

Ephesians

Chapter 1

Let's open with prayer,

Our heavenly Father,

Thank you for your word. Thank you for this time. We submit ourselves to you during this study for you to take your word and minister it to our hearts and minds. Help us in our understanding as we continue to seek out the truth of your word. We pray in Jesus' name, Amen!

S.O.

<u>Ephesians Chapters 1-3</u> The Doctrine of the New Life in Christ

C.O.

<u>Ephesians 1:1-2</u> The Preface

This section, Ephesians Chapters 1 through 3 is the doctrine of the new life in Christ. Verse 1 and 2 is the preface. And we have the introduction and the salutation.

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The introduction by Paul, and again Paul identifies himself as he does in all of his letters. He presents himself as an apostle. That is his authoritative position in the body of Christ.

The word apostle means to be sent out with a commission. It's a military term as if the head officer is sending out someone with a message or sending him out on a task.

And he represents the one who commissions him. The apostle is much like an emissary, or ambassador in the sense that he does not represent himself. He represents Christ.

We just get a slight glimpse of some of Jesus' teachings about asking in His name and going out in His name. He's talking about representing Him and functioning in representation of Christ, not going out and using His name as a lucky rabbits foot and hope that these formulas work things out for us.

So the apostle Paul was going in the name of the Lord. He represented Christ. He's an apostle of Christ, not an apostle of man as we saw in Galatians Chapter 1 Verse 1.

He said I'm an apostle not by committee, nor through any human agency, but I was commissioned by Jesus Christ.

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

And that's what our text tells us, that he is an apostle of Jesus Christ, and then by the will of God, literally through the will of God.

It wasn't his will or choice. It was by God's will that he be commissioned as an apostle.

To the people to whom he's writing: To the saints which are in Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus.

The term "in Ephesus" is not found in the older manuscripts. It's blank, which again causes us to conclude along with the style of the letter, that this letter was a circulation letter which began in Ephesus.

And again, the copyists, the sages would copy the letter and they would put the name of their church in the blank. And they would take the original and send that on to the next church.

And they would copy it and put in their name so that each church would have a copy. And when we're dealing with circulation letters, we're dealing with the doctrine of the new life in Christ.

Everything in the book of Ephesians applies to every believer. So it's not to a specific problem or issue in the city of Ephesus. This is a presentation and an establishment for every believer in Christ.

But notice what he calls them. He says to the saints who are in Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus.

The words saints and faithful have one definite article for both words. The definite article is the word "the." So saints and faithful describe the same people. The word saint means to be set apart. It is a position, not a performance.

Today, in some religious organizations, they vote people in to sainthood based on their performance, and they get in by committee.

But Paul said in Romans Chapter 1 Verses 1 through 7 that all believers are called saints. That is, saints by calling. Again, the word itself doesn't have anything to do with performance, but position.

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Once the Holy Spirit or Spirit of Christ comes into my life, I am set apart. And that's what the word saint means. And that whole process is called sanctification which is the verb form of the adjective saint.

So to the ones who are set apart spiritually but who are geographically in Ephesus, and these same people, to the faithful in Christ Jesus.

Without getting into all the technical things about this, I've heard people give sermons on this to say that if you aren't faithful then this letter is not for you if you're one of the unfaithful Christians.

Now the word faithful is an adjective that describes people who are consistently under the persuasion and influence of God's faith. Remember that faith is given to us by God.

So to the saints in Ephesus and to the faithful in Christ Jesus, not to Him, but in Him!

Then Verse 2, the salutation:

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

The normal greeting by Paul, Grace be to you, and peace.

Grace is the greeting to the Greeks, peace, shalom, is the greeting to the Jews. But it's not the human greeting. He's saying grace and peace to you from God.

May God's grace and God's peace be with you, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

C.O.	Ephesians 1:3
	The Praise
M.V.	Ephesians 1:3

Verse 3 is entitled the praise because Paul pronounced a blessedness upon God. But it is also the foundation verse in the book of Ephesians. The entire book of Ephesians is based and built upon Verse 3 and it can be called the foundation verse.

Now it's very important to understand that Verses 3 through 14 in the Greek text is all one sentence. And that's a very important piece of information in deciphering some of the things that we wrestle with from this text.

