

Ephesians

Windell Gann's e-Sword Notes

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EPHESIANS

Introduction

No book of the Bible exalts Christ and His church to the great extent that Ephesians does. God's eternal purpose is unveiled in this rich epistle of six vibrant chapters. If there is one verse that truly blends all of the thoughts together it is [Eph_3:21](#) –

"Unto God be glory in the church by Christ Jesus, throughout all ages, world without end, Amen."

The book of Ephesians has six great chapters sharing with us vital information on the church. Notice this simple outline of the contents:

<i>Chapter 1</i>	<i>The church as the fulness of Christ</i>
<i>Chapter 2</i>	<i>Reconciled to God in the church</i>
<i>Chapter 3</i>	<i>Glorifying God through the church</i>
<i>Chapter 4</i>	<i>The Oneness of the church</i>
<i>Chapter 5</i>	<i>The Bride of Christ</i>
<i>Chapter 6</i>	<i>The Army of the Lord!</i>

CHAPTER 1 of Ephesians tells us that *all* spiritual blessings are *in Christ*. We learn that sinners are redeemed through the blood of Jesus ([Eph 1:3](#); [Eph 1:7](#)). In [Eph 1:20-23](#) we learn of the necessity of the church. Christ is head over all things to the church (this eliminates the Pope, latter day "prophets" and all hierarchy). Many sectarian notions and denominational doctrines are ruined by clear-cut statements found in chapter one of Ephesians. Since Christ purchased the church with His own blood ([Act 20:28](#)) it is **essential** for us to be in that which the blood bought.

CHAPTER 2 tells us of the tragic position those outside of the Lord find themselves in. Notice these points in chapter 2:

- (1) Dead in trespasses and sins
- (2) Without hope and without God
- (3) Unreconciled and separated from God

As one preacher said: "They are hopeless, helpless and hapless in this world and in the one to come." But:

! God's grace is *in Christ* ([2Ti 2:10](#))

! Salvation is *in Christ* ([Act 4:12](#))

And [Gal 3:27](#) tells us that the way to get into the Lord is through baptism ([Col 2:12](#); [Rom 6:3-5](#)).

The church of the Lord is a spiritual relationship with the Redeemer that transcends geography. Being rooted in Christ means that we are part of the pillar and ground of Truth.

CHAPTER 3 tells us of the glorious *nature* of Christ's church. This spiritual body of the Savior holds a high and lofty place in God's eternal purpose because of its relationship to Jesus. He is the:

Builder ([Mat 16:18](#)); *Purchaser* ([Act 20:28](#)); *Head* (Eph. 5:23); *Savior* ([Eph 5:24](#)); *Foundation* ([1Co 3:11](#)); *Captain* ([Heb 2:10](#)); and *King* ([Joh 18:36](#)).

The Lord's church will succeed because of its divine founder, the divine book (the Bible), and its heavenly goal. There are those who teach that the church was a substitute for the kingdom due to the rejection of the kingdom by the Jews. However, [Eph 3:9-11](#) carefully records the fact that God purposed from eternity that the church would be established and that through the church the *manifold wisdom of God* would be made known to powers in heavenly places.

CHAPTER 4 of this fascinating book sets forth seven points in heaven's platform for unity. The book is written in the decade of the 60's when animosity between Jews and Gentiles is building up greatly [resulting in the Roman-Jewish war AD 67-70], and what a struggle it must have been to keep down racial friction in the church and so in this chapter Paul stresses the UNITY of ALL the disciples in Christ! There was:

One Body -- not one Jewish church and one Gentile church!
 One Spirit -- both the Jews and Gentile guided the same way
 One Hope -- their aspirations were the same
 One Lord -- both Jews and Gentiles the *same* Savior
 One Faith -- their doctrine of faith and practice was the same
 One Baptism -- all Jewish and Gentile disciples were baptized the same way (burial) for the same purpose (remission of sins) into the same Body.
 One God -- they both believed in and worshiped the same God!

Some would teach that of these 7 only one (baptism) is non-essential. But that is arbitrary choosing due to sectarian thinking. Some would say: "There are many faiths"-- but the Bible sanctions only *one*. And, [Rom 10:17](#) lets us know that "*faith comes by hearing the word of God.*" Others argue that there are many churches pleasing to heaven but Paul's identification of Christ's church as **the** body ([Eph 1:22-23](#)) rules out denominationalism.

In the next section -- vs. 7-16-- careful Bible students learn of the purpose of miracles in the first century. Not only did such phenomena "*confirm the word*" ([Mar 16:20](#); [Heb 2:1-4](#)) the miraculous also caused the church to become full-grown *when* the solid unity of truth ("unity of the faith") was revealed. Every wind of doctrine could be challenged properly when the Scriptures were completed as the Spirit revealed to the apostles "*all truth*" ([Joh 16:13](#); [Joh 17:17](#)).

CHAPTER 5 Redemption becomes a key word tying together the rich challenge of the first part of the book with the pulsating closing thoughts. Here is one point for each chapter:

- (1) Redeemed by His blood
- (2) Redeemed by His cross
- (3) Redeemed through His church
- (4) Redemption demands purity
- (5) Redemption demands separation
- (5) Redemption brings opposition.

The first part of chapter 5 reminds us forcefully that we follow the Lord and not the flesh. No filthiness, jesting, fornication, covetousness, vanity, disobedience, or fellowship with darkness can be tolerated.

The last section of chapter 5 tells the message of submission. It is a story of Christ and the church illustrated by the husband-wife relationship in marriage.

CHAPTER 6 deals with a valuable, and yet, often overlooked lesson. Children must obey their parents if God's plan for the home is effectively followed. The rampant rise of rebellion around the world can be traced to parents who allowed their offspring to disregard proper respect for authority.

The major lesson of the final stanza of Ephesians has to do with the militant nature of Christ's church-- His army! Our spiritual warfare against the hosts of sin is powerful. The one weapon to be used is the *sword of the Spirit*-- the Word of God! We battle against Satan and Sin. There is no furlough or week-end pass. Soldiers of Christ are always on guard and on duty against emissaries of evil. The panoply of the Christian as a soldier of Jesus includes, *truth, righteousness, peace, faith, prayer and the proper use of the Scriptures*, our sword.

Paul, an ambassador in bonds bids the Ephesians farewell in his familiar benediction of peace, grace and love.

The book is a rare gem of deep vibrant passages exalting Christ and His Church in the eternal purpose of God!

Introductory Notes:

Eph. 1-3 I. DOCTRINE - Our *Riches* in Christ - Matter of Our *Wealth* - *Position*
Eph. 4-6 II. DUTY - Our *Responsibilities* in Christ - Manner of our *Walk* - *Practice*

Ephesians = 155 verses

Key Work = Unity (Jew and Gentile)

Key Verse = *Eph_1:10* ; *Eph_2:16* ; *Eph_3:6* ; *Eph_4:13* ; *Eph_4:16* ; *Eph_5:32-32* ; *Eph_6:19-20*

Agent = Christ

Instrument = the church

Ephesians: God's Plan for Unity In The Church
Part I The Nature of the church - ch. 1-3
Part II The Life in it - ch. 4-6

Date: Probably late AD 62

Design: To Encourage and stress the blessing had in Christ

Verse Comments

Ephesians 1:1

apostle of Jesus Christ -- Paul asserts that he was a chosen ambassador for Christ to carry His message.

by the will of God -- While commissioned by Christ, the underlying will was God's that choose him to be an apostle. He makes it clear in the the Galatian epistle that his apostleship was not from any man or group of men *Gal_1:1*.

to the saints -- *The letter is addressed to faithful believers, "holy ones,"* in Christ Jesus at Ephesus.

Holy ones; persons possessed of holiness, separated from sin to God. It is true that this is "the

language of charitable presumption" (Pearson, *Exposition of the Creed*, Art. ix); when a community is thus described, St Paul does not thereby positively assert that each individual answers the description. But observe that this presumptive use of the word "saint" does not lower the true sense of the word, so as to make it *properly* mean, e. g., *merely* a member of a Christian community, a possessor of visible Church privileges. - CBSC

in Ephesus -- Two of the oldest manuscripts omit the words, **in Ephesus**, although they stand in most manuscripts. Many scholars think this was a circular letter, written to be read by local gatherings of Christians in several places, of which the church at Ephesus was the most prominent. Fortunately the question affects neither the authenticity of the letter nor its value for us. - BBC

While certainly directed to Ephesus it was also a circular letter. Two things in particular make us seem certain of this: **1)** The omission of the words "*in Ephesus*" in many MSS, and the fact that some epistles are directed to regional churches, ([Gal 1:2](#); [1Pe 1:1](#);) The fact that Paul intended for some of his letters to be read at multiple places, [Col 4:16](#). **2)** The lack of personal and direct references to the Ephesus church (as in Romans 16, and the end of some epistles). - WG

and faithful -- The words "faith," "trust," and "believe" used in English translations all have the same Greek root ([πιστος](#), *pistos*). The word's primary OT emphasis is on the trustworthiness of God. In this context they are "holy" saints and faithful.

The word may mean simply 'trustworthy' (cf. [Eph 6:21](#), [πιστὸς διάκονος](#)) or 'believing.' As a Christian characteristic (the mark by which the Christian 'Saints' were distinguished from the unbelieving Jews. - CBSC

÷Ephesians 1:2

Grace to you and peace -- Paul's regular greeting and introduction found in all thirteen of his epistles.

"Grace" was formal greeting used in Greek letters of this day (note this use in [Act 15:23](#); [Act 23:26](#), [Jas 1:1](#)), while the word "peace" [Hebrew equivalent was "*shalom*."] was the customary Jewish greeting. Paul liked always using both words.

Paul may have written this entire epistle by hand (as he did the letter to Philemon, [Phm 1:19](#).) However, there are indications in six of his epistles that Paul used an amanuensis to write some of his letters and this was probably his usual practice. (see [Rom 16:22](#), [1Co 16:21](#), [Gal 6:11](#), [Col 4:18](#), [2Th 3:17](#), [Phm 1:19](#)).

God our Father -- God chose family terms to reveal Himself to mankind (Example: [Hosea 2-3](#) as passionate, faithful lover, [Hosea 11](#) as loving father and mother). See [Col 1:2](#).

Lord -- The Greek term "Lord" (*kurios*) can be used in a general sense or in a developed theological sense. It can mean "mister," "sir," "master," "owner," "husband" (e.g., [Joh 4:11](#); [Joh 4:15](#); [Joh 9:36](#)) or "the full God-man" (e.g., [Joh 4:19](#); [Joh 9:38](#)).

The OT (Hebrew, *adon*) usage of this term came from the Jews' reluctance to pronounce the covenant name for God, YHWH (cf. [Exo 3:14](#),). They were afraid of breaking the Commandment which said, "Thou shalt not take the name of the Lord thy God in vain" (cf. [Exo 20:7](#); [Deu 5:11](#)). Therefore, they thought if they did not pronounce it, they could not take it in vain. So, they substituted the Hebrew word *adon*, which had a similar meaning to the Greek word *kurios* (Lord).

The NT authors used this term to describe the full deity of Christ. The phrase "Jesus is Lord" was the public confession of faith and a baptismal formula of the early church (cf. [Rom 10:9-13](#); [1Co 12:3](#); [Php 2:11](#)).

÷Ephesians 1:3

Verse 3: 1) Source; 2) Scope; 3) Sphere

v. 3-14 is one sentence; poetical in structure, parallelism, Doxology.

[Wuest says the contents of verses 3-14 make one long sentence, possibly the longest sentence of connected discourse in existence. Long sentences is characteristic of this book, (cf. [Eph 1:3-23](#); [Eph 2:1-10](#); [Eph 2:14-22](#); [Eph 3:1-12](#); [Eph 3:14-19](#); [Eph 4:11-16](#); [Eph 6:13-20](#)).]

Blessed be the God -- This Greek term "eulogy" (*eulogô*) which means to praise or commend and was always used of praising God. It is a different term from the "blessed" (*makarios*) of the beatitudes (cf. [Mat 5:1-11](#)).

Blessed be -- "Worthy of blessing is..." gives the meaning in English more exactly of the Greek.

Blessed (εὐλογητός) is normally applied to God, as having an intrinsic right to the worship of His creatures.

The Father sent the Son and the Spirit to bring believers into fellowship with Himself and fellowship with one another.

the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ -- God the Father is the God of our Lord Jesus Christ as He (the Lord Jesus) is seen in His humanity. He cried on the Cross, "My God, My God, why hast thou forsaken Me?"

The Father addresses, the Son, "Thy throne, O God, is for ever and ever" ([Heb 1:8](#)). But in our Ephesian passage Paul is thinking of the humanity of our blessed Lord as he died on the cross for the forgiveness of our sins, [Eph 1:7](#).

who -- God the Father. Why blessed ...

blessed us with --

- 1) v.3 All spiritual blessing are in Christ
- 2) v. 4-6 We Are Chosen in Christ
 - He chose us, adopted us, character
- 3) v. 7-8 Redemption Is In Christ
- 4) v. 9-10 All Things Gathered in Christ
- 5) v. 11-12 Inheritance Is In Christ
- 6) v. 12-13 Our Trust Is In Christ
- 7) v. 13-14 Sealed In Christ

every spiritual blessing -- Verses 4–14 specify the contents of these blessings, which cover the whole scope of God's saving work in Christ. This includes the type of people God selected to save, our adoption to sonship, redemption, forgiveness, and sealing.

Spiritual" blessings are benefits that relate to our spiritual life in contrast to our physical life. Since God has already given us these things, we do not need to ask for them but should appropriate them by faith and give thanks for them.

in Christ -- The believers are associated in union and companionship with Christ. The believer have committed themselves into his providential care by trusting and obeying and recognize Him as the source of their blessings.

in heavenly places -- Lit., "*in the heavenlies*"; an adjective without a noun.

in heavenly places -- A key phrase; Only used in Ephesians; [Eph 1:3](#); [Eph 1:10](#); [Eph 1:20](#); [Eph 2:6](#); [Eph 3:10](#); [Eph 6:12](#)

"The spiritual sphere or realm of Christ's reign rather than a physical location."

The word "places" is in italics, showing that the word as such is not in the Greek text, and is supplied by the translators in an attempt to make plain to the English reader, the thought in the Greek text. The original has *en tois epouraniois*; a preposition (in), the definite article, (*tois*) and an adjective meaning "in or above heaven, existing in heaven, the heavenly regions; i.e., the abode of God and angels." Thayer applies the last meaning to [Eph 1:3](#), [Eph 1:20](#), [Eph 2:6](#), [Eph 3:10](#), where the same expression is used.

÷Ephesians 1:4

2) v. 4-6 We are chosen in Christ

He chose us, adopted us, character

chose us -- Both Jew and Gentile alike were included in God's eternal plan of redemption. God wanted them all. This focused on the Father's choice before time.

The term election = has to do with the *people*.

The term predestination = has to do with the *purpose*.

in him -- Those that would be saved would be "in Him". They would be people with a special relationship with Christ.

God chose a class of people - the people who accept Christ as Lord and Savior. Many will not accept Christ, but those who do accept him are given the privilege to become sons of God ([Joh 1:12](#)). - CPNIV

In Christ is one of the key expressions of Ephesians. There are two closely related lines of truth in the NT — the truth of the believer's position and the truth of his practice. - BBC

in Him -- This is a key concept. The Father's blessings, grace and salvation flow only through Christ (cf. [Joh 10:7-18](#); [Joh 14:6](#)). Notice the repetition of this grammatical form (locative of sphere) in [Eph 1:3](#), "in Christ"; [Eph 1:4](#), "in Him"; [Eph 1:7](#), "in Him"; [Eph 1:9](#), "in Him"; [Eph 1:10](#), "in Christ," "in Him"; [Eph 1:12](#), "in Christ" and [Eph 1:13](#), "in Him" (twice). These are parallel to "in the Beloved" of [Eph 1:6](#). - Utley

before the foundation of the world -- God's selection of the plan of salvation was not an "afterthought" but it was made before the creation of this world. Those to be saved would be those "in Christ".

This phrase is also used in [Mat 25:34](#); [Joh 17:24](#); [1Pe 1:19-20](#) and [Rev 13:8](#).

This phrase refers to eternity before the time of this world's creation. Paul is speaking from a heavenly perspective when describing God's plan to save men "in Christ."

holy ... blameless ... in love -- The character of those "in Christ" are to be people of holy character. In Christ we are holy, blameless, and loved by God.

(1) Is this description describing the character of those chosen, or

(2) how they will be "counted" when they are "in Christ."

Christians are "**holy**" (*hagious*; cf. *hagiois*, "saints," [Eph 1:1](#)), that is, set apart, dedicated to God. In addition, Christians, as redeemed forgiven people, are "**blameless**." This word *amō̄mous*, "without blemish," is used eight times in the New Testament ([Eph 1:4](#); [Eph 5:27](#); [Php 2:15](#); [Col 1:22](#); [Heb 9:14](#); [1Pe 1:19](#); [2Pe 3:14](#); [Rev 14:5](#)). In the Septuagint it is used of sacrificial animals; only those without blemish could be offered to God.

in love -- (1) Is this referring to divine love demonstrated in God's grace. Or (2) to man's love. The other five occurrences of "in love" in Ephesians ([Eph 3:17](#); [Eph 4:2](#), [Eph 4:15-16](#); [Eph 5:2](#)) Here it seems to refer to God's love for mankind.

Bible expositors are in hopeless disagreement as to whether the words "in love" qualify that which precedes or that which follows.

÷Ephesians 1:5

Who, What, When, Why, How,

Note what was done, Who did the selecting; When it was done; In Whom it was made. Why in v.6

having predestinated -- God pre-determined [foreordained] the plan that those "in Christ" would be adopted as His children. See [Eph 3:11](#); [Rom 8:29](#)

Predestined is from *proorisas*, "marked out beforehand." G4309. Thus the emphasis of predestination is on the *what* and *how* rather than the *who*.

for adoption -- 'Adoption,' was frequent in all parts of the Graeco-Roman world. And Paul seems to have laid hold of the figure to suggest the truth that the special Christian relation of sonship to God (cf. [Eph 5:1](#); [Rom 8:15](#); [Rom 8:23](#); [Rom 9:4](#); [Gal 4:5](#)) is as the relation of Israel to YHWH had been ([Rom 9:4](#), cf. [Exo 4:22](#) ff.)

as sons -- A well-to-do but childless adult who wanted an heir would adopt a male, usually at an age other than in infancy and frequently a slave, to be his son. - CPNIVNT

An adopted son is given the same rights to be a heir to the Father according to the good pleasure and testament of the Father.

through Jesus Christ -- The agent handling the adoption, so to speak, was Christ. Those "in Christ", in a fellowship, or relationship with Christ, would be the ones predestined to be adopted.

Through Jesus Christ is the only one way to the Father, (cf. [Joh 14:6](#); [Act 4:12](#); [1Ti 2:5](#)).

according to -- This plan for adoption was due simply to God's sovereign will.

the good pleasure of His will -- It was/is God's own choice to save people this way, [Eph 1:11](#); [2Pe 3:9](#).

÷Ephesians 1:6

to the praise -- Why? Because our salvation glorifies God - cf. [Eph 3:10-11](#). In praising God for what He does, we learn to praise Him for who He is.

his glorious grace -- God's plan of action reveals his grace (*undeserved favor*, cf. [Eph_1:7](#)) to mankind. [Joh 1:14](#); [2Pe 3:9](#). God's **grace** is not merely *unmerited favor*, but it reveals also the divine character.

This phrase is repeated three times (cf. [Eph_1:6](#); [Eph_1:12](#); [Eph_1:14](#)) and accents the work of the three persons of the Trinity.

1. God the Father before time, [Eph_1:1-6](#)
2. God the Son in time, [Eph_1:1-12](#)
3. God the Spirit through time, [Eph_1:1-14](#) - Utley

glorious -- *Glory* is another of the ruling words of the epistle, falling into the same category with *riches* and *fulness*.

Alford says: "The end, God's end, in our predestination to adoption, is that the glory, glorious nature, brightness and majesty, and kindliness and beauty, - of His grace might be the object of men and angel's praise: both as it is in Him, ineffable and infinite, - and exemplified in us, its objects."

freely given us -- The verb [εχαριτωσεν](#) from the noun "grace" (*charis*). The verb form is used only one other time in the New Testament ([Luk_1:28](#), where Mary is said to be "highly favored").

in the Beloved [in the One he loves] -- This stresses the manifestation of God's love to His Son (cf. "the Son He loves," [Col 1:13](#)).

God the Father loves His Son; and believers, being in the Son, are also the object of God's love.

÷Ephesians 1:7

3) v. 7-8 Redemption Is in Christ

In whom -- "The Beloved" that ends [Eph_1:6](#), is described as the One "in whom we have redemption.

we have -- [εχομεν](#) we have, [G2192 V-PAI-1P](#) "in whom we are having redemption".

we have redemption -- ([G629](#), [N-ASF](#)) The verb is a present participle, so it is durative in action, thus, "in whom we are having redemption." The **redemption** [G629 N-ASF](#) is an abiding fact from the past, through the present, and into the future.

redemption -- The word "redemption" is *apolutrōsis* which Thayer defines as follows; the verb, "to redeem one by paying the price, to let one go free on receiving the price"; the noun, "a releasing effected by payment of ransom, deliverance, liberation procured by the payment of a ransom."

The story of redemption can be told in three Greek words; *agorazō*, "to buy in the slave market" ([1Co 6:20](#), [1Co 7:23](#), [1Co 7:30](#), [2Pe 2:1](#), [Rev 5:9](#)).

The Lord Jesus bought us in the slave market of sin, the ransom price, His blood; we are his bondslaves; *exagorazō*, "to buy out of the slave market, to buy off, to buy for one's self" ([Gal 3:13](#), [Gal 4:5](#)).

The redeemed are the possession of the Lord Jesus forever, and will never be put up for sale in any slave market again; *lutroō* "to liberate by payment of ransom" ([Tit 2:14](#), [1Pe 1:18](#)); the redeemed are set free from the guilt and power of sin now, to be finally set free from the presence of sin...

The particular aspect of redemption spoken of here is redemption from the guilt and condemnation of sin, for the qualifying phrase, "*the forgiveness of sins*" is added. - Wuest

redemption -- Involves 5 basic matters:

- 1) Those in *need* of redemption - the lost
- 2) *Someone* to do the redeeming - the redeemer
- 3) The *price* for redemption - the ransom
- 4) The actual *paying* of the price - redemption
- 5) Those *who* receive the benefit - the redeemed

through his blood -- The preposition "through" is *dia*, the preposition of intermediate agency.

blood -- the price paid for our redemption - [Act 20:28](#); [1Pe 1:18-19](#). The out-poured blood of the Son of God at the Cross is the *lutron*, "the price for redeeming, the ransom," used of the act of buying slaves, of paying the ransom for a life or of captives.

The "**blood**" of Christ sums up the whole process of giving up his life. We should not simply think of the red liquid substance of blood, but the entire whole of a *life-sacrifice* freely surrendered out of love. - WG

forgiveness -- [αφεσις](#) ^{G859}, The noun *aphesis*, used in relation to "sins," means "a release, the letting them go as if they had not been committed, thus, forgiveness, a remission of their penalty" (Thayer). Trench says that the image underlying the verb is that of releasing a prisoner ([Isa 61:1](#)), or letting go, as of a debt ([Deu 15:3](#)).

of sins [our trespasses] -- [Heb 9:22](#); [Mat 26:28](#). [παραπτώματων](#) ^{G3900}; The particular word for "sins" here is *paraptōma*, and means, "a fall beside or near something; a lapse or deviation from truth and uprightness, a sin, a misdeed, a trespass."

(This is a different word from the usual "*sin*" [ἁμαρτία](#), *hamartia*; = *to miss the mark*. And better translated "trespasses" here, [Mat 6:14](#).)

our -- Notice the plural pronoun article, "**our**" sins.

riches of his grace -- The degree of this forgiveness was controlled, dominated by the riches, (*ploutos*) wealth, abundance, plenitude of God's grace [unmerited favor]. This forgiveness is therefore a complete, an unqualified, an unchanging one, since it is controlled by the plenitude of God's grace, and that plenitude is infinite in proportion. - Wuest

RICHES

- 1) Grace - [Eph_1:7](#); [Eph_2:7](#)
- 2) Glory - [Eph_1:18](#); [Eph_3:16](#)
- 3) Mercy - [Eph_2:4](#)
- 4) Unsearchable - [Eph_3:8](#)

÷Ephesians 1:8

lavished -- Abundance continues to set the tone in verse 8 — *grace* is said to have been *lavished on us*.

lavished -- Paul uses this term (*perisseuō*) over and over again (cf. [Rom 5:15](#); [Rom 15:13](#); [1Co 15:58](#); [2Co 1:5](#); [2Co 8:2](#); [2Co 8:7](#); [2Co 9:8](#); [Eph 1:8](#); [Php 1:9](#); [Php 4:12](#); [Php 4:18](#); [Col 2:7](#); [1Ti 4:1](#)). It expresses Paul's sense of the full measure and beyond of God's grace and provisions in Christ. God's love for us demonstrated in Christ is like an overflowing fountain or an artesian well!

This time-reference is fixed by the next verse. Ideally, and for the Church as a body,

upon us, in all wisdom and insight -- They may mean either that God largely exercised His wisdom and prudence, or that He largely gave wisdom and prudence to the saints, but our understanding is the former.

- WG

“in all wisdom and insight” -- This refers to God’s gift of understanding, not the gnostic false teachers’ secret knowledge, which He gave so that fallen mankind might grasp the implications of the gospel (cf. vv. 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 9, 10 and 18–23; [Luk 1:17](#); [Col 1:9](#)). The false teachers were emphasizing a secret human wisdom. God’s wisdom is Christ. (Utley)

“Wisdom” (*sophia*) is what is highest and noblest, and **“insight”** or “understanding” (*phronesei*) is the means by which we perceive it. ²⁴

Again we have to decide whether the last part of this verse modifies the first part of verse 8 or the first part of verse 9 (cf. v. 4). Normally the modifying phrases follow the action words in this passage. Paul’s idea therefore seems to have been that God lavished His grace on us in His infinite wisdom knowing how we would respond to it. The wisdom and insight are God’s, not ours.

²⁴ 24. Richard C. Trench, *Synonyms of the New Testament*, pp. 263–67.

÷Ephesians 1:9

making known -- An aorist participle, *having made known*. The time-reference is to the actual revelation of the Gospel. . [Rom 3:21](#); [Rom 16:25-26](#); [2Ti 1:10](#).

mystery -- In Paul’s writings, the Greek word used here, *mystērion*, refers to God’s plan now revealed in Christ to unify the Jews and Gentiles into one new people of God, the church. [Eph 3:3](#); [Eph 3:5-6](#); [Eph 3:9](#).

The New Testament uses the term “mystery” to refer to a truth previously hidden but now made known by divine revelation (cf. [Mat 13:11](#); [Luk 8:10](#); [Rom 11:25](#); [Rom 16:25-26](#); et al.)

mystery - something which has been hidden, or not revealed, but Paul says is now being made known. Something that Paul goes on to say can be read and understood, [Eph 3:3-6](#).

of his will -- God's plan and choice.

according to his purpose -- God in his Sovereignty chooses his path of action. Without foreign aid or counsel. His purposes originated in his own mind, and were concealed until he chose to make them known; see [2Ti 1:9](#).

set forth in Christ -- God initiated his plan and fulfilled it in Christ.

÷Ephesians 1:10

dispensation of the fulness of times -- The Christian age: cf. [Gal 4:4](#) ([Eph 3:2](#) - "dispensation of grace").

fullness of time -- When the time was just right; when all elements were present make the timing perfect for God's plan. (See [Gal 4:4](#) note.)

fullness of times -- God’s previously hidden plan has now been revealed to believers through Christ, the focal point of God’s redemptive activity (compare [Eph 3:1-9](#)). - FSB

unite all things -- bring together The Greek verb used here, *anakephalaioō*, means “to sum up” or “head up.” Later in Ephesians, Paul describes Christ as the “head” (*kephalē*) of the Church ([Eph 1:22-23](#); [Eph 4:15](#); [Eph 5:23](#)).

the summing up of all things in Christ -- This compound term is literally “the uniting of several things under one head.” This is a reference to the cosmic significance of the work of Christ (as is seen so clearly in [1Co 15:24-28](#) and [Col 1:20-22](#)). Christ is the “head” not only of His body the church, but of creation (*kosmos*). - Utley

heavens and the things on the earth -- God’s work in Christ extends over all creation, including the heavens ([Eph 1:3](#), [Eph 1:20](#)).

÷Ephesians 1:11

In whom -- [Eph 1:1](#); [Eph 1:2](#); [Eph 1:3](#); [Eph 1:4](#); [Eph 1:7](#)

Verse.

- 1) The faithful are in him, and their faith (trust) is in him ([Eph 1:15](#))
- 2) He is means of grace, source of grace
- 3) In Him is where saints experience spiritual blessings
- 4) God's selection realized in Him
- 5) He is the means of sonship thru adoption
- 6) Means of acceptance
- 7) through Him redemption, forgiveness
- 8) v.10 All gathered together in Christ
- 9) v.11 Have inheritance
- 10) v.12 Have trusted (believed) in Christ
- 11) v.13 Gentiles trusted in Christ and are sealed

See Expository Outlines [Glory In The Church](#), by W.T. Hamilton (Gus Nichol's son-in-law)

we -- Here Paul included both Jews and Gentiles. “We” is not emphatic. The emphasis is “also” or “even”.

inheritance -- Paul speaks of inheritance as something promised to our spiritual ancestors and received by us (see [Rom 8:17](#); [Gal 3:29](#); [Gal 4:7](#); [Col 1:12](#); [Col 3:24](#))

having been predestined -- God predestined that it would be through Christ that men would be saved. See [Eph 1:5](#) note.

were chosen -- From the Jewish perspective, this likely refers to the salvation brought about by the Jewish Messiah, Jesus. Such an understanding coheres with passages like [Deu 7:6](#); [Deu 9:26](#); [Deu 14:2](#); [Deu 32:9](#).

who works all things -- The word translated “works” is the same one from which “energy,” “energetic,” and “energize” are derived. When God created the world, He gave it sufficient energy to begin immediately to operate as He had planned. It was not simply ready to function, but was created functioning. As God works out His plan according “to the counsel of His will,” He energizes every believer with the power necessary for his spiritual completion (cf. [Phil 1:6](#); [2:13](#)). - MSB

The phrase seems to emphasize that God “is” now currently, effectively working (accomplishing) His plan. (And this is done through Jesus Christ.) - wg

÷Ephesians 1:12

we -- This refers to believing Jews (cf. [Rom 1:16](#)).

we -- Reflecting Paul's own ethnicity, "**we**" likely refers to Jews— God's chosen people (in the O.T.) and those from whom the Messiah came (see [Mat 10:5](#) and note, [Mat 10:6](#); [Mat 15:24](#) and note; [Act 1:8](#) and note; [Rom 1:16](#) and note). This means that "**you**" often refers to Gentiles (non-Jews), including most of the believers in Ephesus and the surrounding areas (see [Eph 2:11](#); [Eph 3:1](#)). Compare note on [Eph 2:17](#). - FSB

first -- The believing Jews. cf. [Rom 1:16](#); [Rom 2:9](#);

to hope [trust] in Christ -- The one to trust that Jesus was the promised Messiah. In Him that placed their trust for redemption, or salvation. Paul and his fellow-laborers had "first" hoped in the Savior and then had gone on to proclaim the message to others so they could become partakers of the same privileges.

glory -- Denotes honor and majesty. See note on [Rom 1:23](#).

to the praise of His glory. -- God's glory is the supreme purpose of redemption (cf. [Eph 1:6](#), [Eph 1:14](#)).

