life. They don't think it is obtainable; therefore, it is wrong to promote such ideas and get people's hopes up, since they will just be disappointed. But this verse teaches that our shield of faith will quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. Total victory is possible!

It is important to realize that this victorious Christian life doesn't happen because there is no opposition. Satan will shoot his fiery darts. In fact, once a person starts standing on the Word of God, the attack intensifies (2Ti 3:12 and Mr 4:17, see note 5 at Mr 4:16). Victory over all the attacks of the Enemy is possible. Paul said, "Now thanks be unto God, which always causeth us to triumph in Christ" (2Co 2:14). Paul had great opposition, but he always won.

It is true that total victory is not common among Christians, and from the viewpoint of some, it may be nonexistent. But that is not because it is not available. Teaching that God wills us to fail at times is like telling athletes that their coach wants them to lose. We all learn from defeats, and losing can be used to make us better people; but real winners never plan to lose. Christians who plan to lose, will.

EPHESIANS 6:17

And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God:

Note 17 at Eph 6:17: The helmet was a piece of armor that protected the Roman soldier against deadly blows to the head. What the helmet was to the Roman soldier, salvation is to the Christian soldier. There can be no victory unless the mind is protected with God's Word. Ro 8:6 says, "For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace." As Christians, the battlefield is in the area of our

minds (see note 9 at 2Co 10:5). We must be careful to protect our minds from wrong thinking and be transformed by the renewing of our minds (Ro 12:2). Every thought can be brought captive to the obedience of Jesus Christ (2Co 10:4-5).

Note 18 at Eph 6:17: The "sword of the Spirit" is our only offensive weapon. In battle, defense is a great asset to any warrior. If a warrior has only a good defense and no offense, though, he might protect himself from being badly hurt, but he could not win the battle. This piece of armor known as the "sword of the Spirit" is the only piece of armor that has the ability to cut, wound, and hurt our Enemy, the devil.

Several Greek words are used for the "word" of God. The Greek word used here is "RHEMA," and it literally means a spoken word--specifically, a spoken word appropriate for your situation. It's not the Bible lying on your coffee table that makes the Enemy flee; it is the Word of God hidden in your heart, activated by the power of the Holy Spirit, and spoken in an appropriate situation. It's similar to what Jesus said in Joh 6:63--"The words that I speak unto you, they are spirit, and they are life." Eph 6:17 is not speaking of a book, but it's speaking of a book as a RHEMA; i.e., the words we speak that come from the written Word of God and empowered by the Holy Spirit. The Word by itself doesn't make us free. It is the Word we know and speak that will deliver us (Joh 8:32).

Why is the Word so effective? It's because it is the Word of God. It has authority, because it is indeed the Word of God. God's Word supersedes all authority of the church, of reason, of intellect, and even of Satan himself. That's why it is so effective.

Note 19 at Eph 6:17: The Word of God in this verse is also referred to as "the sword of the Spirit." Notice that it is the Holy Spirit that wields this Word as it is spoken in faith. Speaking God's Word in faith brings the Holy Spirit into action. In Lu 4, when Jesus was tempted of the devil for forty days, it was "the sword of the Spirit," the Word of God, that Jesus used to defeat the Enemy during His temptation (see note 5 at Lu 4:4). Jesus constantly met His temptation by quoting from God's Word as He repeatedly stated the phrase, "It is written." Likewise, Christian soldiers must avail themselves of God's Word by placing it in their hearts so that the Holy Spirit may bring it forth at the appropriate time to accomplish a complete and total victory.

EPHESIANS 6:18

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Note 20 at Eph 6:18: In this verse, Paul was speaking of the last piece of the Christian's armor--prayer. The phrase "all prayer" means various kinds of prayer in the Spirit. Prayer is more than just asking. For example, there are prayers of praise, intercession, thanksgiving, agreement, and dedication. It is inappropriate to ask for something more than once, but we can and should continue to pray with these other forms of prayer until we see our answers manifest in the flesh. Prayer is another form of absolute dependence and reliance upon God for His divine intervention.