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

He says blessed *be*, and notice the word "be" is in italics. Usually when it is a present statement of fact, the writer will leave the verb out, indicating to us that the word "is" is meant in the text blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

The word blessed is where we get our English word eulogy from. And it literally means to speak well of someone.

There are different meanings for the word blessed. For instance, in Matthew Chapter 5 in the Sermon on the Mount, all of those principles begin with the word blessed or bless-ed. That's the word Makarios and it means to be filled with the fullness of something.

This word blessed means to speak well of. So what he's saying is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is well spoken of. You'll notice that when we find ourselves in difficult times, we begin to question God, even to His face.

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I'm reminded in Job Chapters 1 and 2 that when Satan got permission to attack Job's life, his presentation was let me touch his life and I'll show you that he will curse you to your face.

You've blessed him so much with material possessions. I will show you that if you let me touch those material possessions and cause terrible things to happen to those possessions, he'll turn on you. He won't worship you, he won't bless you, he will curse you to your face.

One of Satan's motivations for harassing us and making things difficult is to bring us to a point that we begin to question God. We begin to not speak well of God. And we do not speak well to Him and we have a tendency to blame Him for the difficulties.

But Paul says in praise that the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ is well spoken of, who has blessed us. Same word!

Now when we speak about God, we speak well of Him. When He blesses us, He has a favorable expression to us. It's not that He's up in heaven going "Oh, you're a nice guy."

He doesn't speak well of us, He has a good expression toward us. He has blessed us.

And then we have three phrases, and I want you to get the literal translation on these because it is important. Each one of these three phrases is what is called prepositional phrases. They start with the word "in."

He has blessed us in every spiritual blessing, in the heavenlies, in Christ. This is progressive. This is called specific progressive. You start out in general that God has blessed us in every spiritual blessing.

Every spiritual blessing belongs to every believer. But notice the emphasis. It's spiritual! A lot of times we interpret blessing by the material and physical.

Secondly, and even more specific, in the heavenlies. And we'll see in a moment that the word heavenlies in the book of Ephesians stands for the spirit realm.

We are blessed in every spiritual blessing in the spirit realm, and specifically in Christ in the spirit realm. In the spirit realm are all spiritual forces.

All the spiritual creation of God, the throne of God is in the spirit realm. God of course sits on the throne in the spirit realm. Even demons and the devil are in the spirit realm.

But we're taught, and I'll show it to you in a moment, we are taught that in the spirit realm there is order. There's God and His throne, and under Him in order are the ranks of angels, even demonic forces.

And Christ sits above all evil forces that are in the spirit realm. They can't touch Him. They can't reach Him. They can't have anything to do with him. But at the same time, the bible is telling us that we are in Christ in the spirit realm.

Paul is writing this letter to show that our blessings are spiritual. The place where they are found are in the spirit realm, and specifically in the spirit realm in Christ. That's the theme of the book.

But the reason why Paul is going to such lengths and effort to present the doctrine of the new life in Christ is because believers have a tendency to gauge all spiritual activity and condition by the physical.

In other words, today in the physical as a human being, if I had a bad day, I might turn and question my spirituality, or even question whether God is helping me or not, because in the physical realm, things are not going well.

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Pastors in churches judge spiritual conditions and blessings of God by numbers or how easy or how hard they can accomplish the tasks that they want to accomplish.

We, in the spirit realm, we are in Christ at the right hand of the throne of God. That's where we are spiritually. That's our spiritual position.

And that's the point that Paul is trying to get across. Paul is trying to show us what our spiritual condition and position is all the time in the spirit realm, which is why Satan works through the physical realm, and works on our human senses to get us to evaluate and understand spiritual things through the human.

If Satan attacks me and just makes everything go wrong today, he wants me to respond and react by human senses and even approach God that way. And I evaluate that God is not in my life moving mightily today because all these things went wrong.

So Satan works through the physical realm to try to get us to understand and evaluate spiritual things by the human, because in the spirit realm, if we realize who we are spiritually, we look at the physical realm and say "So what."

I'm seated with Christ at the right hand of the throne of God permanently, far above all principalities and powers, and that's why Satan can't just come up and grab me by the neck and destroy me. He can't!

So he works through the physical realm to deceive me and cause me to evaluate and try to understand spiritual things through the physical.

And I would suggest to you that that is the big problem today in the body of Christ, is that Christian biblical spiritual things are understood by how things go in the human, and not our position in Christ.

