

Ephesians

Author- Paul the Apostle, a Jew from the tribe of Benjamin and a Pharisee, who learned under the teaching of Gamaliel. He was converted by Christ on the road to Damascus and made an Apostle by direct appointment of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul was further instructed by direct revelation of Christ Himself (Gal 1:12). Paul wrote this letter while imprisoned (3:1, 4:1, 6:20).

Purpose and Theme - Unlike other Pauline epistles, Ephesians was not written primarily to correct some doctrinal error or heresy, but rather to reveal many great truths concerning salvation and God's eternal purpose for the church. Many profound and spiritual realities are spoken of with clarity and conviction. The first half of the book, chapters 1-3 is doctrinal in nature, dealing with positional reality. The second half of the book, chapters 4-6 is primarily instructional, dealing with the practice of the faith. Chapters 1-3 teach us of our riches in Christ. Chapters 4-6 teach us how to use them.

Themes present in Ephesians:

- RICHES OF GRACE– 1:7, 1:18, 2:7, 3:8, 3:16
- IN CHRIST or IN HIM –
1:1,1:3,1:9,1:12,1:13,1:20,2:6,2:7,2:10,2:13,3:6,3:11,3:21,4:32
- MYSTERY – 1:9. 3:3, 3:4, 3:6, 3:9, 5:32, 6:19

The book reveals profound mysteries concerning Christ and the church. The terms “in Christ” or “in Him” are used 21 times in this book, to describe our tremendous and glorious position in all that Christ has accomplished. In speaking of the realities of what the Father has granted us in Christ, the supernatural world is opened and revealed to our understanding as we are presented with one glorious blessing after another that we have already received. We are further enlightened to the angelic conflict and how it interrelates to God's purpose in the church.

The book also gives clear and precise instruction on practical Christianity. Who we are in Christ, how we are to live, act, think, and speak as Christians is given in simple instruction. The marriage, family, children, and servants relationships are addressed. It further gives a revealing look at spiritual warfare and how it is played out in daily Christian life.

Ephesians 1:1-2 - 1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, to the saints who are at Ephesus, and who are faithful in Christ Jesus: 2 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. NASB

- A. by the will of God – Here Paul affirming that his calling is the work of God and not of man. He affirms several times in Ephesians that he was “given” this ministry of preaching the “mystery” of the gospel.
- B. to the saints who are at Ephesus, and who are faithful in Christ Jesus – Here the church is referred to as “saints” which, literally means holy ones. Ephesians stresses the holiness of God's people, a divine gift which has been imparted to them by the work of Christ.
- C. Grace to you and peace from God – Here the heart of God the Father and Jesus the Son are expressed to us. His desire is for our peace and grace! What marvelous heavenly blessings God gives to us! This grace and peace are major themes in

Ephesians as we shall see.

Ephesians 1:3 - 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, NASB

A. blessed us with every spiritual blessing – First notice the source of these blessings, God. God has blessed us and for this Paul “blesses God.” Consider though; how many blessings are our in Christ? EVERY! And also the nature of these blessings, they are SPIRITUAL! We have EVERY SPIRITUAL blessing in Christ! These spiritual blessings are *unseen and eternal* and would consist of forgiveness, grace, peace, adoption, holiness, redemption, the indwelling of the Holy Spirit, joy, to name just a few but certainly not limited to these but rather we possess the “*riches of His grace*” v-7 which have been “*lavished on us*” v-8. What profound and truly wonderful bliss is our in Christ! Could human language describe the immensity of such blessing? Could 10,000 tongues in 10,000 years praise God enough for such riches which have been lavished on us? Praise God from whom all blessings flow!

2 Corinthians 1:20 - 20 For **as many as may be the promises of God, in Him they are yes**; wherefore also by Him is our Amen to the glory of God through us. NASB

2 Corinthians 4:18 -18 while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things **which are not seen**; for the things which are seen are temporal, but **the things which are not seen are eternal**. NASB

B. in the heavenly places – The word “places” is not in the original and the meaning is better rendered things. In regard to heavenly things we have been blessed in Christ. Of course these are the blessings or riches that we possess in Christ. Even here and now in our earthly experience, we have the blessings of the heavenly realm or place which are the blessings or things we possess in Christ. This does NOT mean that the blessings are far off in heaven and unavailable to us, but rather that we experience them here and now in Christ. They “have been” given to us and we now possess them.

C. in Christ – All of these blessings that we possess are “in Christ”, that is, we have them because they belong to Christ and we are “in Him.” These have become ours because Christ purchased them for us, and made them available to us when He died once for all to bring us into union with Himself. All these riches of God have become ours “because of Christ.” They are the “*unfathomable riches of Christ*” and have been given to us in Him.

Ephesians 3:8 - 8 To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the **unfathomable riches of Christ**. NASB

Ephesians 1:4 - 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him. In love NASB

A. He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world – Divine election is a constant theme in the writings of Paul. (Rom 8:28-11:36, Col 3:12, 1 Thes 1:4, 2 Thes 2:13, Tit 1:1) The church has been “called out” of the world by the eternal decree of God before the beginning of time (Tit 1:1-2, 2 Tim 1:9). Here, salvation is seen to begin in the mind of God and by His sovereign will before any human ever lived or did anything good or bad (Rom 9:11-13). When God decided to create the world and give man free choice, He also planned to save men from sins by the sacrifice of His Son (1 Peter 1:20), and consequently choose a body of people from every tribe and language and nation and people (Rev 5:9), and draw (John 6:37,44,65) them to the Savior to be

found in Him. After being born again and coming to a knowledge of the truth, having believed upon the Lord Jesus Christ through repentance and faith, we learn that our destiny had been “*set beforehand* (predestined)” according the decree of God in eternity past (Rom 8:29-30). Predestination is made clear here in the book of Ephesians (v-1:4-5, v-1:11-12) and also Romans (8:28-9:23) as we see the eternal plan of God in history. (Matt 11:27, John 15:16,19, Acts 9:15, Jer 1:4)

1 Peter 1:1-2 - 1:1 Peter, an apostle of Jesus Christ, to those who reside as aliens, scattered throughout Pontus, Galatia, Cappadocia, Asia, and Bithynia, **who are chosen 2 according to the foreknowledge of God the Father**, by the sanctifying work of the Spirit, that you may obey Jesus Christ and be sprinkled with His blood: May grace and peace be yours in fullest measure. NASB
B. that we should be holy and blameless before Him In love - Here again we see the work of God in salvation. We have been made both “holy” (**Sanctified**) and “blameless” (**Justified**) before Him or “in relation to Him.” God has taken those who are not holy or blameless and has made them holy and blameless by His own work. Here is another profound blessing in Christ, “*imputed righteousness*” that we receive in Him. Christ’s holiness and blamelessness have been imputed to us and we now stand holy and blameless before God, in Christ. And all of this was motivated by God’s great love with which He has loved us.

Colossians 1:22 - 22 yet He has now reconciled you in His fleshly body through death, in order **to present you before Him holy and blameless and beyond reproach** — NASB

Jude 24 -24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, and **to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless** with great joy, NASB

Ephesians 1:5-6 - 5 He predestined us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the kind intention of His will, 6 to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved. NASB

A. He predestined us to adoption as sons – Here we see that not only was our destiny set beforehand but that it is unto “the adoption as sons.” We have been made sons by the eternal decree of God! Our fathers may have handed down to us an empty world and an empty way of life (1 Pet 1:18) but God has a better plan for those whom He has chosen and predestined in Christ. Ephesians points out that we were once alienated from God, dead in sins(Eph 2:1-3), being enslaved to disobedience and sin(Eph 4:17-19), but now have been brought near to God and reconciled by the Christ, we have been made sons with full rights as sons.

Galatians 4:6-7 - 6 And because you are sons, God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts, crying, "Abba! Father!" 7 Therefore you are **no longer a slave, but a son**; and if a son, then an heir through God. NASB

Romans 8:29-30 - 29 For **whom He foreknew, He also predestined** to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; 30 and **whom He predestined, these He also called**; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. NASB

B. to the praise of the glory of His grace, which He freely bestowed on us in the Beloved – Here we see the motivating factor in God’s will to predestine and chose us to be holy and blameless, it was for the “*praise of the glory of His grace.*” It was so we the church would praise Him for His free grace in pardoning us from our sins. This redemption that we possess was “*freely bestowed*” upon us in Christ. We didn’t earn it, nor could we, having already sinned and become deserving of death. We were formerly in a desperate state of sin and death, awaiting the fearful and dreaded judgment of God but were “*graciously pardoned*” by the kind intention of God’s sovereign will. We now glorify

God for His amazing grace, which He freely gave us in Christ! Could there be a greater gift?

Ephesians 1:7-8 - 7 In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace, 8 which He lavished upon us. In all wisdom and insight NASB

A. In Him we have redemption through His blood the forgiveness of our trespasses – Again we see the theme of being “in Him.” Here it is “*redemption*” that we possess in Him. We have been redeemed, which means to “buy back.” Christ paid a price for our redemption, His precious blood. Without the shedding of blood there is no forgiveness of sin (Heb 9:22) therefore our sins required a dear price. The justice of God demanded full payment so that we could be forgiven. Forgiveness of sins is freely given by God, but it was bought with a desperate and severe price, the precious blood of Christ!

1 Peter 1:18-19 - 18 knowing that you were not redeemed with perishable things like silver or gold from your futile way of life inherited from your forefathers, 19 but **with precious blood, as of a lamb unblemished and spotless, the blood of Christ.** NASB

Hebrews 9:12-13 - 12 and not through the blood of goats and calves, but **through His own blood, He entered the holy place once for all, having obtained eternal redemption.** NASB

B. according to the riches of His grace which He lavished upon us – Now here is a statement beyond all comprehension! Imagine what the riches of the grace of *the infinite and eternal God* must be like. I tell you they are inexhaustible resources of “*unmerited favor*” that we who are in Christ will partake of forever and ever, world without end! And these He “*lavishes upon us*” in Christ. We have riches in Christ beyond our wildest imagination! We have been reconciled to God, made holy and blameless before Him, and become the recipients of His eternal favor toward His Son to whom we belong! We are the bride! We have entered into the joy of our Beloved and will here be treated like a royal queen all the days of eternity, yes even forever and ever!

Psalms 103:8-12 - 8 The LORD is compassionate and gracious, Slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness. 9 He will not always strive with us; Nor will He keep His anger forever. 10 He has **not dealt with us according to our sins.** Nor rewarded us according to our iniquities. 11 For as high as the heavens are above the earth, So great is His lovingkindness toward those who fear Him. 12 **As far as the east is from the west, So far has He removed our transgressions from us.** NASB

C. In all wisdom and insight – Here is the *means* by which we lay hold of the riches of God in Christ. We appropriate them by the understanding and application of them that come by divine wisdom and insight. As we learn of the resources we have, we then apply them to every situation we face, acknowledging God in all our ways.

Colossians 1:9 - 9 For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that you may be **filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding** NASB

Ephesians 1:9 - 9 He made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him NASB

A. made known to us the mystery of His will – This mystery is spoken of 7 times in Ephesians. The mystery is that “which has been kept secret for long ages past” (Rom 16:25) and has now been disclosed to the church. Namely that God was in Christ reconciling even the Gentiles to Himself. The mystery is the entire plan of salvation which has now unfolded in Christ and the gospel (Incarnation, Atonement, Salvation by grace through Faith).

Colossians 1:26 - 26 that is, the mystery which **has been hidden from the past ages and**

generations; but has now been manifested to His saints, NASB

Romans 16:25-27 - 25 Now to Him who is able to establish you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to **the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret for long ages past**, 26 but now is manifested, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, has been made known to all the nations, leading to obedience of faith; NASB

B. according to His kind intention which He purposed in Him – God has done these things without the aid of anyone but, purposed in Himself to accomplish these things, even keeping them hidden for ages until He was ready to reveal them. The plan of salvation, even the entire creation, was and is happening all according the sovereign and eternal plan of God as verse 11 states. God has purposed in His own sovereign will to bless us, to choose us, to adopt, redeem and forgive us, and then to reveal it all to us.

1 Corinthians 2:10-13 - 10 **For to us God revealed them through the Spirit**; for the Spirit searches all things, even the depths of God. 11 For who among men knows the thoughts of a man except the spirit of the man, which is in him? Even so the thoughts of God no one knows except the Spirit of God. 12 Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but **the Spirit who is from God, that we might know the things freely given to us by God**, 13 which things we also speak, not in words taught by human wisdom, but in those taught by the Spirit, combining spiritual thoughts with spiritual words. NASB

Ephesians 1:10 - 10 with a view to an administration suitable to the fullness of the times, that is, the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth. In Him NASB

A. suitable to the fullness of the times - Here we see how God in His divine plan, has purposed to bring all things to pass according to His timing. Christ came and redeemed His people at just the right time. We were called out of darkness exactly when God was ready. The *mystery of the gospel* was “hidden for long ages” until time had reached its fulfillment, and then it was revealed. In His providence God works all things after the purpose for which He made them. He is sovereignly and providentially in control of His universe and will bring His eternal purposes to fulfillment at just the right time.