Note 21 at Eph 6:18: The word "supplication" used in this verse is the Greek noun "DEESIS," and it was translated "prayer" or "prayers" twelve times (Lu 1:13, 2:37, 5:33; Ro 10:1; 2Co 1:11, 9:14; Php 1:4, 19; 2Ti 1:3; Heb 5:7; Jas 5:16; and 1Pe 3:12), "supplication" or "supplications" six times (Ac 1:14 [once]; this verse [twice]; Php 4:6 [once]; 1Ti 2:1 [once], and 5:5 [once]), and "request" once (Php 1:4). This word emphasizes a specific need and the entreaty to God for that need. Many times, this takes the form of intercession for the saints (this verse).

Note 22 at Eph 6:18: "In the Spirit" means prayer directed by God's Spirit and in accordance with God's will (1Jo 5:14-15). Paul used this terminology when referring to praying in tongues (1Co 14:2 and 15, see note 20 at 1Co 14:15). Therefore, this includes praying in tongues (see note 13 at Mr 16:17).

Note 23 at Eph 6:18: The Greek word for "perseverance" is "PROSKARTERESIS," and it was used only this one time in the New Testament. This word carries the idea of being on the alert as you wear the Christian armor.

EPHESIANS 6:20

For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Note 24 at Eph 6:20: Notice that Paul requested prayer for utterance (Eph 6:19); that is, that he might be given words empowered by the Holy Spirit to clearly make known the mystery of the Gospel. In effect, his prayer was for more boldness in proclaiming the Gospel, yet it was his boldness with the Gospel that had landed him in jail ("ambassador in bonds"). Prison hadn't diminished Paul's zeal; he was asking for prayer so that he could be bolder than ever. Paul's heart's desire and prayer to God was that people might be saved (Ro 10:1).

Note 25 at Eph 6:20: Once again, Paul's attitude toward his problems came shining through. He did not see himself as a prisoner of the Roman government but as an ambassador of the Lord Jesus Christ. It doesn't matter how others see us; it's how we see ourselves and our situation that determines our attitude (see note 1 at Eph 3:1).

EPHESIANS 6:21

But that ye also may know my affairs, [and] how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:

Note 1 at Eph 6:21: Paul sent Tychicus (see note 6 at Ac 20:4) to the Ephesians so that he could more fully inform them of Paul's activities and how he was doing. Tychicus was with Paul during his imprisonment in Rome and was considered by Paul to be a faithful and beloved brother.

EPHESIANS 6:22

Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and [that] he might comfort your hearts.

Note 2 at Eph 6:22: It was no small thing in Paul's day for Tychicus to travel from Rome to Ephesus just to communicate to the Ephesians how Paul was doing and to comfort them. This emphasizes how much Paul loved these people and wanted to minister to them.

EPHESIANS 6:23

Peace [be] to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Note 3 at Eph 6:23: Peace, love, or faith would be a wonderful blessing to receive by itself, but we have all of these and much, much more in Christ Jesus.

EPHESIANS 6:24

Grace [be] with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

Note 4 at Eph 6:24: Grace was the main revelation that God gave Paul. He brought this truth out as none of the other apostles did. Paul invoked the blessing of God's grace upon the recipients of each one of his letters.

The following is a summary of Paul's benedictions to his epistles: "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen" (Ro 16:20). "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. My love be with you all in Christ Jesus. Amen" (1Co 16:23-24). "The grace of the Lord Jesus Christ, and the love of God, and the communion of the Holy Ghost, be with you all. Amen" (2Co 13:14). "Brethren, the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen" (Ga 6:18). "Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen" (this verse). "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (Php 4:23). "The salutation by the hand of me Paul. Remember my bonds. Grace be with you. Amen" (Col 4:18). "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you. Amen" (1Th 5:28). "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all. Amen" (2Th 3:18). "Grace be with thee. Amen" (1Ti 6:21). "The Lord Jesus Christ be with thy spirit. Grace be with you. Amen" (2Ti 4:22). "All that are with me salute thee. Greet them that love us in the faith. Grace be with you all. Amen" (Tit 3:15). "The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with your spirit. Amen" (Phm 25).