÷Ephesians 1:13

you -- This refers to believing Gentiles (cf. [Eph 2:11-12](#)). Paul stresses that the same inheritance ([Eph 1:14](#)) God gave to Jews is also made available to non-Jews according to God's revealed mystery ([Eph 1:9](#); [Eph 3:3-9](#)).

trusted -- To trust to the extent that one commits self to obeying and following. The word "trust" comes from verse 12. (The NIV seems to falsely indicate that one is marked in Christ with a seal when one believes, thus, salvation by faith only.)

after [when, ESV] that ye heard -- "Faith comes by hearing .." [Rom 10:17](#).

word of truth -- The gospel; called the "word" or message of truth, the word of God, see [Rom 10:17](#). The phrase "the word of truth" means "the true word or message." It was a message unmixed with Jewish traditions or Gentile philosophy. The gospel. [Rom 1:16](#).

word of truth -- Refers to the gospel message, explained in the following clause as "the gospel (*euangelion*) of your salvation." This is the message about the Messiah, Jesus, which was originally proclaimed to Jews and later embraced by Gentiles. - FSB

This is what caused the Ephesians to believe or trust in Christ, cf. [Act 19:18](#), confessed, [Act 20:21](#) repented; [Act 19:5](#) were baptized.

sealed -- stamped, ownership, to mark, accept, something as true. see [Joh 3:33](#); [Joh 6:27](#); [Act 1:4](#). [Eph 4:30](#); [2Co 1:22](#).

The idea of the phrase is a double one; attestation of reality (cp. [Joh 3:33](#); [Rom 4:11](#); [1Co 9:2](#)), and claim of property (cp. [Rom 15:28](#)). - BN

you were sealed -- In the ancient world, a seal indicated ownership and protection (compare [Dan 6:17](#) and note; [2Co 1:22](#)). The notion of sealing in this context is related to the Day of Judgment: Sealed believers will be kept for their ultimate inheritance—redemption at the end of the age ([Eph 1:14](#))—by the gift of the promised Spirit ([Eze 36:26-27](#); [Joe 2:28-30](#)), which is given to Jews and Gentiles alike. - FSB

The **sealing** of which Paul speaks refers to an official mark of identification placed on a letter, contract, or

other document. That document was thereby officially under the authority of the person whose stamp was on the seal. Four primary truths are signified by the seal: **1)** security (cf. [Dan 6:17](#); [Mat 27:62-66](#)); **2)** authenticity (cf. [1Ki 21:6-16](#)); **3)** ownership (cf. [Jer 32:10](#)); and **4)** authority (cf. [Est 8:8-12](#)). - MSB

you ... were sealed -- 1) This indicates that the believers in Ephesus area received some of miraculous gifts mentioned in 1Cor. 12. Their receiving was a mark of God's approval. See also the next verse regard the "guarantee of our inheritance."

the promised Holy Spirit -- cf. [Act 2:38](#); [Act 8:17](#); [Joh 14:16-17](#); [Luk 24:49](#); [Act 1:4](#); [Act 1:8](#); [See detailed study see [Eph 3:17](#)]

[To take a literal, personal indwelling of deity (the Holy Spirit) is to literalize a spiritual concept. The new spirit indwelling God's people is His likeness, His holiness, His attitudes, we are to be "children of God" and look and act like Him.

To argue for a literal indwelling is believing in another "incarnation", but proof against such is that after one claims such, he still sins, which is impossible for God to do.- WG]

Questions:

- 1) Was Jesus, God incarnate?
- 2) Did Jesus sin?
- 3) Is the Holy Spirit God?
- 4) Can God sin?

[The apostles and those they laid hands upon were given the ability by the Spirit to do signs and wonders ([Mar 16:20](#), [Heb 2:4](#)) to confirm the Word. The need or necessity to do this ceased after the fullness of the word was revealed and written down, [Eph 4:11-13](#); [1Co 13:9-11](#); etc. [Mat 28:20](#); I personally think the miraculous ended with the "end of the age" when all trapping of the Jewish/Mosaic dispensation ended with the temple sacrifices, the temple itself, and all the ended with the fall of Jerusalem in AD 70. I believe all scripture, and inspiration ceased with the last of the apostles. WG]

÷Ephesians 1:14

[For the sealing of the Holy Spirit see the previous verse also.]

earnest [guarantee] -- The Greek word is *arrhabôn*, appears in the LXX only in [Gen 38:17-18](#); [Gen 38:20](#); and in the later Greek classics. In the N.T. [G728](#); ([2Co 1:22](#); [2Co 5:5](#); [Eph 1:14](#)).

Thayer says "an earnest; money which in purchases is given as a pledge or down payment that the full amount will subsequently be paid."

Strong says "Of Hebrew origin [[H6162](#)]; a *pledge*, that is, part of the purchase money or property given in advance as *security* for the rest: - earnest."

WordStudy "*arrabo* *nos*, masculine noun transliterated from the Hebrew *'arabo n* ([H6162](#)). Earnest money, a pledge, something which stands for part of the price and paid beforehand to confirm the transaction. Used in the NT only in a figurative sense ..."

earnest of our inheritance – Pledge or down payment. [Eph 4:30](#)

The spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit, see [Eph 1:17](#) for explanation. See [Act 1:4](#) that it is the Holy Spirit of a miraculous nature given in the first century.

Thought: 1) This is usually understood that the Holy Spirit Himself is given to the believer as the pledge of the fuller inheritance that is to be received. 2) It could mean that possessing the "fruits of the Holy Spirit" ([Gal 5:22-23](#)) which are the traits, the characteristics of

God Himself, is both the mark and the pledge that such a one is designated to receive the fuller inheritance of God. See Jesus' Beatitudes, [Mat 5:1-12](#); the kingdom of heaven belongs to the poor in spirit; the meek will inherit the earth, the pure in heart will see God, the peacemakers will be called the sons of God; the righteous will receive the kingdom of God, etc.

our inheritance – That which awaits the "heirs" of God as his "adopted" children.

acquire possession of it -- The "earnest" is the first part of the payment and the "possession" is the full acquisition of the transaction under consideration.

to the praise of his glory – The "*his*" refers back to "Christ" v.12, and "in him" v.13. "...the word *"glory"* has a special reference to the manifestation of the Divine Character, as the Object of praise in the *glorified* world." - BN

÷Ephesians 1:15

15-23 Paul's prayers for these brothers. This is Paul's prayer of thanksgiving and intercession for the recipients (i.e., churches of Asia Minor). It is one long sentence in Greek.

Question: What occasioned Paul's prayers? [Eph 1:15-16](#).

- 1) Heard of their faith
- 2) Heard of their love for the saints

Wherefore [For this reason] -- On account of the inheritance that the redeemed will enjoy.

heard of your faith – Ephesians, being a circular letter, shows that Paul is referring to several churches, not just the church at Ephesus. He had heard of the problems of the churches in the Lycus Valley (Laodicea, Hierapolis, and Colossae) through Epaphras ([cf. Col 1:6-8](#)).

The term "faith" can refer to

1. initial, personal trust in Christ (cf. [Eph 1:19](#) "toward us who believe")
2. ongoing faithful Christian living (i.e., OT sense, of [Col 1:9-10](#))
3. Christian doctrine "the faith," with the definite article, (cf. [Act 6:7](#); [Act 13:8](#); [Act 14:22](#); [Gal 1:23](#); [Gal 6:10](#); [Jud 1:3](#); [Jud 1:20](#))

Here it has the article and probably option #3 is best.

and your love toward all the saints – See [Col 1:4](#) for an exact parallel. Here, however, a few MSS. omit "*love*." "This is His commandment, that we should believe on the name of His Son Jesus Christ, and love one another" ([1Jn 3:23](#)).

Paul had apparently heard something about the Christians in the area to which he is writing where they exemplified the kind of love believers are to have.

÷Ephesians 1:16

Question: What occasioned Paul's prayers? [Eph 1:15-16](#).

- 1) Heard of their faith
- 2) Heard of their love for the saints

I do not cease – Praying was an habitual practice of Paul. He never gave up believe in prayer.

give thanks – This verse reveals two aspects of Paul's prayer life: (1) thankfulness and (2) persistence. Paul continually prayed for all of Christ's churches (cf. [Rom 1:9](#); [2Co 11:28](#); [Php 1:3-4](#); [Col 1:3](#); [Col 1:9](#) ; [1Th 1:2-3](#); [2Ti 1:3](#), [Phm 1:4](#)).

remembering you [making mention] -- See parallel in [2Ti 1:3](#). The apostle prayed regularly for all his new converts.

÷Ephesians 1:17

the Father of glory – This was an O.T. title for God (cf. [Psa 24:7](#); [Psa 29:3](#); [Act 7:2](#)). The genitive modifier (of glory) is also used of Jesus in [1Co 2:8](#) and [Jas 2:1](#). Paul's prayer is that YHWH will give these new believers a full and complete understanding of true wisdom which is Jesus Christ, not the intellectual false wisdom of the Gnostic teachers. There is no human secret wisdom. Jesus is the wisdom of God who fully reveals Him! See fuller note on "Glory" at [Eph 1:6](#).

may give to you a spirit – The term " spirit" is anarthrous (no definite article), but really serves the double purpose of referring to the human spirit energized by the Holy Spirit through His teaching. [Isa 11:2](#) describes God's gifts of the Spirit as "a spirit of wisdom," and "understanding," "a spirit of counsel," and "strength," "a spirit of knowledge," and "fear of the Lord."

In the NT there is a series of passages which describe what the gospel given to us by the Holy Spirit produces in the lives of believers.

1. "a spirit of holiness," [Rom 1:4](#)
2. "a spirit of adoption as sons," [Rom 8:15](#)
3. "a spirit of gentleness," [1Co 4:21](#)
4. "a spirit of faith," [2Co 4:13](#)
5. "a spirit of wisdom and revelation," [Eph 1:17](#)
6. "the spirit of truth," vs. "the spirit of error," [1Jn 4:6](#)

knowledge of Him – Question: For what did Paul pray for them?

- 1) That they may *know* God
- 2) Know His calling
- 3) Know His riches
- 4) Know His power

wisdom and revelation – Paul prays for the brethren there to have these *spiritual gifts*, which is the explanation of how the promised Spirit marked these Christians. [Act 1:4](#); [Act 8:14-18](#); [1Co 12:8](#); [1Co 12:10-28](#))

÷Ephesians 1:18

understanding being enlightened – Through the spiritual gift of *wisdom* and *revelation*. Ours can be opened through reading and studying ([Eph 3:3-4](#); [Act 17:11](#); [2Ti 3:15](#))

enlightened – to know three things:

- 1) The hope of His calling
- 2) Know the treasures God has for his people
- 3) Know the greatness of His power, [Eph 1:19](#)

hope of His calling – The term "calling" (*kaleô*) is used in several theological senses in the NT.

1. sinners are called by God through Christ to salvation
2. sinners call on the name of the Lord to be saved
3. believers are called on to live Christlike lives
4. believers are called to ministry tasks

the riches of the glory – Paul often speaks of gospel truths as "riches" (cf. [Eph 1:7](#); [Eph 1:18](#); [Eph 2:4](#); [Eph 2:7](#); [Eph 3:8](#); [Eph 3:16](#)). See note at [Eph 1:7](#).

÷Ephesians 1:19

exceeding [immeasurable; surpassing] greatness – This term *hyperballô* is used only by Paul in the NT. It expresses his overwhelming emotion of what God in Christ has done for rebellious mankind in redemption (cf. [2Co 3:10](#); [2Co 9:14](#); [Eph 1:19](#); [Eph 2:7](#); [Eph 3:19](#)).

toward us who believe – This phrase shows the falsehood of the doctrine of "universalism" which asserts that eventually all people will be saved. This universalism is usually based on proof-texting isolated passages like [Rom 5:18](#). God has chosen to allow humans to participate (conditional covenant) in their own spiritual salvation and pilgrimage. Christians must believe, repent and be baptized to enter into the spiritual body of Christ.(cf. [Mar 16:16](#); [Act 3:16](#); [Act 3:19](#); [Act 20:21](#); [Gal 3:26-27](#))

The gospel's inclusivism (cf. [Joh 1:12](#); [Joh 3:16](#); [1Ti 2:4-6](#); [Tit 2:11](#); [1Pe 3:9](#)) was in contrast to the exclusivism of the false teachers. The gospel is universal in its invitation (cf. [1Ti 2:4](#); [Tit 2:11](#); [2Pe 3:9](#)) to all who will call on the name of the Lord by faith and obedience (cf. [Rom 10:9-13](#)).

his great power -- Question: How did God demonstrate His mighty power?

- 1) Raising Jesus from the dead [Eph 1:20-21](#)
- 2) Setting Him at His right hand, [Eph 1:20-21](#)
- 3) Put all things under His feet, [Eph 1:22-23](#)
And making Him the head of the church
- 4) Raised us from death spiritually, [Eph 2:1-6](#)
- 5) Seated us together in Christ, [Eph 2:6](#)

÷Ephesians 1:20

see note on [Eph 1:19](#)

worked in Christ – The next three phrases describe what God the Father's tremendous, mighty power has done for Jesus.

1. It "raised Him from the dead" [Eph 1:20](#). This was the sign of His accepted sacrifice (cf. 1 Corinthians 15).
2. It "seated Him on His right hand," [Eph 1:20](#). This was the place of exaltation and preeminence (cf. [Col 3:1](#)). This represented Christ's ongoing intercessory ministry (cf. [Rom 8:34](#); [Heb 7:25](#); [Heb 9:24](#); [1Jn 2:1](#) and was fulfillment of O.T. prophecy, cf. [Psa 110:1](#); [Act 7:56](#)).
3. It "made Him supreme Head of the church," [Eph 1:22](#). This use of the term church refers to the unique new people of God, which includes all who believe, both Jew and Gentile (cf. [Eph 2:11](#) to [Eph 3:13](#); [Gal 3:27-29](#)).

God has also similarly done great things for the followers of Christ (cf. [Eph 2:5-6](#)). All three terms in [Eph 2:5-6](#) are compounds with the preposition *syn* which means "joint participation with."

raised him from the dead – References the Lord's resurrection. This was a sign to the Jews of God's acceptance of Christ as a sacrifice. ([1Co 15:3-4](#))

seated him at his right hand -- This was the place of exaltation and preeminence (cf. [Mar 16:19](#); [Col 3:1](#)). This represented Christ's ongoing intercessory ministry (cf. [Rom 8:34](#); [Heb 7:25](#); [Heb 9:24](#); [1Jn 2:1](#) and was fulfillment of O.T. prophecy, cf. [Psa 110:1](#); [Act 7:56](#)).

÷Ephesians 1:21

Note the supreme position of Christ (5)

far above all rule and authority and power and dominion" This phrase may refer to ranks or orders of spiritual powers or angelic levels that are hostile to humanity (cf. [Eph 2:2](#); [Eph 3:10](#); [Eph 6:12](#); [Col 1:16](#); [Col 2:10](#); [Col 2:15](#); [Rom 8:38-39](#); [1Co 15:24](#)). Jesus is superior to all angelic ranks (cf. Hebrews 1-2). This refuted the Gnostic false teachers' emphasis on angelic levels (*aeons*).

These ranks may also refer to impersonal structures in our world which allow humans to function apart from God. Examples are philosophy, education, government, medicine, religion, etc. (cf. Hendrik Berkhof's *Christ and the Powers*, Herald Press).

and every name that is named – This may refer to the false teachers' secret passwords or names used to pass through the angelic spheres. The gnostics were trusting in their secret knowledge of magical names to bring salvation. Paul asserts that salvation or union with God is found only in Jesus' name (cf. [Php 2:9-11](#)).

In the O.T. a person's name represented his character. The Father's character is fully revealed in the Son (cf. [Joh 14:8-14](#); [Joh 17:11](#)).

this age -- 1) The Jews believed in two ages, the current age, and the one to come.

hat which is to come -- 2) The heavenly age.

÷Ephesians 1:22

in subjection under His feet -- "Subjection" is a military term for a chain of command (cf. [Psa 110:1](#); [Psa 8:6](#)). The Father has given the Son first place in all things (cf. [Col 1:18-19](#)). In the end, the Son will turn all things back to the Father (cf. [1Co 15:27-28](#)).

Jesus' submission to the Father does not imply, in any sense, inequality, but an administrative, functional division of labor within the Trinity. See note at [Eph 5:21](#).

head over -- Here, *head over* all things *to*, and *for*, the church. (cf. [Eph 4:15](#); [Eph 5:23](#); [Col 1:18-19](#); [Col 2:19](#)). The people of the ancient Mediterranean world believed the head gave life to the body.

CHURCH -- [Mat 16:18](#), [Eph 5:23-27](#), [Act 20:28](#).

The Church is the "Body of Christ," [Eph 1:22-23](#), [Col 1:18](#); [Col 1:24](#),

There is one body- [Eph 4:4-6](#), [1Co 12:12-13](#), [Col 3:15](#),

Saved "Added by the Lord"- not "Voted In," [Act 2:47](#), [2Jn 1:9-10](#),

church -- In secular Greek, this term meant an assembly (cf. [Act 19:32](#)). *Ekklesia* was used in the Septuagint (LXX) to translate the Hebrew term "assembly (*qahal*) of Israel" (cf. [Exo 16:3](#); [Exo 12:6](#); [Lev 4:13](#); [Num 20:4](#)). This is the first of several uses of this term in Ephesians (cf. [Eph 1:22](#); [Eph 3:10](#); [Eph 3:21](#); [Eph 5:23-25](#); [Eph 5:27](#); [Eph 5:29](#); [Eph 5:32](#)). Both in Eph. ([Eph 1:22-23](#)) and in Col. ([Col 1:24](#)) Paul calls the church the body of Christ. The early church saw themselves as the fulfilled people of God with Christ Jesus, the Messiah, as their Head.

One of the unusual literary relationships between Ephesians and Colossians is that in Ephesians this term refers to the church universal (cf. [1Co 10:32](#); [1Co 12:28](#); [1Co 15:9](#); [Gal 1:13](#); [Php 3:6](#)), while in Colossians it usually refers to the local church. This points toward Ephesians as a circular letter.

÷Ephesians 1:23

his body – the church (terms used interchangeably). As Christ is the head, the church fills picture as being his body.

The church fulfills His body; Christ fills the body (the church) as being the head.

the fulness of him who fills – Grammatically this is a present middle participle. Here are some possible interpretations of this phrase:

1. Christ is filling the church
2. the church is filling Christ (cf. [Col 1:24](#))
3. the church is being filled to the full number of believers (Jews and Gentiles [all nations] numerical aspect, cf. [Rom 11:25](#))

This terminology was meant to attack the incipient Gnostic false teachers' theological system of *aeons*, emanations or angelic ranks. The terms "fulness" and "filled" are forms of the Greek term *plērôma*, which later in the second century became the technical Gnostic term for the total number of angelic levels

(cf. [Eph 1:21](#)) between the high, holy, spiritual god and the lesser god who fashioned evil matter.

This is a powerful definition of the church. She is meant to fully reflect her head, Jesus. As Jesus revealed the Father, so too, the church is to reveal the Father.

÷Ephesians 2:1

I. What We Were - v. 1-3 (Dead to God)

II. What We Are - v. 4-7 (Alive with Christ)

III. Thanks Be to God For This Change - v.8-10

2:1–10 Paul's prayer (Eph 1:15–23) refers to Gentiles (non-Jews) becoming part of God's family. In this chapter, Paul discusses how that happens: Christ's victory over evil powers makes reconciliation with God possible. This discussion has two parts: vv. 1–10 and 2:11–22. In this first part, Paul writes about humanity's reconciliation with God. Paul begins by reminding his readers that they lived in alienation from God (vv. 1–3). He then describes the blessings that believers receive as a result of being reconciled to God through Christ (vv. 4–10). - FSB

2:1-10 Saved By Grace

And you -- God is referring to the non-Jews reading the letter.

dead -- Refers to being separated from God and under the rule of the evil one (see v. 2 and note). Paul's use of the metaphor of death is significant, as it allows for no middle ground; a person is either dead or alive. - FSB

who were dead -- Another demonstration of God's power illustrated ([Eph 1:19](#)) is illustrated in the resurrection of the Ephesians from the dead! They were dead in sins, but now alive in Christ.

Paul seems to allow no middle ground, a person is either dead or alive.

trespasses and sins -- The Greek words used here, *paraptōma* and *hamartia*, describe the evil that controls and characterizes human life apart from God. They are both the cause of death and the evidence of death.

trespasses and sins --. Caused spiritual death. [Isa 59:1-2](#). Death is a separation, *physical death* is a separation of the spirit from the body, and *spiritual death* is the separation of the spirit from God.

[Jas 2:26](#) Verse 2 begins a description of Spiritual death.

This is a sobering reminder of the total sinfulness and lostness from which believers have been redeemed.

in -- indicates the realm or sphere in which lost sinners exist. They are dead because of sinful acts that they themselves have committed (cf. [Mat 12:35](#); [Mat 15:18-19](#)), and not because of sins of other ([Eze 18:20](#)).

In the **NIV** vs. 1-7, three additional verbs not in the Greek.

÷Ephesians 2:2

Verse 2 begins a description of Spiritual death.

you once walked -- The Gentiles before they obey the gospel of Christ.

walked -- “Walk” is a biblical metaphor for lifestyle cf. [Rom_1:18](#)

Seven Walks in Ephesians

1. [Eph 1:1](#) Not according to the world
2. [Eph 1:1](#) Walk in good works
3. [Eph 1:1](#) Walk worthy of your calling
4. [Eph 1:1](#) Not as other Gentiles
5. [Eph 1:1](#) Walk in love
6. [Eph 1:1](#) Walk as children of light
7. [Eph 1:1](#) Walk wisely, redeeming the time

course of this world – The Greek word used here, *aiōn*, may refer to the mind set, customs, and practices of those who are estranged from God. Alternatively, it could indicate a hostile force in opposition to God and his people (i.e., the devil) - FSB

ruler of the authority of the air -- Refers to the devil (compare [Joh 14:30](#); [2Co 4:4](#)) or the evil one ([Eph 6:16](#)). Many people in the ancient Near East believed that the air (*aēr*)—the sphere between heaven and earth—was the residence of evil spirits. Before the Ephesian believers were in Christ, they lived under the influence of the world and the evil one

prince – = Satan, **ruler** of Darkness, [Joh 12:31](#); [Joh 14:30](#); [Joh 16:11](#); [1Jn 5:19](#); [2Co 4:4](#)

air -- = There are two words in Greek, here the word for "misty, gloom foul air"

The Previous Condition of the Ephesians

Dead; Degraded (Depraved); Devilish; Disobedient; Doomed

Verse 2 -- Who the lost followed:

Verse 3 -- In whom the lost conducted their the sphere of their lives.

Sources of possible information are focusing on (1) [Job 1–2](#) where Satan is one of the “sons of God” (i.e. angels) or (2) [Isa. 14](#); [Ezek. 28](#) where prideful near eastern kings (Babylon and Tyre) are used to illustrate the pride of Satan (cf. [1Ti 3:6](#)). I have mixed emotions about this approach. Ezekiel uses Garden of Eden metaphors not only of the king of Tyre as Satan (cf. [Eze 28:12-16](#)), but also for the king of Egypt as the Tree of the Knowledge of Good and Evil ([Eze 31:1](#)). However, [Isa 14:12-14](#), particularly vv. 12–14, seems to describe an angelic revolt through pride. If God wanted to reveal to us the specific nature and origin of Satan this is a very oblique way and place to do it. We must guard against the trend of systematic theology of taking small, ambiguous parts of different testaments, authors, books, and genres and combining them as pieces of one divine puzzle. - Utley

[Utley's "Special Topic: Personal Evil" located at Eph 2.2]

Man, being created in the "image of God" has come to the knowledge of good and evil, and is personally responsible of his/her choices. - WG

sons [children] of disobedience – Men who are characterized by a particular trait, as here of moral resistance to the Holy God. (cf. [Col 3:6](#))

This is an example of the frequent oriental thought of one being "son of" "child of" in the sense of close connection, to a principle, motive, or disposition, etc. See the next verse "**children of wrath**" as well.

See the note at [Act 4:36](#).

÷Ephesians 2:3

Carnal – Corrupt – Condemned

we all – v. 2-3, Paul being a Jew, puts himself (and all Jews) also into this category alike with Gentiles who in the past lived the ways he now speaks of, [Rom 1:18](#).

once live – Their past conduct of life.

nature [passions, selfish desires; lust of our flesh;] -- Greek "*phusis*" (*foo'-sis*) = a mode of feeling and acting which by long habit has become nature.

This refers to the selfish part of our human nature when we choose to put own desires ahead of everything else. Compare [Gal 5:16](#), [Gal 5:24](#).

Paul uses the term "flesh" in two distinct ways. Only context can determine the distinction. In [Eph 2:11](#), [Eph 2:14](#); [Eph 5:29](#), [Eph 5:31](#); [Eph 6:5](#) and [Eph 6:12](#) it means "the human person," not "the sinful nature of man" giving in to his passions as here.

carrying out the desires of the body and the mind – Living selfish, sinful lives, in opposition to God's will for the way one should live.

were by nature -- The natural consequence of one's actions.

children of wrath – This is an Hebraic idiomatic phrase for a person's character. God is opposed to sin and rebellion in His creation. The wrath of God pictures his justment in both temporal time and his judgment at the end of time.

wrath – Refers to God's righteous judgment upon evil.

÷Ephesians 2:4

What We Are v.4-7 (Alive in Christ)

riches – Riches of God's Mercy cf note on [Eph 1:7](#)

Four Elements of God's Rich Mercy

- 1) He loved us - v. 4 [Rom 5:8](#)
- 2) He quickened us - v. 5
- 3) He exalted us - v. 6
- 4) He keeps us - v. 7-9

God -- The subject of this long sentence. Three main verbs:

- 1) v.5 made alive
- 2) v.6 raised us
- 3) v.6 seated us

his great love – God's natural disposition, [1Jn 4:8](#); [1Jn 4:16](#); [Joh 3:16](#).

rich in mercy – God's abundant mercy, which characterizes Him throughout the Bible ([Exo 34:6-7](#)), is epitomized by His willingness not to punish "children of wrath" but instead ready to forgive penitent mankind through His grace ([Eph 2:5](#)).

÷Ephesians 2:5

when we were dead – A spiritually dead person need to be made alive by God. Salvation bring spiritual life to the dead. The power that raises believers out of death and makes them alive (cf. [Rom 6:1-7](#)) is the same power that raised Christ from the dead. (cf. [Rom 6:11-13](#)).

quicken – made alive. Through union with Christ, obedient believers receive new life that reverses the effects of death (compare [Rom 6:4-11](#); [Joh 3:16-17](#)). Those who believe in Christ participate in His death and resurrection. Consequently, believers share in Christ's resurrected life

saved – In this context, the Greek word used here, *sōzō*, refers to God delivering people from death and giving them life. - FSB

saved by Grace – Out of God's grace (unmerited favor toward mankind) He has provided the Means (a Savior) and the Method (the plan = faith/trust that obeys) of our salvation.

÷Ephesians 2:6

raised – God raising up Christ, made it possible for God's raising of them. [Rom 4:25](#)

raised us up together, and made us sit together – The tense of "raised" and "made" indicates that these are immediate and direct results of salvation.

Believers have already been raised with Christ. Believers were buried with Him in baptism (cf. [Col 2:12](#); [Rom 6:3-11](#)) and raised with Him by the Father (cf. [Col 2:13](#); [Rom 6:4-5](#)) who raised Jesus (raised by the Spirit in [Rom 8:11](#)). These are special redemptive analogies. Believers spiritually participate in the major events of Jesus' experience: crucifixion, death, burial, resurrection, and enthronement! Believers share His life and suffering; they will also share His glory (cf. [Rom 8:17](#))! - Utley

seated us – Seated in the heavenly realm - the church. (The church is God's heavenly realm on earth.) This is the third of the aorist compounds with *syn*. Our position in Him is one of present, as well as future, victory (cf. [Rom 8:37](#))! The concept of sitting down with Him meant reigning with Him. Jesus is the King of Kings sitting on the throne of God the Father and believers are even now co-reigning with Him (cf. [Mat 19:28](#); [Rom 5:17](#); [Col 3:1](#); [2Ti 2:12](#); [Rev 2:26](#); [Rev 3:21](#)). - Utley

heavenly realms— see note and list on [Eph 1:3](#)

This locative (of sphere) neuter plural adjective, "*in the heavenly places*," is only used in Ephesians (cf. [Eph 1:20](#); [Eph 2:6](#); [Eph 3:10](#); [Eph 6:12](#)). From the context of all of its usages, it must mean the spiritual realm in which believers live here and now, not heaven. - Utley

in Christ – *Raised* in Christ, [Rom 6:3-5](#) ff. A reference to *baptism*, cf [Col 2:12-13](#); [Col 3:1-2](#)

÷Ephesians 2:7

so that – Reason why God made them alive. NIV - "in order that"

The Jews believed in two ages, the current evil age (gal 1.4) and the coming righteous age ruled over by the Messiah. This would be the Christian age, and it is in this age that God shows us the immeasurable riches of his grace in Christ Jesus.

coming ages – In [Eph_1:21](#) "age" is singular, here it is plural (cf. [1Co_2:7](#); [Heb_1:2](#); [Heb_11:3](#)). The "ages" to come then means to all future times, this Christian age now and the age of heaven itself.