Galatians 4:4-5 - 4 But **when the fulness of the time came**, God sent forth His Son, born of a woman, born under the Law, 5 in order that He might redeem those who were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption as sons. NASB

B. the summing up of all things in Christ, things in the heavens and things upon the earth. In Him - What a profound and glorious purpose God has accomplished in Christ. Not only that the great war in heaven will be brought to a close, but even here on the earth, God will put all rebel forces under His feet, and bring all faithful ones to live in peace under His direct rule in a kingdom of Peace, world without end! All things whether, angels or demons, men or women, mountains and animals and stars and planets, each will find its rightful place when all is summed up in Christ. What a glorious day that will be!

1 Corinthians 15:24-26 - 24 **then comes the end**, when He delivers up the kingdom to the God and Father, **when He has abolished all rule and all authority and power. 25 For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet.** 26 The last enemy that will be abolished is death. NASB

Colossians 1:20- 20 and **through Him to reconcile all things to Himself, having made peace through the blood of His cross**; through Him, I say, whether things on earth or things in heaven.

Ephesians 1:11-12 - 11 also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will, 12 to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ should be to the praise of His glory. NASB

A. we have obtained an inheritance – Here the point that we have been “*adopted as sons*” v-5 is further clarified explaining that we have been given an inheritance. The full rights as sons is ours who are found in Christ, and in Him we possess the full riches of the grace of God which have been lavished on us! We shall “inherit” portion with the great, even the possession of all that Christ possesses. (Rev21:1-7)

1 Corinthians 3:21-23 - 21 So then let no one boast in men. For **all things belong to you**, 22 whether Paul or Apollos or Cephas or **the world or life or death or things present or things to come; all things belong to you**, 23 and you belong to Christ; and Christ belongs to God. NASB
Ephesians 1:18 - 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are **the riches of the glory of His inheritance** in the saints,

B. who works all things after the counsel of His will – This is the definitive statement in the bible on the PROVIDENCE of God. Here God is seen to be “*effectually working*” the outcome of all circumstances of History. Further, it is all coming about ACCORDING to the divine PLAN. Here the entire creation and history are seen as the outworking of the eternal purposes of God. In other words, GOD IS IN CONTROL! What encouragement that we have as Christians to know that all of the circumstances of our lives are under the direct supervision of a loving and sovereign God who intends to give us eternal life and an inheritance of wealth beyond our comprehension! (**Psalm 33:11, Ecc 7:13, Isaiah 23:9, 25:1, 46:11, Job 12:7-25, Lam 3:37, Pr 19:21, Acts 4:27-28, Romans 8:29-30, 9:22, Exodus 9:16, Isaiah 43:7, 21, 54:16, Acts 17:24-31, Romans 11:33-36, Rev 4:11**)
Proverbs 16:4 - 4 The **LORD has made everything for its own purpose**. Even the wicked for the day of evil. NASB

Ephesians 1:13-14 - 13 In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation — having also believed, you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance, with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, to the praise of His glory. NASB

A. after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation — having also believed – This now is the agency by which one is saved. It is the hearing of the gospel which affords salvation (Rom 10:14-17) to the one who responds with God-given faith (Eph 2:8, John 1:12, 6:65, Phil 1:28-29, 2:13).

John 5:24 - 24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, **he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life**, and does not come into judgment, but has passed out of death into life. NASB

B. you were sealed in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14 who is given as a pledge of our inheritance – Sealed in Him! Here is cause for rest! That we have been sealed, guaranteed, promised, pledged, locked in to the inheritance of Christ. You were sealed, not by your doing but God's. It is God who sees us through to the end by His “already finished” work of predestination. It is in our experience then that this is worked out by the means of justification, redemption, imputation, and sanctification. Here the concept of sealing is that which is a closure or a surety, a “*guarantee or earnest*” of the promise of *eternal salvation*. The idea of sealing has “in view” v-14 the end for which we were sealed, that being the “inheritance” and elsewhere the “day of redemption” in Eph 4:30.

2 Corinthians 1:21-22 - 21 Now He who establishes us with you in Christ and anointed us is God, 22 who also **sealed us and gave us the Spirit in our hearts as a pledge**. NASB

Ephesians 4:30-31 - 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, **by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption**. NASB

Ephesians 1:15-16 - 15 For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which exists among you, and your love for all the saints, 16 do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; NASB

A. Paul commends the Ephesian Christians for their faith and love. These are the central virtues which are self evident among all true Christians. We are a people of faith and love! Here the object of our faith is “the Lord Jesus,” and the objects of our love are “all the saints.”

1 John 5:1-3 - 5:1 Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and **whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him**. 2 By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and observe His commandments. NASB

B. do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers – Paul now speaks of his unceasing prayer for the church. In Paul’s prayer we see the great desires of Christ for His church. Here he is first giving thanks, then praying for the enlightenment or revelation to the church of the great riches we possess in Christ. This is a common theme in the prayers of Paul.

1 Thessalonians 1:2-3 - 2 We give thanks to God always for all of you, **making mention of you in our prayers; 3 constantly bearing in mind** your work of faith and labor of love and steadfastness of hope in our Lord Jesus Christ in the presence of our God and Father, NASB
Philippians 1:9-10 - 9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still **more and more in real knowledge and all discernment**, 10 so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; NASB

Ephesians 1:17-19 - 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints 19 and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might NASB

A. give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened – First, that wisdom and revelation come from God. Second, we are **in need of it** so the apostle earnestly prays that we may receive it. It is through this wisdom and revelation that “we grow up into Him”, coming to know of the great riches we possess in Christ. Until these riches are revealed, we are ignorant of them, even though we possess them already. It is much like having a bank account full of money, but considering oneself a poor man!

Colossians 1:9-10 - 9 For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask that **you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding**, NASB

B. so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints – First, that the hope of salvation originates in the “calling” of God. Second, that this hope is of “the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints.” Again the theme of RICHES is again brought up, but here seeking revelation from God for us to “*know*” or “*comprehend*” it. The inheritance of the Christian is so exceedingly wonderful and complete that it is beyond the comprehension of our natural mind, so Paul prays that the “*eyes of our hearts*” may be “*enlightened*” to it.

Ephesians 3:8-9 - 8 To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles **the unfathomable riches of Christ**, 9 and **to bring to light** what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things; NASB

C. what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe. These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might – Here Paul expresses the tremendous power of God(who is *omnipotent*- possessing all power), but attributes God’s power as yet another glorious spiritual blessing that is ours in Christ! This power is toward us, who believe, that is, Christians. We have the omnipotent power of God as a resource for our Christian life and salvation! Wow! In order to emphasize the magnitude of this, Paul describes it as the “*surpassing greatness*” and further tells us that it is a “*mighty power.*” This power was and is exercised in every aspect of our salvation, not the least of which, in this context, was God raising us from our former dead state and making us “alive” together with Christ v-2:5.

Ephesians 2:5-6 - 5 even when **we were dead** in our transgressions, **made us alive** together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), 6 and **raised us up with Him**, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus, NASB

Ephesians 1:20-23 - 20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. 22 And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. NASB

A. which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places – Here the power of God was seen in the resurrection of Christ from the dead. God raised the “man” Christ Jesus from the dead. The magnitude of this kind of power needs no description! God has power to raise the dead! And more than that, Christ was then “seated at the right hand of God.” In other words, He was placed at that “place of power and authority” equal to God Himself! This place is also described as the “*heavenly places*”, or that place where God is and implements His global rule from.

Romans 8:11 - 11 But if the Spirit of **Him who raised Jesus from the dead** dwells in you, **He who raised Christ Jesus from the dead** will also give life to your mortal bodies through His Spirit who indwells you. NASB

B. far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age, but also in the one to come. And He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things – Here the idea of the right hand of God is described. It is that place of power and authority equal to God Himself and expressed as “*far above*” all “*rule and authority*” and “*power and dominion.*” Mind you, it is not just above, but FAR ABOVE! The power and dominion of Christ are infinitely greater than every created thing, which distinguishes Christ’s rule and authority as that which is FAR greater than any earthly rule. He is “*Sovereign*” or “*supreme in authority.*” It would be impossible to express more explicitly the sovereignty of the Lord Jesus Christ than is here expounded! This supreme authority of Christ is not only here and now, but also in the coming age. Christ’s rule will never end!

Philippians 2:9-11 - 9 Therefore also **God highly exalted Him, and bestowed on Him the name which is above every name**, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. NASB

Colossians 2:9-10 -9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, 10 and in Him you have been made complete, and **He is the head over all rule and authority**; NASB

Daniel 7:14 - 4 "And to Him was given dominion, Glory and a kingdom, That all the peoples,

nations, and men of every language Might serve Him. **His dominion is an everlasting dominion Which will not pass away; And His kingdom is one Which will not be destroyed.** NASB
C. to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all – Here is a statement of wonder and awe! God gave Him, Christ, to the church! Now what greater wealth can one possess than owning the eternal omnipotent and sovereign Son of the Living God! The church possesses Christ as her husband, v-5:32, which expresses the intimacy of the relationship between Christ and His church! Here the church is also described as Christ’s body. This unique analogy is used in the New Testament to describe the church in her relationship to Christ!

1 Corinthians 12:27- 27 Now **you are Christ's body**, and individually members of it. NASB Further, that the church is the “fullness” of Christ. ***The church is the “subject” of the plan of redemption*** and thus the outworking of the fulfillment of God’s eternal purpose in Christ! The church then, is the “filling up” or the “completion” of what God is doing in Christ! As the church is “complete in Christ” (Col 2:10), so Christ is complete in the church! This is a profound mystery!

Ephesians 5:31-32 - 31 For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the **two shall become one flesh. 32 This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.** NASB

Ephesians 2:1-2 - 1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins, 2 in which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience. NASB
A. you were dead in your trespasses and sins – Here is the former state of the Christian believer – DEAD! And that, in “transgression and sins!” This is a theme in the teaching of the Lord Jesus who frequently refers to unbelievers as “dead” and in desperate need of regeneration. (Matt 8:22, Luke 15:24-32, John 5:21-24) This is the reason for the great need of REGENERATION, without which “no one can SEE the kingdom of God.” (John 3:3-6, John 6:65) Here is seen the consequence of sin and transgression, DEATH! Not that they were physically dead, but in that wretched state of spiritual death which rendered them helpless to hear or understand the things of God and His kingdom (1 Cor 2:14, Rom 8:5-8) Here is the definitive statement in the bible on depravity or natural inability.

John 5:21-24 - 21 "For just as the Father raises the dead and gives them life, even so **the Son also gives life to whom He wishes.** 22 "For not even the Father judges anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son, 23 in order that all may honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He who does not honor the Son does not honor the Father who sent Him. 24 "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My word, and believes Him who sent Me, has eternal life, and does not come into judgment, but **has passed out of death into life.** NASB

B. which you formerly walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience – Here is seen the direction of the unbeliever, their ruler and lord, as well as the spirit which is working in them. This also is the former state of every Christian. They were living for this world, followers of Satan, and driven by the spirit of sin were “sons of disobedience.” This is the truly wretched state of all who are not in Christ! They are without hope and without God in the world (v-2:12), destined for hell (2 Thess 1:8-9) and storing up wrath (Rom 2:5) for the day of judgment! Woe to one who rejects God’s free grace in Christ!

Colossians 1:21- 21 And although you were **formerly alienated and hostile in mind**, engaged in evil deeds, NASB

1 John 5:19 - 19 We know that we are of God, and **the whole world lies in the power of the evil one.** NASB

Ephesians 2:3 - 3 Among them we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest. NASB

A. we too all formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind – The flesh is defined as the “*sinful nature*” and here “*ALL*” of us formerly lived “in the lusts of the flesh” and “indulging the desires of the sinful nature.” This is the state of every person apart from REGENERATION. ***Because the unbeliever has not received the Spirit, he/she is in bondage to the flesh (Rom 6:17-23), they always and continually live after the flesh.*** Until we have been raised from our dead state, we have no communion with God and live to please the SELF, satisfy SELF, and follow and indulge in the desires of SELF, rather than the desires of God. Indeed before Christ, we cannot see (John 3:3), cannot understand (1 Cor 2:14), cannot accept (John 14:17), cannot obey (Rom 8:7) and cannot hear (John 8:43) God.

Romans 6:17-20 - 17 But thanks be to God that though **you were slaves of sin**, you became obedient from the heart to that form of teaching to which you were committed, 18 **and having been freed from sin**, you became slaves of righteousness. 19 I am speaking in human terms because of the weakness of your flesh. For just as you presented your members as **slaves to impurity and to lawlessness**, resulting in further lawlessness, so now present your members as slaves to righteousness, resulting in sanctification. 20 For when **you were slaves of sin**, you were free in regard to righteousness. NASB

Romans 8:7-8 - 7 because the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for **it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so**; 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God. NASB

Titus 3:3-3 For we also once were foolish ourselves, **disobedient, deceived, enslaved to various lusts and pleasures**, spending our life in malice and envy, hateful, hating one another. NASB

Colossians 3:5-7 - 5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. 6 For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come, 7 **and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them.** NASB

B. were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest – In the former verse we were “sons of disobedience” and here repeated “children of wrath.” ***This is our “natural state”, by NATURE objects of God’s wrath, or destined for death***, eternal separation from God (2 Thess1:8-9). We were subject to wrath because of our transgressions and sins, and were headed straightway for the wrath of God, for the wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23). We were “even as the rest”, that is, all the rest of the people in the world who have not been raised up with Christ and saved by grace through faith v-8.