The physical realm is opposite of the spirit realm. What is true for the spirit realm, you will not be able to see in the physical. And in the physical realm, if I get caught up in my physical senses, it's the opposite of what the truth is in the spirit realm.

So I've got to understand these two realms and the fact that Satan, because I still am in a human body, Satan is going to use the physical things of the world to get me to react, which I do and I respond.

But for the believer, the more we grow in Christ, the less our response time. We react and it's like "Okay, that's Satan working through the physical realm. Go ahead and do whatever you're going to do."

I know who I am in Christ. Spiritually I haven't changed. My soul's the same. My emotion and my psyche might respond and say I don't like that.

But that's the whole point of the presentation here, is that we have been blessed in every spiritual blessing, not physical, in the spirit realm, not physical, and it's in Christ, specific in the spirit realm.

Let's study a little bit about the heavenlies. You might want to write these down. Throughout the book of Ephesians, this is what gives us our definition of the spirit realm for the heavenlies, or heavenly places.

In Ephesians Chapter 1 Verses 20 and 21, in speaking of the power of the resurrection, which God worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenlies.

So wherever God is and Jesus is seated, it's in these heavenlies, whatever they are.

And these are far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and those are all ranks of angels, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the one to come:

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So you have the spirit realm, and you have the throne of God. And Jesus Christ is at the right hand of the throne of God, far above all principalities and powers, the ranks of angels, authorities in the spirit realm.

And I am in Christ. I am in the spirit realm. I also am far above all principalities and powers and might and dominions, all of the demonic spiritual forces.

So then a Christian might say "Well then, why do we have such a tough time wrestling with evil?" We'll, we're not spiritually wrestling with evil. That's the point!

We are physically, or in the human wrestling with the evil, not spiritually, because the evil forces are moving through the physical realm. Spiritually, they can't do anything to me.

They can do something to my physical body. They can stir my emotions. They can stir my psyche. They can work through the physical realm, through the circumstances and cause me to react depending upon how attached I am to those circumstances and get me for minutes and hours and days and weeks and months constantly thinking about it so that I function in the physical and not in the spiritual.

So this tells us that wherever the heavenly places are, that it is where Jesus is seated at the right hand of God. And this place is far above all the angelic forces.

Secondly, Ephesians Chapter 2 Verse 6 says that God has also raised us up together and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus.

So we too, and these are aorist tenses in the Greek. He's raised us up. He's already made us to sit together with Christ in the heavenly places. So wherever Christ is, is where I am in the spirit realm.

Next, Ephesians Chapter 3 Verse 10, God revealing the mystery that has been revealed in times past, he says to the intent, or for the purpose,

that now unto the principalities and powers, that would be the spirit forces, angels, in the heavenly places, might be known through the church the manifold wisdom of God.

So again, he brings up the fact that there are principalities and powers that are working in the heavenly places or spirit realm. And they are working through the church in order to understand the manifold wisdom of God.

What we're studying in this letter, Paul is going to tell us that it has been hidden in times past. Nobody's known anything about it.

In fact, he's going to present the fact that God chose him to reveal the mysteries of Christ to so that he could teach us. And that's what we're studying.

Ephesians Chapter 6 Verse 12 is where Paul is talking to us about the armor of God. Hopefully you will be pleasantly surprised when we study that.

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

The term high places is the same word heavenlies.

Our battle is not with flesh and blood. Paul is presenting to us that the armor of God is a spiritual battle because we don't wrestle with flesh and blood, but against these spiritual forces of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in the spirit realm in the heavenlies.

So again, he's identifying for us this picture that we see here, taking all these verses that are in this one book about the spirit realm because the theme is that we are in Christ in the spirit realm.

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And he's trying to teach us that the physical and spiritual don't mix. In my life and your life, the physical and spiritual don't mix. It says the flesh fights against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh.

Well if that's true, it's got to be the same for the church. It's got to be the same everywhere we go. If I go to church and my flesh is happy, something is wrong.

My flesh is supposed to be the enemy of God. It's hostile against the things of Christ. When we sit in church, there are two forces, two realms that are in opposition to each other, the physical and the spiritual.

And whenever we cross the line to compromise and try to satisfy the physical and human realm, we've compromised the truth of the gospel. We've compromised our own position of strength and power in the things of Christ. That's the foundation verse.

C.O.