This use of the plural in a symbolic sense can be seen in the passages that refer to the past "ages" (cf. [Rom_16:25](#); [1Co_10:11](#); [2Ti_1:9](#); [Tit_1:2](#)).

Some scholars believe this was simply a metaphor for eternity because of the way the phrase was used in secular Koine Greek and in several places in the NT (cf. [Luk_1:33](#); [Luk_1:55](#); [Joh_12:34](#); [Rom_9:5](#); [Gal_1:5](#); [1Ti_1:17](#)). - Utley

shew – Show, NET=demonstrate. This term means "to publicly display" (cf. [Rom_9:17](#); [Rom_9:22](#)). God's mercy and purpose in Christ are clearly manifested to the angels by His treatment of mankind (cf. [Eph_3:10](#); [1Co_4:9](#); [Heb_1:13-14](#)).

exceeding riches of His grace – cf. [Eph_1:7](#) [Eph_2:4](#); The “abounding, overflowing” riches of grace; compare the notes, [Eph_1:7](#). This is Paul’s favorite expression - an expression so beautiful and so full of meaning that it will bear often to be repeated. - BN

in Christ -- This speaks our our vital union with the Lord which is the never silent key-note of the passage. (CBSC)

÷Ephesians 2:8

Section v. 8-10 III. Thanks Be To God For This Change

grace -- cf. [Tit_2:11](#) Salvation is by the "grace" of God (cf. [Eph_1:3-14](#)). The character of God is revealed through His mercy (cf. [Eph_2:4-6](#)). Grace is best defined as the unmerited, undeserved love of God. It flows from God's nature through Christ and is irrespective of the worth or merit of the one loved. (BN)

"Grace" *charis* is feminine,

"Faith" *pistis* is feminine

"that" *touto* is neuter.

saved -- Salvation is the gift of God, it's grounds is God's grace. Salvation's source is not in man. This is a perfect passive periphrastic participle which is a repeat of [Eph_2:5](#) (see note there). Its thrust is that "believers have been and continue to be" saved by God.

In the OT the term "save" spoke of "physical deliverance" (cf.). In the NT this meaning has taken on a spiritual dimension. God delivers believers from the consequences of their sins and gives them eternal life. ([Isa_59:2](#)) He restores their fellowship with God again.

through faith -- Mankind must respond to God's offer of grace and forgiveness in Christ (cf. [Joh_1:12](#); [Joh_3:16-17](#); [Joh_3:36](#); [Joh_6:40](#); [Joh_11:25-26](#); [Rom_10:9-13](#)), and this is done through a faith that "trusts and obeys." Salvation by faith means we trust in God's trustworthy promises and yield ourselves to him as our Lord, which means then that we keep his commandments. (John 14:15; [1Jn_5:3](#); [2Jn_1:6](#))

and that -- This is the Greek demonstrative pronoun (*touto*), which is neuter in gender. The closest nouns, "grace" and "faith," are both feminine in gender. Therefore, this must refer to the whole process of salvation as completed in Christ. (Utley)

“That” refers to the entire previous statement of salvation. FSB

not of yourselves -- This is the first of three phrases which clearly show that salvation is not based on human performance: (1) "not of yourselves" [Eph 2:8](#); (2) "gift of God" [Eph 2:8](#); and (3) "not as a result of works (either OT works or one's own merit)" [Eph 2:9](#).

gift -- Also see [Heb 6:4](#) -- **Heavenly gifts** -- forgiveness of sins, salvation. The paradox of salvation as both a free gift and a mandated covenant response are difficult to grasp. Yet both are true! Salvation is truly free, yet costs everything. (Uteley).

÷Ephesians 2:9

works -- Paul stressed that salvation did not come by keeping the works of the Mosaic Law (cf. [Rom 3:20](#); [Rom 3:27-28](#); [Rom 9:11](#); [Rom 9:16](#); [Gal 2:16](#); [Php 3:9](#); [2Ti 1:9](#); [Tit 3:5](#)). This was in direct contrast to the false teachers he had to oppose. We learn from it that man's own merits, or self-righteousness, cannot earn salvation.

(*Faith* is called a work in [Joh 6:29](#), that is, a work (something) ordained by God.

so that no one may boast -- Salvation is by God's grace, not human effort, so there is no room for human glorying (cf. [Rom 3:27](#); [Rom 4:2](#)). If believers boast, let them boast in Christ (cf. [1Co 1:31](#), which is a quote from [Jer 9:23-24](#)).

÷Ephesians 2:10

his – *His* is emphatic. *His* workmanship are we.

workmanship – The product of a master. The word denotes a piece of art or a masterpiece. The English word "poem" comes from this Greek term (ποίημα, *poiema*). This word is only used two times in the NT, here and [Rom 1:20](#). - BKC

For we are his workmanship - We are his "making" - *poiema*. That is, we are "created or formed" by him, not only in the general sense in which all things are made by him, but in that special sense which is denoted by the new creation; see the notes at [2Co 5:17](#). [Barnes](#)

created in Christ Jesus -- This is an aorist passive participle. This act of a new spiritual creation is described in the same terms used of the initial creation in Genesis (cf. [Gen 3:9](#); [Col 1:16](#)).

good works – Different from the works of v. 9. Here Paul is talking about acts of faithfulness and service to God. Compare [Col 1:10](#). - FSB

good works – This speaks to the Christian's lifestyle. They are saved by grace through faith to do good works! They are saved to serve! Faith without works is dead, as are works without faith (cf. [Mat 7:21-23](#) and [Jas 2:14-26](#)). The goal of the Father is that believers be "holy and blameless" and doing good. (cf. [Eph 1:4](#)). [Rom 2:6-9](#); [2Co 5:10](#)

which God prepared beforehand – This strong term (*pro + hetoimos*, "to prepare before") relates to the theological concept of predestination (cf. [Eph 1:4-5](#); [Eph 1:11](#)) and is used only here and in [Rom 9:23](#). God chose beforehand that those He saved must reflect His character. God give all men the opportunity to choose this way of life ([2Pe 3:9](#); [Rev 22:17](#)) but the decision is man's.

that we should walk in them -- God has a life-style planned for those who will be saved. They must reflect the character of their Father and will be called "sons of God."

÷Ephesians 2:11

Therefore – Paul often uses this word to start a new literary unit by building on the combined truths of previous units (cf. [Rom 5:1](#); [Rom 8:1](#); [Rom 12:1](#)). "**Therefore**" because of what Paul has just said.

This is the third major truth of Paul's doctrinal section (Ephesians 1-3). **1)** The first was God's eternal choice based on His gracious character, **2)** the second was the hopelessness of sinful humanity, saved by God's gracious acts through Christ which must be received and lived out by faith. **3)** Now the third, God's will has always been the salvation of all humans (cf. [Gen 3:15](#); [Gen 12:3](#); [Exo 19:5](#)), both Jew and Gentile (cf. [Eph 2:11](#) to [Eph 3:13](#)). No human intellect (i.e., Gnostics) understood these revealed truths. (Utley)

remember – These Gentiles are commanded to continue to remember their previous alienation from God, [Eph 2:11-12](#) (Pres. Act. Imp.)

Paul urges the Gentile believers to recall their life before Christ, just as the Israelites were often told to remember what God had done for them (see [Exo 13:3](#)). - FSB

formerly you, Gentiles in the flesh – This is literally "nations" (*ethnos*). It refers to all peoples who are not of the line of Israel (Jacob). In the O.T. the term "nations" (*go'im*) was a way (often even a derogatory way) of referring to all non-Jews.

time past Gentiles – The Gentiles ... Past and Present, [Eph 2:11-22](#)

- 1) Without Christ vs In Christ – v.12
- 2) Aliens or Foreigners vs. Fellow Citizens - v. 12, v.19
- 3) Strangers from the covenant vs. no longer strangers - of household v. 12, v.19
- 4) No hope vs New man v.12, (v.14 peace)
- 5) Without God vs access to the Father , vs 12, 13, 18
- 6) Far off vs Made nigh - vs 13, 18
- 7) Enmity vs. Reconciliation - v. 14-18

uncircumcision – "uncircumcised" Gentiles vs Jews. The "Judaizers" of Galatians claimed that this was still God's will and was indispensable for salvation (cf. [Act 15:1](#) ff; [Gal 2:11-12](#)). This was probably a term of derision.

uncircumcision – A derogatory term emphasizing that non-Jewish people are outsiders in relation to God's covenant with Israel. This category includes most members of the churches planted or empowered by Paul. - FSB

made by hands – The Greek word used here, *cheiropoiētos*, portrays circumcision as a human rite. In the Septuagint (the ancient Greek translation of the O.T.), this word is used to refer to idols (e.g., [Lev 26:1](#); [Isa 2:18](#); [Isa 10:11](#); [Dan 5:4](#)). - FSB

÷Ephesians 2:12

separated from – This is literally "on separate foundations." These next few phrases (like [Eph 2:1-3](#)) show the helplessness and hopelessness of the Gentiles without Christ.

alienated – This is a perfect passive participle meaning "have been and continued to be excluded." In the O.T. this term referred to resident non-citizens with limited rights (aliens). The Gentiles had been and continued to be separated, alienated from the Covenant of YHWH.

commonwealth of Israel -- The theocracy of divine government. Aliens, not citizens of God's nation of Israel. NIV-"excluded from citizenship in Israel".

This is literally "citizenship" (*politeia*). This word came into English as "politics." It refers to the chosen descendants of Abraham. Their benefits are enumerated in [Rom 9:4-5](#).

covenants of promise -- The NT can refer to the O.T. as one covenant or as several covenants, plural, as here. The principle covenant which the Jews had lived under was **1)** the covenant mediated by Moses at Mt. Sinai. But the O.T. also speaks of covenants made with **2)** Adam in the garden; **2)** Noah ; and **3)** Abraham.

hope -- confident expectation.

having no hope and without God in the world -- In speaking of the Gentiles' past condition, Paul says without God, they were cut off without any hope, lost in idolatry and paganism (cf. [1Th 4:13](#) and [Rom 1:18](#) to [Rom 2:16](#)).

÷Ephesians 2:13

OLD TESTAMENT (LAW)

For our learning- [Rom 15:4](#)

Changed- [Heb 7:12](#) & [Heb 8:7-8](#) & [Heb 8:13](#) & [Heb 10:9](#), [Eph 2:13-15](#), [Col 2:14](#),

Ended at the death of Christ-

[Heb 9:15-17](#), [Gal 3:19](#) & [Gal 3:16](#) & [Gal 3:24-25](#), [Gal 5:4](#) & [Gal 5:18](#).

Sabbath to Jews - [Deu 5:2-3](#) & [Deu 5:15](#).

Made known at Sinai- [Neh 9:13-14](#).

But now -- There is a contrast between the hopeless past of the Gentiles, [Eph 2:11-12](#), and their great hope in the gospel, [Eph 2:13-22](#).

far off -- A common term in rabbinical writings used to describe Gentiles, those who were apart from the true God (cf. [Isa 57:19](#); [Act 2:39](#)). - MSB

you who formerly were far off have been brought near -- This same concept is repeated in [Eph 2:17](#), where [Isa 57:19](#) is quoted. In Isaiah this text referred to Jewish exiles but here in Ephesians it refers to Gentiles.

This is one example of Paul's typological use of OT passages. The NT Apostles have universalized the OT hope. As the exiled Jews were apart from God, so too, the Gentiles were alienated from God.

by the blood of Christ. -- This referred to the vicarious, substitutionary atonement of Christ (cf. [Eph 1:7](#); [Rom 3:25](#); [Rom 5:6-10](#); [2Co 5:21](#); [Col 1:20](#); [Heb 9:14](#); [Heb 9:28](#); [1Pe 1:19](#); [Rev 1:5](#)). God's family is no longer national, but spiritual (cf. [Rom 2:28-29](#); [Rom 4:16-25](#)).

The blood of Christ was a sacrificial metaphor (cf. Leviticus 1-2) for the death of the Messiah (cf. TEV). John the Baptist said of Jesus, "Behold, the lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world" (cf. [Joh 1:29](#)). Jesus came to die (cf. [Gen 3:15](#); [Isaiah 53](#); [Mar 10:45](#)).

It also was a way to assert the true humanity of Jesus, (cf. [Eph 2:15](#)) which the Gnostics denied.

÷Ephesians 2:14

The literary unit of [Eph 2:11](#) to [Eph 3:13](#) focuses on peace between Jew and Gentile. This was the mystery of the gospel's plan which was hidden in ages past. The term "peace" refers to:

1. peace between God and mankind (cf. [Joh 14:27](#); [Joh 16:33](#); [Rom 5:1-11](#); [Php 4:7](#); [Php 4:9](#))
 2. peace between Jew and Gentile, [Eph 2:14-15](#); [Eph 2:17](#) (cf. [Gal 3:28](#); [Col 3:11](#))
- See note at [Eph 2:15](#).

he himself is our peace -- "He Himself" (*autos*) is emphasized (cf. [Eph 2:15](#)). The term "peace" means to "restore that which was broken" (reconciliation). Jesus the Messiah is called the Prince of Peace (cf. [Isa 9:6](#) and [Zec 6:12-13](#)). God's peace in Christ has several aspects. **For he is our peace;** i.e. Peace-maker, or Mediator of peace, both between God and man, and between Jew and Gentile.

peace -- v.14 **Reconciliation** - between Jew and Gentile

(Note: see diagram of how and where two people are woven into one. [Eph 2:13-19](#))

made both one -- Believers are no longer Jew or Gentile, but Christian (cf. [Eph 1:15](#); [Eph 2:15](#); [Eph 4:4](#); [Gal 3:28](#); [Col 3:11](#)). This was the mystery of God as revealed in Ephesians. This has always been God's plan ([Gen 3:15](#)). God chose Abraham to choose a people, to choose a world ([Gen 12:3](#); [Exo 19:5-6](#)). This is the unifying theme of the Old and New Covenants (Testaments).

Gal 3:28 "There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female, for **you are all one** in Christ Jesus." (emphasis mine, WG).

"**Both**" and "**one**" are neuters in the Greek. The idea is rather of positions and relations than of persons (Monod).—"One:"—"one thing," one community, or rather, one organism. - CBSC

dividing wall of hostility -- This is literally "the middle wall of partition." In context this obviously refers to the Mosaic law (cf. [Eph 2:15](#)). Some commentators have asserted that it was an allusion to the wall in Herod's Temple between the court of the Gentiles and the court of the Women which separated Jewish and Gentile worshipers. This same symbolism of the removal of barriers is seen in the veil of the Temple rent from top to bottom at Jesus' death (cf. [Mat 27:51](#)). Unity is now possible. Unity is now the will of God (cf. [Eph 1:10](#); [Eph 4:1-10](#)). (Uteley)

Sermon: on [Eph 2:11-22](#) **The Great Peacemaker**

(Int. 1938 Sir Neville Chamberlain - "Peace in our time" - not so!!)

1. **Separation** - vs. 11-12 What Gentiles were (5 points)

- 1) Without Christ - v.12
- 2) Without citizenship (aliens) v.12
- 3) Without covenant (strangers) v.12
- 4) Without hope
- 5) Without God

2. **Reconciliation** p v. 13-18 What God did for the Gentiles (9 points)

- 1) "made nigh" v.13
- 2) "wall broken down" -v.14
- 3) abolished enmity (how) p.v15
- 4) Both in one body - v.16
- 5) Peace preached to those far and near - v.17
- 6) Both have same access - v.18
- 7) Fellow citizens - v.19
- 8) Fellow members of same household (family)
- 9) One Holy Temple - v.20-22

3. **Unification** - what Jew and Gentile are in Christ

- 1) One nation - v.19
- 2) One family - v.19
- 3) One Holy Temple - v.20-22

÷Ephesians 2:15

abolished -- cf. [Col 2:14](#) ; [Rom 7:6](#); Jesus said He had come not to destroy the law (of Moses), but to fulfil [Mat 5:17](#). The Law stood as a wall between the Jew and Gentile. In the temple there was a literal wall that blocked Gentiles from proceeding any further while Jews could enter the inner court. The term "abolish" is a favorite of Paul's (cf. [Rom 3:31](#); [Rom 6:6](#); [Col 2:14](#)). It literally means "to make null and void" or "to bring to no effect." It is an aorist active participle. Jesus has totally eliminated the death sentence of the OT Law (cf. [Eph 2:16](#); [Col 2:14](#); [Heb 8:13](#)).

This does not mean to imply that the OT is not inspired and important revelation for the NT believer (cf. [Mat 5:17-19](#)). It does mean that the Law is not the means of salvation (cf. Acts 15; Romans 4; Galatians 3; Hebrews).

in his flesh -- [NIV; NKJV; etc.] -- This refutes the Gnostic doctrine that Christ did not come in the flesh, but was only spirit.

This emphasizes Jesus' humanity (cf. [Col 1:22](#)) as well as His Incarnational ministry (cf. [Eph 4:8-10](#)). The Gnostic false teachers would have denied both because of their ontological dualism between spirit, which they saw as good, and matter, which they saw as evil.

the enmity -- Between the Jew and the Gentile. Tyndale renders this, "the cause of hatred, that is to say, the law of commandments contained in the law written." This is expressive of the true sense. The idea is, that the ceremonial law of the Jews, on which they so much prided themselves, was the cause of the hostility existing between them. -BN

commandments and ordinances -- "*The commandments in decrees*" are, doubtless, in part, the "touch not, taste not," of ceremonial restrictions; but not these only. They are the whole system of positive edict, moral as well as ceremonial. -CBSC

to create in Himself one new man -- Theme of the book of Ephesians. This Greek term means "new" in kind, not time. The people of God are not Jews, not Gentiles, but Christians! The Church is a new entity, in and through and for Christ (cf. [Rom 11:36](#); [Col 1:16](#); [Heb 2:10](#)).

The phrase "new man" occurs only here and [Eph 4:24](#), (where see note.) Here the great organism of the saints, Jew and Gentile, is viewed as, so to speak, one Person; a view closely akin to that of the "One Body" of Christ; [1Co 12:13](#).

making [establishing] peace -- This is a favorite term for Paul. It is used eleven times in Romans and seven times in Ephesians (cf. [Eph 1:2](#); [Eph 2:14-15](#); [Eph 2:17](#); [Eph 4:3](#); [Eph 6:15](#); [Eph 6:23](#)). He uses it to speak 1) of peace between God and mankind, [Col 1:20](#); 2) of peace between peoples, [Eph 2:11](#) to [Eph 3:13](#).

This is a present passive participle, and Christ continues to make peace for those who will respond by faith and obedience to God's will; this peace is not automatic (aorist subjunctive of [Php 2:16](#)) but it is available to all (cf. [Rom 5:12-21](#)).

÷Ephesians 2:16

[Eph 2:16](#)

might reconcile -- They who are reconciled to God will be at peace with each other. They will feel that they are of the same family, and are all brethren. (On the subject of reconciliation, see the notes on [2Co 5:18](#).)

us both -- As Jews and Gentiles are brought to God through Christ Jesus, they are brought together with each other. This was accomplished by the cross. FSB

in one body -- the church; see the notes at [Eph 1:23](#). The reuniting of Jews and Gentiles through Christ (cf. [Eph 1:7](#)) is one beautiful example of God's unifying work in our world.

by the cross - By the atonement which Christ made on the cross; see [Col 1:20](#); compare the notes at [Rom 3:25](#). It is by the atonement only that men ever become reconciled to God. The Jewish leaders meant Christ's cross to be a curse (cf. [Deu 21:23](#)). God used it as a means of redemption (cf. [Isaiah 53](#)).

having slain the enmity [killing the hostility] -- Not only the enmity, or hostility, between Jews and Gentiles, but the enmity between the sinner and God. He has by that death removed all the obstacles to reconciliation on the part of God and on the part of man.

The English translations show that this phrase can be understood in two ways. This is because the singular pronoun can be a dative masculine (TEV, NJB) or dative neuter (NASB, NRSV). In context either is possible. The emphasis of the larger context is on Christ's finished redemptive work. - Utley

÷Ephesians 2:17

[Eph 2:17](#)

preached -- The Greek word for "preached" literally means "to bring or announce good news," and in the NT is almost always used of proclaiming the good news that sinners can be reconciled to God by the salvation which is through Jesus Christ. - MSB

preached peace -- far off ... near -- This is an allusion to [Isa 57:19](#) or possibly [Isa 52:7](#). Paul, by typological exegesis, applied OT texts to exiled Jews to Gentiles. Even the rabbis, going back to [Isa 56:6](#), used this phrase to refer to Gentile proselytes. - Utley

And came and preached peace -- The good news Christ brought was intended to produce peace with God. This he preached personally to those who "were nigh," that is, the Jews; to those who were "afar off" - the Gentiles - he preached it by his apostles. He was the author of the system which proclaimed salvation to both. The word "peace" here refers to reconciliation with God.

to you which were afar off, -- see the notes at [Eph 2:13](#); compare [Act 2:39](#).

÷Ephesians 2:18

[Eph 2:18](#)

In this verse we see Christ, the one Spirit, and the Father.

access -- approach. Both Jew and Gentile came in thru the same door into Christ.

we both have access -- "This is a present active indicative meaning "we continue to have access." Both Jews and Gentiles; see the notes at [Rom 5:2](#). We are permitted to approach God through him, or in his name. The Greek word here - *προσάγωγη* *prosago ge* - relates properly to the introduction to, or

audience which we are permitted to have with a prince or other person of high rank. This must be effected through an officer of court to whom the duty is entrusted.

This is the concept of Jesus personally bringing believers into the presence of God and giving them a personal introduction (cf. [Rom 5:2](#); it is also used in the sense of confidence in [Heb 4:16](#); [Heb 10:19](#); [Heb 10:35](#)).

one Spirit -- The same Spirit pointed them to the same door. This is also emphasized in [Eph 4:4](#). The false teachers were causing disunity, but the Spirit brings unity.

unto the Father -- We are permitted to come and address God as our Father; see the [Rom 8:15](#).

÷Ephesians 2:19

Eph_2:19

no longer strangers -- The Gentiles who were estranged ([Eph 2:11-12](#)) are now fully included. This is clearly stated by the use of four common biblical metaphors.

1. fellow citizens (city)
2. saints (holy nation set apart for God)
3. God's household (family members)
4. a spiritual building (temple, [Eph 2:20-22](#))

fellow citizens -- Belonging to the same community with the people of God. [Gal 4:26](#); [Php 3:20](#) (Greek); [Heb 11:10](#); [Heb 11:16](#); [Rev 3:12](#), &c

saints -- “Not *angels*, nor *Jews*, but called to be holy saints of God, members of the spiritual body of Christ” See [Eph 1:1](#).

household -- Of the same family. Entitled to the same privileges, and regarded by him as his children; see [Eph 3:15](#).

[Eph 2:19](#) -- household of God NCV God's family
[Gal 6:10](#) -- household of faith NIV family of believers
[1Ti 3:15](#) -- house of God NCV family of God
[Heb 10:21](#) -- house of God NCV God's house
[1Pe 4:17](#) -- house of God NIV family of God
 Consider also [Eph 3:15](#)

÷Ephesians 2:20

Eph_2:20

built -- Better, **Having been built**; once built (aorist), by your Redeemer. The metaphor here boldly changes, from the inmates of city and house, to the structure. Possibly the element “*house*” in “household” suggested this. - CBSC

the foundation of the apostles and prophets -- Jesus laid the foundation of the gospel (cf. [1Co 3:11](#)). Jesus is the new temple (cf. [Joh 2:19-22](#)). The OT prophesied the coming Kingdom of God, Jesus' Spirit-led life, death, and resurrection accomplished it, and the Apostles preached its reality. The only question is, to whom does the term "prophets" refer? Are they OT prophets or NT prophets (cf. [Eph 3:5](#); [Eph 4:1](#))? The order of the terms implies NT prophets (cf. [Eph 2:3](#); [Eph 4:11](#)), but the OT Messianic allusion to the "cornerstone" implies OT prophecy. - Utley

The comparison of the church with a building, is common in the Scriptures: compare the notes at [1Co 3:9-10](#). The comparison was probably taken from the temple, and as that was an edifice of great beauty, expense, and sacredness, it was natural to compare the church with it. Besides, the temple was the sacred place where God dwelt on the earth; and as the church was the place where he delighted now to abide, it became natural to speak of his church as the temple, or the residence of God. - BN

apostles and prophets -- Refers to the early leaders of the Church who imparted God's message to the people. The apostles include the twelve apostles who knew Jesus during His earthly ministry (with Matthias replacing Judas Iscariot; see [Act 1:15-26](#)) as well as Paul, and perhaps others (see [Act 14:14](#)). The prophets were other influential leaders who were outside of the circle of apostles but who were teachers under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (compare [Act 13:1](#); [1Co 12:28](#); [Eph 3:5](#); [Eph 4:11](#))

Christ Jesus himself being -- It is possible to render "the chief corner stone *of it* (the foundation) being Christ Jesus;" but far less probable. The "Himself" is almost demanded by the separation and contrast of the supreme position of the Lord.

the cornerstone -- This is an OT Messianic metaphor (cf. [Isa 28:16](#); [Psa 118:22](#); [1Pe 2:4-8](#)). In the OT God's stability, strength and perseverance are often visualized in "Rock" as a title (cf. [Deu 32:4](#); [Deu 32:15](#); [Deu 32:18](#); [Deu 32:30](#); [Psa 18:2](#); [Psa 18:31](#); [Psa 18:46](#); [Psa 28:1](#); [Psa 31:3](#); [Psa 42:9](#); [Psa 71:3](#); [Psa 78:15](#)).

The metaphor of Jesus as a stone.

1. a rejected stone - [Psa 118:22](#)
2. a building stone - [Psa 118:22](#); [Isa 28:16](#)
3. a stone to stumble over - [Isa 8:14-15](#)
4. an overcoming and conquering stone (kingdom) - [Dan 2:45](#)
5. Jesus used these passages to describe Himself (cf. [Mat 21:42](#); [Mar 12:10](#); [Luk 20:17](#))

He was the key construction item who was ignored in OT ritualism and legalism (cf. [Isa 8:14](#)). - Utley

÷Ephesians 2:21

[Eph 2:21](#)

the whole structure [ESV] -- *all the building*] R. V., "each several building;" as if the great Temple were viewed for the moment in its multiplicity of porches, courts, and towers; each connected with the great bond of the substructure, in and on which the whole architecture was rising.—An interesting grammatical question arises over the reading here and this rendering, and will occur again [Eph 3:15](#) : - CBSC

The concept of the church as a temple is expressed in [1Co 3:16-17](#).

being joined together -- *fitly framed together*; One word, a present participle, in the Greek. The same occurs below, [Eph 4:16](#) ("fitly *joined* together"), and nowhere else in N. T. The idea is not of a completed but of a progressive work, a "framing together" of the structure ever more closely and firmly. The verbs in [Eph 2:21-22](#) have the compound *syn* which means "joint participation with." They are both present passive. God is continuing to build/add to His church.

The Point: Both Jewish and Gentile believers are being "joined together" into this one organism labeled "a holy temple."

grows -- with the perpetual addition of new "living stones" ([1Pe 2:5](#)) and the resulting new connexions. -

CBSC

* See Utey here for a Greek MSS problem connected with the phrase "the whole building."

into – The phrase, “*unto*,” “into,” suggests (like that in the next verse) a sanctuary not yet complete and ready for the Presence. - CBSC

holy temple in the Lord -- *an holy sanctuary*. See [1Co 3:17](#); [2Co 6:16](#); The word for temple (*naos*) always refers to the sanctuary within the physical structure in Jerusalem, not to the entire temple area with its open courts (*hieron*).

÷Ephesians 2:22

[Eph 2:22](#)

In whom [him] -- In Christ, or on Christ, as the solid and precious foundation.

you also -- Paul reminds them of the joyful fact that they are examples of the truth that "the Gentiles are fellow-heirs."

are being built – A present tense in the Greek; are building, being built. It is a process; carried on to new acquisition of more souls, and new and deeper "framing together" with those already redeemed.

a dwelling place for God -- For a habitation; The word rendered "habitation" (elsewhere only [Rev 18:2](#)) means by its form, emphatically a permanent abode. The idea of the church (the people) being the dwelling place of God. [1Co 3:16](#); [2Co 6:16](#).

÷Ephesians 3:1

[Eph 3:1](#)

Eph 3:1-13 The Mystery Of The Ages

prisoner of Jesus Christ – The one Christ had put in fetters. Or, A prisoner of Rome for Jesus Christ's sake.

for this reason – [Eph 3:2-13](#) is a theological continuation of [Eph 2:11-22](#). Paul repeats this phrase in [Eph 3:14](#), where he returns to his prayer to God. (After a parenthesis of [Eph 2:2-13](#) about his call and ministry to Gentiles).

the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of the Gentiles – When Paul wrote this book he was imprisoned at Rome because of a riot in Jerusalem (cf. [Act 21:27](#) to [Act 22:22](#)). The riot occurred when the Jews accused Paul of taking Trophimus, an Ephesian convert, into the Temple. The Jews knew him to be a Gentile and were outraged (cf. [Eph 2:14](#)).

Paul felt a specific call to the Gentiles (cf. [Eph 3:2](#); [Eph 3:8](#); [Act 9:15](#); [Act 22:21](#); [Act 26:16](#); [Act 26:18](#); [Rom 11:13](#); [Rom 15:16](#); [Gal 1:16](#); [Gal 2:9](#); [1Ti 2:7](#); [2Ti 4:17](#)).

on behalf of you Gentiles – For the sake of you Gentiles.

÷Ephesians 3:2

Eph 3:2-7 form one sentence in Greek.

if ye have heard -- "*ei*" with indicative leaves no doubt they had heard. **Since**. [Act 20:31](#) Paul spent three years there and in the area and they had heard of his ministry and calling.

stewardship [dispensation; economy; administration] -- Paul had been entrusted with the gospel by the Lord Himself. [Act 9:15](#); [Act 26:16-20](#); (cf. [Eph 3:9](#); [1Co 4:1-2](#); [1Co 9:17](#); [Gal 2:7](#); [Col 1:25](#); [1Th 2:4](#); [1Ti 1:11](#); [1Pe 4:10](#)).