Romans 5:12 - 12 Therefore, just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so **death spread to all men**, because all sinned NASB

Psalms 51:5 - 5 Behold, I was **brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.**

Ephesians 2:4 - 4 But God, being rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us, NASB

A. But God, being rich in mercy - Mercy is an attribute of God, which is part of His very essence. Mercy is not something God has, but something God is. ***His mercy is complete and full, never changing and infinitely abundant.*** So it is said of the Lord that He is "the Father of mercies" (2 Cor 1:3), "rich in mercy" (Eph 2:4), "full of pity, and of tender mercy" (James 5:11). What a beautiful characteristic of God, He is merciful!

Micah 7:18 - 18 Who is a God like you, who pardons sin and forgives the transgression of the remnant of his inheritance? You do not stay angry forever **but delight to show mercy**. NIV
Exodus 34:6-7 - "The LORD, the LORD God, **merciful and gracious**, longsuffering, and abounding in goodness and truth, **7 keeping mercy for thousands**, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, by no means clearing the guilty, visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children and the children's children to the third and the fourth generation."

Psalms 145:8 - 8 The LORD is gracious and full of compassion, Slow to anger and **great in mercy**. NKJV

Mercy is defined as "the active compassion of God to assist and provide for the miserable and bestow benefit on the needy." ***Mercy is the lovingkindness of God and His disposition of compassion and benevolence.*** Mercy presupposes sin and death. Since we, as His creatures, have "all sinned and fallen short of His Glory" (Rom 3:23), we are all in need of Divine mercy. In our miserable fallen and deadly state, God has actively come to our aid and provided for our needy souls an abundant provision of eternal life and peace through Jesus Christ. Mercy is not something that we merit or earn, but is freely given of God to the miserable.

1 Peter 1:3 - 3 Praise be to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ! **In his great mercy** he has given us new birth into a living hope through the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead, **Titus 3:4-7** - 4 But when the kindness and love of God our Savior appeared, **5 he saved us, not because of righteous things we had done, but because of his mercy.** He saved us through the washing of rebirth and renewal by the Holy Spirit, **6 whom he poured out on us generously through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 so that, having been justified by his grace, we might become heirs having the hope of eternal life.** NIV

B. because of His great love with which He loved us – Here is statement of great comfort and assurance, God loves His saints whom He has chosen! Here is the special love of God toward His elect described. In this context this love is toward "us" who believe. ***It is because of God's great love that he did these things, says Paul.*** This love is the cause of our being "made alive with Christ" and "raised up with Him." These are terms describing God's work of REGENERATION in the believer.

1 John 3:1 - 3:1 See how **great a love the Father has bestowed upon us, that we should be called children of God**; and such we are. For this reason the world does not know us, because it did not know Him. NASB

Ephesians 3:18-19 - 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, **19 and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge**, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God. NASB

1 John 4:9-10 - 9 By **this the love of God was manifested in us**, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world so that we might live through Him. **10 In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins.** NASB

Ephesians 2:5-6 - 5 even when we were dead in our transgressions, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved), **6 and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus,** NASB

A. even when we were dead in our transgressions – ***Here the word "EVEN" emphasizes the idea that we were in a disposition which was at enmity with God.*** We were His enemies and "formerly lived in the lusts of our flesh, indulging the desires of the flesh." Being helplessly in bondage to our sins, we had done to God what had caused us to be objects of His wrath, but in spite of this God "made us alive." What wondrous love is this?

Romans 5:6-8 - 6 For while **we were still helpless**, at the right time Christ died for the ungodly. **7 For one will hardly die for a righteous man; though perhaps for the good man someone would dare even to die. 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that while we were yet sinners,**

Christ died for us NASB

B. made us alive together with Christ - Here is the idea of REGENERATION. We were “DEAD”, but God, “made us ALIVE.” This is something that God has done, “HE” has “MADE” us alive (John 6:65). Regeneration precedes faith! In fact, regeneration is God granting us faith (the ability to lay hold of Christ by the revelation and indwelling power of the Holy Spirit). In our former DEAD state, we were unresponsive, like a corpse. Therefore God had to “make us alive” in order for us to believe, accept and come to possess Christ. ***“God has given us as complete a resurrection from the death of sin to a life of righteousness, as the body of Christ has had from the grave.(Clarke)”***

John 6:65 - 65 And He was saying, "For this reason I have said to you, that **no one can come to Me, unless it has been granted him from the Father.**" NASB

Colossians 2:13-13 And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, **He made you alive together with Him**, having forgiven us all our transgressions, NASB

Titus 3:4-7 - 4 But when the kindness of God our Savior and His love for mankind appeared, 5 He saved us, not on the basis of deeds which we have done in righteousness, but according to His mercy, **by the washing of regeneration and renewing by the Holy Spirit**, 6 whom He poured out upon us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, 7 that being justified by His grace we might be made heirs according to the hope of eternal life. NASB

Regeneration - a sovereign act of **God by his Spirit** in which the sinner is given the capacities needed to understand, believe, and lay hold of the kingdom of God by faith and granted eternal life. His/her mind, will and emotions are divinely enabled to comprehend sin and righteousness and judgment. His/her spirit is resurrected from its natural dead state, restoring communion with God who is Spirit. It is a fundamental change in the nature of mankind having the very nature and eternal life of God infused into the human soul. **At this time the Holy Spirit enters into the being of mankind, enabling by divine power all the graces of salvation and performing this transformation eternally.**

C. (by grace you have been saved) – If we were dead and unable to respond to God’s love, then ***God making us alive and raising us up is an act of free grace on His part.*** It is by favor that you did not merit that you have been saved. This is what is so amazing about grace! Why you and me! Was there some merit in us by which God should have saved us? Did you somehow earn God’s choosing you for salvation? ***By no means of your dead self were you saved,*** it was by God’s gracious choice in predestining you to eternal life v-1:4-5.

Romans 11:5-6 - 5 In the same way then, there has also come to be at the present time a remnant **according to God's gracious choice. 6 But if it is by grace, it is no longer on the basis of works**, otherwise grace is no longer grace. NASB

Acts 16:14 - 14 And a certain woman named Lydia, from the city of Thyatira, a seller of purple fabrics, a worshiper of God, was listening; **and the Lord opened her heart to respond to the things spoken by Paul.** NASB

D. and raised us up with Him, and seated us with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus – We were raised from our former state of spiritual death and made alive in Christ! It is into “heavenly places”, that is the heavenly realm where Christ is seated with God. ***We now have the spiritual and divine perspective of God and the revelation of regeneration in which to view our world. It is a Christian WORLDVIEW.*** We NOW see the world and everything in it from the divine perspective of God in heaven. Again this tremendous spiritual blessing of grace is granted us “IN CHRIST.” Oh dear Christian, now that your eyes have been opened,

look no longer to the things of earth, but rather to the things of heaven!

Colossians 3:1-2 - 3:1 If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 **Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth.** NASB

Ephesians 2:7 - 7 in order that in the ages to come He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. NASB

A. in order that in the ages to come – here in chapter 2 we have been told of our PAST state (v-1-3), our PRESENT state (v-4-6) and now here our FUTURE state. In the ages to come speaks of our ETERNAL state of exalted glory and honor of which we will partake with Christ. We shall be united with Christ forever, enjoying and receiving all the blessings which God has bestowed on Him. The terms “ages to come” (aion in the Greek) are not limited to some ages, but include all the coming ages.

Ephesians 1:21 - far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, **not only in this age, but also in the one to come.**

B. He might show the surpassing riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus – Here the purpose of our salvation may be seen, “in order that” God may lavish the riches of His grace upon us. *God saved us to lavish all the treasures of His glory and virtue on us forever and ever, and this of course for the purpose of magnifying His glorious grace for all the eons of eternity!* The “surpassing riches”, what must such expressions imply? How surpassing are the riches of God’s grace? This is a rapturous thought to be pondered and meditated on. The Father has chosen and redeemed a bride for the Son, and will now bring them together into His Kingdom to lavish all the riches of His Kingdom on them both forever and ever, world without end! Christian, do you realize what profound things have been granted you in Christ?

Matthew 25:34 - 34 "Then the King will say to those on His right, 'Come, **you who are blessed of My Father, inherit the kingdom prepared for you** from the foundation of the world. NASB

Ephesians 2:8-9 - 8 For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, that no one should boast. NASB

A. For by grace you have been saved through faith – It is through no merit of our own that we have been saved, but is an act of God’s free mercy - See comments on v-5 above. But here we are told that this grace comes to us “through faith.” Faith then is the medium by which we receive salvation. It is the conduit through which the graces of salvation flow to us.

Romans 3:22-26 - 22 even **the righteousness of God through faith in Jesus Christ for all those who believe**; for there is no distinction; 23 for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, 24 being justified as a gift by His grace through the redemption which is in Christ Jesus; 25 whom God displayed publicly as **a propitiation in His blood through faith.** This was to demonstrate His righteousness, because in the forbearance of God He passed over the sins previously committed; 26 for the demonstration, I say, of His righteousness at the present time, that **He might be just and the justifier of the one who has faith in Jesus.** NASB

B. that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, that no one should boast - Here any idea of man’s ability to earn or merit salvation is annulled. It is clearly, “the gift of God” which man did not possess and that God freely gave. It is also “not the result of works” which man can do and so boast about His abilities. It is rather God granting a blessing which the poor, dead man was in desperate need of and could not furnish on his own.

Philippians 1:29 - 29 For **to you it has been granted for Christ's sake**, not only to believe in Him, but also to suffer for His sake, NASB

Romans 3:19-21 - 19 Now we know that whatever the Law says, it speaks to those who are under the Law, that every mouth may be closed, and all the world may become accountable to God; 20 because **by the works of the Law no flesh will be justified in His sight; for through the Law comes the knowledge of sin.** 21 But now apart from the Law the righteousness of God has been manifested, being witnessed by the Law and the Prophets, NASB

Ephesians 2:10 - 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them. NASB

A. For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus – Here is another emphatic statement showing salvation as the free gift of God. He “created us” in Christ. We were not, and then we were, by the creative power of God. Consider also what this may mean in regard to how perfectly we have now been created in Christ! We shall shortly reap the complete and total benefits of our new state, immortal, sanctified and even glorified new bodies!

2 Corinthians 5:17- 17 Therefore if any man is in Christ, **he is a new creature**; the old things passed away; behold, new things have come. NASB

Ephesians 4:24 - 24 and put on the new self, which **in the likeness of God has been created** in righteousness and holiness of the truth. NASB

B. for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them – Yet another wonderful purpose of our salvation, that we would then do “good works.” We formerly walked after the course of the world and followed the lusts of our flesh, but now we have been empowered to live a holy life! And not only this, but God had foreordained our performance of such works! And further, all who have been born again WILL live out the fruit of that Spirit which is now their true nature. This holiness which we live in has been “*prepared beforehand*” by God and is the **manifest evidence of His wisdom** (Eph 3:10) to the world! The saints of God are the proof of His divine mercy and justice!

Romans 8:29 - 29 For whom He foreknew, **He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son**, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; NASB

Ephesians 1:4 - 4 just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, **that we should be holy and blameless before Him.** In love NASB

Ephesians 2:11-13 - 11 Therefore remember, that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands — 12 remember that you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world. 13 But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ. NASB

A. Gentiles in the flesh, who are called "Uncircumcision" by the so-called "Circumcision," which is performed in the flesh by human hands – Gentile is a term used by Jewish people to refer to foreigners, or any other people who were not a part of the Jewish race. Here we see the attitude of the Jew toward the Gentile, animosity. They were despised by the Jew, who gloried in his circumcision (the sign of the Old Covenant), looking down on the Gentile who had no right or title to any blessing of God. The reality however is that God has always and continually looked at the genuineness of the heart.