Ephesians 1:4-14 The Plan of God for Believers

In Verses 4 through 14, Paul presents the seven blessings that God has bestowed upon us. This section is entitled The Plan of God for Believers.

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

Notice how the first word in Verse 4 is "According as." He's making reference back to Verse 3 when it says God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings. Well, according as opens up a list for us.

The first one is, according as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

There are three phrases that I'm going to pick out for you and hopefully help you see, as I can only do so much, and sometimes I feel like I fail and hope the Lord picks it up and enlightens us.

But there are people that talk about predestination and choosing, election and predestination, and choosing literally means to choose, and that is our first blessing from God, is the election of God.

But I want to show you how the Greek presents it, only because when you take a foreign language and diagram it, you see things that you don't see in the English.

For instance, in our English it says according as He has chosen us. But it's not until we get down to the middle of the verse that we should be is the completion of the choosing.

Remember I told you that Verses 3 through 14 is all one sentence. All of these personal pronouns, the us, and the we, and the you, all those pronouns make reference to the subjects which are found in Verses 13 and 14.

Those who have heard the gospel, those who have believed the gospel, and those who are sealed with the Holy Spirit, to those people, it has been chosen that they should be holy and without blame, literally without blemish before Him in love.

Now I'm going to make a statement, and you can quote me if you wish, but I'm showing you here how it applies to the book of Ephesians. Nowhere in the bible is the word chosen or predestination have anything to do with salvation. None!

Most people read this text and they say "He has chosen us. You see, we've been chosen!"

It's not for salvation. The "us" are the people who are already saved. It's what God has chosen for us, and I've given this example in the past, that

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if you're going to go apply for a job, you find out how much the pay is, you turn in your resume, but you also want to know what are the benefits, dental, health?

This would be the word predestination and choosing, in the sense that the employer would be choosing ahead of time all of the benefits of the person that would fill that position.

God, before the foundation of the world, chose that all of those who should hear the gospel, believe the gospel, and be sealed with the Holy Spirit of God, that they one day would stand before Him, Holy and without blemish.

The only way that I'm going to stand before God Holy and without blemish is because God chose me to be that way when I stand before Him. That's it!

All of this of course is based on the finished work of Christ, but He's talking to believers, not to non-believers.

So the first blessing is in God's election before the foundation of the world, He has chosen us to stand before Him Holy and without blemish one day. It says before Him in His love.

Do I deserve that? No! Can I accomplish that? No! God has chosen that one day, I will be before Him that way.

Secondly in Verse 5:

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

Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children.

It isn't the people who have been predestined. It's the adoption process that has been predestined. Again, it's the same setup as we had before, having predestinated us unto adoption.

Who are the us? Those who have heard, believed, and been sealed by the Spirit of God. Again, the subject to this long sentence is in Verses 13 and 14, and that's what throws people off.

All the pronouns come first. You can't take the "us" and make it to be individuals. It's the group. What group? Those who have heard, and believed, and been sealed.

This is God's inheritance, what God has chosen for them, having predestinated us, and by the way, the word predestinated means to mark out boundaries. It comes from our word horizon.

So God has sectioned out for us the adoption process so we can become legal heirs of God.

But this adoption process should be by Jesus Christ to himself, and it's based on according to the good pleasure of his will,

God says it pleases me to do this. That's why I do it!

And then the doxology:

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

To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he has made us accepted, or graced, in the beloved one.

Now the trinity is involved in all of these blessings. As you'll notice at the heading, right up above election, it says for Verses 4 through 6 that these are the provision of the Father, election and adoption.

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And at the end of this section is a doxology, that everything in its purpose is done for the praise of the glory of His grace.

Now as we move on, we see that Verses 7 through 12 is the provision of the Son. And Verse 12 also has a doxology, that we should be to the praise of His glory.

In Verses 13 and 14, it tells us that it is the provision of the Holy Spirit. and again, the doxology is unto the praise of His glory.

So we have the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit all functioning to bless us in the spirit realm.

So now Verses 7 through 12, as we continue with the plan of God for believers.

The third thing, and remember that there are seven, but the third blessing that is listed for us is redemption.

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

In whom, that is in Christ, we have redemption through his blood, that is the forgiveness of sins. So redemption equals the forgiveness of sins. And this again is on the basis of according to the riches of his grace;

According to the wealth of God's grace, He provides this for us.