God's grace -- God's arrangement for extending His salvation to all men. see [Eph 1:10](#), See [Eph 3:7](#).

given to me for you -- Paul was God's chosen instrument to relay this wonderful news of the gospel to Gentiles. [Act 9:15](#); [Act 26:16-20](#);

÷Ephesians 3:3**Eph_3:3**

revelation -- [1Co 2:10](#) ; [Gal 1:11](#) ; Just as the twelve apostles received teaching (revelation) from the Lord personally, so Paul also was three years in God's preparation of him to preach the gospel, [Gal 1:15-18](#).

See notes on [Eph 3:4-6](#)

mystery -- Paul not only wrote of the mystery that, in Christ, Jew and Gentile become one in God's sight and in His kingdom and family, but also explained and clarified that truth. - MSB

Paul used the term "mystery" over twenty times. Most often it is associated with the how and why of the union of believing Jews and Gentiles into one new community, the church, (cf. [Eph 2:11](#) to [Eph 3:13](#); [Col 1:26-27](#)).

wrote afore -- Some think Paul had written a previous letter, but it seems best to be understood to refer to a previous part of Ephesians, probably [Eph 2:11-22](#). This common use of the aorist tense is called an epistolary aorist.

÷Ephesians 3:4**Eph_3:4**

When you read -- This probably refers to the public readings of Paul's letters in the churches (cf. [Col 4:16](#); [1Th 5:27](#); [Rev 1:3](#)). Remember that Ephesians was undoubtedly a circular letter.

read -- God's word, revelation, in written format; the Holy Spirit speaks to us today through the pages of the Holy Scriptures.

understand -- God's word can be read and *understood*. We may have to pay attention to it.

mystery -- God's plan for man's redemption, hidden through the ages (v.5). The mystery of how God was going to reconcile Jew and Gentile into one body.

the mystery of Christ -- Paul explains this phrase in [Eph 3:6](#). Through Christ's death and resurrection, God has invited Gentiles (non-Jews) to join His people—expanding the scope of His salvation to include the entire world, not just Israel (compare [Isa 49:6](#); [Gal 3:8](#)). This stunning revelation is the heart of Paul's gospel and missionary work. Compare [Rom 11:13-16](#). - FSB

÷Ephesians 3:5

[Eph 3:5](#)

revealed – Paul emphasizes that God's mystery had now been revealed. A sacred thing hidden in the past but now revealed.

God is now clearly revealing His age old plan of the redemption of all mankind (cf. [1Co 2:6-9](#); [Col 1:26](#) a), Jew and Greek, rich and poor, slave and free, male and female (cf. [1Co 12:13](#); [Gal 3:28](#)).

was not made known ... has now been revealed – These are two passive verbs, which show God's actions in the revelation of this great truth before time ([Eph 1:3-6](#)), in time ([Eph 1:7-12](#)), and through time ([Eph 1:13-14](#)). NT believers know more about God and His plan and His Messiah than any O.T. person!

prophets – A reference to prophets of this new covenant times. Men such as Mark, and Luke were not apostles, but they were New Testament prophets, that is, inspired by the Holy Spirit in their message. cf. [Act 11:27](#); [Act 13:1](#); [Act 15:32](#);

to His holy apostles and prophets – This phrase is also found in [Eph 2:20](#); [Eph 4:11](#). They are "holy" because they were set apart for a specific task. This refers to NT prophets (see Special Topic at [Eph 2:20](#), cf. [Eph 4:11](#); [Act 11:27](#); [Act 13:1](#); [Act 15:32](#); [Act 21:9-10](#); [1Co 12:28](#); [1Co 14:1-40](#)). Both groups, Apostles and prophets (along with evangelists and pastor/teachers, cf. [Eph 4:11](#)), proclaimed this newly revealed mystery of the gospel, that believing Jew and Gentile now formed one new body, the church.

÷Ephesians 3:6

[Eph 3:6](#)

Verse 6 The Mystery of God in a nutshell! [Mat 28:19-20](#), [Mar 16:15](#).

mystery – What a startling revelation of the age-old mystery of God's redemptive plan. In Christ there is no more Jew or Greek (cf. [Rom 2:28-29](#); [Rom 3:22](#); [Rom 10:12](#); [1Co 12:13](#); [Gal 3:7-9](#); [Gal 3:28-29](#); [Col 3:11](#)). This same word, "fellow-heirs," is also used in [Rom 8:17](#); [Heb 11:9](#) and [1Pe 3:7](#).

Gentiles are fellow heirs – There are three *syn* compounds here: (1) "fellow-heirs"; (2) "fellow members of one body"; and (3) "fellow partakers of the promise." Paul uses these *syn* compounds often to describe the believer's new life in Christ. This is very similar to the three compounds with *syn* in [Eph 2:5-6](#).

members of the same body – Better, "fellow-members" of the one body, the church, the living temple of God.

partakers of the promise – Better, "fellow-partakers" [Eph 2:12](#) "the covenants of promise", cf. [1Jn 2:25](#); [Heb 4:1](#); [Heb 11:10](#).

in Christ Jesus through the gospel – This is become possible only "*in Christ*" in whom there is no distinctions of nationality, no male or female, but all are "one", and this is made possible, and proclaimed, through the "gospel" of Christ.

÷Ephesians 3:7

Eph_3:7

See [Eph 3:2](#), for like expression of the grace God gave to Paul for the benefit, blessing, of Gentiles.

I was made -- This could refer to Paul's initial salvation, but in context it seems to refer to his apostolic Gentile mission given him by God. (cf. [Eph 3:2](#); [Eph 6:20](#); [Rom 12:3](#); [Rom 15:15-16](#); [1Co 3:10](#); [1Co 15:10](#); [Gal 2:9](#); [Col 1:25](#)).

minister -- We get the English word "deacon" from this generic Greek verb for minister (*diakoneô*, cf. [Mat 8:15](#) or *diakonia*, cf. [Eph 4:12](#)). A servant.

given to me -- Paul was called to be an apostles to the Gentiles by Christ Himself.

by the working of his power -- Often the word "power" indicates something miraculous power from God that enabled Paul to work signs and miracles.

÷Ephesians 3:8

Eph_3:8

Two infinites state Paul's ministry

- 1) v.8 *To preach* - to both Jew and Gentile but esp Gentiles, [Rom 11:13](#).
- 2) v. 9 *To make plain* - "bring to light"

The UnSearchable Riches of Christ

Eph_3:8-12 This is one Greek sentence. These long sentences are characteristic of Ephesians.

the very least of all saints -- This is one of the class of expressions unique to Paul. The ordinary terms of language do not express the idea which he wishes to convey, and a word is therefore coined to convey an idea more emphatically.

This is literally "most least," which is a comparative of a superlative (cf. [1Co 15:9](#); [1Ti 1:15](#)). Paul was humbled by his previous life of religious self-righteousness, and aggressive persecution. He was also amazed by God's love for such a persecutor of His church. See Special Topic: Saints at [Col 1:2](#).

unsearchable -- Literally = "*not capable of being traced by foot prints.*" Only here and [Rom 11:33](#).

"Trackless, inexplorable," - too vast to be mapped and measured.

What a powerful word to describe God's riches in Christ (cf. [Rom 11:33](#) and the Septuagint translation of [Job 5:9](#); [Job 9:10](#)). Mankind cannot discover God, but God has chosen to reveal Himself. - Utley

riches -- cf. note [Eph 1:7](#). A key word in the book of Ephesians.

RICHES

- 1) Grace - [Eph_1:7](#); [Eph_2:7](#)
- 2) Glory - [Eph_1:18](#); [Eph_3:16](#)
- 3) Mercy - [Eph_2:4](#)
- 4) Unsearchable - [Eph_3:8](#)

÷Ephesians 3:9

Eph_3:9

to bring light – This is literally "to turn on a light" (cf. [Eph_1:18](#); [Act_26:18](#); [2Co_4:6](#); [1Pe_2:9](#)). We get the English term "photo" from the Greek word.

the plan [administration; fellowship] of the mystery – This is literally "stewardship of a household (*oikonomia*).\" This is one of Paul's favorite words for God's eternal plan of redemption in Christ for all the children of Adam (cf. [Eph_1:10](#); [Eph_3:2](#); [Eph_3:9](#); [Col_1:25](#)).

There is a Greek manuscript problem with the term "**stewardship**" versus "**fellowship**." "Stewardship" is found in all uncial manuscripts, most minuscule manuscripts, all ancient versions, and all early church father quotes, therefore, "stewardship" seems undoubtedly the original word.

God, who created all things – This refuted the Gnostic dualism between matter and spirit (cf. [Eph_2:10](#)). In the Colossian parallel, Jesus is identified as God the Father's agent in creation (cf. [Joh_1:3](#); [Joh_1:10](#); [Rom_11:36](#); [1Co_8:6](#); [Col_1:15-16](#); [Heb_1:2-3](#); [Heb_2:10](#)).

÷Ephesians 3:10

[Eph_3:10](#)

through the church – God's plan of uniting all man-kind in one body, the church, reveals something about the wisdom of God. The church itself reveals God's wisdom by His wise arrangement to gather all people together to Him.

the church – *Ekklesia* was used in the Septuagint (LXX) to translate the Hebrew term "assembly (*qahal*) of Israel" (cf. [Exo_12:6](#); [Exo_16:3](#); [Num_20:4](#); [Lev_4:13](#)). This is one of several uses of this term in Ephesians (cf. [Eph_1:22](#); [Eph_3:10](#); [Eph_3:21](#); [Eph_5:23-25](#); [Eph_5:27](#); [Eph_5:29](#); [Eph_5:32](#)).

Paul calls the church the body of Christ both in [Eph_1:22-23](#) and in [Col_1:24](#). The early church saw itself as the true people of God with Christ Jesus the Messiah as Head.

One of the unusual literary relationships between Ephesians and Colossians is that in Ephesians this term refers to the church universal (cf. [Mat_16:18](#); [Gal_1:13](#)), while in Colossians it usually refers to the local church ([1Co_10:32](#); [1Co_12:28](#); [1Co_15:9](#); [Gal_1:12](#); [Php_3:6](#)). This points toward Ephesians as a circular letter. - Utley

the manifold wisdom – Literally, "much-variegated." It means the "greatly-diversified wisdom." It does not mean merely that there was "great" wisdom, but that the wisdom shown was diversified and varied. This is a compound word stressing the "many-colored" wisdom of God. In [1Pe_1:6](#) it refers to the manifold sufferings and in [1Pe_4:10](#) it refers to the manifold graces of God. This great multi-faceted truth of God can best be seen in Paul's doxologies in [Rom_11:33-36](#) and [Eph_3:18-21](#).

be made known – The angels longed to know God's plan (cf. [1Pe_1:12](#)). God used His love for the Church to reveal Himself to mankind and to angels (cf. [Eph_2:7](#); [1Co_4:9](#)).

to the rulers and authorities – This refers to angelic levels of authority, both good and evil (cf. [Rom_8:38-39](#); [1Co_2:8](#); [Eph_1:21](#); [Eph_6:12](#); [Col_1:16](#); [Col_2:10](#); [Col_2:15](#); [Col_2:20](#)). This is a contradiction to some theological opinions held by the Gnosticism.

Heavenly places – Occurrences, [Eph_1:3](#) [Eph_1:20](#) [Eph_2:6](#) [Eph_3:10](#); [Eph_6:12](#)

This locative (of sphere) neuter plural adjective (*epouranious*) "in the heavenly places" is only used in Ephesians (cf.; [Eph_1:20](#); [Eph_2:6](#); [Eph_3:10](#); [Eph_6:12](#)). From the context of all of its usages, it must mean the spiritual realm in which believers live here and now, not heaven. - Utley

÷Ephesians 3:11

Eph_3:11

eternal purpose – cf. [Eph 1:5](#). It was God's plan to save all nationalities (Jews were intended to be a light to the Gentiles for their salvation, but they failed) from the beginning.

the eternal purpose – The supreme purpose of the church is to glorify God, which includes the displaying of His wisdom (v. 10) before the angels, who then honor Him with even greater praise.

the realized [purposed] -- "which he accomplished in Christ Jesus" NKJV, NIV

÷Ephesians 3:12

Eph_3:12

in whom – i.e. in Christ.

we have boldness -- The word used here - [παρρησία](#) *parresian* - means, properly, boldness of speaking; [2Co 7:4](#); [Joh 7:26](#); [Act 4:13](#), [Act 4:29](#), [Act 4:31](#). Here it seems to mean "freedom of utterance;" and the idea is, that we may come to God now in prayer with confidence through the Lord Jesus; see [Heb 4:16](#).

and access – see [Eph 2:18](#). The sense is, that we may now come confidently and boldly to the throne of grace for mercy in the name of the Redeemer. Boldness is not rashness; and faith is not presumption; but we may come without hesitating, and with an assurance that our prayers will be heard. - BN

through [by] our faith in him – Jesus is God's channel for all spiritual blessings (cf. [Eph 1:4](#); [Eph 1:7](#); [Eph 1:9-10](#) (twice), [Eph 1:12-13](#) (twice)).

This is literally "faithfulness of him" (cf. [Gal 2:16](#); [Gal 3:22](#)). If it is an objective genitive, believers trust in Christ. He is the trustworthy One! If it is a subjective genitive, it refers to Christ's "faithfulness" (O.T. sense or the term). Faithfulness in fulfilling the O.T. Law (His life) and offering Himself as a sacrifice for sins (His death). - Utley

÷Ephesians 3:13

Eph_3:13

not to lose heart – Paul was a prisoner at Rome at this time. His zeal for the gospel had roused the wrath of the Jews and had led to his imprisonment (see Acts). Yet, Paul was not down-cast, or broken, and with coming persecution to all Christians, Paul wants them to be strong in the faith also.

over what I am suffering – Paul was in Roman custody. [Act 28:30-31](#).

which is your glory – Rejoice that you have a friend who is willing to put his life on the line for you. [Eph 3:1](#); Paul was fulfilling his ministry among the Gentiles, therefore, his sufferings opened the door to their salvation. See "glorious grace" [Eph 1:6](#).

which are your glory – Indicates that Paul's hardships have contributed to the believers' life with Christ in the age to come— when Jesus returns and makes all things right.

÷Ephesians 3:14

Eph_3:14

Four Requests (like a telescope - each section leads to the next).

Eph_3:14-21

- 1) The Invocation - v.14-15
- 2) The Petition - v. 16-19
- 3) The Benediction - 20-21

For this reason – The same phrase as that of Eph_3:1. Paul returns to his initial purpose (cf. Eph_3:1, i.e. his prayer): Notice the doctrinal section opens with a prayer to the God (cf. Eph_1:3-14) and closes with prayer. Here the broken connexion is resumed.

I bow my knees – The attitude of prayer, Luk_22:41; Act_7:60; Act_9:40; Act_20:36; Act_21:5. See also Rom_14:11; Php_2:10. The words do not impose a special bodily posture as a necessity in spiritual worship; physical conditions may make kneeling impossible, or undesirable, on occasion. But they do impose the spiritual attitude of which the bodily is type and expression; profound and submissive reverence.

In the temple, standing, not bowing, was the usual position for Jewish prayer. Here "kneeling" shows Paul's intensity (cf. Mat_6:5; Mar_11:25; Luk_18:11-12; Luk_22:41; Act_7:60; Php_2:10).

the Father – The words, "*of our Lord Jesus Christ*," are omitted in many MSS. They appear in very ancient documents, including the Syriac and Latin versions.

The KJV translation adds "*the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*," but this phrase is not in the ancient Greek manuscripts P⁴⁶, à, A, B, C, nor the Greek texts used by Jerome and Augustine. The addition does occur in the uncial manuscripts à^c, D, G, K, and the Greek text used by Chrysostom.

The concept of three divine persons with one divine essence (i.e., monotheism) is difficult to understand. Yet, if Jesus is deity and the Spirit is a person, then Bible believers are forced to affirm a triune unity. - Utley

÷Ephesians 3:15

Eph_3:15

Father ... family – [Eph_3:14-15] This is a play on the Greek name *pater* and *patria*. Notice the emphasis on the Father, as in Eph_1:3-14. The Creator God is the paradigm for all living beings and their social units (i.e. tribes/nations). - Utley

Eph_3:14-17 "Father. . . Spirit. . . Christ" Notice the work of the Trinity as in Eph_1:3-14. It is true that the term "Trinity" is not used in the NT. However, there are numerous passages where the three divine persons are mentioned in a unified context (cf. Mat_3:16-17; Mat_28:19; Joh_14:26; Act_2:33-34; Act_2:38-39; Rom_1:4-5; Rom_5:15; Rom_8:9-10; 1Co_12:4-6; 2Co_1:21-22; 2Co_13:14; Gal_4:4-6; Eph_1:3-14; Eph_1:17; Eph_2:18; Eph_3:14-17; Eph_4:4-6; 2Th_2:13; Tit_3:4-6; 1Pe_1:2; Jud_1:20-21). - Utley

every family in heaven and on earth – This refers to all believers, whether dead or alive. Php_2:10.

÷Ephesians 3:16

[Eph 3:16](#)

riches of his glory – cf. "Our Riches In Christ" is one of Paul's favorite phrases. cf. [Eph 1:7](#)

strengthened – With power (strength); How? The means is through his Spirit. The Word of God is used by the Holy Spirit to strengthen the inner man. [Heb 4:12](#), [Eph 6:17](#) [Act 7:51](#)

in your inner being [man] -- Paul often uses the contrast between the inner man and the outer man. The inner man is the spiritual aspect, while the outer man is the physical aspect.

[Eph 3:16-19](#) Paul's prayer can be outlined using two grammatical features.

1. Three purpose clauses (*hina*)
 - a. [Eph 3:16](#), God would grant (aorist subjunctive)
 - b. [Eph 3:18](#), God would fully enable (aorist subjunctive)
 - c. [Eph 3:19](#) b, God would fill (aorist subjunctive)
2. Four aorist infinitives
 - a. [Eph 3:16](#), "you to be strengthened"
 - b. [Eph 3:17](#), "Christ to dwell in your hearts"
 - c. [Eph 3:18](#), "you to comprehend"
 - d. [Eph 3:19](#), "you to know"

This paragraph reflects Paul's prayer for the believers in all these churches that they be stable and established by God's power through Christ's acts and the Holy Spirit's empowering to resist (1) the false teachers and (2) the persecution of a fallen world.

II. Petition - v. 16-19**1) For Strength - v.16****2) For Foundation (*rooted and grounded*) v. 17**

Dwell - to settle down and be at home

Rooted - spiritual roots deep; Where do I get my nourishment?

Grounded - foundation we build upon.

3) For Comprehension - v. 18

Able to grasp, lay hold on, the cross, upward, horizontal, downward.

4) For Fulness - v. 19

Life abhors a vacuum.

÷Ephesians 3:17

[Eph 3:17](#)**II. Petition - v. 16-19 (continued, see [Eph 3:16](#))**

1) For Strength - v.16

2) For Foundation (rooted and grounded) v. 17

dwell – to settle down and be at home (Thayer). The Greek word used here, *katoikeō*, carries the sense of residing permanently.

in your hearts – The heart in ancient Greek and Jewish thought represents the essential aspects of existence and identity: the inner being, will, and intelligence

firmly rooted and established – Paul uses these two metaphors— one agricultural (“rooted”) and the other architectural (“established”)— as a reminder of the stability that Christ provides. Paul’s ultimate hope is that Christ dwelling in the heart will deepen the our understanding and faith in God’s love.

rooted – spiritual roots deep; Where do I get my nourishment?

grounded – foundation we build upon.

Christ may dwell –

dwell . . HOW does Deity dwell in us? He tells us here, "*by faith!*" cf. "Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the law, or by the hearing of faith?" **Gal_3:2**

The Indwelling of the Holy Spirit

- 1) God Dwells In Us
2Co_6:16; 1Jn_4:12; 1Jn_4:15;
- 2) Christ Dwells In Us
Eph_3:16-17; Col_1:27; Rom_8:10; 1Jn_5:12; Gal_4:19 Joh_14:23
- 3) The Holy Spirit Dwells In Us
(See comments **Act_5:32**); **Rom_8:11; Rom_8:9;**
- 4) The Word of God Dwells In Us
1Jn_2:14; 2Jn_1:9; Eph_3:17; Col_3:16
- 5) Sin Dwells In Us
Rom_7:17; Rom_7:20
- 6) Satan in Judas
Joh_13:27; (Cf. Mat_16:23; Mar_8:33)

HOW

How does God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit in us?

Through following the teaching they give us:

Col_3:16; 2Jn_1:9; Php_2:5 Rom_8:14

Notice Joh_14:23 Christ abiding in us is dependent upon us keeping His word.

(See also the note on **Joh_16:8**.)

Led by the Spirit

Rom_8:14;

Men resist the Spirit

Act_7:51;

NOTE ALSO:

- 1) We Dwell In God
1Jn_4:15-16; 1Th_1:1
- 2) We Dwell In Christ
Rom_6:3; Rom_8:1 ff; Gal_3:27; Joh_14:20
- 3) We In the Holy Spirit
1Co_12:13; Mat_28:19; Jo_10:38; John_10:17; John_10:21
- 4) Christ In the Father
Joh_14:20 Joh_14:10-11;

Heb_4:12, Eph_6:17 Act_7:51 The Word of God is used by the Holy Spirit to strengthen the inner man. The indwelling of the Holy Spirit is a figurative expression (often employed

by eastern writers) to indicate the holy disposition one acquires from being taught by men inspired by the Holy Spirit. [2Ti 3:14-17](#) ; [2Pe 1:21](#).

Note how the Holy Spirit today works by using the words of inspired men.

- 1) He produces faith - [Rom 10:17](#)
- 2) He begets - [1Co 4:15](#)
- 3) He quickens - [Psa 119:50](#)
- 4) He causes to be born of the Spirit - [1Pe 1:23](#)
- 5) He cleanses - [Joh 15:3](#)
- 6) He purifies - [1Pe 1:22](#)
- 7) He sanctified - [Joh 17:17](#)
- 8) He leads - [Psa 119:105](#) ; [Gal 5:18](#); [Eph 1:3](#); [Act 8:14](#) [2Ti 4:2](#); [1Jn 2:5](#);
- 9) He comforts - [1Th 4:18](#)
- 10) He builds us up - [Act 20:32](#)

The *Spirit* does exactly for us what He did in the first century . *Then* He used inspired men, the words of inspired speakers, *today* He used the writings of inspired men!

Everything the Bible affirms the *Spirit* does, the Bible affirms He does it through the inspired Word.

The Jewish mind often spoke metaphorically of a "characteristic" dwelling in a person, and sometimes calling him the "son of ..." that characteristic. Thus, of Barnabas as "son of consolation" [Act 4:36](#), and James and John as "sons of thunder" [Mar 3:17](#); and the term "son of perdition" in [2Th 2:3](#).

(3) The word "son" is used with a following genitive of quality to indicate some characteristic of the person or persons described. In the English the word "son" is usually omitted and the phrase is paraphrased as in [2Sa 3:34](#), where the words translated "wicked men" in the King James Version mean literally, sons or children of wickedness. - ISBE, "Son; Sons" (3)

Which Person of the Trinity indwells believers? [Utley, [Rom 8:11](#)]

Most Christians would answer the Spirit. This is certainly true, but in reality, all three Persons of the Trinity indwell believers.

1. **the Spirit**, [Joh 14:16-17](#); [Rom 8:11](#); [1Co 3:16](#); [1Co 6:19](#); [2Ti 1:14](#)
2. **the Son**, [Mat 28:20](#); [Joh 14:20](#), [Joh 14:23](#); [Joh 15:4-5](#); [Rom 8:10](#); [2Co 13:5](#); [Gal 2:20](#); [Eph 3:17](#); [Col 1:27](#)
3. **the Father**, [Joh 14:23](#); [2Co 6:16](#)

This phrase is an excellent opportunity to show that the NT often attributes the works of redemption to all three persons of the Trinity:

- (1) God the **Father** raised Jesus (cf. [Act 2:24](#); [Act 3:15](#); [Act 4:10](#); [Act 5:30](#); [Act 10:40](#); [Act 13:30](#), [Act 13:33-34](#), [Act 13:37](#); [Act 17:31](#); [Rom 6:4](#), [Rom 1:1](#); [Rom 8:11](#); [Rom 10:9](#); [1Co 6:14](#); [2Co 4:14](#); [Gal 1:1](#); [Eph 1:20](#); [Col 2:12](#); [1Th 1:10](#));
- (2) God the **Son** raised Himself (cf. [Joh 2:19-22](#); [Joh 10:17-18](#));
- (3) God the **Spirit** raised Jesus (cf. [Rom 8:11](#))

This same Trinitarian emphasis can be seen in [Rom 8:9-10](#).

J. Noel Merideth writes: As a father today indwells his son is a figurative expression, God is said to dwell in Christians ([2Co 6:16](#)), and Christ dwells in Christians ([Eph 3:17](#); [Col 1:27](#)), and the Holy Spirit dwells in Christians. We understand that Christ does not personally dwell in Christians. Christ dwells in Christians to the extent that they live like him. There is no indication that the Holy Spirit dwells in us differently. The same expressions that describe Christ's indwelling also describe the Spirit's indwelling. When the words [teachings] thoughts and Spirit of God are controlling in our lives, God dwells in us; when the gospel controls us, Christ dwells in us; when we receive the gospel by the hearing of faith, the Spirit dwells in us. As long as Christians are true to the words of God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit, then God, Christ, and the Holy Spirit are in them.

÷Ephesians 3:18 [Eph_3:18](#)

strength to comprehend – "able to know" -- Paul's desire was that all others (probably especially the Jews), as well as the recipients of the letter, might appreciate the wonders of God's plan for the redemption of all men.

This emphasis on knowledge counteracted the exclusive intellectual claims of the Gnostic false teachers. It may refer to the newly revealed mystery of God, the uniting of Jews and Gentiles in Christ (cf. [Eph 3:9](#)).

with all the saints – For the phrase cf. [Eph 1:15](#), [Eph 6:18](#); [Col 1:4](#); [1Th 3:13](#); [Phm 1:5](#); [Rev 8:3](#),

width ... length ... depth ... height – Not four different features of love, but an effort to suggest its vastness and completeness.

breadth . . . length . . . depth . . . height – namely, the full dimensions of the spiritual temple, answering to "the fulness of God" ([Eph 3:19](#)), to which the Church, according to its capacity, ought to correspond (compare [Eph 4:10](#), [Eph 4:13](#)) as to "the fulness of Christ."

The "breadth" implies Christ's world-wide love, embracing all men: the "length," its being extended through all ages ([Eph 3:21](#)); the "depth," its profound wisdom which no creature can fathom ([Rom 11:33](#)); the "height," its being beyond the reach of any foe to deprive us of ([Eph 4:8](#)) [BENGEL].

I prefer to understand "the breadth," &c., to refer to the whole of the vast mystery of free salvation in Christ for all, Gentile and Jew alike, of which Paul had been speaking ([Eph 3:3-9](#)), and of which he now prays they may have a fuller comprehension. As subsidiary to this, and the most essential part of it, he adds, "and to know the love of Christ" ([Eph 3:19](#)). GROTIUS understands depth and height of God's goodness raising us from the lowest depression to the greatest height. - JFB

breadth and length and height and depth – The Object is left unnamed. What is it? We understand it is that which has just been named, Divine Love and which is to be named (as the Love of Christ) immediately again. At least, it is that Work, Purpose, Covenant, of God in Christ which is ultimately resolved into the Eternal and Sovereign Love. (CBSC)

÷Ephesians 3:19 [Eph_3:19](#)

the love of Christ -- The love of Christ toward us; the immensity of redeeming love. Not merely the love showed including Gentiles, but here the love that is shown in giving himself for the whole lost world, [Joh 3:16](#).

which passes knowledge -- Christ's love is far beyond the capability of human reason and experience to explain. (cf. Phil. 4:7).

surpasses knowledge -- This implies that when he says "know," he does not mean that we can adequately know; all we know is, that His love far exceeds our knowledge of it, and with even our fresh accession of knowledge hereafter, will still exceed them. Even as God's power exceeds our thoughts ([Eph 3:20](#)).

filled with -- The Greek means "filled even unto all the fullness of God", that is, filled, each according to your capacity, with the divine wisdom, knowledge, and love; "even as God is full," and as Christ who dwells in your hearts, hath "all the fullness of the Godhead dwelling in Him bodily" ([Col 2:9](#)). (JFB)

filled with all the fullness of God -- Barnes says, "What an expression! How rich and glorious Who can comprehend all that it implies?"

It seems to mean that as God loves and is merciful, so his followers ought to be filled with the same character and attitudes that we know God possesses. - WG

Utey says this " is a play on the false teachings of the Gnostics, who emphasized fullness (*plērôma*) as special knowledge which enabled one to pass through all the angelic spheres (*aeons*) to heaven. Christ is the true "fullness of God" (cf. [Eph 1:23](#); [Col 2:9](#))."

÷Ephesians 3:20 [Eph_3:20](#)

him -- Christ in our hearts by faith, cf. [Eph 3:17](#).

who is able -- This is a wonderful title for God used three times in the NT (cf. [Rom 16:25](#); [Jud 1:24](#)). Each of these texts deal with different aspects of God's activities.

far more abundantly ... -- It is characteristic of Paul to use compound superlatives, meaning "exceeding, abundantly more" (cf. [1Th 3:10](#); [1Th 5:13](#)) It is bad English grammar, but great divine theology!

power -- The Holy Spirit working in us. [Note Eph 3:17 how the Holy Spirit works within us today. In the days of the apostles, he also worked miraculously. [1Co 12:7](#) "But the manifestations of the Spirit is given to every man to ..."]

÷Ephesians 3:21 [Eph_3:21](#)

be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus -- Here is the exalted place of Jesus' Bride and Body, the Church (cf. [Eph 1:23](#)), His blood-bought, Spirit-filled people!