Romans 2:28-29 - 28 For he is not a Jew who is one outwardly; **neither is circumcision that which is outward in the flesh.** 29 But he is a Jew who is one inwardly; and **circumcision is that which is of the heart, by the Spirit**, not by the letter; and his praise is not from men, but from God. NASB

Philippians 3:3 - 3 for we are the **true circumcision**, who **worship in the Spirit of God and glory in Christ Jesus and put no confidence in the flesh**, NASB

B. you were at that time separate from Christ, excluded from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world - A man without God and Christ is indeed in the most deplorable and bankrupt state of any. This is a further statement of the natural state of man, and here described with 5 characteristics:

- **Separate from Christ** – Having no knowledge or fellowship with Christ, without a Savior
Colossians 1:21- 21 And although **you were formerly alienated and hostile** in mind, engaged in evil deeds, NASB
- **Excluded from the commonwealth of Israel** – Having no knowledge or claim to the privileges of the Jews
Acts 3:25 - 25 "It is you who are the sons of the prophets, and **of the covenant which God made with your fathers**, saying to Abraham, 'And in your seed all the families of the earth shall be blessed.' NASB
- **Strangers to the covenants of promise** - Having no knowledge or claim to the specific promises of God to the Jews of a land, a priesthood, a people, a nation, a kingdom, and a King, and now in Christ eternal life
Romans 9:4-5 - who are Israelites, to whom belongs **the adoption as sons and the glory and the covenants and the giving of the Law and the temple service and the promises, 5 whose are the fathers, and from whom is the Christ** according to the flesh, who is over all, God blessed forever. Amen. NASB
- **Having no hope** – Having no basis for present joy, future happiness, or life beyond the grave
1 Thessalonians 4:13 - 13 But we do not want you to be uninformed, brethren, about those who are asleep, that you may not grieve, as do **the rest who have no hope**. NASB
- **Without God in the world** – Man by nature lives in a world created by God, sustained by God, even his life is granted to him each moment by God, but he has no true knowledge of God or fellowship with him apart from Christ
Ephesians 4:18 - 18 being darkened in their understanding, **excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them**, because of the hardness of their heart;
Galatians 4:8 - 8 However at that time, when **you did not know God**, you were slaves to those which by nature are no gods. NASB

C. But now in Christ Jesus you who formerly were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ - Behold the sweetness of Christ! In our former state of being far from God, “in Christ Jesus” we have been brought near! We now enjoy not only proximity, for He is in us, but we have sweet fellowship with the Living God! The sacrifice of Christ was so complete as to make us the very temple of God. And here it is His “blood” that has made it so. It was the sacrifice of Christ, the precious blood of Christ that accomplished salvation and all of its rights, privileges and blessings!

Hebrews 10:14 - 14 **For by one offering He has perfected for all time those who are sanctified**. NASB

Ephesians 2:14-16 - 14 For He Himself is our peace, who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall, 15 by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, 16 and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity. NASB

A. For He Himself is our peace who made both groups into one, and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall – Jesus is our peace! Not only have we been reconciled to

God through Christ, but also to each other! The Jew and Gentile now have the same God, the same Savior, the same faith and standard for life! There is now then a basis for true fellowship between the Jew and Gentile because they are now **“one”** in Christ and He, Christ Jesus is our peace! He “broke down the dividing wall” which was a barrier for fellowship, this no doubt refers to the “soreg” which was the dividing wall in the Jewish temple which restricted the Gentiles from entering into the inner courts of the Temple. Now in Christ Jesus both Jew and Gentile are one, and there is no distinction between the members of the body of Christ. There is room for any whether slave or free, male or female, Jew or Gentile, even every tribe and language and nation and people!

Galatians 3:26-29 - 26 For **you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus**. 27 For all of you who were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 28 There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free man, there is neither male nor female; **for you are all one in Christ Jesus. 29 And if you belong to Christ, then you are Abraham's offspring, heirs according to promise.** NASB

B. by abolishing in His flesh the enmity, which is the Law of commandments contained in ordinances, that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, thus establishing peace, 16 and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, by it having put to death the enmity – Jesus removed the “enmity” or animosity between Jew and Gentile by His sacrifice or “in His flesh.” This enmity was chiefly caused by the Mosaic Law which was intended to “set apart” or “consecrate” the Jews unto God and point to the Messiah who would come to fulfill it. The law is that which brought the division between Jew and Gentile, especially the ceremonial Law, for its traditions and ceremonies and feasts vastly set the Jew apart from the Gentile. In Christ the Law has been fulfilled and mankind has now been reconciled unto God by the fulfillment of the Law and commandments, by the death of Christ, which held men captive as slaves of sin until the time should come that Christ should fulfill it. In Christ, the Jew and Gentile have been united as one under faith in Christ. It was Christ’s sacrifice which accomplished these things, He **“abolished them in His flesh.”** Christ died to reconcile not only men to God but also men to one another!

Colossians 2:13-14 - 13 And when you were dead in your transgressions and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He made you alive together with Him, having forgiven us all our transgressions, 14 **having canceled out the certificate of debt consisting of decrees against us and which was hostile to us; and He has taken it out of the way, having nailed it to the cross.** NASB

Ephesians 2:17-18 - 17 And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near; 18 for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. NASB

A. And He came and preached peace to you who were far away, and peace to those who were near; 18 for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father. – Jesus here is portrayed as a preacher bearing the message of peace to both Jew, those who are **“near”**, and the Gentile, those who are **“far away.”** But here we see that both Jew and Gentile have their access to God the Father **“through Christ”** and **“in the Spirit.”** Here the Trinity is clearly portrayed and the work of each member of the Godhead in the plan of redemption. We come **“to the Father,”** and that **“through the Son,”** and that **“in the Spirit.”** Now having the same Holy Spirit indwelling our beings, we have the very essence and nature of God in us making us **“one”** in the Spirit.

1 Corinthians 12:13 - 13 For **by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body**, whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free, and we were **all made to drink of one Spirit.** NASB

Ephesians 2:19-22 - 19 So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, 20 having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone, 21 in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; 22 in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit. NASB
A. So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints, and are of God's household – No longer “far off,” no longer “strangers and aliens,” but in Christ are “fellow citizens”, even members of God’s own household. We have become partakers of the promise of God and now share with the Patriarchs and the Jews the very blessing which was promised to them all. Not only have we been “brought near,” but are given rights and privileges of God’s very family, His household.

Ephesians 3:6- 6 to be specific, that the **Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise** in Christ Jesus through the gospel, NASB

B. having been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone – Here the “apostles and prophets” are spoken of as the foundation of the church. It is not the men themselves which are the foundation, but the revelation of God’s Word through them which is the actual foundation, for it is the message of Christ and His Gospel by which faith comes (Rom 10:17), that the prophets and apostles bear witness of. Jesus is here the “corner stone” and is elsewhere in the New Testament called the “foundation.”

1 Corinthians 3:11-11 For no man can lay a foundation other than **the one which is laid, which is Jesus Christ.** NASB

C. in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing into a holy temple in the Lord; 22 in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit - This is a beautiful analogy of the church as a building and is obviously referring to the Temple. It is the place where “God dwells.” Not only have we been brought near by the blood of Christ, but here we have become the very dwelling of God! The believer is referred to as the “temple of the Holy Spirit” and also “living stones” which make up the building which is God’s Temple. What was once a physical reality in the Jewish temple is now a spiritual reality in Christ’s church.

1 Corinthians 6:19 - 19 Or do you not know that **your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit** who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? NASB

1 Peter 2:5 - 5 you also, **as living stones, are being built up as a spiritual house** for a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. NASB

Ephesians 3:1-3 - 3:1 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles — 2 if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you; 3 that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief.

A. For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles – Here Paul speaks of his imprisonment in Rome. But what is profound about this is Paul’s view of his circumstance. Rather than claiming to be a prisoner of Rome or Ceasar, Paul calls himself the **“prisoner of Christ.”** Paul saw the sovereign purpose of God in his imprisonment, and all this **“for the sake of you Gentiles.”** Would that we would all understand that our lives and circumstances are all under the direct and sovereign control of God and marvel at what purpose God must be working in our lives!

B. if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you; 3 that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery, as I wrote before in brief. – Paul again speaks of God's sovereign purpose in *“giving the stewardship”* to Paul. He saw himself as divinely called by God and gifted with a certain calling to fulfill. And all of this was done by the *“revelation of the mystery”* of God in Christ. Paul knew this was his commission from God and that he had no choice but to fulfill it, even if it meant chains and death. This was his glad sacrifice after all Christ had done in making Himself known to Paul.

Romans 11:29 - 29 **for the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable.** NASB

Ephesians 3:4-7 - 4 And by referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; 6 to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel, 7 of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of God's grace which was given to me according to the working of His power.

A. understand my insight into the mystery of Christ, 5 which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; - Paul had tremendous insight into the kingdom of God which he received by direct revelation from Christ. The understanding of the gospel had been kept a mystery and secret for all the long ages past, but now it was revealed to Paul to preach it among every living creature. (Isa 49:6,52:10, Joel 2:28, Amos 9:12, Zech 2:11, Col 1:26, Rom 16:25) This was also revealed to the other Jewish apostles by revelation. Acts 10:11-16, 10:34-48, 11:15-18

Galatians 1:11-17 - 11 For I would have you know, brethren, that **the gospel which was preached by me is not according to man. 12 For I neither received it from man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.** 13 For you have heard of my former manner of life in Judaism, how I used to persecute the church of God beyond measure, and tried to destroy it; 14 and I was advancing in Judaism beyond many of my contemporaries among my countrymen, being more extremely zealous for my ancestral traditions. 15 But when He who had set me apart, even from my mother's womb, and called me through His grace, **was pleased 16 to reveal His Son in me, that I might preach Him among the Gentiles, I did not immediately consult with flesh and blood,** 17 nor did I go up to Jerusalem to those who were apostles before me; but I went away to Arabia, and returned once more to Damascus. NASB

B. the mystery of Christ.... to be specific, that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel – Here we see the *“mystery of Christ” spoken of specifically.* It is that now the Gentiles are fellow partakers in the promise of Christ. God has made the two (Jew and Gentile) into one. This is the mystery which Paul speaks of.

Galatians 3:13-14 - 13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the Law, having become a curse for us — for it is written, "Cursed is everyone who hangs on a tree" — 14 in order **that in Christ Jesus the blessing of Abraham might come to the Gentiles,** so that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith. NASB

Acts 11:18 - 18 And when they heard this, they quieted down, and glorified God, saying, "Well then, **God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that leads to life.**" NASB

Ephesians 3:8-9 - 8 To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, 9 and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things;

A. To me, the very least of all saints, this grace was given, - Here Paul is sure to give glory to God and in humility refer to himself properly. Although God had honored him with the stewardship of preaching the gospel to the Gentile world, he didn't hesitate to draw attention away from himself so that we could see Christ. Here is an example of true humility for our instruction. If Paul refers to himself in this manner, than how should we?

1 Timothy 1:12-16 - 12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has strengthened me, because He considered me faithful, putting me into service; 13 **even though I was formerly a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent aggressor.** And yet I was shown mercy, because I acted ignorantly in unbelief; 14 and the grace of our Lord was more than abundant, with the faith and love which are found in Christ Jesus. 15 It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world **to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.** 16 And yet for this reason I found mercy, in order that in me as the foremost, Jesus Christ might demonstrate His perfect patience, as an example for those who would believe in Him for eternal life. NASB

B. to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, 9 and to bring to light what is the administration of the mystery which for ages has been hidden in God, who created all things; - Here again we see the RICHES of the grace of God in Christ! The magnitude of this statement is incomprehensible! Neither men nor angels can comprehend the tremendous providence of Almighty God in creating a universe and redeeming it from its sinful fallen state and delivering it to a glorious eternal kingdom of peace and joy forever! What words could describe such a thing? ***These RICHES are unfathomable!*** That means they are so rich and full that they cannot be comprehended. It was the preaching of this message or ***“bringing to light”*** that Paul was given, that now the Gentiles could become fellow heirs of all of the promises in the Messiah, Christ Jesus.

Romans 11:33-36 - 33 Oh, **the depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God! How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways!** 34 For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? 35 Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to him again? 36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things. To Him be the glory forever. Amen. NASB

Ephesians 3:10-11 - 10 in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. 11 This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, A. in order that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places – Here we see the purpose of the grand design of God in His redemptive work, it is to ***“make known His wisdom.”*** It is for the display of the splendor of His glorious wisdom, the manifestation of His glory and infinite perfections. The church is the focal point of the angels, both fallen and holy, which “make known” the wisdom of God. ***Specifically that God has brought about unity in the church making Jew and Gentile into one unified, loving family of people who were once at enmity with each other.*** It is as if we were playing out some grand scheme or event for all the angelic world to be spectators, and through all our trials and toils and snares, through all of our joys and victories, God's wisdom is made known to them. Consider what facets of the wisdom of God have now been made known in the work of redemption! The providence of God in creation is glorious and beyond comprehension!

Romans 11:33-36 - 33 Oh, the **depth of the riches both of the wisdom and knowledge of God!** How unsearchable are His judgments and unfathomable His ways! 34 For who has known the mind of the Lord, or who became His counselor? 35 Or who has first given to Him that it might be paid back to him again? **36 For from Him and through Him and to Him are all things.** To Him be the glory forever. Amen. NASB

B. This was in accordance with the eternal purpose which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord – All of this amazing providential plan was accomplished by the work of the Lord Jesus! ***The “eternal purpose of God was carried out” in and by Christ Jesus!*** Christ’s life, (His ministry, crucifixion and resurrection) is the central event in all of human history which in itself accomplished and completed the eternal purposes of God! This purpose was in the mind of God for long ages past, and was brought to fulfillment by the passion of Christ! As John Piper has said, ***“The cross is the blazing center of the Glory of God!”*** All of the grand and glorious spiritual blessings that are ours in the church, **SEE Eph 1:3-11**, have been afforded to us by Christ’s work!

Isaiah 46:9-10 - 9 "Remember the former things long past, For I am God, and there is no other; I am God, and there is no one like Me, 10 Declaring the end from the beginning And from ancient times things which have not been done, Saying, **'My purpose will be established, And I will accomplish all My good pleasure'**; NASB

2 Timothy 1:9-11 - 9 who has saved us, and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but **according to His own purpose and grace which was granted us in Christ Jesus from all eternity, 10 but now has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus,** who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the gospel, NASB

1 Corinthians 1:30-31 - 30 But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who **became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness and sanctification, and redemption,** 31 that, just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord." NASB

Ephesians 3:12-13 - 12 in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him. 13 Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory.