The word redemption means to purchase out of the marketplace. They used to line up slaves down at the markets, and people while they were shopping, or else they would come down specifically to get a slave. They would buy one. They would purchase him out of the marketplace. That's what redemption means.

Not only do we have forgiveness of sins, but that forgiveness comes through His blood, and it was through His blood that He purchased us.

Many believers either forget, or don't realize what Paul says in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20 that our bodies are the temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, which you have from God, for you were bought with a price.

He owns us. We've been purchased!

That's why when we get to Verse 14, when the Holy Spirit seals us, He's waiting for the day that He comes for His possession. You see, He bought us. He owns us!

Fourthly, vision:

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

This grace wherein he has abounded toward us in all wisdom and insight. The word prudence means insight.

He has given us the ability to see and understand spiritual things. It's interesting that the word prudence or insight, gives us understanding.

Many believers have understanding, but wisdom is the application of that understanding.

In other words, I can train my mind to memorize the bible and spend years to be a "walking bible" where if you just mention a word that is found in the bible, I would start quoting scriptures. But that's not necessarily wisdom.

Wisdom is to be able to see and know and have the realization of that truth working in your life. It's not something we claim. It's something that's going on! He abounds towards us in wisdom and insight.

The fifthly, revelation:

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

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Having made known unto us the mystery of his will,

If I were to tell you right now that we have our bible, we know it's the word of God because God's Spirit makes it alive for us, and we know that the people who wrote this book were inspired by God.

But if I were to tell you that there's a whole section in this book that is a mystery, not the kind of mystery that we can figure out, but the kind of mystery that takes revelation to find out, in ages past, the people of old, it was hidden from them.

Peter said that the prophets would prophesy, but they didn't understand what it was for.

One of God's judgments in the Old Testament was that when God's people were disobedient, in the book of Isaiah, it says that this book became a closed book to them.

It doesn't mean they couldn't get it open. It means that they opened it up and they'd go "I don't understand what that means. I used to know and I used to really enjoy the bible, but now I can't enjoy it!"

The things that we are entering into in the book of Ephesians are things that are hidden. They are called the mysteries of Christ. And Paul was chosen to reveal those mysteries. As Christ revealed them to him, he revealed them to the church.

The sad part is that 2,000 years later, after it's written, for many believers it's still a mystery because God's Spirit has not opened the mysteries of Christ to them.

I don't mean to be mystical. I'm talking about God's Spirit giving us that vision, opening up that revelation of what this book is teaching.

And if we did understand what this book is teaching, we wouldn't be conducting our churches the way we do. I said our, I didn't say your. I

said our. All the churches to some degree function as if the truths in the book of Ephesians don't exist.

He has made known to us the mystery of his will, and this was according to his good pleasure which he has purposed in himself:

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

That in the dispensation, the explanation of this mystery, it gives us a little introduction. We won't get the mystery until Chapter 3 Verse 6.

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

Right now there is a sifting process going on. Christ has been set above all things. There are those who are lining up with Christ and submitting to Him, and there are others who are not.

God's plan is to make one body, one group worldwide, past, present, and future, who will be called up to Christ. He's picking out for Himself a people for Himself.

The word dispensation means administration. You've probably heard that doctrine too, the doctrine of dispensation. Oikonomia is the Greek word for economy. That's the Greek word that's used here for this dispensation.

So he says the reason why God has made the mystery of His will known at this time is so that He can gather up, in the future of ministration, in the fullness of times, that is when everything's been fulfilled, that He might gather together in one, all things in Christ both in heaven and upon the earth.

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And then the possession in Verse 11:

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

In whom, that is Christ, also we have obtained an inheritance,

Romans 8:7 tells us that we are co-inheritors of Christ. Everything that belongs to Christ, everything that He is, I have. All of His blessings, everything about Him, I have. I am co-inheritor of Christ. I possess an inheritance!

You see, that's why God had to make the adoption process. He predestined an adoption process that through it legally, I can become an inheritor of the things of God.

That might sound legalistic but that's the way God does things. He doesn't just willy-nilly say "Here, have an inheritance." He helps us to understand that we have been born into His family. And every child born into His family has an inheritance.

Everything that Christ is, I have. Everything that belongs to Christ, I have. Everything that the Father has given to Christ, I have in the spirit realm, which is why Satan fights so hard to get me to function in the physical and in the human.