The term "church" is from two Greek terms, "out of" and "to call." It was used in Greco-Roman culture for town meetings (cf. [Act 19:32](#)). In Jewish life this term was used to translate the significant theological concepts of "the assembly of Israel" or *qahal* (cf. [Exo 12:6](#); [Exo 16:3](#); [Lev 4:13](#); [Num 14:5](#); [Num 20:6](#); [Deu 5:22](#); [Deu 9:10](#); [Deu 10:4](#); [Deu 18:16](#)). The early believers saw themselves as the true and ongoing "People of God" (cf. [Gal 6:16](#); [1Pe 2:5-9](#); [Rev 1:6](#)). - Utey

in the church -- Or, by the church; [Eph 3:10](#). The church was to be the instrument by which the glory of God would be shown; and it was by the church that his praise would be celebrated.

throughout all ages, world without end -- There is a richness and amplification of language here which shows that Paul's heart was full of the subject, and that it was difficult to find words to express his conceptions. It means, in the strongest sense, **forever**. (BN)

throughout all ages -- Literally *unto all the generations of the age of the ages*. Such is the length of prospect revealed for the Church of Christ, as the "habitation of God" ([Eph 2:22](#)). The meaning manifestly is, "to all eternity," whatever manifestations the eternal Future may bring. (CBSC)

÷Ephesians 4:1

[Eph 4:1](#)

ch 1-3 **Our Riches** in Christ

ch 4-6 **Our Walk** in Christ

1. Walking in Unity - 4:1-16
2. Walking in Holiness - 4:17-32
3. Walking in Love - 5:1-6
4. Walking in Light - 5:7-14
5. Walking in Wisdom - 5:15-6:9
 - a) Husbands and wives - 5:18-33
 - b) Parents and children - 6:1-4
 - c) Masters and servants - 6:5-9
6. Waling in Victory - 6:10-20
7. Conclusion - 6:21-24
 - a) Information - 6:21-22
 - b) Salutation - 6:23
 - c) Benediction - 6:24

1. Walking in Unity - 4:1-16

- 1) The Graces of Unity - v.1-3
- 2) The Grounds of Unity - v.4-6
- 3) The Gifts for Unity - v. 7-11
- 4) The Growth for Unity - v. 12-16

therefore -- This word marks the transition from doctrine to duty, principle to practice, position to behavior. This is typical of Paul (see Rom. 12:1; Gal. 5:1; Phil. 2:1; Col. 3:5; 1 Thess. 4:1).

prisoner in the Lord -- Literally "in the Lord." This is one of Paul's prison letters, probably written in Rome in the early 60's. It is different from [Eph 3:1](#), which has "prisoner of Christ Jesus." Paul saw believers as encompassed by Christ. They live and move and have their being in Him (cf. [Job 12:10](#); [Dan 5:23](#); [Act 17:28](#)). See note on Eph 3:1.

walk -- The key verse in chapters 4-6 "Walk" is frequently used in the N.T. to refer to daily conduct. It sets the theme for the final 3 chapters. "Worthy" has the idea of living to match one's position in Christ. The apostle urged his readers to be everything the Lord desires and empowers them to be.

worthy of the calling -- God's act of creating one family in Christ requires His children to live in a manner that honors His work. This begins the practical section of the letter. Unity is maintained by purposeful actions of Christlike living (cf. [Eph 2:2](#); [Eph 2:10](#); [Eph 4:1](#); [Eph 4:17](#); [Eph 5:2](#); [Eph 5:15](#); [Col 1:10](#); [Col 2:6](#)).

calling -- This is an aorist passive indicative. The call always comes from God (cf. [Joh 6:44](#); [Joh 6:65](#)). The word "call" is etymologically related to the term "church" in [Eph 3:21](#). There is an obvious word play on this term (cf. [Eph 4:1](#) [twice] and 4 [twice]). - Utley

÷Ephesians 4:2

Eph_4:2

humility [lowliness] -- "Humility" is a term not found in the Roman or Greek vocabularies of Paul's day. The Greek word apparently was coined by Christians, perhaps even by Paul himself, to describe a quality for which no other word was available. Humility, the most foundational Christian virtue (James 4:6), is the quality of character commanded in the first beatitude ([Mat 5:3](#)), and describes the noble grace of Christ ([Php 2:7-8](#)). - MSB

"Humility" is uniquely a Christian virtue which was not included in the Greek moralist's (Stoics) list of virtues. Both Moses (cf. [Num 12:3](#)) and Jesus (cf. [Mat 11:29](#)) are described by this term. Paul uses it several times (cf. [Php 2:3](#); [Col 2:18](#); [Col 2:23](#); [Col 3:12](#)).

gentleness -- "Meekness," an inevitable product of humility, refers to that which is mild-spirited and self-controlled (cf. Matt. 5:5; 11:29; Gal. 5:23; Col. 3:12).

This refers to "domesticated strength" like a trained animal. The KJV translates it "meekness." Wild animals have been tamed to serve mankind. Believers have been "tamed" to serve one another, not compete with one another.

patience [longsuffering] -- The Greek word literally means *long-tempered*, and refers to a resolved patience that is an outgrowth of humility and gentleness (cf. 1 Thess. 5:14; James 5:10).

As God has long-suffering patience with unbelievers (cf. [Rom 2:4](#); [Rom 9:22](#)) believers should continue to deal with the faults and weaknesses (cf. [1Ti 1:6](#)) of other believers in the same gracious way. Believers must put others for whom Christ died before themselves (cf. [Rom 14:1](#) to [Rom 15:13](#); [Gal 5:22](#); [Php 2:3](#); [Php 4:5](#); [Col 3:12-13](#)). This self-giving emulates Jesus (cf. [1Jn 3:16](#)), and is evidence of the reversal of the tendencies of the fall.

bearing with one another -- Humility, gentleness, and patience are reflected in a forbearing love for others that is continuous and unconditional (cf. 1 Pet. 4:8).

Since believers belong to one family of God, they must bear with one another. Compare Phil 2:1-5.

love -- Note the attitudes to accompany love. Humility, meekness, steadfastness, patience.

÷Ephesians 4:3

Eph_4:3

eager [diligent; endeavoring] -- The New English Bible translates it as "spare no effort."

unity of the Spirit -- Unity fostered by the Spirit. Unity is to be joined together in the bond of peace. [1Co 1:10](#). [Php 2:2](#)

unity of the Spirit -- The Spirit-created oneness of all true believers (see [1Co 6:17](#); [1Co 12:11-13](#); [Php 1:27](#); [Php 2:2](#)) has created a bond of peace, the spiritual cord that surrounds and binds God's holy people together. This bond is love ([Col 3:14](#)).

in the bond of peace – Earlier, Paul portrays Christ as the personification of peace ([Eph 2:14](#)). The work of Christ leads to peace between God and humanity and between Jews and Gentiles (2:15).

÷Ephesians 4:4

[Eph 4:4](#)

God's ONEderful Plan (7 Planks)

ONE Body	- Unity of Organization
One Spirit	- Unity of Guidance
One Hope	- Unity of Aspiration
One Lord	- Unity of Authority
One Faith	- Unity of Message
One Baptism	- Unity of Practice
One God	- Unity of Worship

one body – **CHURCH** – [Mat 16:18](#), [Eph 5:23-27](#), [Act 20:28](#).

The Church is the "Body of Christ," [Eph 1:22-23](#), [Col 1:18](#); [Col 1:24](#),

There is one body- [Eph 4:4-6](#), [1Co 12:12-13](#), [Col 3:15](#),

Saved "Added by the Lord"- not "Voted In," [Act 2:47](#), [2Jn 1:9-10](#).

one body – The church, the body of Christ, is composed of every obedient believer since Pentecost without distinction, by the work of the "one Spirit" (see [1Co 12:11-13](#)). Paul uses this metaphor often in Ephesians (cf. [Eph 2:16](#); [Eph 3:6](#); [Eph 4:4](#); also [Col 1:18](#)).

Most uses of the term "church" in the NT refer to local congregations. The universal church is addressed in [Mat 16:18](#) and Ephesians. The emphasis is on the unity and oneness of all of God's people and His church everywhere.

one Spirit – Most translations capitalize "Spirit" to make it refer to the Holy Spirit. If it is "spirit" it could refer to the attitudes and characterists that God wants all his children to possess and exhibit.

one hope -- This is the pledge and promise of eternal inheritance given each child of God ([Eph 1:11-14](#)) and who has the ownership-sealed to each believer by possessing the same spirit of God ([Eph 4:13](#)).

÷Ephesians 4:5

[Eph 4:5](#)

One Lord	- Unity of Authority
One Faith	- Unity of Message
One Baptism	- Unity of Practice

one Lord -- Both Jew and Greek has accepted the same God to be the Lord of the lives. See [Act 4:12](#); [Rom 10:12](#); [Gal 1:8](#).

Lord is a title with both an O.T. background for YHWH (cf. [Exo 3:14](#), see [Col 1:3](#)), and a NT usage in connection with Jesus' deity (cf. [Rom 10:9](#); [1Co 12:3](#); [Php 2:9-11](#)).

one faith – The body of doctrine revealed in the NT cf. [Jud 1:3](#). (cf. [Gal 1:23](#); [Gal 3:23](#); [Gal 3:25](#); [Php 1:27](#); [Jud 1:3](#); [Jud 1:20](#)),

one baptism – See outline in the opening verse -- [Eph 1:1](#).

Both Jew and Gentile were baptized the same way, for the same purpose, with the same results, being added by God the same body (the church - [Act 2:41](#); [Act 2:47](#)).

one baptism – see note on [1Co 10:2](#) This refers to water baptism commanded by Christ in [Mat 28:19](#); [Mar 16:15-16](#), which was the early church's practice at one's conversion to Christ. It symbolized death to the old life and the beginning of the new life in Christ ([Rom 6:4](#); [Col 2:12](#)).

÷Ephesians 4:6

[Eph 4:6](#)

See note on [Eph 4:4](#)

one God -- This is the basic doctrine of God taught in Scripture (see [Deu 4:35](#); [Deu 6:4](#); [Deu 32:39](#); [Isa 45:14](#); [Isa 46:9](#); [1Co 8:4-6](#)).

and Father – It may have been shocking to the Gentiles to think of calling God "Father." He is Father of all" in the sense that God is the creator of all, created by Him in His image and likeness (cf. Gen 1:26-27). But in this context the focus is not on creation but on God's plan for restoring sinful man-kind to Himself and making them His heirs of eternal life.

over all, and through all, and in all – Stresses the supremacy of God. He joins all people together under His sovereign rule.

÷Ephesians 4:7

[Eph 4:7](#)

4:7-16 In this passage, Paul focuses on God's gifts that build up the body of Christ (the Church). The NT lists areas of spiritual giftedness five times ([Eph 4:11-12](#); [1Co 12:4-11](#), [1Co 12:28-30](#); [Rom 12:3-8](#); [1Pe 4:7-11](#)). Each list presents different gifts and emphases.

grace – God's undeserved kindness and favor.

But ... each one of us – Jew and Gentile. The "but" could be translated "on the other hand," contrasting what has just been said with what is about to be said, moving from the subject of the unity of believers ("all," v. 6) to that of the uniqueness of different believers ("each one").

Certain gifts of God's grace (like salvation, etc) is given to all faithful believers, but other special gifts were given to specific believers (miraculous gifts) for the duration and purposes expressed in [Eph 4:14](#).

Some believers were given unique spiritual gifts that God gave through the laying on of the apostles' hands (cf. [Act 8:17-18](#)) and gave according to God's sovereign will and design. The Greek term for "gift" focuses on the grace that prompted it and the freeness of the gift.

every one – i.e. Jew and Gentile. This is a reference to the miraculous spiritual gifts and it is not indicating that every Christian had some gift, but that they were given alike to Jews and Gentiles.

measure of the gift –. "diversities of gifts" but the same spirit." [1Co 12:4](#).

Conquering generals gave gifts, the idea come from secular kings. cf. NASB, NIV, ESV.

measure – A portion; quantity; [Early Christians didn't individually have all of the miraculous gifts, but different members had different gifts.] It is recorded that Christ was given the Spirit without measure.
[Joh_3:34](#)

÷Ephesians 4:8

[Eph_4:8](#)

it says – **Psalm 68** ([Psa_68:18](#)) is a victory hymn composed by David to celebrate God's conquest of the Jebusite city of Jerusalem and the triumphant ascent of God up to Mt. Zion (cf. [2Sa_6:1-7](#); [1Ch_13:1](#) ff). After such a triumph, the king would bring home the spoils and the prisoners. Here Paul depicts Christ returning from His battle on earth back into the glory of the heavenly city with the trophies of His great victory at Calvary (*see notes on* [2Co_2:14-16](#)).

The phrase "*gave gifts to men*" is found in the Aramaic Targum, the Peshitta (Syriac), and Chaldean translations, while "received gifts" ["Thou didst take gifts amongst men"] is in the Masoretic Text (Hebrew text) and the Septuagint (Greek translation). Paul quotes an O.T. translation that reflected the true theology point he is making. [This seeming discrepancy may be that the point is Christ "received these gifts" from the Father to "give them" to his disciples, [Eph_4:11](#). - WG]

When he ascended on high – To heaven. The Psalm is, "Thou hast ascended on high;" compare [Eph_1:22-23](#). (cf. [Act_1:9-11](#).)

led captivity captive -- [Psa_68:18](#) The picture of conquering generals leading his captives as they proceeded with their victory parade through Rome on their return home. The Hebrew there is literally "Thou didst ascend on high; Thou didst lead captive a captivity (a band of captives)..."

1) "Harrowing of Hell"

[Psa_68:18](#); [Isa_53:12](#);

The verses here pictures the ascension of our Lord back into heaven after his victory over Satan and the grave. The righteous saints who had been captives of Satan in hades (Luke 19 "Abraham's bosom" and Luke 23 "paradise" were now in the Lord's company as he returned to heaven to the Father.

2) An alternative view, but correct also in addition, and made clear in other passages, is that all satanic principalities and powers who attacked him were now captive to the Lord Jesus.

Image of conquering Satan and all his demonic hoards.

[Heb_2:15](#); [Col_2:15](#) [Luk_11:21-22](#)

3) Jesus took the key to hades with him ([Rev_1:18](#))

[2Co_5:8](#) [Php_1:23](#) [Act_2:33](#) [2Co_12:2-5](#) [1Pe_3:19](#); [1Pe_4:6](#) [Isa_53:12](#)

The wonderful truth for the Christian today is that because of this victory we will not spend any time in Satan's dominion of that hades world, but will die to be in the Lord's presence awaiting the time of the resurrection and judgment. [2Co_5:6-8](#) [2Co_5:8](#), [Php_1:23](#), etc.

Where Are The Dead? See note on [2Co_5:8](#)

gave gifts -- The gifts Christ gave are specified [Eph_4:11](#); ([Act_2:33](#) [Act_2:38](#); [Act_10:45](#)).

The picture Paul paints is this: As victorious Roman generals would lead a victory procession through the streets of Rome upon their return, just so Jesus returned to heaven victorious in his resurrection and led those who had been captive in hades with him.

And Paul continues with the picture he has started, that just as the victorious Roman generals

gave gifts to the people, of the spoils he had taken, the Lord gave gifts for his disciples.

÷Ephesians 4:9

Eph_4:9

(Verses 9 and 10 go together)

In saying -- Or **it**, i.e. the Scripture, **says**. Paul's usage in quotation leaves the subject of the verb undetermined here and in similar cases (see *e.g.* [Eph 5:14](#)). Paul alludes back to the scripture [Psa 68:18](#) quoted in the previous verse, [Eph 4:8](#).

ascended -- back into heaven. [Psa 68:18](#); [Isa 53:12](#); [Joh 3:13](#); [Joh 20:17](#) [Act 1:9-11](#) [Act 2:34](#);

descended -- True, the Lord descended from heaven to earth in the incarnation. [Joh 1:14](#) [Php 2:6-7](#); [John 3:13](#); But by adding "*into the lower parts of the earth*" Paul is referring to his **descent** into the hades and Jesus' conquest of Satan and the grave. [Luk 23:43](#); [Act 2:27](#) [Rom 10:6-7](#) [Joh 3:13](#) [Php 2:6-7](#).

÷Ephesians 4:10

Eph_4:10

He who – Reference to Christ's death, resurrection and ascension back to heaven. ([Mar 16:19](#)).

descended -- (From heaven to earth - the incarnation.) [Joh 1:14](#) [Php 2:6-7](#).) But more properly here it means Jesus descended into hades and conquered Satan and the grave. [Act 2:27](#) [Rom 10:6-7](#) [Joh 3:13](#) [Php 2:6-7](#).

ascended -- Jesus' ascension back into heaven. [Psa 68:18](#); [Isa 53:12](#); [Joh 3:13](#); [Joh 20:17](#) [Act 1:9-11](#) [Act 2:34](#)

÷Ephesians 4:11

Eph_4:11

apostles -- Jesus selected 12 to be apostles to the Jews, and Paul to be the apostles to the Gentiles. cf. [Mat 10:1](#); [1Co 12:28](#).

prophets -- Prophets spoke (taught) under direct prompting of the Holy Spirit. [2Pe 1:21](#).

Prophet = one who speaks forth from God. (Our connotation today is one who "*foretells*" the future, which was sometimes included in his message. But the prophet was a "*forth-teller*" from God to man by inspiration.

The reference here to "*prophets*" is to those in New Testament times. see [Eph 2:20](#) and [Eph 3:5](#). [Act 11:27](#); [Act 13:1](#); [Act 15:32](#); [1Co 12:28](#); [1Co 14:1](#).

v. 11 *What* - special gifts

v. 12 *Why* - for the maturing of the saints, etc.

v. 13 *When* - until unity, (until all truth given to both Jew and Gentiles) until mature in Christ cf.

v.14 the *purpose* -

evangelists – Such as Timothy (probably Titus and others named but not specified as such in the New Testament) who had the laying on of elder's hands to ordain him ([1Ti 4:14](#)), and had Paul's hands on him that imparted some special gift ([2Ti 1:6](#)) which is not named. Timothy's gift may have been to "preach" or to "organize" and put order into churches ([Tit 1:5](#)).

A term sometimes used of such men was the term "man of God". ([1Ti 6:11](#); [2Ti 3:17](#)) In the O.T. of Moses ([Deu 33:1](#); [Jos 14:6](#)), Elijah, Elisha, Samuel, David, and unnamed prophets (i.e., [1Sa 2:27](#); [1Ki 12:22](#); [1Ki 13:1](#)).

pastors -- The titles "elders" (*presbuteroi*), "bishops" (*episkopoi*), and "pastors" (*poimenas*) all refer to one function and later office (cf. [Act 20:17](#); [Act 20:28](#); and [Tit 1:5-7](#)). The term "elder" had an O.T. background, while the term "bishop" or "overseer" had a Greek city-state background. The Greek syntax (one conjunction *de* and one article *tous*) links these two titles together as one function, cf. Acts 15; cf. [Act 14:23](#); [Act 20:28](#); [Jas 5:14](#).

Some in the first century were especially recognized and appointed by inspired men. (Paul in [Act 14:23](#) didn't require a long time frame to be able to know whom to appoint. The Holy Spirit apparently directed Paul at Ephesus whom to appoint - [Act 20:28](#). Timothy, not being inspired as Paul or an apostle or prophet, needed the instruction from an inspired man to know the kind of men who should be appointed (see [1Ti 3:1-7](#)).

teachers -- This word denotes those who instruct, or communicate knowledge. It is clear that it is used to denote a class of persons different, in some respects, from those who prophesied and from those who exhorted as evangelists. This class, not inspired nor given revelations, but apparently had a gift for teaching.

÷Ephesians 4:12 [Eph 4:12](#)

This verse indicates the Purpose of the gifts ([Eph 4:8-12](#)). For the equipping of the saints for the work of service, ... the building up of the body of Christ. cf. NASB.

For the perfecting – *equipping*, maturing, etc.

On the meaning of the word rendered here as "perfecting" - *καταρτισμὸν* *katartismōn* - It properly refers to "the restoring of anything to its place;" then putting in order, making complete, etc. Here it means that these various officers were appointed in order that everything in the church might be well arranged, or put into its proper place; or that the church might be "complete."

Louw and Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, vol. 1, p. 680, assert that *artios* (complete, adequate, fully equipped for the assigned task), with all its different prepositional compounds (*epi* and *kata*), are all synonyms (cf. [Luk 6:40](#); [2Co 13:9](#), [2Co 13:11](#); [Eph 4:12](#); [2Ti 3:17](#)).

The term "equip" means to cause something to be ready for its assigned purpose. It is used of:

1. broken limbs being healed and made useful again
2. torn fishing nets being mended and thereby able to catch fish
3. ships being fitted with ropes and sails and tacked for sea
4. chicks who had grown large enough to be taken to market

For the work of ministry – All the "gifts" in the previous verse are engaged in the work of the ministry, though in different ways. In the first century all of these gifts were needed to establish and edify the church.

Gus Nichols uses the illustration how that in building a great building you need scaffolding to frame up the building. But when the building is completed and is being used, the scaffold is no longer needed. The first century need the inspired apostles and prophets to reveal and teach God's word. But after the "Faith" [[Jud 1:3](#)] had been delivered and contained in inspired NT Scripture, the "frame-work" was no longer required.

Today we have evangelists, teachers, and elders and deacons to "maintain" the ministry of the church.

to the building up [edifying] of the body of Christ – Paul mixes his building metaphor (cf. [Eph 2:20-22](#)) with his body metaphor (cf. [Eph 1:23](#); [Eph 4:12](#); [Eph 5:30](#)).

the body of Christ – The church, [Eph 1:22-23](#).

IV. Growth - v. 12-16 - Evidence of spiritual growth - v.13

1. Christ-like minds - v.12
2. Stability - v.14
3. Joining truth and love - v.15
 - Truth without love is brutal.
 - Love without truth is hypocrisy.
4. Cooperation - v.16
 - Joined and knit together. Every part doing its share.

÷Ephesians 4:13

[Eph_4:13](#)

until – The *duration* of these gifts of v.8-11. These gifts were to help homogenize the Jews and Gentiles into one body.

unity of the faith – Faith here refers to the body of revealed truth that constitutes Christian teaching, particularly featuring the complete content of the gospel. Oneness and harmony among believers is possible only when it is built on the foundation of sound doctrine.

the knowledge of the Son of God -- Till the disciples understood and had knowledge of Christ and the manner of men that Christ wanted them to be.

mature manhood [perfect man] -- to be complete, mature, (fully furnished).

the fullness of Christ – God wants every believer to manifest the qualities of His Son, who is Himself the standard for their spiritual maturity and perfection.

÷Ephesians 4:14

[Eph_4:14](#)

V. 14 explains the reasons for these gifts. These gifts were in order that God's children not be like drift wood on water, or wavering children, but, v.15, make proper growth. cf. [1Co 13:11](#) The gifts were to give stability to the infant church.

no longer be children – In some respects Christians “are” to be like children. They are to be docile, gentle, mild, and free from ambition, pride, and haughtiness; [Mat 18:2-3](#). But children are often

changeable [Mat 11:17](#); they are influenced easily by others, and led astray. In these respects, Paul exhorts the Ephesians to be no longer children to be led astray by false teachers. ([Gal 1.6](#); [Gal 3:1](#);)

tossed to and fro – Literally, “*billowed*”; carried up and down as *on* waves.

and carried about with every wind of doctrine - - With no settled course; no one at the helm. The idea is that of a vessel on the restless ocean, that is tossed about with every varying wind, and that has no settled line of sailing. So many persons are in regard to religious practices. They have no fixed views and principles.

by human cunning, by craftiness in deceitful schemes – This obviously refers to the false teachers, who seem to be a combination of Greek philosophers and Jewish legalists. This phrase refers to the deception of false teachers and to the craftiness of their deceitful schemes.

÷Ephesians 4:15

Eph_4:15

cf. [Eph 4:12](#).

3. Joining truth and love - v.15

Truth without love is brutal.

Love without truth is hypocrisy.

4. Cooperation - v.16

Joined and knit together. Every part doing its share.

speaking the truth – [ἀληθεύοντες δὲ](#). ‘Being’ or ‘*Living the truth*.’ The context shows that far more than truth-speaking is required, and the use of [ἀληθεύειν](#) in LXX. is in favour of a wide extension of meaning to truth in all relations of life. - CBSC

speaking in truth in love – Margin, “being sincere.” The translation in the text is correct - literally, “truthing in love” - BN

This stands in stark contrast with the action of [Eph 4:14](#) of being cunning, crafty and deceitful. - WG

we grow up – The idea is maintaining truth in love in both speech and life is the ideal for Christ's followers.

It is the metaphor of [Eph 4:13](#) (the full-grown man). We are the body and Christ is the Head. We are to grow up to his stature. - RWP

into him which is the head, even Christ – Our growth must be fitting with our head, Christ.

÷Ephesians 4:16

Eph_4:16

from whom – Christ is the head, and the body should follow his leadership.

the whole body – The Church is one unified group directed by Christ to accomplish His purposes—yet there are many parts to it. Paul uses this metaphor to explain how many people with different roles and gifts can work together in unity (compare [1Co 12:12-20](#)).

joined and held together – Just as all parts of the body are joined together creating one whole, so each part of the spiritual body works to benefit the whole, this is *unity*.

when each part is working properly – Godly, biblical church growth results from every member of the body fully is doing his part, living properly and being a Christian influence, and in cooperation with other Christians (cf. [Col 2:19](#)).

makes the body grow – This is the proper way for the growth of the church, growing in love and truth.

it builds itself up in love – The church is self-edifying, and thrives in an atmosphere of love.

÷Ephesians 4:17

[Eph_4:17](#)

#2 Walking In Holiness (Purity) v. 17-31

4:17–32 Continuing his emphasis on unity, Paul urges believers to abandon former ways of living that have nothing to do with Christ. He reminds them of their previous life apart from God ([Eph 4:17-19](#)) and exhorts them to discard the old self, since they have been made new in Christ ([Eph 4:20-24](#)). As members of Christ's body, believers are called to show integrity, kindness, and grace. They must overcome bitterness and anger and learn to forgive ([Eph 4:25-32](#)). - FSB

Paul sets forth how the Gentiles walked:

v.17

1) vanity of minds

v.18

2) Understanding darkened

3) Alienated from God

4) Because of ignorance

5) Blindness of heart

v. 19

6) Past feeling

I say and testify in the Lord -- Paul is speaking the truth from the Lord himself.

no longer walk –

futility of their minds [vanity] -- which leads to nothing ([Rom 1:21-22](#)) When they lived apart from God, the Gentiles' entire way of thinking was ineffectual, distorted by the powers of sin ([Eph 2:1-3](#))

÷Ephesians 4:18

[Eph_4:18](#)

Paul sets forth how the Gentiles walked:

v.17

1) vanity of minds

v.18

2) Understanding darkened

3) Alienated from God

4) Because of ignorance

5) Blindness of heart

v. 19

6) Past feeling

darkened in their understanding – On “the understanding” note above in [Eph 2:3](#) (where it is “mind”).

The Greek word may fairly be said to mean the reasoning in action. Here the "reasoning" is blind because of darkness.

Paul doesn't say that they could not have perceived the truth; or that they had no ability to understand it. He speaks of a simple and well-known fact - that one's reasoning or judgment become tainted or darkened by indulgence in sin.

Barnes put it: "A man who is unchaste, has no perception of the loveliness of purity. A man who is avaricious or covetous, has no just views of the beauty of benevolence."

alienated from the life of God -- Gentiles were not only excluded from Israel (Eph 2:12); they were cut off from the very life of God. Their ignorance of God and His ways led to enmity with God (Eph 2:12–13), resulting in the need for reconciliation.

the ignorance that is in them -- Pagan Gentiles just did not know what God was wanting from man-kind.

their hardness of heart -- The Gentiles' exclusion from the life of God resulted not only from their ignorance, but from their willful and stubborn rejection of **Him**.

÷Ephesians 4:19

Eph_4:19

become callous [being past feeling] -- callous, insensitive to right and wrong. Hardened in sin. Totally lacking of emotion on moral subjects.

The Greek relative pronoun indicates a certain conditionality, *Past feeling* literally "having got over the pain," as when mortification sets in; a deeply suggestive metaphor.

given themselves up [over] to sensuality [lasciviousness] -- Voluntarily, like a traitor, and preferring "wantonness". It means intemperate, reckless readiness for lasciviousness, and for every self-indulgence.

themselves -- is emphatic by its position in the sentence.

greedy to practice -- (here for impurity); Greedy either with covetousness, and then it refers to those who prostitutes themselves for gain; or with an insatiable desire of still going on in their filthiness.

The Greek word is rendered "covetousness," [Luk 12:15](#). But it means much more than the desire of *money*, or *property*, with which we specially associate "covetousness." It occurs in close connexion with the subject of *fleshly impurity* [1Co 5:11](#); [1Th 4:6](#); and below, [Eph 5:3](#); [Eph 5:5](#). See too [Col 3:5](#).

"Greed" has a strong and terrible connexion with impurity, as is obvious.

every kind of impurity-- lasciviousness, as describe in [Rom 1:24-26](#). The word occurs in the N.T. 11 times. The root-idea of the word is not specially fleshly impurity, but rebellion against restraint as such; petulance, wantonness, as shown in violence.

÷Ephesians 4:20

Eph_4:20

not ... learned -- You have not been taught this by Christ. The followers of Jesus are taught to abandon such a course of life.. to learn Christ's teaching..

They became Christians by learning.

That which they learned was to imitate the way Christ lived.

÷Ephesians 4:21

Eph_4:21

if indeed -- The Greek expression used here, *ei ge*, is sometimes translated using a conditional statement ("if"), but it actually implies confidence. Paul's point is that his audience *does* know and follow Christ. The same expression begins [Eph 3:2](#).

assuming that you have heard ..were taught -- If you have listened to the true nature of Jesus and the way of life they had been taught about him.

were taught -- As Paul had taught them about the Lord Jesus. ([Joh 14:6](#), [Joh 6:44-45](#).)

as the truth is in Jesus -- Paul proceeds to teach again the truth teaching of Jesus in the following verses.

÷Ephesians 4:22

Eph_4:22

What follows in the next several verses is the "*truth that is taught in Jesus.*" cf. [Eph 4:20-21](#).

to put off -- The Greek verb is aorist infinitive and denotes a singleness of action. Some would render this "that you have (or did) putt off."

The "instruction in Christ" had informed them about such a "putting-off" of a certain way of life, and the "putting-on" of what was expected from Christ. The question is, does this crisis appear here as a past or future one? The answer is found in the words "old man". Paul is teaching that at one's conversion the "old" way of living changes and a new life is expected from the Lord. (See also [Col 3:9](#) which favors a reference to a crisis past.)

to put off -- Paul again uses the metaphor of putting on/off clothing to teach that Jesus' disciples are to renounce a certain course of life, and to follow the life Jesus wants from his followers. From the way Paul gives this instructions it seems that some of his intended readers had been following a contrary course. It is possible some false teachers had made light of the Christian life.