A. in whom we have boldness and confident access through faith in Him – In Christ we have access to God! For a creature to approach the creator is an act of ***“boldness”***, even if done in humble submission. But ***this could never be afforded to a sinner***, lest there be by some great reconciliation an ***“access”*** granted to come before His Holiness! We now have a ***“confident access”*** to God. The dividing wall has been removed, the veil has been torn, and we have been born again into a new and living way to God, that is through Christ Jesus, who Himself is the way to God(John 14:6, 1 Peter). In Christ we have not only a “confident access” to God, but have become members of His family, heirs of His inheritance, and even bear His great Name!

Hebrews 10:19-22 - 19 Since therefore, brethren, **we have confidence to enter the holy place by the blood of Jesus, 20 by a new and living way which He inaugurated for us through the veil,** that is, His flesh, 21 and since we have a great priest over the house of God, 22 let us draw near with a sincere heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled clean from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water. NASB

Hebrews 4:16 - 16 **Let us therefore draw near with confidence to the throne of grace, that we may receive mercy and may find grace to help** in time of need. NASB

B. I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, for they are your glory - Paul wants the Christians to develop his eternal perspective about his plight of being in chains for the gospel. These chains are “the glory” of the Ephesian Christians. In other words Paul’s preaching, which put him in chains, was the means of God in delivering salvation to the Gentile church! These chains should be our treasure, they brought us the gospel!

Ephesians 3:14-16 - 14 For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father, 15 from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name, 16 that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man;

A. For this reason, I bow my knees before the Father – After all this profound enlightenment, Paul now prays that the Christians will have power to realize and apply these great truths to their life. This is a common theme in the writings of Paul. We get tremendous insights into the prayer life of Paul through these. (**Eph 1:16-18, 2 Thes 1:11**)

Philippians 1:9 - 9 **And this I pray**, that your love may abound still more and more in real knowledge and all discernment, NASB

Colossians 1:9-10 - 9 For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, **we have not ceased to pray for you and to ask** that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding, NASB

B. from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name – He we see the church as a family with God as its Father. We are “fellow citizens with the saints” and “members of His household.” Christian here is cause for fear, you bear the name of God! What is the highest and holy privilege is also a great responsibility that you represent Him rightly. Who’s children are these?

James 2:7- 7 Do they not blaspheme **the fair name by which you have been called**? NASB

C. that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man – Again the idea of the “RICHES of His glory” which are afforded to us, but this time Paul is praying that we become partakers of them. Behold the request of Paul; ***to be strengthened with power through His Spirit in the inner man***; This is a profound idea that God would give us power in the “inner man.” The inner man means the heart, mind, and soul, that place where the battle of sin and temptation is fought and won. The Christian needs ***powerful strength*** in order to live the life he/she is called to, as Paul will shortly explain, it cannot be done in the energy of the flesh. This power is afforded to us through the Holy Spirit and His indwelling presence (John 7:37).

Ephesians 6:10-12 - 10 Finally, be strong in the Lord, **and in the strength of His might**. 11 Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Philippians 4:13 - **13 I can do all things through Him who strengthens me**. NASB

Ephesians 3:17-19 - 17 so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

A. so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith – Paul having formerly described the church as “a dwelling of God by His Spirit,” here prays that he would come and inhabit it. Here we are taught of the indwelling presence of Christ, ***He is “in us”*** and we are “in Him.” All of this is afforded to us by faith, or that through faith we lay hold of and possess the RICHES of God which are Christ Jesus Himself.

John 15:4 – 4 **“Abide in Me, and I in you** . As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. NASB

B. that you, being rooted and grounded in love, 18 may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth – Love, being the chief virtue of Christian life, is likened here unto the *foundation of the spiritual building* where God lives, the church. Again (Eph 1:16-18), Paul is praying for our comprehension of the grace of God, but here it is *to grasp the immensity of His love*. He uses the dimensions of a building to describe these. Some think this is an illusion to the grand temple of Diana (Artemis) in Ephesus, which was considered one of the wonders of the world. It being in length 425 feet, in breadth 220; it was supported by 127 pillars, each 60 feet high; was built at the expense of all Asia; and was 220 years in being completed. The church as a spiritual building of God would stand in stark contrast to that place of detestable idolatry. The love of Christ is much more grand than any earthly man-made thing, so much so that *only by divine enablement can we comprehend it!*

Colossians 2:6-7 - 6 As you therefore have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so walk in Him, 7 having been **firmly rooted and now being built up in Him and established in your faith**, just as you were instructed, and overflowing with gratitude. NASB

C. to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God - We cannot comprehend GOD; yet we can know that He is; approve of, love, adore, and serve him. In this same sense *we know the love of Christ*, which cannot be fully comprehended, but it is our great desire to glory in and appreciate more and more that glorious love which is full of wonder and awe! More than this, Paul prays that we would be *“filled up”* with it, and that being all *“the fullness of God.”* The meaning of this is that we Christians would have the fullest measure of God’s glorious riches and His very presence and love, and that the enjoyment of this awesome privilege would fill us up to the top and overflow, or that we may possess it in the fullest measure possible!

Romans 8:38-39 - 38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, **shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord**. NASB

Colossians 2:9-10 - 9 For **in Him all the fulness of Deity dwells** in bodily form, 10 and **in Him you have been made complete**, and He is the head over all rule and authority; NASB

Ephesians 3:20-21 - 20 Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, 21 to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen. NASB

A. Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think – If God has given us all these glorious RICHES of His grace, will He not give to us according to His RICHES? Indeed He will, and His promise is to do beyond what we can even imagine or conceive. This is in fulfilling all these amazing realities Paul has described in these three chapters, but more specifically, “be filled up to all the fullness of God.”

2 Corinthians 9:8 - 8 And **God is able to make all grace abound to you**, that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed; NASB

B. according to the power that works within us, - This power of God is at work within us to fill us up to all His fullness, even to transform into His very likeness. After becoming a Christian one will never be the same, for there is a great divine power of God at work in them to transform them eternally into Christ’s likeness!

Philippians 2:12-13 - 12 So then, my beloved, just as you have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your salvation with fear and

trembling; 13 for **it is God who is at work in you, both to will and to work for His good pleasure.** NASB

C. to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen – The purpose FOR which everything exists! All of these exceedingly amazing truths about the church and the Christian are designed by God for the display of the glory of His splendor! And so this is a fitting end to this great doctrinal text of Ephesians 1-3, wherein the wonders of God in creating mankind and redeeming him from his fallen state to bring him into eternal glory, are explained in comprehensive detail!

Revelation 19:6-9 - 6 And I heard, as it were, the voice of a great multitude and as the sound of many waters and as the sound of mighty peals of thunder, saying, "**Hallelujah ! For the Lord our God, the Almighty, reigns.**" 7 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready." 8 And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints. 9 And he said to me, "**Write, 'Blessed are those who are invited to the marriage supper of the Lamb.'**" And he said to me, "**These are true words of God.**" NASB

Ephesians 4:1-2 - 1 I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called, 2 with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love, 3 being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. NASB

A. I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, entreat you to walk in a manner worthy– Here the apostle shifts from doctrinal instruction about our position in Christ to clear instruction about our practice. He begins a series of very practical and precise exhortations to Christian living. Here it is to “walk in a manner worthy of your calling.” The term *walk here means “live.”* So here it is to “live in a worthy manner,” and that, equivalent to the “calling” you have received. This is a theme in Paul’s writings, that is to exhort Christians to holy living.

Philippians 1:27- 27 Only **conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ;** so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel; NASB

Colossians 1:10 -10 so that you may **walk in a manner worthy of the Lord,** to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; NASB

B. of the calling with which you have been called - The term calling is a term used to speak of that part of salvation wherein *God “calls” us. It is a unique expression identifying God as the caller and us as the responder.* This term is used many places by Paul to describe the invitation of God to salvation. Calling in Ro 11:29; 1Co 1:22-26; Eph 1:18; 4:1,4; Php 3:14; 2Th 1:11; 2Ti 1:9; Heb 3:1; 2Pe 1:10. In each of these places the term is used to emphasize God’s sovereign grace in disposing this calling to those who believe. All who come to a saving knowledge of Christ come by the “calling of God,” thus the term “effectual calling.” *The calling of God is effectual unto salvation.* Calling is the invitation, regeneration is the means by which one is given the free gift of grace to repent and believe the Gospel. Thus, all those who are effectually called, are saved (Rom 8:30). This effectual calling can also be seen in John 6:44,64-65, Acts 13:48, 16:14, 1 Cor 2:12, 3:6-7, 2 Cor 4:6, Phil 1:29, Jer 24:7, Eze 36:26-27, 2 Tim 2:24-25.

Romans 8:28-30 - 28 And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, **to those who are called according to His purpose.** 29 For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; 30 and whom He predestined, **these He also called; and whom He called,** these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. NASB

C. with all humility and gentleness, with patience, showing forbearance to one another in love – Here are Christian virtues to be sought after and cherished. In these we see the perfect character of Christ, who was humble and gentle and patiently forbearing in love. What a beautiful expression to describe God’s character! But here now we Christians are to possess and exercise the very character of God. This would be living in a manner worthy of God, to live like Him and walk as He walked.

1 John 2:6 - the one who says he abides in Him **ought himself to walk in the same manner** as He walked. NASB

Here then is how we live. This is to be our attitude and character, and in this context, how we are to behave toward one another.

Humility – Lowliness of mind, bowed down, submissive, meek, esteeming others more highly than self. It does not demand undue self-depreciation but rather lowliness of self-estimation and freedom from vanity and self-exalting pride. Humility is the well spring from which all other virtues flow.

Gentleness – Mild disposition, tender and soft not strong, easiness, moderate.

Patience – Suffering without complaint, calmly enduring, not easily provoked,

Showing forbearance in love – Exercising patience with others, enduring and bearing with, putting up with discomfort caused by others, this motivated by selfless concern

D. being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace – Since God has reconciled us unto Himself and brought peace, and since Jew and Gentile are now one in Christ, we are to strive to keep that unity which we have already been afforded by the Spirit. **We are to “be diligent” or “earnestly striving” to keep this unity.** We have no need to create unity as we already possess it in Christ. We are to make every effort therefore to KEEP that unity which we already have, and this in the “bond of peace.” Since Christ is our peace (Eph 2:14), AND He lives in every Christian, then we are to live in that peace with one another which is already ours. We must therefore submit to one another to preserve this unity and peace.

Colossians 3:12-14 - 12 And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; 13 **bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you.** 14 And beyond all **these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.** NASB

Ephesians 4:4-5 - 4 There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; 5 one Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all. NASB

A. Here Paul describes our **unity** pointing out the many facets of it. Each of these points of unity are shared by every true Christian. It is therefore these things which are our common bond of being united together in them.

one body - We are all members of the one body of Christ, united together by our salvation which was purchased by Christ. We are members together in the family of God.

one Spirit – We are all united by the indwelling presence of the Holy Spirit. Every true Christian is the temple of God and united with all other Christians having been born again by the Holy Spirit by whom we received the very nature and life of God in our souls.

one hope of your calling – We are all united by the hope which we have of our eternal existence in heaven with God, and the benefits of future grace which God will grant to us

in facing all the trials and sufferings of this life. We are united together in the hope of our being transformed into the perfect likeness of Christ, progressively now and completely at the resurrection. We are all united in the hope of seeing God and receiving our eternal inheritance of the surpassing riches of His kingdom and grace.

one Lord – We are all united in our submission to the Lord Jesus as our Master and King. By His power, we voluntarily submit our wills to Him for obedience and recognize His commandments and good Word as authoritative and to be fully adhered to. Every true Christian has this witness in himself/herself – Jesus Christ is Lord!

one faith – We are all united in the belief of Christ’s deity and teachings, the teachings of the apostles, and also in the common conviction of agreement with the whole counsel of God expressed in His Word, the bible. The nature of this faith is the same in every true Christian.

one baptism – We are all united in the fact that we received Christ publicly by identifying with Him in His death, burial and resurrection in the ordinance of Baptism. Every true Christian has been publicly baptized to give profession of their faith.

B. **one God and Father of all who is over all and through all and in all** – Here our Christian *unity is illuminated in the object of our faith*. We worship and serve the ONE true and living God who alone is God, triune in nature, and Father to all who have been adopted into His family. This in *contrast* to the Ephesians former “many gods,” whose attention would have brought into disunity by many different objects of worship. But the Christians have unity in that they all behold the ONE who is “*over all*” (Sovereign and supreme), and “*through all*” (Omnipresent and Providential), and “*in all*” (indwelling every Christian).

2 Corinthians 6:16 - 16 Or what agreement has the temple of God with idols? For **we are the temple of the living God**; just as God said, “**I will dwell in them and walk among them**”; And I will be their God, and they shall be My people. NASB

Ephesians 4:7-10 - 7 But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift. 8 Therefore it says, "When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, And He gave gifts to men." 9 (Now this expression, "He ascended," what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) NASB

A. **But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift** – All Christians are united by the special grace which brings salvation, but each one has been given gifts specifically. This grace of gifts is given “*to each one of us*” Christians and in this context are for the edification of the entire body (v-11-16).