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

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

You see that term again "being predestined?" It's what has been predestined, not us, but what we should be. It's being predestined, that we should be to the praise of His glory, who first hoped in Christ.

So why is God doing this? Is He trying to impress me and say "Hey, don't feel so bad. I want you to feel good as a person like you're worth something, and you're rich and successful."

He's not doing that at all. He's doing this for the praise of the glory of His grace.

We might think that it's selfish of Him to do that. But on the other hand, if you stop and think about it, He doesn't dare fail. Everything is for His glory to be praise to Him. It's His reputation that's on the line, not mine.

He's not lying to me. And His ministry to me is based on Himself. It's not based on me.

M.V.

Ephesians 1:13

The possession inheritance:

This is the third section, the provision of the Holy Spirit. The blessing is preservation.

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

In whom, again speaking of Christ, you also trusted, and notice this, number one, after that you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also, notice number two, after that you believed, and then the main verb, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,

M.V.

Ephesians 1:14

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

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

There are a lot of words in there, but each phrase is very meaty.

It's after we heard, after we believed, we were sealed.

There are different kinds of sealings, even in scripture. A slave was branded. That was called a seal or sign or signant. A fence or a hedge around an area was called sealing off the area.

We hear it a lot with the police. They'll seal off an area. I don't expect to go out and see seals all over the street. And I don't expect to see it glued shut. They've sealed it off.

And that's the use here. I will bring up this point first before I summarize. We are sealed with the Holy Spirit. He doesn't give us a seal. He is the seal.

He's the mark of ownership and He has sealed me so that no spiritual force or otherwise can penetrate my spirit. I've been sealed. I've been sealed by the Holy Spirit and filled with the Spirit of Christ. I'm a very rich man!

You were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise who is the guarantee of our inheritance. It's nice to know that in the midst of our weaknesses that the presence of God's Spirit is our guarantee, until the redemption of the purchased possession.

In this use of the word redemption, it's making reference to the coming of Christ, when redemption is realized. Remember that I said redemption means purchased?

We've been purchased and we're sitting at the will call window. He hasn't picked us up yet. But when Christ comes, He's going to come for the purchased possession. That's you and me!

You might take note of Ephesians 4:30. It tells us that we are sealed with the Spirit of God "until" Christ comes.

I'm preserved. I'm being kept for Christ at His coming. That's my guarantee that I am preserved for Him. And again, the doxology, unto the praise of His glory!

Those are the seven blessings that the believer has as their inheritance right now!

C.O.

Ephesians 1:15-23 The Prayer of Paul for Believers

Verses 15 and 16 reveal to us the motive of Paul. He says:

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

He says: Wherefore, that is on account of this, all that I've presented to you, that you have been blessed in God.

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

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

I Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you, literally, upon the occasion of my prayers;

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There were two things, at least in in Paul's ministry, that's what he noticed, two elements that characterized a believer. Number one is faith, and number two is love. In Paul's ministry, these two things are inseparable.

When he hears that faith, and by the way, when the term says "your faith" in this text, it is the preposition Kata. It is used distributively, meaning the faith that is among you in the Lord Jesus.

So that's your relationship with Christ, and that's another emphasis for a reason to study this book.

If you are going to trust Christ with what God's word says and not interpret it or judge anything spiritual according to the human, then you have to live by faith, because the human won't feel like the things of the Lord are true.

It won't look like the things of the Lord are true. And so we have to live by faith. In other words, in Paul's ministry, when someone trusted Christ, it was in spite of everything that they had to go through. That's the genuine believer.

And secondly, love, Agape love, unto or towards all the saints, not some of them.

Love is not a requirement for the believer. Love is a characteristic of a believer. Even to the point where John says if you say you know God but you don't love your brother, you're not saved. It's as simple as that because Agape love is God. Love is not an action. Love is a person.

So he says when I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and your love towards all the saints, I ceased not to give thanks for you, making mention of you upon the occasion of my prayers.

The inspiration:

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

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

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

That the eyes of your understanding, having being enlightened; that you may know, three things:

Let's take this section, Verse 17 and 18.

He prayed to God that God would give the believers a spirit, that is in the spirit realm, and of course we know it comes from the Holy Spirit, wisdom and revelation.

I can understand revelation, but do I understand how it applies to life? That's wisdom.

When you see a believer or know of a believer, you're around a Christian that lives out the truth that he or she understands, that person is a wise person.