Five Sins to be Discarded (Formula: Negative / Positive)Some Things to Put Off

1. [Eph 4:25](#) - stop lying - speak truth
2. [Eph 4:26-27](#) - be angry and sin not
3. [Eph 4:28](#) - stop stealing - start working
4. [Eph 4:29](#) - stop corrupt speech - speak godly, edifying
5. [Eph 4:30](#) - stop grieving the H.S.
6. [Eph 4:31](#) - put off bad disposition toward others - be kind

your former manner of life -- The word (noun and verb) is almost always used by Paul in reference to a sinful way of life.

you old self (old man) -- Similar phrase in [Rom 6:6](#); [Col 3:9](#). And in translated "your former conduct"; "your former way of life" "the way you use to live" "your old way of life", etc.

and is corrupt through deceitful lusts -- Rather, the Greek [[G5351](#)] is "*which is being corrupted*". The way of life Christ expects you to live is corrupted (destroyed, subverted, comes to destruction) when you give in to such lusts.

deceitful desires – Deceitful with promises of joy and gain. Lusts and passions which are deceitful and morally decaying.

÷Ephesians 4:23

Eph_4:23

be renewed – A present infinitive in the Greek. The word used here - *ἀνανεώω* *ananeoo* ^{G365}, - does not occur elsewhere in the New Testament; but it has the same meaning as the word used in [2Co 4:16](#), and [Col 3:10](#). It means to renew, being in the middle passive, for self to be continually renewed insofar as one's spiritual life is concerned. Thus there is the idea of progress and growth which is opposite to the "corruption" of verse 22. A renewal, a freshening, a continual making fresh again. A "revival" if you please.

in the spirit of your minds – Not a physical "make-over" but one of the mind, heart, or spirit.

÷Ephesians 4:24

Eph_4:24

that you put on -- [2Co 5:17](#) Continuing the metaphor from [Eph 4:22](#) similar to the putting off and on of clothing. "to put off" negative v.22, and here positive v.24.

the new self [man] -- This is called in other places, the "new creature, or the new creation" [see the note on [2Co 5:17](#)], and refers to the condition after the heart is changed.

This change is brought on by repentance and obedience to the gospel.

created after the likeness of God -- The real point is that God wants us to imitate His own altitudes and characteristics, as "sons of God" [Col 3:10](#). Christians should have the family characteristics of God (cf. [Rom 8:28-29](#); [Gal 4:19](#)). We have been created in the likeness of God, [Gen 1:26](#), and we have the ability to know right and wrong and we sin when we choose the opposite of godliness and disobey God. This phrase also proves that, when man was created, he was a righteous holy being.

righteousness – In righteousness and true holiness. From [G1342](#); Thayer describes such a one as upright, innocent, faultless, guiltless, and used of him whose way of thinking, feeling, and acting is wholly conformed to the will of God. See on [Luk 1:75](#).

The word (noun, adjective, or adverb) occurs (as here) with "righteous" or "righteousness" [Luk 1:75](#); [1Th 2:10](#); [Tit 1:8](#). It is the almost invariable rendering in the LXX. for the Heb. *châsîd*; e.g. [Psa 16:10](#), quoted [Act 2:27](#); [Act 13:35](#) (A.V. "thy Holy One"); and [Isa 55:3](#), quoted [Act 13:34](#) (where lit. "the holy things of David," the inviolable promises given to him^[38]). - CBSC

in true righteousness – "True" as opposed to *deceit*, [Eph 4:22](#), and likewise personified. Righteousness and holiness are attributes of truth.

holiness – The Greek "holiness of the truth". The Cambridge Bible for Schools and Colleges says "Literally, sanctity of the truth. use "sanctity" rather than "holiness," to mark the fact that the Greek word (*hosiotés*) is not akin to that commonly rendered "holy." (CBSC)

÷Ephesians 4:25

Eph_4:25

4:25-32 A Christian Is Not To Wrong His Neighbor

Therefore – Continuing the thought from [Eph_4:15](#) how we are to speak.

Therefore [wherefore] -- From the characteristics of "the new man" the particular features that follows now result.

putting away [lay aside]-- Continuing the metaphor of clothing ([Eph 4:24](#)). Greek "having put away" once for all.

falsehood [lying] -- "Speak ye truth each one with his neighbor," is quoted from [Zec 8:16](#). Notice that Paul quotes the Old Testament as encouragement for New Testament Christians ([Eph 4:26](#)). It is said that lying was a universal vice among the pagan world.

speak truthfully to his neighbor – Speak as things are, and act sincerely and candidly.

all members of one body – Christians belong to the same body of Christ. The idea of falsehood tends to loosen the bonds of brotherhood. Falsehood among Christians is something considered unconceivable. Christians live in a family and not as isolated individuals.

÷Ephesians 4:26

[Eph_4:26](#)

This verse begins a series of present imperatives with the negative particle which usually means to stop an act already in progress (cf. [Eph 4:26-30](#)). (Utley)

Be ye angry and sin not [KJV]-- If the case be that one becomes angry do not let it led into sinning against your neighbor.

Do not let the sun go down on your anger – This quote from the LXX is from [Psa 4:4](#). It may also be an allusion to [Deu 24:15](#). The Jewish day began at sunset (cf. [Gen 1:5](#)). Anger is a powerful emotion which must be dealt with quickly.

Wetstein quotes a curious parallel from Plutarch, (*De Fraterno Amore*, p. 488 b.), who says of the Pythagoreans that it was their rule, if betrayed into angry reviling, to shake hands before the sun set.

angry – [ὀργή](#) G3710, is forbidden absolutely in [Eph 4:31](#) in the sense of personal outburst of passion. There is good reason therefore for taking this verse as referring to 'righteous indignation'; cf. [Jam 1:19](#) [βραδὺς εἰς ὀργήν](#). For the anger here is regarded as inevitable and right, though needing to be kept in strict restraint. Indeed the obligation to speak truth involves at times the saying of hard things. - CBSC

The section [Mat 5:22](#) ff. may have the same meaning, especially with the omission of [εἰς](#)?. The phrase [ἔνοχος τῷ κρίσει](#) simply asserts that every one who is angry will have to give an account. It does not say that he will necessarily be condemned.

wrath – "Wrath" is absolutely forbidden; "anger" not so. (JFB) cf. Jesus in [Mar 3:5](#).

÷Ephesians 4:27

[Eph_4:27](#)

Neither give place – Don't give place to one who would attempt to intrude at a half-open door, intent on occupying the house. (CBSC)

“Do not yield to the suggestions and temptations of Satan, who would take every opportunity to persuade you to unkind and angry feelings, and to keep up a spirit of resentment among brethren.”
(BN)

The devil is always busy when we are angry, and in some way, if possible, will lead us into sin;

the devil – Behind that which called forth angry.

Paul's use elsewhere of the word *diabolos* (literally “Accuser”) for the great Enemy.

The term "devil" is a Greek compound (*diabolos*) [G1228] which meant "to throw across" (cf. [Act 13:10](#); [Eph 4:27](#); [Eph 6:11](#); [1Ti 3:6-7](#); [2Ti 2:26](#)). It was a metaphorical way of referring to Satan the accuser. Paul referred to Satan in several passages (cf. [Act 26:18](#); [Rom 10:20](#); [1Co 5:5](#); [1Co 7:5](#); [2Co 2:11](#); [2Co 11:14](#); [2Co 12:7](#); [1Th 2:18](#); [2Th 2:9](#); [1Ti 1:20](#); [1Ti 5:15](#)). Satan was apparently an angelic being who rebelled against God (cf. Genesis 3; Job 1-2; Zechariah

It is biblically difficult to talk about Satan because

1. the Bible never speaks definitively of the origin or purpose of evil
2. the O.T. texts which are usually seen as possibly related to Satan's rebellion are specifically directed to the condemnation of prideful earthly rulers (King of Babylon, [Isaiah 14](#) and King of Tyre, [Ezekiel 28](#)) and not Satan (see Special Topic: Personal Evil at [Eph 2:2](#))

It is obvious from several NT passages that there was conflict in the spiritual realm ([Mat 4:10](#); [Mat 12:26](#); [Mat 16:23](#); [Joh 13:27](#); [Joh 14:30](#); [Joh 16:11](#); [Act 5:3](#); [2Co 4:4](#); [Eph 2:2](#); [1Jn 5:19](#); [Rev 2:9](#); [Rev 2:13](#); [Rev 2:24](#); [Rev 3:9](#); [Rev 12:9](#); [Rev 20:2](#); [Rev 20:7](#)). Where, when, and how are all mysteries. Believers do have an angelic enemy (cf. [Eph 2:2](#))! (-Utleby)

÷Ephesians 4:28

[Eph_4:28](#)

Let the thief no longer steal – Theft, like lying, was, and is, almost a universal vice among the pagan. The practice of pilfering prevails in, probably, every pagan community, and no property is safe which is not guarded, or so locked up as to be inaccessible. Hence, as the Christian converts at Ephesus had been long addicted to it, there was danger that they would fall into it again; - BN

stole – steal – Many early Christians were slaves; many of whom were given to stealing and pilfering.

but rather let him labor – Let him seek an honest means of living.

working with his own hands – Let him pursue honest employment. Paul was not ashamed to LABOR with "his own hands" [Act 20:35](#); [Act 18:1-3](#). God made man to work [Gen 2:15](#).

something to share – The Christians is to be compassionate rather than covetous.

÷Ephesians 4:29

[Eph_4:29](#)

corrupt communication – Further admonition regarding their "speaking" cf. [Eph 4:15](#); [Eph 4:25](#). The word rendered “corrupt” ([σαπρός](#) *sapros*) means bad, decayed, rotten, and is applied to putrid

vegetable or animal substances. Then it is applied to a tree that is of a useless character, that produces no good fruit; [Mat 7:17](#). Then it is used in a moral sense, as our word "corrupt" is, to denote that which is sinful, evil, contaminating, and may denote here anything that is obscene, offensive, or that tends to corrupt others. (BN)

communication – Here simply means one's talk, speech or language.

good for building up [edifying] -- Speech is a great tool. Like a hammer, it can be used to tear down or to built up. We should use speech for the good of others. The one who talks for the mere sake of talking will say some foolish things, and even while not meaning, may be very hurtful to others. [Mat 12:36](#); [Ecc 5:2](#); [Pro 10:19](#); [Jam 1:19](#).

give grace – Let your speech be an instrument creating favor to others, favor toward God for self.

÷Ephesians 4:30

[Eph 4:30](#)

And – Shouts a connection with above verses. By corrupt (worthless) speech.

grieve not – Paul warns his readers not to repeat the mistake of the Israelites who "rebelled and grieved" the Holy Spirit in the wilderness ([Isa 63:10](#)).

A distinct indication of the Personality of the Blessed Spirit. "Grief is certainly a personal affection, of which a Quality is not capable" - CBSC

grieve not – The word used here - [λυπειτε](#) lypeite - means properly to afflict with sorrow; to make sad or sorrowful. It is rendered to make sorry, or sorrowful, [Mat 14:9](#); [Mat 17:23](#); [Mat 18:31](#); [Mat 19:22](#); [Mat 26:22](#), [Mat 26:37](#); [Mar 14:19](#); [Joh 16:20](#); [2Co 2:2](#); [2Co 6:10](#); [2Co 7:8-9](#), [2Co 7:11](#); [1Th 4:13](#). It is rendered "grieved," [Mar 10:22](#); [Joh 21:17](#); [Rom 14:15](#); [2Co 2:4-5](#); [Eph 4:20](#); and once. "in heaviness," [1Pe 1:6](#). The verb does not elsewhere occur in the New Testament. The common meaning is, to treat others so as to cause grief. - BN

sealed – "stamped" Seal of an official on a document or letter. Marked as God's possession. See noted at [2Co 5:5](#). [2Co 1:22](#);

Better, ye were sealed, at the definite crisis of reception. See above, [Eph 1:13](#) and notes. - CBSC

Day of redemption -- "the redemption of the purchased possession," [Eph 1:14](#), where see note.

÷Ephesians 4:31

[Eph 4:31](#)

all bitterness -- Both of spirit and of speech. "Bitterness" as opposed to "kind." "Bitterness" may imply a secret lurking of displeasure at another. (Poole)

wrath -- (*thumos* [G2372](#)) refers to a fast burning anger or rage (cf. [2Co 12:20](#); [Gal 5:20](#); [Col 3:8](#)). The boiling up of passion that is harsh and vengeful, as opposed to "tender-hearted."

anger -- Lasting resentment; as opposed to "forgiving one another."

clamor -- Picture of a horse that has anger for its rider. The inordinate loudness of men in anger which breaks out into words and actions. The noise, disorder, and harsh words that men use in a brawl. Christians are to be calm and serious. Harsh contentions and strifeful brawls are to be unknown among

them. [Act 23:9](#).

"Bitterness" begets "wrath"; "wrath," "anger"; "anger," "clamor"; and "clamor," the more chronic "evil-speaking," slander, insinuations, and surmises of evil.

slander [evil speaking] -- Either with respect to God or man, though the latter seems particularly meant here. Backbiting, angry expressions, tale-bearing, railing, reviling, reproaching, the ordinary effects of uncontrolled anger.

be put away – Aorist passive imperative, "be put away from yourself." Christians must remove these characteristics. They are not consistent with being a follower of the Lord Jesus.

malice – Literally "with all evil" or wickedness, [κακία](#), *kakia*, [G2549](#). Every sort of evil is to be put away, and you are to manifest only that which is good.

"Malice" is the secret root of all: "fires fed within, and not appearing to by-standers from without, are the most formidable" [CHRYSOSTOM].

÷Ephesians 4:32

[Eph_4:32](#)

Positive side of the proceeding verse.

Be – From the Greek sentence structure the emphasis is on the verb [γίνεσθε](#), Present imperative, "*you become and keep on becoming*" [G1096](#), (V-PNM-2P) "this is what you are to become" -- "Show yourselves in thought, word and deed, and live according to your true nature as Christians."

Be kind -- Mild, courteous, pleasant, polite, helpful, [χρηστοὶ](#) *chre stoi*. [G5543](#), [1Pe 3:8](#).
[see 4x6 file card-WG]

to one another – [εἰς](#) [G1519](#) [PREP](#) to [ἀλλήλους](#) one to another [G240](#) [C-APM](#)

tenderhearted -- Compassionate and understanding. Having a heart disposed to pity and compassion, and especially disposed to show kindness to the faults of erring brethren; for so the connection demands.

forgiving one another – [Mat 6:12](#).

[ἐαυτοῖς](#). The change from [εἰς ἀλλήλους](#) in the opening phrase should be noticed, but as Robinson shows (after Blass, *Gr. N.T.* § 48, 49) too much must not be made of it. The same change is found in [Col 3:13](#); [Col 3:16](#); [1Pe 4:8](#); [1Pe 4:10](#) and [Luk 23:12](#). Certainly in this last passage the change can only be due to the love of variety. - CBSC

God in Christ [God for Christ's sake] -- The Greek, is "God in Christ" ([2Co 5:19](#)). It is in Christ that God vouchsafes forgiveness to us. It cost God the death of His Son, as man, to forgive us. It costs us nothing to forgive our fellow man.

even as -- God hath shown Himself "kind, tender-hearted, and forgiving to you"; it is but just that you in turn shall be so to your fellow men, who have not erred against you in the degree that you have erred against God ([Mat 18:33](#)). - JFB

as God in Christ forgive you – God, on account of Christ's death as the sacrifice for sin making atonement on our behalf has forgiving us, and so we also should be forgiving of other's transgressions toward us. God's example of being "forgiving" is ours to imitate.

The reason for these positive commands is that in Christ God is kind ([Eph 2:7](#)), compassionate

([Mar 1:41](#)), and gracious ([Rom 8:32](#)) to believers. - BKC

÷Ephesians 5:1

[Eph_5:1](#)

#3 Walking In Love 5:1-6

5:1-14 Imitators of God

be – "you must keep on" following God's example. WmsNT

From the Greek sentence structure the emphasis is on the verb [γίνεσθε](#), Present imperative, "*you become and keep on becoming*" [G1096](#), (V-PNM-2P)

imitators [followers] -- - [μιμηταί](#) *mime tai*, imitators, following an example. It is the word from which we get "mimic".

beloved [dear] -- "beloved"; i.e. children imitating a father.

children – The meaning is, "as those children which are greatly loved follow the example of a father, so we who are loved of God, should follow his example."

÷Ephesians 5:2

[Eph_5:2](#)

walk in love – We are to *love* God, love the church, the word, the gospel.

A sanctified love, like the love of a mother hen. We are to live life-style of love. It is to be our manner of living.

as Christ loved us – The example of love seen in the Lord's sacrificial death. We are to evince the same love for one another which he has done for us.

gave -- [G3860](#), to surrender, yield up.

himself -- [εαυτον](#), This stands in emphasis.

for -- [G5228](#), *huper*, on behalf of; *for* the sake of.

us [you] -- The ancient Greek manuscripts differ between "us" and "you." "You" seems best in context. Jesus is our example (cf. [1Jn 4:11](#)).

fragrant smell – In the Old Testament sacrifices are described as having an aroma pleasing to God ([Exo 29:25](#); [Lev 1:9](#)).

a fragrant offering – [G4376](#), An offering other than the blood-offering, a thanksgiving offering. Not only did Jesus die for us, He also "lived" a life as an exemplary life for us to imitate. [1Pe 2:21](#).

and a sacrifice – [θυσίαν](#) *thusian*. Christ is here expressly called a "Sacrifice" - the usual word in the Scriptures to denote a proper sacrifice. Such sacrifice always implied the "killing" of the animal as an acknowledgement of the sinner that he deserved to die. It was the giving up of "life," which was supposed to reside in the "blood" (see the fuller note on [Rom 3:25](#)), and hence it was necessary that "blood" should be shed.

÷Ephesians 5:3

Eph_5:3

As *imitators*, we must be pure in *life*.

fornication [immorality] -- Premarital and other immoral sex. The Greek word used here, *porneia*, and is considered to include any kind of sexual immorality.

A “common” vice among the pagan then as it is now, and one into which they were in special danger of falling; see [Rom 1:29](#) note; [1Co 6:18](#).

Greek *porneia*; refers broadly to all illicit sexual acts outside marriage, such as premarital sex, sex with prostitutes, homosexual activity, incest, and adultery. See [1Th 4:3-8](#). - NIVBTSB

impurity [uncleanness] -- lasciviousness, works of the flesh, [Gal 5:19](#). Unlawful lusts whereby men defile themselves.

covetousness -- not to be greedy or stingy. The Greek word used here, *pleonexia*, refers to the consuming desire to possess more than others, regardless of actual need. Paul calls greedy people idolaters ([Eph 5:5](#); [Col 3:5](#)).

let it not be named among you – Such sins should not be heard of, or not mentioned without detestation: see [1Co 5:1](#).

saints --The Greek word used here, *hagioi*, (*holy ones*) refers to those who are set apart from the worldly way of live and who belong to God. It does not mean they are totally without any sin.

÷Ephesians 5:4

Eph_5:4

Imitators must be pure in *speech*.

filthiness not foolish talk --

crude joking [jesting] -- lewd, immoral, suggestive talk and action. Paul instructs believers to avoid crude humor (compare [Eph 4:29](#); [Col 3:8](#)).

"Dirty stories, foul talk, and course jokes." (Taylor's translation)

Insolent speech and sexual humor were as common in ancient pagan society as they are today. Paul did not water down God's standards to accommodate the culture; instead he warned that those who engaged in this lifestyle would not be among God's people in the world to come. - IVPBBCNT

which are out of place [not fitting] -- These three inappropriate sins of the tongue include any speech that is obscene and degrading or foolish and dirty, as well as suggestive and immoral wit. All such are destructive of holy living and godly testimony and should be confessed, forsaken, and replaced by open expressions of thankfulness to God. - MSB

thanksgiving -- Christians should be known for expressions of gratitude to God ([2Co 4:15](#); [2Co 9:11](#); [Eph 5:20](#); [Col 4:2](#)).

÷Ephesians 5:5

Eph_5:5

*Inheritance In The Kingdom Is Restricted**See v. 3 and v. 4*

For this you know – Paul had taught this truth many times when he ministered at Ephesus and it should have been clear in their minds.

you may be sure of --

sexually immoral or impure – A repeat of sins mentioned in verse 3 and 4. See the note on those verses of a descriptions of these sins.

covetous (that is, an idolater) -- Paul ties idolatry to greed. A greedy person values possessions more than God, thereby committing idolatry ([Col 3:5](#)).

has not inheritance – God never tolerates sin, which has no place at all in His kingdom, nor will any person whose life pattern is one of habitual immorality, impurity, and greed (see v. 3) be in His kingdom, because no such person can be saved as long as they practice these sins (see [1Co 6:9-10](#); [Gal 5:17-21](#); [1Jn 3:9-10](#)).

Paul is referring to those who persistently and unrepentantly give themselves over to such lifestyles.

in the kingdom of Christ and God -- Refers to the domain in which Christ reigns as King. An alternative term for the church in [Mat 16:18-19](#) and other places.

In the Gospels, the kingdom of God (or kingdom of heaven) is a central theme of Jesus' teaching (e.g., [Mat 4:17](#); [Mat 13:10-52](#); [Mar 1:15](#))

In acknowledgement of Christ's rule, believers are called to exhibit obedience, loyalty, and love. Those who continue to participate in illicit behavior essentially are resisting Christ's reign and acting as though they reject an inheritance in His kingdom.

÷Ephesians 5:6

Eph_5:6

Let no one deceive you – Christians should not be misled, thinking that such a lifestyle (vv. 3–5) has no consequences.

with empty [vain] words – **Attempts** to trivialize or justify such illicit behavior. False teachers or pagan philosophers arguing to convince them that these social customs (sins) of vs. 3-5 were natural and harmless.

because of these things – The sins just mentioned in [Eph 5:3-5](#) will be the cause of such people suffering God's wrath.

the wrath of God -- Refers to God's righteous judgment upon those who do evil. [Rom 2:8-9](#). Christians must not partner in any of their wickedness- [Eph 5:7](#).

sons of disobedience – This is a Hebraism, see the same phrase in [Eph 2:2](#) and the note there.

÷Ephesians 5:7

Eph_5:7

#3 Walking In Love 5:1-6

#4 Walking In Light - 5:7-14

(see note [Eph_5:1](#))

do no associate [be partakers] -- [G4830](#), *partaking together with one, a joint partaker in something*. Partner; Paul emphasizes that Christians are not to participate with the wicked in their sins.

Although we have normal social relationships with unbelievers, we must not participate in their sinful lifestyle. [2Co 6:14](#). - NIVBTSB

... many in Greco-Roman society would have branded Christians as antisocial for refusing to take part in immoral conversation and, even more, in the pervasive civic religious cults which were regarded as a mark of local loyalty. - IVPBBCNT

÷Ephesians 5:8

Eph_5:8

for at one time – Speaking of their past before their conversion to Christ.

you were darkness – This describes the spiritual condition and lifestyle they were in before their conversion.

Darkness symbolizes the realm dominated by sin and death (compare [Eph 6:12](#); [Col 1:13](#)).

Darkness also can refer to lack of understanding (e.g., [Psa 82:5](#); [Rom 2:19](#)).

The realm of darkness is presided over by the “power of darkness,” ([Luk 22:53](#); [Col 1:13](#)) who rules those headed for “eternal darkness” ([Mat 8:12](#); [2Pe 2:17](#)).

Tragically, sinners love the darkness ([Joh 3:19-21](#)). It is that very darkness from which salvation in Christ delivers sinners (*consider* [Joh 8:12](#); [Col 1:13](#); [1Pe 2:9](#); cf. [Psa 27:1](#)).

Just as Christ often used "light" and "darkness" to contrast good and evil, Paul often takes up this same contrast.

you are light in the Lord -- cf. [Mat 5:14-16](#). Represents righteousness and life (compare [2Co 6:14](#); [Job 33:30](#)); also refers to understanding ([Psa 119:105](#), [Psa 119:130](#)). [1Jn 1:5](#). As Christ was the Light so now his disciples are to be like him and reflect His light to the world.

Walk as -- Live as; choose the life-style that Christ, who is our Light, lived. Christians have undergone a fundamental identity change from "darkness" to "light" when they came to the one who is the light ([Eph 5:14](#); [Joh 8:12](#); [Act 26:18](#); [1Pe 2:9](#)).

children of light – [Isa 2:5](#); [1Th 5:5-8](#); [1Jn 1:5-7](#). A term for those who are in right relationship with God. A common Hebraism, see [Eph 4:8](#) for the opposite.

÷Ephesians 5:9

Eph_5:9

fruit - Refers to natural results. Rooted in Christ, the believer's life should produce Christlike virtues.

fruit of the light – The moral and ethical actions of those who live in God's light ([Mat 7:16-20](#);

[Gal 5:22-23](#); [Php 1:11](#)).

all that is good ... -- This speaks of that which is produced by walking in the light (cf. [1Jn 1:5-7](#)), namely moral excellence of heart, righteous behavior, and truthfulness (honesty or integrity).

÷Ephesians 5:10

[Eph_5:10](#)

try to discern [find out; proving; learn; determine] -- [G1381](#), to prove a thing after examination. This was a metallurgical term used of testing coins for genuineness.

As Scripture is consulted it enlightens believers to discern “what pleases the Lord.” See [Rom 12:2](#).

Proving – Seven Walks

1. [Eph 2:2](#) Not according to the world
2. [Eph 2:10](#) Walk in good works
3. [Eph 4:1](#) Walk worthy of your calling
4. [Eph 4:17](#) Not as other Gentiles
5. [Eph 5:2](#) Walk in love
6. [Eph 5:8](#) Walk as children of light
7. [Eph 5:15](#) Walk wisely, redeeming the time

pleasing to the Lord -- Christians are called to adopt Christ's will and standards as their own.

÷Ephesians 5:11

[Eph_5:11](#)

Take no part [no fellowship with] -- Paul's instruction is plain and direct: Christians are to faithfully live in righteousness and purity and have nothing at all to do with the evil ways and works of Satan and the world. The two ways of living are unalterably opposed to each other and mutually exclusive. Cf. [1Co 5:9-11](#); [2Co 6:14-18](#); [2Th 3:6](#), [2Th 3:14](#).

unfruitful deeds of darkness – Contrasted with the "fruit of light" [Eph 5:9](#). It refers to the illicit behavior Paul mentioned in [Eph 5:3-5](#). Such actions are characteristic of sin and death.

expose them [reprove] -- Speak out against, expose. Christ's disciples are to expose these deeds either verbally or through their lifestyle. By not participating in such actions, they show these deeds to be the evil that they are.

While the Christian is responsible for exposing and opposing darkness wherever it is found, he should especially do so when it is found in the church. See [Mat 18:15-17](#); [Gal 6:1-3](#).

÷Ephesians 5:12

[Eph_5:12](#)

it is a shame to speak – Such ungodly behavior should not even be a topic of polite conversation (especially in a mixed group) [Eph 5:4](#). [Rom 1:24-32](#).

Some sins are so despicable that they should be sealed off from direct contact and not even mentioned, much less discussed, except in order to contradict and oppose them. Merely talking about them can be morally and spiritually corruptive. Positive proclamation of the pure truth in the light of the Word exposes all evil (cf. [Pro 6:23](#); [2Ti 3:16](#)). - MSB

that they do -- It is debatable whether this refers to unbelievers or disobedient believers, but the language of “the dead” in [Eph 5:14](#) suggests unbelievers (but see note on [Eph 5:13](#)).

in secret – Paul considered it a shame to speak of the practices of the pagans (even in their idol temples.) His check of modesty and virtue considered it shameful to mention what was done.

÷Ephesians 5:13

[Eph_5:13](#)

when exposed by the light – The pure light of God's word exposes all the secrets of sins, whether Christians or unbelievers.

This verse seems to go with the next verse and it better translated, "for it is light that makes everything visible."

If we understand “the disobedient” in [Eph 5:12](#) to refer to believers rather than unbelievers, we would interpret vv. 13–14 not as a summons to evangelism but as a summons expose sin and to discipline the sinners; - NIVBTSB

light – In the light all things are seen for what they really are. [Php 2:15](#).

becomes visible – God’s light (His Word) inevitably shows the true character of one’s deeds.

÷Ephesians 5:14

[Eph_5:14](#)

Christians are to point out to those in darkness that they are in darkness - asleep - dead spiritually. [1Jn 1:1](#) 1-18;

anything that becomes visible is light – CEV "Light shows up everything." NIV "for it is light that makes everything visible."

it is said – This is not a direct quote from any Old Testament passage, but Paul wording might be a reflection of [Isa 60:1](#); [Job 14:12](#) or [Isa 26:19](#); He also might be borrowing the wording from an early Christian hymn imploring those lost in sin to be baptized and have their life renewed. (FSB)

These words may have been part of an early church hymn used as an invitation to unbelievers. They express a capsule view of the gospel. (Cf. the invitations in [Isa 55:1-3](#), [Isa 55:6-7](#) and in [Jas 4:6-10](#).) (MSB)

Some think that Paul cites an early Christian prophecy or song, composed by either Paul or another prophet (cf. [1Co 14:37](#)). It seems clear in any case that the quotation was familiar to both Paul and the letter’s first hearers. (IVPBBCNT)

sleeper – Sleep is a common metaphor for death.

arise from death – Paul may be extending an invitation to those in darkness (the lost) to come to Christ (the light) for salvation in order that they may be transformed from children of darkness into the kingdom of God’s holy light, [Col 1:13](#) (cf. [Pro 4:18](#)).

Christ will shine on you – You will no longer be in the "darkness" of sin, but forgiven of sins and ready now to walk in the light of Christ.

÷Ephesians 5:15

[Eph_5:15](#)

An Exhortation to Exercise Christian Wisdom - 5:15 - 6:9

Look carefully [circumspectly; with good sense] -- This term means “accurately or precisely with great care” (cf. [Psa 1:1](#); [Mat 7:14](#)).

how you walk – "Walk" was one of Paul's metaphors for a way or course of life, one's life-style.

not as unwise – Biblically, a “fool” is not so named because of intellectual limits, but because of unbelief and the consequent abominable deeds ([Psa 14:1](#); [Rom 1:22](#)). To live morally is to live wisely.

The "unwise" (or fool) lives apart from God and against God's law ([Pro 1:7](#), [Pro 1:22](#); [Pro 14:9](#)), and doesn't comprehend the truth ([1Co 2:14](#)) or his true condition ([Rom 1:21-22](#)).