Romans 12:6-8 - 6 And since **we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly**: if prophecy, according to the proportion of his faith; 7 if service, in his serving; or he who teaches, in his teaching; 8 or he who exhorts, in his exhortation; he who gives, with liberality; he who leads, with diligence; he who shows mercy, with cheerfulness. NASB

B. **"When He ascended on high, He led captive a host of captives, And He gave gifts to men."** – A quote from Psalms 68:18 which is a victory Psalm celebrating David’s conquest of the city of Jerusalem on Mount Zion. Here Paul uses it to describe Christ’s triumphant victory over sin and death and ascent into heaven, at which time He brought the spoils and “*captives*” of His victory which He leads in triumphal procession, namely us, whom He graciously gifted after making us “*captives*” to His Lordship.

Psalms 68:18 - 18 **Thou hast ascended on high, Thou hast led captive Thy captives; Thou hast received gifts among men.** Even among the rebellious also, that the LORD God may dwell there. NASB

C. (Now this expression, "He ascended," what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He who descended is Himself also He who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.) – Christ, the eternal King, left the glory of heaven and “descended” to the earth to redeem man by a great war. After His victory, He ascended back to the rightful place, “far above the heavens” where He again rules as Sovereign King. This He accomplished becoming one of us, in order to “fill all things” as to wage war as one of us, not by some abstract, far off power, but in the fray with sin and death, along with all of us who were held captive by it.

Ephesians 1:20-23 - 20 which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead, and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, **21 far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named,** not only in this age, but also in the one to come. 22 And **He put all things in subjection under His feet, and gave Him as head over all things to the church,** 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all. NASB

Ephesians 4:11-13 - 11 And He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers, 12 for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ; 13 until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. NASB

A. He gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as pastors and teachers – Here Paul elaborates on the gifts given to the captives. Specifically that “*some*” have received these specific gifts for a specific purpose which he further elaborates on. Each one of us Christians have received the grace of gifts but only “*some*” have received the grace of these specific gifts. Paul does not elaborate on each of these offices but simply mentions each one and the *general purpose* of them all. This is by no means an exhaustive list of spiritual gifts, but simply a list of those offices within the church given for the equipping of the saints for their individual work of service (ministry).

apostles and prophets – These have formerly done the work of “laying the foundation” of the “building where God lives by His Spirit” (Eph 2:20) to *equip the saints*. This was accomplished by the revelatory Word of Holy Scripture which they brought forth by the Spirit. The 13 Apostles of our Lord and the New Testament prophets who laid the foundation of the church. See Eph 2:20, 3:5

evangelists – Do the ongoing work in the body of preaching the gospel and disciplinmaking to *equip the saints*, but with the specific emphasis on calling the church out of darkness and seeking to convert the lost.

pastors and teachers – Do the ongoing work of disciplinmaking in the church specifically through the ministry of teaching to *equip the saints*. The word “pastors” (poimen, poy-manē—shepherd) is the word for shepherds, which is used elsewhere in the NT to refer to Christ (Heb 13:20, 1 Pet 2:25). Here coupled together with the word for teachers to emphasize the work of a pastor as a teacher. The ministry of a “pastor-teacher” is outlined in the books of 1 & 2 Timothy and Titus where Paul gives practical instruction to Timothy and Titus.

B. for the equipping of the saints for the work of service, to the building up of the body of Christ - Each one of these unique giftings, (apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors and teachers) fulfills the work of **“equipping of the saints for the work of the ministry.”** But notice here, the work of service or ministry belongs to “the saints.” Every Christian has been uniquely gifted to fulfill the “work of the ministry.” This work is the privilege and responsibility of every Christian and includes the expression of every good gift and virtue of Christ to **“edify the body”** until we have reached maturity in our unity and knowledge. The work of the ministry is specifically for the building up of the body, thus all the members of the body work together with their own gifting for the purpose of serving and building up the rest of the body of Christ.

Colossians 1:28 - 28 And we proclaim Him, admonishing every man and teaching every man with all wisdom, **that we may present every man complete in Christ.** NASB

Romans 15:14 - 14 And concerning you, my brethren, I myself also am convinced that you yourselves **are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, and able also to admonish one another.** NASB

1 Thessalonians 5:11 - 11 Therefore encourage one another, **and build up one another,** just as you also are doing. NASB

C. until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. – This **“equipping and building up”** is to continue until such time as we “attain to the unity, knowledge, and maturity” which Christ possesses. We are therefore to **“attain the unity of the faith”** which would include the entire message of the Christian gospel the whole body of Christian teaching. The **“knowledge of the Son of God”** would be to “know Christ” in experience as well as doctrinally. This all leads to the eventual “maturity” of the body, which is measured not by ourselves, but by the measure of **“the fullness of Christ!”** The faithful Christian presses toward a goal, high and lofty, and this pressing forward is the very nature of our Christian experience, UNTIL we have arrived at the perfection of Christ!

1 Corinthians 1:10 - 10 Now I exhort you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, **that you all agree, and there be no divisions among you, but you be made complete in the same mind and in the same judgment.** NASB

Colossians 2:2-3 - 2 that their hearts may be encouraged, having been knit together in love, and **attaining to all the wealth that comes from the full assurance of understanding, resulting in a true knowledge of God's mystery, that is, Christ Himself,** 3 in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge. NASB

Ephesians 4:14-16 - 14 As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; 15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. NASB

A. As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves, and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful scheming; - Since we are all working in the ministry to build one another up to maturity, we will **“grow up in our salvation” and “no longer be children.”** Children, or young immature Christians, are carried away with dangerous and destructive doctrines, which are prevalent within the professing church, put forth by the **“deceitful scheming”** of false

teachers. These deceive for some purpose of personal gain. *Therefore we see the contrast between mature and immature Christians, namely the immature Christian is “doctrinally ignorant” and the mature Christian is “doctrinally grounded” in the knowledge of the Son of God.* The goal here then is to become mature in the knowledge of Christ and of the will of God for life and its meaning, purpose and duty.

2 Peter 2:1-3, 18 - 2:1 But false prophets also arose among the people, just as **there will also be false teachers among you**, who will secretly introduce destructive heresies, even denying the Master who bought them, bringing swift destruction upon themselves. 2 And **many will follow their sensuality, and because of them the way of the truth will be maligned**; 3 and **in their greed they will exploit you with false words**; their judgment from long ago is not idle, and their destruction is not asleep. 18 For speaking out **arrogant words of vanity they entice by fleshly desires, by sensuality**, those who barely escape from the ones who live in error, NASB

B. 15 but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, 16 from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies – Here is how the body is built up primarily. It is by speaking the truth in love that we grow up. This is the work of the ministry to admonish, teach, and encourage one another with spiritual wisdom and knowledge. We then “grow up in all aspects into Christ”, which is to say that we attain the knowledge of God’s will and character and then begin to live it out practically as we are transformed into His perfect likeness. *Here is Christian maturity, “grown up into Him”, that is, that we become like Him in thought, word and deed!* And this is accomplished by the “mothering” of the church as each member of the body fulfills its purpose supplying what is needed to “fit us together.”

1 Peter 2:1-3 - 2:1 Therefore, putting aside all malice and all guile and hypocrisy and envy and all slander, 2 like newborn babes, **long for the pure milk of the word, that by it you may grow in respect to salvation**, 3 if you have tasted the kindness of the Lord. NASB

C. according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love. – Each individual part has a “*proper working.*” No Christian is an island unto himself, but as a member of the body, has important and vital part to contribute. Not to do so would be to sin against Christ and His church. It is through this work of the ministry, admonishing, teaching, and encouraging one another with spiritual wisdom and knowledge that the body is built up to the stature of Christ. All of this is an expression of the love of God that we have in Him, and through this loving process we become in practice what we are in position.

Romans 12:4-6 - 4 For just as we have many members in one body and **all the members do not have the same function**, 5 so we, who are many, are one body in Christ, and individually members one of another. 6 And **since we have gifts that differ according to the grace given to us, let each exercise them accordingly**: NASB

Ephesians 4:17-19 - 17 This I say therefore, and affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, 18 being darkened in their understanding, excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; 19 and they, having become callous, have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness. NASB

A. affirm together with the Lord, that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk – Here Paul begins to draw a *contrast* between the former life of an unsaved Gentile and the new life of a “born again” Christian who has been created by God in true righteousness and holiness v-24. Here he is calling the church to walk(that is TO LIVE)

in a manner separate from their former manner of living. Here he begins yet another description of the former state of the Christian, describing their depravity as in chapter 2:1-3 and 2:11-13. In seeing this contrast he **“affirms together with the Lord”** that we Christians no longer live in the manner we did when we came to Christ. We have been changed, and we are to put on the outward evidences of it. This is central to the Christian faith and essential to mature Christian living. Now that we are to grow up **“in all aspects into Him,”** this means we must put off the former life and put on the new man in Christ, that is to stop living the way we did and start living in the manner worthy of Christ.

1 Peter 4:2-3 - 2 so as **to live the rest of the time in the flesh no longer** for the lusts of men, but for the will of God. 3 For the time already past is sufficient for you to have carried out the desire of the Gentiles, having pursued a course of sensuality, lusts, drunkenness, carousals, drinking parties and abominable idolatries. NASB

B. in the futility of their mind, 18 being darkened in their understanding, - Here Paul points out the THINKING of a Gentile. It is **“futile and darkened.”** The mind before regeneration is in “darkness” because it has not received the “light” of the revelation of regeneration. It cannot “SEE” the Kingdom of God because it has not been **“born again”**, John 3:3. This describes the thinking of all who are not in Christ and is a further description of the former state of the Christian or “natural state” of man.

Romans 1:20-23 - 20 For since the creation of the world His invisible attributes, His eternal power and divine nature, have been clearly seen, being understood through what has been made, so that they are without excuse. 21 For even though **they knew God, they did not honor Him as God, or give thanks; but they became futile in their speculations, and their foolish heart was darkened.** 22 Professing to be wise, they became fools, 23 and exchanged the glory of the incorruptible God for an image in the form of corruptible man and of birds and four-footed animals and crawling creatures. NASB

2 Corinthians 4:3-5 - 3 And even if our **gospel is veiled, it is veiled to those who are perishing,** 4 in whose case the god of this world **has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ,** who is the image of God. NASB

C. excluded from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; 19 and they, having become callous, - Because mankind has forsaken God and walked headlong into sin, he has forfeited the life of God and has died, seen most clearly in Adam and Eve, “In the day you eat of it, you SHALL SURELY DIE.” Mankind is excluded from the life of God because in his ignorance of God his heart has become calloused toward truth and he has gone off pursuing everything but God, Rom 3:11-12. Having a **“hardened heart”** toward the righteousness of God, mankind is laden with every kind of sin and impurity, and his conscience hardly knows it. Mankind has **“hardness of heart and is callous”** which is to say he has become **morally insensitive.** The verb translated callous means to be past feeling or unashamed.

Romans 3:11-12 - 11 There is none who understands, There is **none who seeks for God; 12 All have turned aside, together they have become useless;** There is none who does good, There is not even one. " NASB

Romans 8:5-8 - 5 For those who are according to the flesh **set their minds on the things of the flesh,** but those who are according to the Spirit, the things of the Spirit. 6 For the mind set on the flesh is death, but the mind set on the Spirit is life and peace, 7 because **the mind set on the flesh is hostile toward God; for it does not subject itself to the law of God, for it is not even able to do so; 8 and those who are in the flesh cannot please God.** NASB

D. have given themselves over to sensuality, for the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness – This is to say that their conscience no longer bears witness against them in any way to restrain them. They are callous toward sin, and God’s righteous judgment against it, they have thrown off all sense of shame. This has plunged mankind

into the PRACTICE of every kind of IMPURITY and that with a continual lust for more. The flesh is never fulfilled and neither are the flames of hell. The acts of men have become so deplorable that Paul later says it is shameful to even mention what they do. It is for these things that the wrath of God is coming Col 3:6.

Ephesians 5:11-12 - 11 And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; 12 for **it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret.** NASB

Romans 1:28-32 - 28 And just as they did not see fit to acknowledge God any longer, **God gave them over to a depraved mind, to do those things which are not proper,** 29 being filled with all unrighteousness, wickedness, greed, evil; full of envy, murder, strife, deceit, malice; they are gossips, 30 slanderers, haters of God, insolent, arrogant, boastful, inventors of evil, disobedient to parents, 31 without understanding, untrustworthy, unloving, unmerciful; 32 and, although they know the ordinance of God, that those who practice such things are worthy of death, they not only do the same, but also **give hearty approval to those who practice them.** NASB

Ephesians 4:20-24 - 20 But you did not learn Christ in this way, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, 22 that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, 23 and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 24 and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. NASB

A. But you did not learn Christ in this way, 21 if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus – We were formerly given to impurity and sensuality having hard hearts toward God until we “*learned of Christ.*” When we came to know Christ we were given the light of truth and our eyes were opened and we are no longer in darkness, that is to say our understanding has been enlightened to the moral purity of Christ and His Kingdom. This *learning of Christ was in stark contrast to the Gentile way of life.* If you have been taught the “*truth that is in Jesus,*” you see that great contrast of holiness and moral purity which separates God from an unholy world of sinners. The command of the Gospel of Jesus Christ is first and foremost one of REPENTANCE from our former life of SIN and a calling to the PRACTICE of a HOLY LIFE which is consistent with the moral purity of God.