When you go ask a wise person a question, they will understand the truth in the spirit realm and see it in the spirit realm, that's wisdom.

Many people have revelation. Many people have knowledge. Many people have understanding. Very few people have wisdom, where that truth is a reality.

So he prays for God to give them the revelation and the wisdom, found not just in knowledge, but the full knowledge of Him. You get all the

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pieces put together, the full picture, the eyes of your understanding having been enlightened.

He's talking about a spiritual enlightenment that comes to our understanding which is given to us by God. So he prays, not about the three things yet, but actually for them that God would give them the spiritual ability to understand it and see it.

He says that you may know, and here are the three things concerning Hope:

That you may know what is the hope of his calling.

Every believer has been called. God has called them. They've responded to the call.

In Romans Chapter 8, it tells us that God has subjected all of creation to emptiness so that no matter what we do in the physical, it will eventually work out to be emptiness and frustration, no satisfaction, and have no purpose.

God has purposely created everything, nature and people, to be without hope so that we only find hope in one person, and that person is Christ.

The word hope in Greek doesn't mean to wish, like I hope it happens. It actually means an expectancy, a confident expectancy.

You see, my hope is when Christ comes back. I don't hope He comes back, but my hope is His coming back.

Peter said in 1 Peter Chapter 1 Verse 3 that we have been born again into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

While I too am subjected to this emptiness and the way God has made nature and all of creation, since I still live in a human body and live in this earthly life, I too am subjected to emptiness.

But in my spirit, I have a living hope, a confident expectancy that when others run around trying to find meaning to life, and if they can't, they try to escape either through drugs, or drinking, or even staying busy, I understand that those are just measures taken to try and get through this life one day more because it has been subjected to emptiness.

So he's praying that we will be enlightened to come to know what is the hope of His calling. When we get into the human, we feel like we don't have any hope.

Secondly, concerning inheritance:

And what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

Now I want you to catch this because it's very important. It's not what God's inheritance is for the saints, but in the saints. God has a lot of investment in us. And He's given us His word. He's given us His Spirit. God's inheritance is in the saints.

We have inherited from God, and He inherits from us. I am His inheritance. I don't think He's getting a good deal!

But you understand that when this is all over, and the millions of people stand before God, holy and without blemish, He's going to have an inheritance in the people He's going to be with throughout eternity.

We don't realize how rich we are, and realize that God has an investment in us. He's not going to fail!

Thirdly, concerning power, and this one carries over into Chapter 2:

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

And what is the exceeding greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working, and that's the word energy, according to the

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energizing of his mighty power, or more literally, according to energy of the grip of His strength.

Very picturesque! God has a grip on us. By the time we get to Chapter 6, Paul will be encouraging us to draw off of the strength of the grip that God has on you.

There's no need to fight. Just relax and draw off the strength. He's got you in His hand. No one's going to take us out of His hand.

In Verses 20 to 22, we see the demonstration of this power. And some people think that there's only one illustration of this but there's four.

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

Number one:

Which he energized in Christ, first concerning the resurrection, when he raised him from the dead.

The same energy and power that raised Christ from the dead is the same energy and power that I am energized by in the spirit.

Concerning the ascension:

And set Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, that's the spirit realm,

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

So it's not just resurrection power, but it is ascension power too, from the grave all the way to the throne, all that power that exalted Christ!

Concerning subjection:

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

And he has put all things under his feet,

Once He was ascended up into His position, all things are now put under the feet of Christ, and all must answer to Christ.

Fourthly, concerning headship:

And gave him to be the head over all things with respect to the church,

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

Which is his body, the fullness, and I'll give it to you literally, the fullness of the one who is filling all circumstances in all people.

I'll give it to you again. The church is His body, the fullness of the one filling, all things in all people.

I have Christ in me. I have Christ around me. He is constantly filling my life inside and out. Even when I think that He has abandoned me, I am totally immersed in the provision of His Spirit.

Let's close with prayer,

Our heavenly Father,

Again we thank you for your provision. We thank you for your Spirit. We study your word and yet no matter how much we study, and how much we think we understand, we still don't understand without the ministry of your Spirit taking what we read and what we study, and ministering it to us and impressing upon our hearts the truth of your word. We pray that you will continue to draw us to you and your word. We pray this in Jesus' name, Amen!