Certainly believers are to avoid behaving like fools (see [Luk 24:25](#); [Gal 3:1-3](#)).

but as wise – The Bible, especially the Proverbs, closely associates wisdom with honoring and obeying God (e.g., [Pro 1:7](#)). One's true wisdom is seen obeying God's revealed will ([Deu 4:5-6](#); [Psa 19:7](#); [Psa 119:98](#); [Mat 7:24](#); [Jas 3:13-17](#)).

walk circumspectly -- Walking in wisdom, redeeming the time, [Eph 5:16](#).

Seven Walks in This Epistle

1. Eph_2:2 Not according to the world
2. Eph_2:10 Walk in good works
3. Eph_4:1 Walk worthy of your calling
4. Eph_4:17 Not as other Gentiles
5. Eph_5:2 Walk in love
6. Eph_5:8 Walk as children of light
7. Eph_5:15 Walk wisely, redeeming the time

÷Ephesians 5:16

[Eph_5:16](#)

best use [redeeming the time] -- "buying up the opportunity", purchase all opportunities offered. Obviously, verse 15 and 16 go together.

We are to make the most of our time in this evil world in fulfilling God's purposes, taking advantage of every opportunity for worship and godly service. [1Pe 1:17](#).

Be aware of the brevity of life ([Psa 39:4-5](#); [Psa 89:46-47](#); [Jas 4:14](#)).

One should make the most of every opportunity to do good works ([Eph 2:10](#); [Col 4:5](#)).

days are evil – Which can spread wickedness of all kinds and to bring men into condemnation.

This current world (or present age) is characterized by disobedience and the corrupting influence of Satan. [Eph 2:2](#); [Gal 1:4](#); [2Co 4:4](#).

÷Ephesians 5:17

[Eph_5:17](#)

Therefore – In the light of making the best use of our time and using our opportunities for good.

do not be foolish [not unwise] -- Foolish, devoid of practical judgment. To be foolish is to be ignorant of God's values, concerns, and authority ([Psa 14:1](#); [Psa 53:1](#)).

In Jewish tradition "wisdom" and "foolishness" had much more to do with morality than they did in pagan philosophy or knowledge (e.g., [Jer 29:23](#)).

understand – Godly understanding goes beyond cognitive comprehension to applied knowledge (cf. [Pro 2:1-9](#)).

Knowing and understanding God's will through His Word is spiritual wisdom.

the will of the Lord -- God's will is to bring all of creation under the authority of Christ ([Eph 1:9-10](#)).

÷Ephesians 5:18

[Eph_5:18](#)

drunk with wine – to be intoxicated. (I had a professor who said that when you take one drink, you are one-drink-drunk.)

Although Scripture consistently condemns all drunkenness (cf. [Pro 23:20-21](#), [Pro 23:29-35](#); [Pro 31:4-5](#); [Isa 5:11-12](#); [Isa 28:7-8](#); cf. [1Co 5:11](#); [1Pe 4:3](#)), the context suggests that Paul is here speaking especially about the drunken orgies commonly associated with many pagan worship ceremonies of that day. They were supposed to induce some ecstatic communion with the deities. Paul refers to such as the "cup of demons" (see [1Co 10:20-21](#)). - MSB

debauchery [excess] -- [α'σωτία](#), G810, "Aso *ṭía* is a dissolute, debauched, profligate manner of living;" (dative, singular, masculine); "dissipation" "debauchery"

This verse clarifies why intoxicants are wrong: They causes wrong behavior. Whether they are alcoholic or mind-bending drugs.

be filled with the Spirit -- Paul is giving a command for believers to live continually under the influence of the Spirit by letting the Word control them (see note on [Col 3:16](#)), pursuing pure lives, ... Being filled with the Spirit is living in the conscious presence of the Lord Jesus Christ, letting His mind, through the Word, dominate everything that is thought and done. Being filled with the Spirit is the same as *walking in the Spirit* ([Gal 5:16-23](#)). - MSB

In the Greek text of Ephesians, this command provides the basis for Paul's statements in [Eph 5:19-21](#), all of which describe the action of spiritually minded saints.

÷Ephesians 5:19

[Eph_5:19](#)

v. 19 - Consequences of being filled with the Spirit.

1. Singing and making melody
2. Giving of thanks - v.20
3. Subjection one to others - v.21.

speaking [addressing] -- In singing giving admonition to self and others, directed to the Lord.

- 1) Ourselves - Teach, exhortation, admonish
- 2) To God - praise, glory, thanks.

one another -- Christian singing in worship should edify self and others and be to the praise and glory of God.

psalms and hymns and spiritual songs -- While some see all three categories as parts of the Book of Psalms, we understand only psalms to mean the inspired writings of David, Asaph, and others. Hymns are non-inspired songs which ascribe worship and praise directly to God. Spiritual songs are any other lyrical compositions dealing with spiritual themes, even though not addressed directly to God. - BBC

spiritual songs -- Spiritual “odes” - ὁδῶν οἱ δαῖς. Odes or songs relating to spiritual things in contradistinction from these which were sung in places of festivity and revelry. - BN

E. Wellesz proposed that the terms were specific in meaning. He defined *psalmody* as “the cantillation of the Jewish psalms and of the canticles and doxologies modeled on them”; *hymns* as “songs of praise of a syllabic type, i.e. each syllable is sung to one or two notes of melody”; and *spiritual songs* as “Alleluias and other chants of a jubilant or ecstatic character, richly ornamented” (Wellesz 1955, 2).

...

Wellesz was aware of the view that the three words are synonyms but suggests that “the individuality of psalm, hymn, and spiritual song is obvious to the student of comparative liturgiology” (Wellesz 1961, 33–34)

...

Most scholars think that the Jewish psalmody of the synagogue is what the first Christians sang, and as the earliest Christians were Jews, it is reasonable to think that Jewish psalmody was the basis of their music.

Porter, W. J. (2000). Music. In C. A. Evans & S. E. Porter (Eds.), *Dictionary of New Testament background: a compendium of contemporary biblical scholarship* (electronic ed., p. 713). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

making melody – ψαλμός -- *psalmós*; genitive *psalmoú*, masculine noun from *psállaō* ^(G5567), to sing, chant "Music" in the NIV

In [1Co 14:15](#) --(See the context there.) Singing with the Spirit may be a reference to supernatural or miraculous inspiration.

your heart – The instrument that is "plucked" in the "making melody" is described as the "heart." In the OT when there is "plucking" the instrument is named, as it is here.

Christian singing is to be accompanied by the heart. For singing to be spiritual worship it must have the heart involved in its praise to God. [Col 2:2](#).

to the Lord -- The contrast is between the heathen and the Christian practice, "Let your songs be not the drinking songs of heathen feasts, but psalms and hymns; and their accompaniment, not the music of the lyre, but the melody of the heart" - Conybeare and Howson.

A Common Hermeneutic

A specific commandment authorizes; silence about similar things prohibits. The apostolic command is to sing; silence about other kinds of music intentionally omits them.

That is a common hermeneutic we all learned as children. When Mama said, "Go play in the backyard," "backyard" was specific. It commanded an enjoyable and familiar play place. We learned

quickly that her silence about other play places prohibited: playing in the street or inside Philip's house next door, for example.

Why do we understand that so readily in every other venue except in worship to God?
-- Cecil May, Jr.

singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. -- A second evidence of the filling is inward joy and praise to God: singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord. The Spirit-filled life is a fountain, bubbling over with joy ([Act 13:52](#)). Zacharias is an illustration: when he was filled with the Holy Spirit, he sang with all his heart to the Lord ([Luk 1:67-79](#)). - BBC

[For a more extensive explanation for the practice of a capella music in Christian worship see the e-Sword module at <http://http://home.hiwaay.net/~wgann/e-Sword%20Modules/e-Sword%20index.htm> or to download a PDF click [here](#).

<http://home.hiwaay.net/~wgann/sermons/ACAPPELLA%20MUSIC%20IN%20NT%20WORSHIP%20-%205x8%20booklet.pdf>

÷Ephesians 5:20

[Eph_5:20](#)

giving thanks always -- This is probably connected with the preceding verse and to denote that the proper subject of Christian singing is thanksgiving and praise.

[1Th 5:18](#); cf. [2Co 4:15](#); [2Co 9:12](#), [2Co 9:15](#); [Php 4:6](#); [Col 2:7](#); [Heb 13:15](#); [Php 1:4](#); [Php 1:6-7](#);

for everything -- *ὕπὲρ πάντων* *hyper panto n* - for all things, or all "persons." For God's mercies and all blessings, and even trials that make us stronger.

Beside the Christian writers in the New Testament the only ancient writers (Jewish writers and some Greco-Roman, especially Stoic, writers) who stressed thanking God for everything were those who believed that God (whether the Stoic Fate or the personal God of Judaism) ruled the course of events.

to God the Father -- The Christian's thankfulness is for who God is and for what He has done through His Son, their Savior and Lord

in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ -- On the basis of who Christ is and what he has done. Through the mediation of Christ and trusting in him; [Joh 14:13](#). [Joh 16:23](#).

÷Ephesians 5:21

[Eph_5:21](#)

submitting to one another -- In our day "submission" is a negative, sexist term. Originally it was a military term which related to obedience based on the chain of command.

But in the NT it is often used of Jesus' attitude toward His earthly parents ([Luk 2:51](#)) and His heavenly Father ([1Co 15:28](#)). Paul was fond of this term and used it 23 times. [Eph 5:21](#) is a universal spiritual principle of mutual submission between believers connected to the Spirit-filled life.

Submission goes against our cultural, western, individual focused mind-set. Selfishness and dominance are so culturally ingrained, but biblically inappropriate (cf. [Rom 12:10](#); [Gal 5:13](#); [Php 2:3](#); [1Jn 4:11](#))!

This verse emphasizes reciprocal submission on the part of all believers. This was not directed toward one group. It needs to be reaffirmed that this context ([Eph 5:22-31](#)) deals with the domestic relationship between Christian husbands and Christian wives, not men and women in general. Women are not spiritually inferior in any sense (cf. [Act 2:16-21](#); [Gal 3:28](#)).

out of reverence [fear of God] -- [G5401](#); An attitude of reverence, honor, and respect.

It could mean fear of offending God, or in fear of the consequences if we fail to do as God requires of us.

÷Ephesians 5:22

[Eph_5:22](#)

I nstructions for Christian Households. After instructing believers how to live worthy of their calling within the community of faith (4:17–5:20), Paul instructs them how to live within the household. The link into this topic is [Eph 5:21](#) and "submitting."

Vs. 22-27 - Compares Church to Marriage
(vs. 28-33, more particular marriage; application.)

Wives should submit to their *own husbands*.

Children should submit to their *parents*.

Bondservants should submit to their *masters*.

Wives, submit – Frequently synonymous with “obey” (cf. 1 Pet 3:5–6). Nevertheless, submission recognizes a divinely ordered set of relationships, and submission to another human is conditioned on the submission that one ultimately owes to God. Moreover, submission does not imply inferiority (cf. Gal 3:28) but a difference in role since Christ functionally submits to the Father (1 Cor 15:28). - NIVBTSB

(see [1Co 11:3-10](#); [1Co 14:34-35](#); [Col 3:18](#); [1Ti 2:11-12](#); [Tit 2:5](#); [1Pe 3:1-6](#)).

While the cultural model for marriage in the Jewish world emphasized patriarchal leadership, Paul’s model is based on mutual love and respect ([Eph 5:28](#), [Eph 5:33](#)) and grounded in the O.T. creation story ([Eph 5:31](#) cites [Gen 2:24](#)). See note on Eph 5:21; note on [Eph 5:25](#).

to your own husbands – "For the husband is the head of the wife ..." [Eph 5:23](#)

as to the Lord -- *As you do to the Lord*, is the motivation for a wife’s submitting voluntarily to her husband. As the wife submits to her husband, she is also submitting to the Lord’s authority..

÷Ephesians 5:23

[Eph_5:23](#)

For the husband – To be the head is to have authority (see [1Co 11:3](#)). The husband and the wife are “one flesh” ([Eph 5:31](#)), and the husband, in that sacred union, is the leader. So Christ and the Church are one, and Christ is the Leader.

head of the wife –

The Spirit-filled wife recognizes that her husband’s role in giving leadership is not only God-ordained, but is a reflection of Christ’s own loving, authoritative headship of the church. See on [1Co 11:3](#); cf. [Eph 1:22-23](#); [Eph 4:15](#); [Col 1:18](#); [Tit 2:4-5](#).

"as the head in the natural body, being the seat of reason, and the fountain of sense and motion, ..." - Poole

Christ ... church, his body – Paul uses the relationship between Christ and the Church as an analogy for the relationship between husband and wife.

head - see [Eph 1:22](#); [1Co 11:3](#);

his body – The Body is the Church, viewed as a complex living organism. The Greek words *Sôtêr* (Saviour) and *sôma* (body) have a similar sound which makes it possible that we have here an intentional “play upon words.” (CBSC)

himself its Savior – As the Lord delivered His church from the dangers of sin, death, and hell, so the husband provides for, protects, preserves, and loves his wife, leading her to blessing as she submits. Cf. Titus 1:4; 2:13; 3:6. - MSB

The Lord is called **Savior** elsewhere, [Luk 2:11](#); [Joh 4:42](#); [Act 5:31](#); [Act 13:23](#); [Php 3:20](#); [2Ti 1:10](#); [Tit 1:4](#); [Tit 2:13](#); [Tit 3:6](#); [2Pe 1:1](#); [2Pe 1:11](#); [2Pe 2:20](#); [2Pe 3:2](#); [2Pe 3:18](#); [1Jn 4:14](#).

Deliverance and Preservation are both elements in the idea of Salvation. See further, above, on [Eph 2:5](#).

CHURCH – [Mat 16:18](#), [Eph 5:23-27](#), [Act 20:28](#).

The Church is the "Body of Christ," [Eph 1:22-23](#), [Col 1:18](#); [Col 1:24](#),

There is one body- [Eph 4:4-6](#), [1Co 12:12-13](#), [Col 3:15](#),

Saved "Added by the Lord"- not "Voted In," [Act 2:47](#), [2Jn 1:9-10](#),

[See 4x6 card - Eph. 5 - 88Ho by Jerry Jenkins]

Six Observations Based on Ephesians 5

1. Church to be **sanctified** - v.26 (NASV, RSV "by" "with")
2. Christ is the **Savior** - v.23;
3. Church is the **saved** - v. 23
4. Church to be in **submission** - v. 24
5. Church is to be **spotless** - v. 27
6. Church is to be a **serving** church - v

÷Ephesians 5:24

[Eph_5:24](#)

the church submits to Christ – Christ is the builder ([Mat 16:18](#)) and head of the church. All authority has been given to him, [Mat 28:18](#); [Eph 1:22](#).

The church's subjection to Christ is the prototype of the wife's submission to her husband.

so also wives should submit – A repeat, for emphasis and clarity, of the wife-husband relationship in the home.

Today, just at the authority of Christ in reject, the home relationship God has ordained is also rejected.

Nothing could more exalt the role of the wife than comparing it to the role of **the church** as the Bride of **Christ**. The church's submission is the pattern to be followed by the wife. She is to be **subject in everything**—that is, **everything** that is in accordance with the will of God. No wife would be expected to obey her husband if he required her to compromise her loyalty to the Lord Jesus. But in all the normal relationships of life, she is to obey her husband, even if he is an

unbeliever. - BBC

in everything to their husbands – Just as Christ is the head in all things to Christians, so the husband in the family is the head over all things that regards the family. The pertains "to a husband's legitimate authority 'in the Lord' ([Col 3:18](#)). everything not contrary to God." -- JFB

Ephesians 5:25

Eph_5:25

Husbands, love your wives – Though the husband's authority has been established (vv. 22–24), the emphasis moves to the supreme responsibility of husbands in regard to their wives, which is to love them with the same unreserved, selfless, and sacrificial love that Christ has for His church. Christ gave everything He had, including His own life, for the sake of His church, and that is the standard of sacrifice for a husband's love of his wife. Cf. [Col 3:19](#). [1Pe 3:7](#). - MSB

The duty of the wife is to obey; the right of the husband is to command. But the apostle would guard against the abuse of that right by enjoining the manifestation of such a spirit on the husband as would secure submission on the part of the wife. (BN)

The instructions given to husbands are three times longer than those given to wives

In the first century ad, a husband was not necessarily expected to show love for his wife. Generally, Paul's model for household relationships affirms traditional roles but undermines cultural understandings of these roles. Paul's exhortation to husbands (vv. 25–33) is the longest single section in this teaching on households (5:22–6:9). Paul takes great care to set his command that wives submit to their husbands (vv. 22–24) within its proper context, emphasizing the husband's responsibilities in greater detail. - FSB

as Christ loved the church – Paul is referring primarily to sacrificial actions for the benefit of the wife. The model for this kind of love is Christ's death on the cross

gave himself up for her -- Christ sacrificed himself for the salvation of the saints.

÷Ephesians 5:26

Eph_5:26

that he might sanctify her -- Speaking of what Christ did for the church, his bride, [Tit 3:5](#); Christ loved the church and set it apart from the world to be his bride, [Eph 5:27](#).

As the wife is to be devoted to her husband, Christ expect the church to be sanctified (devoted or consecrated) to Him. [Heb 2:11](#); [Heb 10:10](#); [Heb 13:12](#).

having cleansed her -- [Joh 15:3](#); [1Pe 1:23](#); [Tit 3:5](#);

As such a virgin was purified and prepared for her husband by washing and by anointing, so the church is to be prepared for Christ. It is to be made pure and holy. Outwardly there is to be the application of water and within there is to be holiness of heart; [2Co 11:2](#), (BN)

by the washing of water with the word -- Paul alludes to the imagery of baptism, [Rom 6:3-6](#); [Tit 3:5](#); [Rev 21:2](#);

with [in] the word -- The Greek word used here, *rhēma*, refers in this context to the gospel—the

proclamation of Christ's sacrificial love ([Eph 5:25](#); [Joh 17:17](#)). The cleansing of the church is done in obedience (submission) to the Word of God.

Greek, "IN the word." To be joined with "cleansing it," or "her." The "word of faith" ([Rom 10:8-9](#), [Rom 10:17](#)), of which confession is made in baptism, and which carries the real cleansing ([Joh 15:3](#); [Joh 17:17](#)) and regenerating power ([1Pe 1:23](#); [1Pe 3:21](#)) - (Alford).

÷Ephesians 5:27

[Eph 5:27](#)

he might present -- In the Greek "*He*" is emphatic; "He to Himself;" with stress on the Lord's personal action. In the last day when Christ will receive the church as his bride in heaven - [Rev 21:9](#); It now speaks of what Christ did for His church so that it might be a pure bride.

present -- For similar use of the same Greek word see [2Co 4:14](#); [2Co 11:2](#); [Col 1:22](#); [Col 1:28](#). In [Jud 1:24](#) a similar word is used.

The thought is of the heavenly Bridegroom welcoming the glorified Bride at the Marriage Feast hereafter. True, she is now "His Spouse and His Body;" but the manifestation then will be such as to be, in a sense, the Marriage as the sequel to the Betrothal. - CBSC

splendor, without spot or wrinkle – Paul alludes to bridal garments as symbols of purity before God (compare [Zec 3:3-5](#); [Rev 7:13-14](#)). Other N.T. writers figuratively portray Christ as a bridegroom and the renewed Church as His bride ([Mat 25:1-13](#); [Rev 21:2](#), [Rev 21:9](#)).

or any such thing – No defilement, but purity is the attire of the Christ's bride. [Son 4:7](#).

A church full of honor, splendor, beauty. The idea of "shining," or of being "bright," would convey the sense here. There is still here an allusion to a bride "adorned for her husband" ([Rev 21:2](#); compare [Psa 45:9-14](#)); and the ideal is, that the church will be worthy of the love of the bridegroom, to whom it will then be presented. (BN)

that she might be holy and without blemish – The glorious state of the Church that was the purpose of Christ's sacrificial death.

÷Ephesians 5:28

[Eph 5:28](#)

In the same [even so] way – As Christ loved the church. The Greek word gives reference to *preceding* ideas. (CBSC)

husbands should love their wives – Literally, "his own wife." The Greek emphasized the "self-ness", "his own wife ...his own self." (CBSC)

as their own bodies – A clause explaining the "*even so*" just above. In the way that Christ loved the church.

He who loves his wife loves himself – Because she is one with him, and their interests are identified. Because, by this, he really promotes his own welfare, as much as he does when he takes care of his own body. A man's kindness to his wife will be more than repaid by the happiness which she imparts. (BN)

In the end, a husband who loves his wife in these ways brings great blessing to himself from her and from the Lord. - MSB

÷Ephesians 5:29

Eph_5:29

For no one – In his right mind.

hated his own flesh – His body. This is urged as an argument why a man should love his wife and show kindness to her. As no man disregards the happiness of his own body, or himself, so he should show equal care to promote the happiness of his wife.

nourishes and cherishes it -- Feeds and clothes it, and supplies it with things necessary for it. These express the twin responsibilities also of the husband of providing for his wife's needs so as to help her grow mature in Christ and to provide warm and tender affection to give her comfort and security. (MSB)

nourishes – Greek "nourisheth it up" name, to maturity. This refers to food and sustenance.

cherishes – Refers to clothing and external care.

A word used only here and [1Th 2:7](#) in the N.T. The word is found in a marriage contract in a papyrus. It primarily mean to warm (Latin *foveo*) to give tender care. (RWP) [G2282](#).

just as Christ does the church – The Lord furnishes all things needful for the church, [Eph 1:3](#).

÷Ephesians 5:30

Eph_5:30

For -- "because" [1Co 6:15](#).

we are members of his body – Of the body of Christ; see [1Co 11:3](#), note; [1Co 12:27](#). The idea is that there is a close and intimate union between Christ and the members of His body, the church.

members - *Limbs*; the word used above [Eph 4:25](#); and cp. [Rom 12:4-5](#); [1Co 6:15](#) (a strict parallel), [1Co 12:27](#).

of his flesh, and of his bones – [A few MSS omit these words.]

We are all members of Christ's body, the church. But in context the church is pictured as his Bride.

Hence the language of [Gen 2:23](#), where Adam declares that his wife "is bone of his bone and flesh of his flesh," applies to our relation to Christ. (PNT)

÷Ephesians 5:31

Eph_5:31

Therefore – The Greek in this verse is practically identical with that of [Gen 2:24](#). We may reverently infer that the Apostle was guided to see this parallel relationship in the institution of marriage. cf, [Mat 19:4](#);

Paul reinforces the divine plan for marriage which God instituted at creation, emphasizing its

permanence and unity. The union of marriage is intimate and unbreakable. “**Joined**” is a word used to express having been glued or cemented together, emphasizing the permanence of the union (*see* [Mal 2:16](#); [Mat 19:6-9](#)). - MSB

hold fast [joined] -- This is full of importance, cf. [1Co 6:17](#).

two will become one flesh – This quotation of [Gen 2:24](#) supports Paul’s statement in [Eph 5:29](#): A husband is to love his wife as himself because, in the context of marriage, they have become one body. - FSB

the two – The LXX in [Gen 2:24](#) reads "two shall be one flesh" instead of "they shall be one flesh" cf. [Mat 19:5](#), where the Greek reads "they two" also.
 οἱ G3588 T-NPM δύο they two G1417 A-NUI

÷Ephesians 5:32

Eph_5:32

mystery – The word “mystery” - μυστήριον *myste rion* - means something which is concealed, hidden, before unknown. [Eph 1:9](#), [Eph 3:3-4](#); [Eph 3:9](#); and below [Eph 6:19](#).

The mystery of two becoming one flesh, but Paul says, 'I am using this illustration to speak of Christ and the church.'

When Paul says the **mystery** is **great**, he does not mean it is very mysterious. Rather he means that the implications of the truth are tremendous. - BBC

profound [great; important] -- Both the unity of husband and wife and the unity of *Christ and the church* are *profound*.

it refers to Christ and the church – The magnificent and beautiful mystery of union between husband and wife greatly illustrates the relationship between Christ and his bride, the church.

÷Ephesians 5:33

Eph_5:33

However [nevertheless] -- Paul now comes to summarize the relationship between husbands and wives (5:22–33). Christian marriages should be marked by **love** and **respect**.

let each – Both husband and wife have their responsibilities in the marriage relationship.

of you – Add with the Greek, **also**.

let each one of you love his wife – Each (every) husband, is to love his own wife.

Love *his own wife*, as in [Eph 5:28](#).

let the wife ...respect [reverence] her husband –

ASV "fear" *phobos* = in sense of love, respect, reverence, honor, [Act 9:31](#).

÷Ephesians 6:1

Eph_6:1

Ch. 6 - Still pertaining to the family as God would have it be.

Children – Children who are still growing up and dependent and living in the home of their parents.

The word τέκνα *tekna* usually signifies those who are young; but it is used here, to denote those who were under the care of their parents.

The child in the home is to be willingly under the authority of parents with obedient submission to them as the agents of the Lord placed over him, obeying parents as if obeying the Lord Himself.

The reasoning here is simply that such is the way God has designed and required it (“right”). Cf.

Hos 14:9. - MSB

obey –. **G5219** ὑπακούω, *hupakoúō* ; fut. *hupakoúiso* , from *hupó* (**G5259**), and *akoúō* (G191), to hear. To hearken, obey. to hear and heed, to harken, to submit to; Parents have authority!

(VI) Of children's obedience to parents (Eph 6:1; Col 3:20).

(VII) Of slaves to their masters (Eph 6:5; Col 3:22).

-- WordStudy **G5119**

"**Obey**" to children is stronger than the expression to wives, to "submit" or "being subject" Eph 5:21. *Obedience* is more implicit, while *subjection* has a willing element yielding to one with the right to command..

your parents – See Pro 6:20; Pro 30:17; Rom 1:30; Col 3:20; 2Ti 3:2 Mothers as well as fathers (see next verse). Scripture uniformly upholds the authority of the mother. Cp. Pro 1:8; Pro 6:20.

in the Lord -- cf. Col 3:20 where the parallel sentence structure reads "in everything" in stead of "in the Lord." Evidently the "obedience" to parents like obedience to the Lord.

This would not apply to anything the parents wanted which was against or contrary to God's word and what was right. Act 5:29.

The phrase is omitted in a few Greek MSS.

for this is right – Both according to the law of nature and of nations. Good, strong families make a good strong society.

÷Ephesians 6:2**Eph_6:2**

Honor – *timao* = to honor, revere, to respect, to venerate. Exo 20:12; Deu 5:16. The Greek here is verbatim that of the LXX. On this duty, see Mat 19:19; Mar 7:10; Mar 10:19; Luk 18:20. The “honor” is that not of mere sentiment but of obedience. See for illustration, Mat 15:4-8.

While verse . 1 speaks of action, this term speaks also of attitude, as Paul deals with the motive behind the action.

In first century Graeco-Roman society, children were required by law to submit to the authority of their parents. Paul's instruction, however, expects that children be treated with respect by their parents (see Eph 5:4).

first ... with promise -- The reference here is to the Decalogue which plainly is in fact the *only* “commandment with” definite “promise.”

When God gave His law in the Ten Commandments, the first law governing human relationships was this one ([Exo 20:12](#); [Deu 5:16](#)). It is the only command of the 10 that relates to the family because that principle alone secures the family's fulfillment. Cf. [Exo 21:15](#), [Exo 21:17](#); [Lev 20:9](#); [Mat 15:3-6](#). Proverbs affirms this principle (see [Pro 1:8](#); [Pro 3:1](#); [Pro 4:1-4](#); [Pro 7:1-3](#); [Pro 10:1](#); [Pro 17:21](#); [Pro 19:13](#), [Pro 19:26](#); [Pro 28:24](#)).

÷Ephesians 6:3

[Eph 6:3](#)

that it may go well – The law given to Moses had severe repercussions for those who cursed or disobeyed.

Just as the original command in [Deu 5:16](#) (see [Exo 20:12](#)) came with the promise of a full life in the land of Canaan, so also the command in the new covenant comes with a general promise of well-being (“*go well with you ... enjoy long life*”) in this present earthly life. There will be exceptions, but the general principle holds true.

live long -- A reference back to the command as given at Sinai. [Exo 20:12](#).

Social studies have shown that children who obey their parents do better in school and have less problems with all kinds of authorities, civil and employment.

÷Ephesians 6:4

[Eph 6:4](#)

Fathers -- We may equally well render, **parents**. Moses' parents are called ([Heb 11:23](#), Greek) his *fathers*.

The expression is found in the classics, Greek and Latin.—The father is the head of authority in the home, but the oneness of husband and wife secures the high authority of the mother also. This is assumed in the Fifth Commandment.

At the present time in the United States parental and teacher authority is at a low ebb. Our nations needs desperately a revival of the teaching of the holy Scriptures to cure the many problems and evils in our society today. - WG

provoke [exasperate] -- (Present imperative,) "Don't continually – . again and again." habitually. Same word [Col 3:21](#). where follows "lest they be discouraged".

Do not irritate by vexatious commands, unreasonable blame, and uncertain temper - (Alford)

wrath [anger] -- You cannot properly train children in this condition. Allow them to develop without rebellion and wildness, inaction, erratic, temperate. This admonition deals with the nature of development.

but bring up -- The Greek conveys the idea of *development* (here in the sphere of character and principle) by *care and pains*. The same word has occurred [Eph 4:29](#), with reference to bodily development.

discipline and instruction [nurture] -- Here the idea is *to educate*. *padeia* = the whole training and education of children. Mind, morals, body. To bring up, to educate.

admonition -- instruction. The Greek noun recurs [1Co 10:11](#); [Tit 3:10](#). For the kindred Greek verb, see [Act 20:31](#); [Rom 15:14](#); [1Co 4:14](#); [Col 1:28](#); [Col 3:16](#); [1Th 5:12](#); [1Th 5:14](#); [2Th 3:15](#). It will be seen that the noun relates to the warning side of instruction, a side too often neglected.

of the Lord -- Which the Lord prescribes. Those principles and teaching that we learn from the Lord.

÷Ephesians 6:5

Eph_6:5

In dealing with the household, Paul now touches on the servant-master relationship.

The relationship between slaves and masters (and, by analogy, between employees and employers) is to be shaped by their commitment to the Lord and their desire to build one another up in Christ. Christian slaves are to obey their masters, and Christian masters are to treat their slaves kindly (see Col 3:22–4:1).

- Paul was not promoting slavery but teaching Christians to live with it as a fact of life in that culture (for Paul's treatment of slavery, see the book of Philemon.) - NLTSB

Slaves [bondservants] -- Often considered members of the household in Graeco-Roman culture.