Titus 2:11-12 - 11 For the grace of God has appeared, bringing salvation to all men, **12 instructing us to deny ungodliness and worldly desires and to live sensibly,** righteously and godly in the present age, NASB

B. that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, - In Christ we are to “*lay aside the old self,*” that is to say to no longer live like we did before we were saved. There should be a stark contrast in our living now that we have come to Christ. As he has explained, it is the life of sin and of moral impurity which we are to “*put off,*” which is “*corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit.*” The life of sin is very deceptive. It promises freedom and happiness, but leads to death, despair and corruption. It is these formerly sinful habits of living which the Christian is to now “put to death by the Spirit.”

Romans 8:12-15 - 12 So then, brethren, we are under obligation, not to the flesh, to live according to the flesh — 13 for if you are living according to the flesh, you must die; but if **by the Spirit you are putting to death the deeds of the body, you will live.** 14 For all who are being led by the Spirit of God, these are sons of God. NASB

Colossians 3:5-10 - 5 Therefore **consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry.** 6 For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come, 7 and in them you also once walked,

when you were living in them. 8 But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, **since you laid aside he old self with its evil practices**, 10 and have put on the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge according to the image of the One who created him NASB

C. and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, - In the contrast which Paul is drawing between the former life of depravity and the new life of holiness, he has focused primarily on the thinking pattern of the “old man” of sin. *The Gentile apart from God is “futile, darkened, ignorant and calloused” in his thinking.* Now he shows the contrast of the thinking pattern of the “new man” of holiness. He is to think like a new man, to be renewed in his mind with new righteousness of God which has become his in Christ. *This is the key to spiritual transformation!* We are to be renewed in our thinking, having our minds transformed by the Word of God. This is accomplished by the basic disciplines of Christian life of;

- **Meditation on the Word of God Daily**
- **Prayer**
- **Christian Fellowship**

The Christian is to “*be transformed by the renewing of the mind,*” and to continually seek to “put on Christ” in his practice. We live out or practice our thinking patterns, as the proverbs say(Prov 23:7). It is these thinking patterns which desperately need to be renewed by the Word of God.

Romans 12:2 - 2 And do not be conformed to this world, **but be transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect. NASB

Colossians 3:9-10 - 9 Do not lie to one another, since you laid aside the old self with its evil practices, 10 and have put on **the new self who is being renewed to a true knowledge** according to the image of the One who created him NASB

2 Corinthians 4:16-18 - 16 Therefore we do not lose heart, but though our outer man is decaying, yet **our inner man is being renewed day by day**. 17 For momentary, light affliction is producing for us an eternal weight of glory far beyond all comparison, 18 **while we look not at the things which are seen, but at the things which are not seen**; for the things which are seen are temporal, but the things which are not seen are eternal. NASB

D. and put on the new self, which in the likeness of God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. – We are to consciously “*put on the new self,*” that is to live in repentance moment by moment. We are to continually think in a manner consistent with Christ so that we may live out His teaching, which is righteous and holy. In Christ we have become a new creation of God, having “been created” with the new nature of God within our soul. That new nature is “*in the likeness of God*” and is born of the “*incorruptible seed of the Word of God(1 Pet 1:23),*” and is the life of God’s righteousness and holiness of the truth living within the soul of man/woman. It is this new life which we were saved for and has become our chief purpose for living! We must understand that regeneration is no small thing but in fact the very life of God has been implanted into our souls. We now have a nature which is incorruptible and undefiled, righteous and holy, abiding in truth. Therefore we must continually put this new self on, to think, speak, and act like that righteous and holy man which we are!

Romans 6:4-7 - 4 Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, **so we too might walk in newness of life**. 5 For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, 6 **knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; 7 for he who has died is freed from sin.** NASB

Ephesians 4:25-27 - 25 Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbor, for we are members of one another. 26 Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and do not give the devil an opportunity.
A. 25 Therefore, laying aside falsehood, speak truth, each one of you, with his neighbor, for we are members of one another – Because we have “put on the new self, which is created in righteousness and holiness of the TRUTH,” we can no longer lie! The word falsehood actually means any form of lying such as; *LYING, DECEPTION, EXAGGERATION, CHEATING, SLANDER, MAKING FALSE PROMISES AND EXCUSES*. Instead we are to speak the **TRUTH**, which now lives in us! The Christian should abhor the evil of lying and keep himself far from it! It should be noted that liars go to HELL (Rev 21:8, Rev 22:15) and that lying is the native language of the DEVIL (John 8:44)! Since we are members of one body, we cannot lie and so deceive each other any more than the human body deceives its different members.

John 8:44 - 44 "You are of **your father the devil**, and you want to do the desires of your father. He was a murderer from the beginning, and **does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. Whenever he speaks a lie, he speaks from his own nature; for he is a liar, and the father of lies.** NASB

Revelation 21:8 - 8 "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters **and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone**, which is the second death." NASB

B. 26 Be angry, and yet do not sin; do not let the sun go down on your anger, 27 and do not give the devil an opportunity – Paul points out two important things about anger. One that there is an anger which is NOT sinful. This kind of righteous anger is activated by sin which is destructive to people or dishonoring to God, and it is born out of a hatred for evil. Righteous anger is self-controlled and kept in check by meekness. Two, that there is always present the danger of committing sin when angry. Anger motivated by selfish reasons is always sinful and can be very destructive. Here is what is meant by “do not give the devil an opportunity.” The destructive nature of sinful anger can hurt and defile many. Sinful anger can be unrestrained and become violent. Anger should always be restrained, here Paul points out, not to let the sun go down on it, or to refrain from it by nightfall.

James 1:19-21 - 19 This you know, my beloved brethren. But let everyone be quick to hear, slow to speak and **slow to anger; 20 for the anger of man does not achieve the righteousness of God.** NASB

Proverbs 14:29 - 29 He who is **slow to anger has great understanding**. But he who is quick-tempered exalts folly. NASB

Ephesians 4:28-30 - 28 Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather let him labor, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have something to share with him who has need. 29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear. 30 And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. NASB

A. 28 Let him who steals steal no longer; but rather let him labor, performing with his own hands what is good, in order that he may have something to share with him who has need – Paul continues with a series of contrasts showing the difference between the old self and the new self. Here the old man of stealing must be put to death so that the new man of working to share can live! The sin of stealing is selfishly motivated and cares not

for those who are its prey. The new self is focused on others by working hard to have plenty so that he/she can share with others. Notice this godly virtue of mercy which seeks to meet the needs of others by its own sacrifice!

B. Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear – Here the contrast of evil speaking and holy words....Paul puts an end to all such speech as is “*unwholesome.*” Any words which are not good for building someone up are NOT to be spoken by the new man of righteousness! On the contrary, now we speak the truth in love as we learned back in verse 15, which causes “*the body to be built up and grow up in all aspects unto Him.*”

C. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption – Here we are told not to grieve the Holy Spirit, by our unholy words, thoughts or actions in this context. Here the moral or commanded will of God is expressed in terms of His great desire to see us thinking, speaking and acting in a manner “worthy of our calling.” The heart of God is grieved by the sin of His people....put your hand over your mouth! And then go and sin no more! We also see here another affirmation of the sealing of the Holy Spirit which is “*unto the day of redemption.*”

William Burkitt –

But what doth God's sealing his people by his Holy Spirit intimate and imply?

1. It intimates that God has **distinguished** them from others.
2. That he has **appropriated** them to himself.
3. That he has put a **value** upon them, and a **very high esteem**. and,
4. It imports the **irrevocable purpose of God** for their salvation.

Seals are for these uses, ends, and purposes: seals are for distinction, for appropriation, for confirmation; and argue a high evaluation and precious esteem of the person or thing which the seal is put upon.

Ephesians 4:31-32 - 31 Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. 32 And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. NASB

A. Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice - Here the contrast is between several evil behaviors and several godly virtuous acts. All of these sins are certainly grieving to the Holy Spirit who we are commanded not to grieve. Let these be put away from you church.....kill this sin, count it dead!

bitterness - a grudge or inner feeling of extreme displeasure against someone.

wrath - the passion of anger expressed, an action resulting from extreme anger

anger - a vindictive emotion excited by real or imaginary injury

clamor - a loud continuous outcry of displeasure, boisterous speaking, brawling

slander – a false or malicious report

malice – a disposition to harm others, deliberate mischief

All these sins are destructive to the body of Christ. Rather than building up the body, these tear down and cause division and injury. The Christian is to lay aside that old self with all of its evil behavior, we are to put it to death.

Romans 6:10-11 - 10 For the death that He died, He died to sin, once for all; but the life that He lives, He lives to God. 11 Even so **consider yourselves to be dead to sin**, but alive to God in Christ Jesus. NASB

B. And be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you – Here is the holy behavior of Christ. He has a sweet, loving and courteous disposition to others, being humble with a submissive spirit. He is tender-hearted, being sensitive to the needs and infirmities of others, he is compassionate and forgiving. The Christian is to live and walk forgiving any grievances they have against one another, just as God in Christ has forgiven us. God's forgiveness is given freely, heartily and sincerely. Here then is a standard for our forgiveness. For a Christian to harbor unforgiveness is a direct offense against the forgiveness which has been offered to Him in Christ! Remember the parable of the unmerciful servant! **Matthew 18:21-35**

Colossians 3:12-13 - 12 And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. NASB

Ephesians 5:1-2 - 1 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma. NASB

A. Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; 2 and walk in love – Here is the heavenward call of the Christian, to be an imitator of God! This also is equivalent to the words of Christ, ***“be perfect as your heavenly Father is perfect!”*** (Matt 5:48) We are always and continually striving to live as an imitator of God, always seeking to clothe ourselves with His holy virtue. Being His beloved children, we have taken on His nature and are therefore to live a life of love which is an expression of that divine nature which is in us.

2 Peter 1:4 - 4 For by these He has granted to us His precious and magnificent promises, in order that **by them you might become partakers of the divine nature**, having escaped the corruption that is in the world by lust. NASB

B. just as Christ also loved you, and gave Himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God as a fragrant aroma – Here the standard of Christ’s love is portrayed to us by His act of personal sacrifice on the cross. ***“He gave Himself up for us,”*** thus displaying His divine love for us! The strength of His love for us was so intense that He gave Himself up to death on our account. Our life now is to be **CHARACTERIZED** by this love of God in Christ! Here another contrast, this time between the ***“grieving of the Spirit”*** and a ***“fragrant aroma”*** in the nostrils of God. Our obedience is a pleasing and sweet smelling aroma to God as an obedient child is to us!

1 John 3:16-18 - 16 We know love by this, that He laid down His life for us; and **we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren**. 17 But whoever has the world's goods, and beholds his brother in need and closes his heart against him, how does the love of God abide in him? 18 Little children, **let us not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth**. NASB

Ephesians 5:3-4 - 3 But do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints; 4 and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. NASB

A. do not let immorality or any impurity or greed even be named among you, as is proper among saints – More acts of destructive behavior which are to be put to death. But here notice that these are not ***“even to be named among us!”*** These he says are ***“not proper”*** for saints, holy ones! Shall God’s holy temple be profaned with devil’s deeds? Shall God’s chosen people be adorned with wickedness and evil? These should not be present in any form in the assembly of the righteous and should be purged(actively removed) from among us!

immorality – fornication, including any sex outside of marriage, adultery, incest, homosexuality, **gk.** 4202. porneia from 4203; harlotry (including adultery and incest); figuratively, idolatry:--fornication.

impurity – uncleanness, moral filth. **gk.** - akatharsia, from 169; impurity (the quality), physically or morally:--uncleanness.

greed – covetousness, unbridled lust, **gk.** - pleonexia from 4123; avarice, i.e. (by implication) fraudulency, extortion:--covetous(-ness) practices, greediness.

It should be mentioned that this is yet another **CONTRAST** being drawn by Paul. Here it is **BETWEEN** being “imitators of God and walking in love” which is “pleasing to the Lord,” **AND** being immoral greedy and impure which is “improper for saints.”

Colossians 3:5-7 - 5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as **dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry**. 6 For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come, 7 and in them you also once walked, when you were living in them. NASB

2 Corinthians 12:21 - 21 I am afraid that when I come again my God may humiliate me before you, and I may mourn over many of those who have **sinned in the past and not repented of the impurity, immorality and sensuality** which they have practiced. NASB

In this day of visual images and powerful audio/video media, Christians should be warned to put away even the very appearance of immoral and impure temptations. Christian men should never engage in viewing pornographic material as a fixed gaze on a naked or scantily clad woman is surely a sin against the Lord and poison for your soul (Matt 5:28). A Christian man or woman should not engage in viewing television shows or reading magazines/books which present unwholesome and filthy immoral stories and thoughts or ideas and comments about sinful, impure and immoral behavior which the wicked perpetrate against the Lord in the darkness. It is *SHAMEFUL TO EVEN MENTION* what the disobedient do in secret.