Slaves in both Greek and Roman culture had no rights legally and were treated as commodities. There was much abuse and seldom good treatment of slaves. The Bible does not speak against slavery itself, but against its abuses (cf. [Exo 21:16](#), [Exo 21:26](#), [Exo 21:27](#); [Lev 25:10](#); [Deu 23:15-16](#)). - MSB

obey your earthly masters -- Being under Christ's authority does not mean that believers are free of all civil or social authority. Paul maintains that slaves should serve their human masters as though they were obeying Christ. Graeco-Roman slavery in the first century ad was very different from that of the colonial period.

earthly masters – In contrast to your true and heavenly Master, [Eph 6:4](#).

be obedient – This is the uniform direction in the New Testament; see [1Pe 2:18](#); [1Ti 6:1-3](#); notes [1Co 7:21](#). If they could be made free, they were to prefer that condition to a state of bondage [1Co 7:21](#), but while the relation remained, they were to be kind, gentle, and obedient, as became Christians. [Col 3:22](#).

with fear and trembling – This is not fright, but respect for their authority. Not in slavish terror, ([1Co 2:3](#); [2Co 7:15](#)) but with anxious eagerness to do your duty, and a fear of displeasing. Even if an employer does not deserve respect in his own right ([1Pe 2:18](#)), it should nevertheless be given to him with genuine sincerity as if one was serving Christ Himself.

with a sincere heart -- With a simple, sincere desire, with pure motives, to do what ought to be done.

as you would Christ -- To serve one's employer well is to serve Christ well. Cf. [Col 3:23-24](#). [Rom 14:7-9](#).

÷Ephesians 6:6

Eph_6:6

not by way of eye-service -- Working well only when being watched by the master (or boss).

as people pleasers -- As if it were the main object to please people. The object should be rather to please and honor God. ([Gal 1:10](#).) Working only to promote one's welfare, rather than to honor the employer and the Lord, whose servants we really are.

but as servants of Christ -- As those who have been bought by the blood of Christ, believers no longer belong to themselves (see [1Co 6:19-20](#); [1Co 7:22](#); cp. [Rom 1:1](#); [Gal 1:10](#); [Php 1:1](#))

doing the will of God from the heart – For Christian slaves, *the will of God* is that they honor him by serving their human masters faithfully and *with enthusiasm*. That is, God requires industry, fidelity, conscientiousness, submission, and obedience in that rank of life.

from the heart – Implies that believers should have the right motivation for their actions. Literally, soul ([Psa 111:1](#); [Rom 13:5](#)).

÷Ephesians 6:7

Eph_6:7

rendering service with a good will – Not with an outward display of compliance while we are inwardly seething with resentment, but cheerfully and willingly.

as to the Lord and not to man -- Not only regarding men your masters, but Christ your great Master. Consider that which is done for masters (good or bad) as service done to Christ. [Col 3:23](#). God's credits and rewards will be appropriate to the attitude and action of our work. No good thing done for His glory will go unrewarded.

÷Ephesians 6:8

Eph_6:8

whatever good anyone does – That is, as the servant of Christ and as unto the Lord.

will receive back -- No good thing done for His glory will go unrewarded. God takes account of the kindness and generosity people display to one another.

Although earthly masters may not reward their slaves, slaves will receive a reward for their good deeds when they stand before the judgment seat of Christ ([Mat 16:27](#); [1Co 3:8](#), [1Co 3:14](#); [2Co 5:10](#)). Paul does not specify the content of the reward here; [Col 3:24](#) identifies it as the eternal inheritance that God has prepared for believers. - NIVBTSB

whether he is slave or free -- Paul says this is a true principle whether done as a slave or a free man. [Gal 6:7-9](#).

Elsewhere, Paul states that there is no distinction in Christ between slaves and free people.

÷Ephesians 6:9

Eph_6:9

And masters -- *κυριοι* you masters G2962. [Col 4:1](#). This is still the same literary context as [Eph 5:22](#) to [Eph 6:9](#), which is Paul's domestic example of the Christian life in action.

do the same to them -- Show the same regard to God's will, and to your servants' well-being, in your relation to them, as they ought to have in their relation to you.

There should be mutual honor and respect from Christian employers to their employees, based on their common allegiance to the Lord.

stop [give up] your threatening -- This is a present active participle used as an imperative. The word literally means "*to loosen up*."

In Graeco-Roman society, masters had the right to treat slaves as they saw fit. Paul commands masters to set aside their rights and to instead treat their slaves with kindness as people who are equal before Christ (compare note on Eph 6:5).

knowing ... Master ... in heaven -- Reminding the "master" that he also has a "Master" who is really the "Master" for them both.

no partiality with him -- The Christian master (or boss) uses his authority and power with justice and grace—never putting people under threats, never abusive or inconsiderate. He realizes that he has a heavenly Master who is impartial (cf. [Act 10:34](#); [Rom 2:11](#); [Jas 2:9](#)).

÷Ephesians 6:10

Eph 6:10

6:10-20 Walking in Victory (Conflict; v. 11 Standing in Victory)

6:10–20 In the letter's final teaching section, Paul instructs believers to stand against the evil forces at work in the world. This discussion has three parts: a description of the nature of the battle ([Eph 6:10-13](#)), a call to resist the powers by putting on the armor of God ([Eph 6:14-17](#)), and a reminder to pray and be alert ([Eph 6:18-20](#)).

Finally -- Literally "for the rest" "for what remain" and could possibly mean "for the future." But the probable meaning in context is simply "what remains for me say to you." Paul's *final word* is to remind the believers of the devil's opposition and urge them to protect themselves with *all of God's armor*.

my brethren -- The MSS evidence for including this is not conclusive. Some think it is a possible insertion by transcribers from [Php 3:1](#), [Php 4:8](#). These epistles were written about the same time and are a part of the group called "the prison epistles" and since "Ephesians" is considered a circular letter this phrase may have been dropped from some copies, or added to some. It is just not present in all our MSS.

be strong in the Lord -- While Christ has won the victory through his crucifixion and resurrection, there are daily battles with the devil and the various temptations he uses. Paul urges the saints to be strong and rely on the strength of the Lord. God gave the Israelites a similar charge before they engaged in battle with the inhabitants of the promised land ([Deu 31:23](#); [Jos 1:6](#)).

Be strong is from the same Greek verb of [Act 9:22](#); [Rom 4:20](#); [2Ti 2:1](#); and in the active voice, [Php 4:13](#); [1Ti 1:12](#); [2Ti 4:17](#). The tense here is present, not aorist, and suggests rather the maintenance than the attainment of strength.

in the strength [power] of his might -- Christ's might: as in [Eph 1:19](#), it is the Father's might. Christ's strength was already and permanently established, so the encouragement is to remember His strength and might and go forth courageously depending and trusting on Him.

÷Ephesians 6:11

Eph_6:11

Put on -- "Put on" recalls [Eph 4:24](#). ([Rom 13:12](#); [Rom 13:14](#); [1Co 15:53-54](#); [2Co 5:3](#); [Gal 3:27](#)).

"**Put on**" conveys the idea of permanence, indicating that armor should be the Christian's sustained, life-long attire

the whole armor -- "*whole armor*" is one word in the Greek, *panoplia*. It occurs in N.T. elsewhere only [Luk 11:22](#) and here [Eph 6:13](#) and carries the idea *complete*, or *full* set of armor.

See [Rom 13:12](#); [2Co 10:4-5](#). It is only by the Lord's protection that a believer can **stand firm against all strategies of the devil** (cp. [1Pe 5:8-9](#)).

While Paul's analogy fits the common armor worn by Roman soldiers, and one his Gentile readers would recall, he primarily draws on Old Testament passages that describe the armor of God ([Isa 59:16-17](#)) and promised Messiah ([Isa 11:4-5](#)).

of God -- That is, the armor supplied by Him, having been wrought by Him. For the conflict described nothing less will do.

able to stand -- Paul's analogy for the Christian's spiritual defense affirms its necessity if one is to hold his position while under attack. With this armor no inadequacy in his equipment is to be feared.

against the schemes [wiles] of he devil – This Greek word carrying the idea of cleverness, crafty methods, cunning, and deception. Satan's schemes are propagated through the evil world system over which he rules.

"**Wiles**" is all-inclusive, encompassing every sin, immoral practice, false theology, false religion, and worldly enticement. - MSB

the devil – Scripture refers to him as "the ruler of the demons" ([Luk 11:15](#)), "the god of this world" ([2Co 4:4](#)), and "the prince of the power of the air" ([Eph 2:2](#)). Scripture depicts him opposing God's work ([Zec 3:1](#)), perverting God's Word ([Mat 4:6](#)), hindering God's servant ([1Th 2:18](#)), hindering the gospel ([2Co 4:4](#)), snaring the righteous ([1Ti 3:7](#)), and holding the world in his power ([1Jn 5:19](#)).

÷Ephesians 6:12

Eph_6:12

For we – Some manuscripts read *For you*.

do not wrestle – The Greek word used here - *πάλη* *pale* – denotes a "wrestling;" the use of hand-to-hand combat. Then by extension it came to mean a struggle, fight, combat. Here it refers to the struggle or combat of the Christian against evil forces.

Wrestling features trickery and deception, like Satan and his hosts when they attack.

against flesh and blood – cf. [2Co 10:3-5](#). The opposition Christians face comes from the *unseen world* of spiritual evil, and Christ has authority over that realm (see [Eph 1:21-22](#)).

It is interesting that the literal Greek order in this occurrence is "*blood and flesh*"; but English usage reverses the order and makes it coincide with the Greek order of the words in [Mat 16:17](#); [1Co 15:50](#); [Gal 1:16](#); [Heb 2:14](#).

The Christian life is a spiritual battle in which the ultimate opposition to the gospel stems from evil spiritual powers (cf. [Eph 1:21](#); [Eph 3:10](#) and notes). These powers can operate through humans

([Eph 4:14](#); [Eph 4:27](#)) and institutions, but they cannot be reduced solely to these manifestations. - NIVBTSB

The apostles does not mean to imply that Christians have no enemies among men that oppose them. They are exposed to persecution, false teachers, etc., but behind these evil forces are lurking invisible spirits of wickedness that seek to destroy them.

the rulers [principalities] -- This word refers to principal rulers or chieftains. αρχας [G746](#).

These various terms show the diversity and comprehensiveness of the enemy's power, reminding us that the battle cannot be fought merely with human resources.

The 4 designations describe the different strata and ranking of those demons and the evil supernatural empire in which they operate. Satan's forces of darkness are highly structured for the most destructive purposes. Cf. [Col 2:15](#); [1Pe 3:22](#).

against the authorities -- εξουσιας [G1849](#), refers to those who have "power" or "authority" in their realm of influence. The "Leaders".

against the cosmic powers -- κοσμοκρατορας, [G2888](#), the Lord, or ruler, of his world. The ruler who presides over, as seen in the next phrase, "this present darkness" or "this world of darkness" and thus to mean a world of sin and evil.

over this present darkness -- Darkness here is an emblem of ignorance, misery, and sin. It accurately pictures these malignant spirits as *ruling over a dark world*. The earth-- dark and wretched and ignorant and sinful.

against the spiritual forces of evil -- Literally, "the *spiritual things wickedness*."

forces of wickedness -- Refers to hostile supernatural entities. Because of Christ's victory over the evil powers, believers have courage and strength to resist them ([Eph 1:19-21](#); [Eph 3:10](#); [Col 2:15](#)).

in the heavenly [high] places -- "*in celestial or heavenly places*." As in [Eph 1:3](#); [Eph 3:10](#), this refers to the entire realm of spiritual beings.

The word (ἐπουράνιος *epouranios*) is used of those that dwell in heaven, [Mat 18:35](#); [Phi 2:10](#); of those who come from heaven, [1Co 15:48](#); [Phi 3:21](#); of the heavenly bodies, [1Co 15:40](#). Then the neuter plural of the word is used to denote the heavens; and then the "lower" heavens, the sky, the air, represented as the seat of evil spirits. (BN)

÷Ephesians 6:13

[Eph_6:13](#)

Therefore -- δια Wherefore.

take up the whole armor -- "Take up" what God has provided for us. The Ephesians were familiar with the idea of the gods giving armor to mythical heroes: thus Paul's allusion would be appropriate.

Paul again emphasized the necessity of the Christian's appropriating God's full spiritual armor by obedience in taking it up, or putting it on (v. 11). The first 3 pieces of armor (girdle, breastplate, and shoes/boots, vv. 14, 15) were worn continually on the battlefield; the last 3 (shield, helmet, and sword, vv. 16, 17) were kept ready for use when actual fighting began.

of God -- That is, the armor supplied and prepared by Him. For the conflict the Christian will face, nothing less will do.

able to withstand [stand against] -- With the armor God provides you can hold your position when under attack. Do not fear, God's armor will make you fully equipped.

in the evil day – The day of temptation, the day when you are violently assaulted by Satan. We must always have our armor on, to be ready against the evil day which may come at any moment, for we are in a perpetual war. [Psa 41:1](#).

Since the sin in the Eden, every day has been evil ([Eph 5:16](#)), a condition that will persist until the Lord returns.

and having done all -- Margin, "*or overcome*." The Greek word means, to work out, effect, or produce; and then to work up, to make an end of, to vanquish, (Robinson, Lexicon.) The intensity of the meaning in this context "having *accomplished* all things, all things demanded of your equipment and the action you must take."

The idea seems to be, that they were to overcome or vanquish all their foes, and thus to stand firm. The whole language here is taken from war; and the idea is, that every foe was to be subdued. (BN)

to stand -- "*Stand*" occurs four times in vv. 11–14. Standing firm against the enemy without wavering or falling is the goal. [1Pe 5:8-9](#).

÷Ephesians 6:14

[Eph 6:14](#)

Stand therefore – By repeating "stand" four times in this section Paul is really emphasizing this necessity. Here, as throughout the passage, the tense of this verb is aorist, a decisive act of *taking a conscious stand* is implied.

Resist every attack – as a soldier must in battle. Paul now proceeds to tell them in what way they were to do this, and how they were to be armed.

having girded your loins [fastened on the belt of truth] --The belt around a soldier's waist held the breastplate in place and provided an attachment for the sword.

Girding up the loose ends of one's tunic between the legs and tucking it into the belt as in preparation for battle.

your loins – —cp. [Exo 12:11](#); [Job 38:3](#); [Job 40:7](#); [Psa 18:39](#); [Isa 11:5](#); [Luk 12:35](#); [1Pe 1:13](#). The well-fastened girdle or belt kept together the soldier's dress and accouterments, and added conscious vigour to his frame. - CBSC

with [in] truth – Literally "in truth". Greek preposition *ev*, *in*. For the girded body is *within* the girdle or belt. But this meaning would be lost if conveyed in English by "with." - CBSC
Question - Is the belt itself "truth", or is what is fastened within the belt "truth"?

Many understand the belt to be "*the truth*", that is, God's word. (Let the Word of God be our defense, as Jesus used Scripture in [Mat 4:4](#); etc. cf. [Psa 119:11](#).) But "*the truth*" comes in [Eph 6:17](#) under the title of the *sword of the Spirit*.

truth -- The absence of the article leaves us to understand the word to mean in sincerity, reality, in earnest devotion. (CBSC)

having put on the breastplate of righteousness – The same verb as [Eph 6:11](#). The tense is aorist; something the Christian has done in preparation.

breastplate of righteousness – Paul seems to be drawing his picture from [Isa 59:17](#); [Isa 11:4-5](#). cf. [1Th 5:8](#).

Breastplates protected the chest area— the place of the body's most vital organs. They were usually a sleeveless piece made of leather and overlaid in the front with metal, such as bronze.

"**Righteousness**" either 1) the righteousness, justification, God credits to those who trusted and obeyed him; or 2) the righteous way of life that God now expects his people to exemplify in their lives. In the context it seem #2 is to be preferred. - wg

÷Ephesians 6:15

[Eph 6:15](#)

shod your feet – Better, "*having shod your feet*." This is reference to what kind of shoes (ESV) you wear for battle.

Roman soldiers wore boots with nails in them to grip the ground in combat. - MSB

While many connect this preparation to refer to "running" shoes, to joyfully carry the message of "peace" ([Isa 52:7](#); [Nah 1:15](#)), it is more proper to consider Paul's context where he has just said "be ready to stand", or "to stand fast" ([Eph 6:13](#)), so the kind of "shoes" needed for such "standing firm" to fight against evil is what is called for.

preparation -- Preparation, what the gospel of peace provides. Sure-footing was essential in combat.

The Greek word occurs here only in N.T. In the LXX. it occurs several times, and tends, curiously, to denote equipment in the special form of base or pedestal (e.g. [Ezr 3:3](#); A.V. "bases"). Such a meaning is obviously in point here, where the imagery suggests not readiness to run, but foothold for standing. - CBSC

The Gospel of peace keeps up upright and firm. - PC

Although Thielman recognizes an allusion to [Isa 52:7](#) he suggests Paul's image of the soldier's feet is different -- whereas the "feet" in Isaiah are praised for proclaiming good news, Paul urges the Christian soldier to stand in preparation to fight the evil powers. - BECNT

gospel of peace – "Gospel" is "good news". Here it is the good news of "peace".

It seems like a contradictory of thought, to dress for battle, wear shoes to stand fast, ready to "war" for "peace." [1Pe 3:15](#). Yet, we speak of all our wars, as 'wars for peace.'

peace -- It sounds like contradictory terms, speaking of "warfare" and "peace." Note [Eph 6:12](#) that the fight is against those evil forces that would destroy the "peace".

The "**peace**" here is that which we do not want broken. "Peace with God" [Rom 5:1](#); "the peace of God" [Php 4:7](#); cf. [2Ti 1:12](#). In this context the focus is on the peace that the Good News gives, [Rom 5:1](#).

The **gospel of peace** pertains to the good news that, through Christ, Christians are at peace with God and He is on our side ([Rom 5:6-10](#)). It is that confidence of divine support which allows one to stand firm, knowing that he is at peace with God, and God is his strength ([Rom 8:31](#), [Rom 8:37-39](#)).

÷Ephesians 6:16

Eph 6:16

Above all [in all circumstances] -- "Over" all, as a soldier holds his shield to defend himself. It provides protection over every part of his body as he can turn it in every direction.

shield of faith – The shield was usually made of light wood, with a rim of brass, and covered with several folds or thicknesses of tough hide, which was frequently oiled to preserve the leather and help attacking weapons to slide off.

The shield was the soldier's primary defensive piece in battle. In the same way, the Christian's faith and trust in God provides protection against the devil and his schemes.

The faith to which Paul refers is not the body of doctrine or teaching, but our individual basic trust in God.

wherewith [with which] --

extinguish [quench, put out] all the flaming darts [arrows] -- Temptations are likened to the flaming arrows shot by the enemy and quenched by the oil-treated leather shield (cf. [Psa 18:30](#); [Pro 30:5-6](#); [1Jn 5:4](#)).

Examples of flaming arrows include demonic attacks, temptations, and rage ([Eph 4:26-27](#)) that confront individuals, and false teachings and divisions that threaten the community's unity. (cp. [Mat 6:13](#); [Mat 26:41](#); [1Co 10:13](#); [Jas 1:12-15](#)).

fiery darts – This may be an allusion to the poisoned darts some barbarous nations sometimes used which inflamed the bodies they hit. Faith is said to quench the *fiery* darts of temptations, etc.

the wicked one – Literally *the evil one*. [2Th 3:3](#).

÷Ephesians 6:17

Eph 6:17

Take -- *καί, kai, and*.

the helmet -- The helmet was a head covering, a cap, made of thick leather, or brass, fitted to the head, and often an officer's was crowned with a plume, or crest, as an ornament. Its use was to guard the head from a blow by a sword, or war-club, or battle-axe.

helmet of salvation – This is clear from Paul's reference to "the helmet of salvation" spoken by Isaiah, ([Isa 59:17](#); [1Th 5:8](#)). But although a Christian's feelings about his salvation may be seriously damaged by Satan-inspired doubt, God assures us that nothing can assault His plan for our salvation [Rom 8:31-39](#).

sword -- [Heb 4:12](#). The offensive weapon. Our warfare is not carnal, [2Co 10:4](#).

Other weapons were the bow, the spear, or the battle-axe. But, without a sword, no soldier would have regarded himself as well armed. The ancient sword was short, and usually two-edged, and resembled very much a dagger.

sword of the Spirit – Which the Holy Spirit furnishes; the truth which he has revealed. [2Ti 3:16](#).

This weapon helps Christians to both proclaim the gospel message, and to combat false doctrine and other attacks from the devil ([Eph 6:11-12](#)).

which is the word of God -- [Heb 4:12](#); [Act 7:51](#) The Word of God is used by the Holy Spirit to strengthen the inner man. The sword was used both defensively to fend off attacks, and offensively to help destroy the enemy's strategies. The Christian's sword is the holy Scripture. See [2Co 10:3-5](#); [Heb 4:12](#), see [Rev 1:16](#); [Rev 2:12](#); [Rev 2:16](#); [Rev 19:21](#); [Rev 19:15](#)

HOLY SPIRIT (see notes at eph 3.17)

Member of Godhead- [Mat 28:19](#), [1Jn 5:7-8](#),

"He"- [Joh 16:13](#); [Joh 1:1-17](#), [Act 8:29](#),

Gave us God's word- [2Pe 1:21](#),

"Sword of Spirit" is "Word of God"- [Eph 6:17](#),

Holy Spirit baptism- Occurred twice

1. On Pentecost-- To give power to the apostles-- [Act 1:8](#) & [Act 2:1-4](#)
2. At Cornelius' house to show that gentiles accepted- [Act 11:15-18](#) & [Act 15:7-8](#).
3. Paul later wrote that there is now only "One Baptism"- [Eph 4:4](#)
4. Baptism in the name of Christ is water baptism- [Act 10:47-48](#) and [Act 2:38](#). It is commanded of everyone- [Mat 28:19](#), [Mar 16:16](#)

÷Ephesians 6:18

Eph 6:18

praying at all times – Prayer should not be an afterthought for believers, but rather a primary source of strength.

Prayer is not another piece of armor but is the way believers appropriate God's armor and stand firm. Paul is saying that the general character of the Christian life is regular habitual prayer.

- 1) "**all prayer and supplication**" focuses on the variety;
- 2) "**always**" focuses on the frequency (cf. [Rom 12:12](#); [Php 4:6](#); [1Th 5:17](#));
- 3) "**in the Spirit**" focuses on submission, as we line up with the will of God (cf. [Rom 8:26-27](#));
- 4) "**being watchful**" focuses on the manner (cf. [Mat 26:41](#); [Mar 13:33](#));
- 5) "**all perseverance**" focuses on the persistence (cf. [Luk 11:9](#); [Luk 18:7-8](#)); and
- 6) "**all saints**" focuses on the objects (cf. [1Sa 12:23](#)). - MSB

in the Spirit – The question is whether "Spirit" should be capitalized. 1) If it is "**Spirit**" it means that our prayers should be in accordance to the instruction and provisions given us by the Holy Spirit in the Scriptures. 2) If it is "**spirit**" then it indicates the spiritual frame of mind, or attitude, of reverence and holiness that we should approach God in prayer.

with all prayer and supplication – With all kinds of prayer; prayer in the closet, the family circle, in congregational assembly. Prayer at the usual hours, prayer when we are specially tempted, and when we feel just like praying ([Mat 6:6](#)) prayer in the form of **supplication** for ourselves, and in the form of **intercession** for others.

to that end [with this in view] keep alert -- Watching for opportunities to pray; watching against all those things which would hinder prayer ([Mat 26:38](#); [1Pe 4:7](#)).

with all perseverance – Literally, "all", "utmost" See [Rom 12:12](#) for a close parallel to the thought.

making supplication for all the saints – [G1162](#), to make known one's particular need. Want, need. In the NT, supplication or prayer for particular benefits, petition for oneself.

We need to be praying for all Christians: 1) Because we are brethren; 2) because they like us need God's grace; 3) because nothing helps us to love more and forget faults as to pray for one another; 4) because they can help the church's growth; 5) because we need their prayers also.

÷Ephesians 6:19

Eph 6:19

and also for me -- Paul asks them to remember him also in their prayers, but he does not ask for prayer for his personal well-being or physical comfort in the imprisonment from which he wrote, but for boldness and faithfulness to continue proclaiming the gospel to the unsaved no matter what the cost. Leaders need the prayers of the church and should be willing to ask for them.

that words [utterance] may be given me ... -- Though Paul was a prisoner in Rome he was permitted to preach (Acts 28:30-31) and he wants to say the right words that will win his listeners there to Christ. We need to be cautious of our words and choose them gently and adapt them for our particular audience. This doesn't mean changing the gospel, but seasoning our speech with salt (Col 4:6).

(See 1Co 12:8, Paul may have been asking them to pray that the Holy Spirit would inspire him to use proper bold words in his preaching. Eph 3:12; Php 1:20.)

boldly to proclaim – Refers to courage, especially in public speech. In Acts, Paul's preaching is characterized by boldness (Act 2:29; Act 4:13, Act 4:31; Act 28:31).

the mystery of the gospel – This might refer generally to the good news about Christ, or it could point specifically to the inclusion of Gentiles (non-Jews) into the people of God (Eph 3:4-6; see note on Eph 3:4; compare Eph 2:11-22).

The mystery that has been revealed and now it needs to be proclaimed publicly and boldly.

÷Ephesians 6:20

Eph 6:20

for which – "on behalf of which". It was because of his boldness in preaching the gospel that he was now a prisoner.

an ambassador in bonds [chains] -- A reference to his prison bonds.

Act 28:16; Act 28:20; Eph 3:1; Eph 4:1; Php 1:7; Php 1:13-14; Php 1:16; Col 4:3; Col 4:18; Phm 1:1; Phm 1:9-10; Phm 1:12

He was "*an ambassador*" - sent to proclaim peace to a lost world. But he was now in chains but still felt compelled to proclaim the gospel even during his imprisonment (see Eph 3:1 and note).

an ambassador – G4243, A special envoy or representative. Paul was Christ's special ambassador to the Gentiles.

declare it boldly – This is still a part of Paul's request for the recipients of the letter to pray for him, and what he especially asks them to plead in their prayers to God.

(See Act 4:13; Act 9:27; Act 13:46; Act 14:3; Act 18:26; Act 19:8; Act 26:26.)

as I ought to speak – Whether in bonds or at large. Paul felt that the gospel ought always to be spoken with plainness, and without the fear of man as he even did before Felix and King Agrippa.

÷Ephesians 6:21

Eph_6:21

Conclusion: 6:21-2

1. Information - v.21-22

2. Salutation - v.23

4. Benediction - v.24

So that you also may know ... -- Paul wanted to keep the churches informed about him, his condition and his work. This would enable them to pray for specifically for him and to be encourage knowing what he was doing.

you also -- Perhaps the emphasis has to do with [Col 4:7](#), words which were written so nearly at the same time: Ephesus as well as Colossæ should be kept informed. This, however, opens the question which Epistle was *first* penned, this or the Colossian.

Tychicus -- A companion of Paul during his ministry and the bearer of this letter as well as the one to the Colossians and probably the letter to Philemon. [Col 4:7-9](#). Paul's remarks about Tychicus in [Eph 6:21-22](#) parallel [Col 4:7-8](#) almost word for word. He was a "*beloved brother*" "*faithful minister*" fellow servant".

Tychicus was a convert from Asia Minor (modern Turkey) who was with the apostle during his first imprisonment in Rome, from where this epistle was written (see [Eph 3:1](#)). He accompanied Paul in taking an offering to the church in Jerusalem ([Act 20:4-6](#)) and was sent by him on several missions ([2Ti 4:12](#); [Tit 3:12](#)).

minister -- That is, a *servant*. We take it that Tychicus and those mentioned like him were not only post-men but also evangelists and preachers/teachers themselves.

in the Lord -- in the Lord's work.

÷Ephesians 6:22

Eph_6:22

sent him - Tychicus was now Paul's ambassador. One wonders if Paul himself did not pen this verse as well as [Eph 6:23-24](#).

purpose ... know our affairs – The circumstances of Paul and his fellow Christians at Rome, and probably a report on how Paul's trial before Caesar's court is going. Greek, "*the things concerning us*," namely, concerning myself. "Aristarchus, my fellow prisoner, and Marcus, sister's son to Barnabas" ([Col 4:10](#)).

that he may encourage – By his report to them.

encourage [comfort] -- Tychicus' information would inform them and encourage them. ([Eph 3:13](#) also).

The word is rendered "beseech," "urge" in [Eph 4:1](#), above. By derivation and usage it has more in it of *exhortation* than *consolation*; though the two ideas run often into one another. (CBSC)

÷Ephesians 6:23

Eph_6:23

Salutation. Eph 6:23-24

Peace -- The apostle echos his opening benedictory prayer, see [Eph 1:2](#). The word "peace" was the Hebrew equivalent was "*shalom*" and was the customary Jewish greeting.

to the brothers – The brotherhood, this would include both the men and women in the churches who read this letter.

The only certain occurrence in this Epistle of this word in the plural. In the singular it has occurred once, [Eph 6:21](#). As children of God, Christians are brothers and sisters of one another in a sense full of our Christian family. See [Rom 8:29](#); [1Jn 5:1](#).

love with faith – He prays that “the love of God may be poured out in their hearts” ([Rom 5:5](#)), and that they may “walk in love” [Eph 5:2](#) as its result. For the word “love” in benediction or salutation, see the note on [2Co 13:11](#).

with faith – Paul's prayer is that their *faith*, or *trust* and confidence in God will be theirs.

from God the Father – Paul prays that God will provide these things for them. See [Eph 1:2](#).

and the Lord Jesus Christ – The Father and the Son are regarded as equally the author of peace and love. cf. [Eph 1:2](#); [2Co 13:14](#).

÷Ephesians 6:24

[Eph 6:24](#)

Benediction

Grace -- "Grace" was formal greeting used in Greek letters of the day (note this use in [Act 15:23](#); [Act 23:26](#), [Jas 1:1](#)). Paul has used the word "Peace" in the previous verse which was the usual Hebrew greeting.

with all who love our Lord Jesus Christ – In this short clause, at once so broad and so deep in its reference, so exclusive from one point of view, so inclusive from another. [Joh 1:16](#).

love incorruptible [in sincerity] -- This term usually means "incorruptible" (cf. [1Co 9:25](#); [1Co 15:52](#); [1Ti 1:17](#)). It had the connotation of something true and unchanging. Here it defines how we are to love the Lord Jesus Christ, with a pure heart, without dissembling, without hypocrisy, *sincerely*.

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