Matthew 5:28 - 28 but I say to you, that **everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her** already in his heart. NASB

B. and there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks – Here the apostle will deal with holiness of speech. He tells us what is improper in our words and what should rather fill our mouths. Christians must not only be imitators of God in actions but also in speech. This is imperative, not just a suggestion, as he says, **“THERE MUST BE NO”**.....

filthiness – obscenity, morally or sensually dirty words. **gk.** - aischrotes, from 150; shamefulness, i.e. obscenity:--filthiness

silly talk - foolish talking - **gk.** - morologia, from a compound of 3474 and 3004; silly talk, i.e. buffoonery:--foolish talking.

coarse jesting – harsh joking or jeering - **gk.** - eutrapelia, from a compound of 2095 and a derivative of the base of 5157 (meaning well-turned, i.e. ready at repartee, jocosely); witticism, i.e. (in a vulgar sense) ribaldry:--jesting.

It is imperative for Christians to have holy speech which edifies and builds others up, not that which jeers, wounds, and tears down or destroys. Even when making light of things, we are not to use speech which is negatively charged, impure, or unwise. This again the apostle says is “not fitting” for saints. But rather what is fitting is the giving of thanks, which we do far to little of.

Proverbs 15:2 - 2 The tongue of the wise makes knowledge acceptable, But **the mouth of fools spouts folly**. NASB

Matthew 12:34 - 34 "You brood of vipers, how can you, being evil, speak what is good? **For the mouth speaks out of that which fills the heart**. NASB

Ephesians 4:29 - 29 Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth, but **only such a word as is good for edification according to the need of the moment, that it may give grace to those who hear**. NASB

James 3:4-7 - 4 Behold, the ships also, though they are so great and are driven by strong winds, are still directed by a very small rudder, wherever the inclination of the pilot desires. 5 So also **the tongue is a small part of the body, and yet it boasts of great things**. Behold, how great a forest is set aflame by such a small fire! 6 And **the tongue is a fire, the very world of iniquity**; the tongue is set among our members as that which defiles the entire body, and sets on fire the course of our life, and is set on fire by hell. NASB

Ephesians 5:5-6 - 5 For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. 6 Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. NASB

A. For this you know with certainty, that no immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God - Here Paul says we are to “**know with certainty**”, that is absolutely and positively, that **NO ONE WHO PRACTICES THESE SINS WILL ENTER HEAVEN**. The inheritance is likened unto the full possession of eternal life in heaven with God (Eph 1:18). Here Paul points to three specific lifestyles. The emphasis here is on people who practice these sins on a continual basis, or possess these as a lifestyle, not single occurrences where someone has fallen.

Know with certainty that the wicked shall not inherit the kingdom of Christ and of God.

immoral person – a fornicator, **gk.** pornos, a (male) prostitute (as venal), i.e. (by analogy) a debauchee (libertine):--fornicator, whoremonger.

impure person – an unclean person, **gk.** akathartos, impure (ceremonially, morally (lewd) or specially, (demonic)):--foul, unclean.

covetous man, who is an idolater – a greedy person, **gk.** pleonektes, holding (desiring) more, i.e. eager for gain, (avaricious, hence a defrauder) covetous.

This is nothing new to the New Testament, scripture makes this same declaration over and over again.

Hebrews 13:4 - 4 Let marriage be held in honor among all, and let the marriage bed be undefiled; **for fornicators and adulterers God will judge**. NASB

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 - 9 Or do you not know that **the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor the covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers, shall inherit the kingdom of God.** 11 And such were some of you; but you were washed, but you were sanctified, but you were justified in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ, and in the Spirit of our God. NASB

Galatians 5:19-21 - 19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21 envying, drunkenness, carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you **that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God**. NASB

B. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience - Paul here warns the church, “**Let no one deceive you with empty words.**” What he is saying is what I have told you is true, don’t let anyone tell you otherwise. In fact he says, “**because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.**” These are the very things that have plunged creation into death and despair, it is because of these things that people go to hell. One cannot possibly think that they can live in these deplorable sins and be a member of the household of God or enter His kingdom.

Colossians 3:5-6 - 5 Therefore consider the members of your earthly body as dead to immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and greed, which amounts to idolatry. 6 **For it is on account of these things that the wrath of God will come**. NASB

Revelation 21:8 - 8 "But for the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, **their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.**" NASB

Ephesians 5:7-14 - 7 Therefore do not be partakers with them; 8 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light 9(for the fruit of the

light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), 10 trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. 11 And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; 12 for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. 13 But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. 14 For this reason it says, "Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you." NASB

A. Therefore do not be partakers with them; 8 for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; - Again Paul stressing the importance of separation from the evil deeds and lifestyles of unbelievers, but here, because **WE HAVE BEEN MADE NEW**, we "*were darkness*" but now "*are light in the Lord.*" Because we are light, we can no longer be partakers of the deeds of darkness, that would be to deny who we are, if indeed we are light in the Lord. The *theme* of darkness and light in the New Testament is commonly associated with the *behavior* of unbelievers which is characterized by sin, and believers which is characterized by holiness.

Matthew 5:14 - 14 "**You are the light of the world.** A city set on a hill cannot be hidden. NASB
Philippians 2:14-15 - 14 Do all things without grumbling or disputing; 15 that you may prove yourselves to be blameless and innocent, children of God above reproach in the midst of a crooked and perverse generation, **among whom you appear as lights in the world, NASB**
2 Corinthians 6:14 - 14 **Do not be bound together with unbelievers;** for what partnership have righteousness and lawlessness, or **what fellowship has light with darkness?** NASB
Romans 13:12-14 - 12 The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore **lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.** 13 Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. 14 But **put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh** in regard to its lusts. NASB

B. walk as children of light 9(for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness and righteousness and truth), 10 trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. – Here again are three contrasts with the *former* life of the Gentiles and the *new* life of the Christian;

- what brings the wrath of God ----- what is pleasing to the Lord
- fruitful walk as children of light ----- the unfruitful deeds of darkness
- immorality, impurity, covetous ----- goodness, righteousness, truth

Here we are exhorted to live like who we are, children of light. And this life **WILL PRODUCE THE FRUIT OF LIGHT** in our lives which is;

goodness - God's character or virtue, **gk.** agathosune, goodness, i.e. virtue or beneficence: --goodness.

righteousness - rightstanding with God, **gk.** dikaiosune, equity (of character or act); specially (Christian) justification:--righteousness

truth – that which is true, **gk.** aletheia, truth:--true, truly, truth, verity.

We are further exhorted to "*try and learn what is pleasing to the Lord.*" We are ever and continually learning what pleases God so that we may conform our lives to it, always seeking to know the will of God for our lives that we may do it!

1 Thessalonians 5:21-22 - 21 But **examine everything carefully; hold fast to that which is good; 22 abstain from every form of evil.** NASB

Romans 12:2 - 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, **that you may prove what the will of God is, that which is good and acceptable and perfect.** NASB

Philippians 1:9-10 - 9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more **in real knowledge and all discernment, 10 so that you may approve the things that are excellent, in order to be sincere and blameless** until the day of Christ; NASB

C. And do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; 12 for it is disgraceful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. 13 But all things become visible when they are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light. 14 For this reason it says, "Awake, sleeper, And arise from the dead, And Christ will shine on you." – The Christian is to have no part in sin for these are the deeds of darkness. These are **“unfruitful deeds”** and bring about no good thing, but rather only destruction. The Christian is to live a life of *separation* from sin. This theme is repeated again and again in scripture.

(2Cor 6:14, 1Cor 5:9-11, 10:20-22, 2Thes 3:6,14, 1 Tim 5:20, Rev 18:4, 2 Tim 3:5,)

Psalms 1:1 - How blessed is the man who **does not walk in the counsel of the wicked, Nor stand in the path of sinners,** Nor sit in the seat of scoffers! NASB

Romans 6:21- 21 Therefore **what benefit were you then deriving from the things of which you are now ashamed?** For the outcome of those things is death. NASB

No only this, but we here are called to **“expose or reprove”** these “deeds of darkness.” That we are to call attention to them and to bring the truth to bear upon them, exposing them to the light of God’s truth! The Greek word for expose here is the word...

expose – to reprove – **gk.** elegcho, 1651 - of uncertain affinity; to confute, admonish:--convict, convince, tell a fault, rebuke, reprove.

All of this because it is **“disgraceful or shameful to even mention”** what sinners do “in darkness,” much less participate with them. It is for these things that God’s wrath is coming!

Romans 13:11-14 - 11 And this do, knowing the time, **that it is already the hour for you to awaken from sleep;** for now salvation is nearer to us than when we believed. 12 The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. **Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and put on the armor of light.** 13 Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. 14 But **put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.** NASB

Is it a surprise to us that sinners don’t like to fellowship with us? Should we be shocked that sinners don’t darken the door at the church? Let us maintain that holy sense of separation in the church, continually bringing the light of God’s truth to shine upon our deeds and desires, and let God’s brightest sunbeams shine into the recesses of our hearts that we might be cleansed.

John 3:19-21 - 19 "And this is the judgment, that the light is come into the world, and **men loved the darkness rather than the light; for their deeds were evil. 20 "For everyone who does evil hates the light, and does not come to the light, lest his deeds should be exposed.** 21 "But he who practices the truth comes to the light, that his deeds may be manifested as having been wrought in God." NASB

Ephesians 5:15-17 - 15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil. 17 So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

A. 15 Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise, 16 making the most of your time, because the days are evil. – Here is the loud voice of wisdom calling to us.....**BE CAREFUL!** Be **“full of care”** to obey God and walk in all His ways and to love Him and serve Him! Do not be like the lazy man or the sluggard, but like the diligent and wise man in the way you live your Christian life! In Deuteronomy, Moses warns Israel again and again to **“be careful to follow all the words of this law so that it may go well with you.”** Here is a list of references from Deuteronomy where this is said. (Deuteronomy 2:4,4:15,5:1,6:3,6:25,8:1,11:22,11:32,12:1,12:13,12:19,12:28,12:32,15:5,16:12,17:10,

17:19, 19:9,23,24:8,26:16,28:1,28:13,28:58,31:12,32:46)

With such a high and holy calling as ours, how could we Christians do anything less. We must **BE VERY CAREFUL** then how we live, what we do, what we say, what we think!

Proverbs 2:11 - 11 **Discretion will guard you, Understanding will watch over you,** NASB

Proverbs 4:26 - 26 **Watch the path of your feet,** And all your ways will be established. NASB

It is possible to be a Christian and live like a fool...v-15,v-17....Paul tells us "**not as unwise men but as wise.**" Here is yet another contrast of Paul's, this between the life of wisdom and that of folly. Wisdom is supreme! It will guard our ways!

Proverbs 4:6-8 - 6 "Do not forsake her, and **she will guard you; Love her, and she will watch over you.** 7 "The beginning of wisdom is: Acquire wisdom; And with all your acquiring, get understanding. 8 **"Prize her, and she will exalt you; She will honor you if you embrace her.**

NASB

B. Here Paul tells how to be careful and wise, he says "**making the most of your time.**" Oh that we could regain those precious moments of time which have slipped out of our reach! This is imperative for Christians to heed, but all too often we waste our time and suffer for it! Hear the wisdom in *Jonathon Edwards'* resolutions numbers 4-6.....

4. Resolved, never to do any manner of thing, whether in soul or body, less or more, but what tends to the glory of God; nor be, nor suffer it, if I can avoid it.

5. Resolved, never to lose one moment of time; but improve it the most profitable way I possibly can.

6. Resolved, to live with all my might, while I do live.

We must "**make the most of our time**" in order that we do what is most beneficial for our lives and for the lives of our families. Here are things which can be done to make the most of time, a quote from Barnes....

(1.) in gaining useful knowledge;

(2.) in doing good to others;

(3.) in employing it for the purpose of an honest livelihood for themselves and families;

(4.) in prayer and self-examination, to make the heart better;

(5.) in seeking salvation, and in endeavoring to do the will of God.

Paul also explains WHY we should do this, he says "**because the days are evil.**" Evil is all around us, tempting us to waste our time and squander it away in useless endeavors which bring no fruit at all. One main goal of Christian life is to be as effective and productive as possible. We should be effectively fulfilling the work of the ministry and producing fruit which glorifies God.

John 15:1-9 - 15:1 "I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. 2 **"Every branch in Me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit.** 3 "You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. 4 "Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. 5 **"I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in Me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from Me you can do nothing.**

6 "If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. 7 "If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. 8 **"By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples.** NASB

2 Peter 1:5-9 - 5 Now for this very reason also, **applying all diligence, in your faith** supply moral excellence, and in your moral excellence, knowledge; 6 and in your knowledge, self-control, and in your self-control, perseverance, and in your perseverance, godliness; 7 and in your godliness, brotherly kindness, and in your brotherly kindness, love. 8 For if these qualities are

yours and are increasing, **they render you neither useless nor unfruitful** in the true knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ. NASB

C. 17 So then do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. – Again the exhortation against folly. The contrast here is to **“be foolish”** and to **“understand what the will of the Lord is.”** Obviously the call here is to **“understanding”** verses **“foolish thinking.”** We must have a thorough understanding of God’s will, (this is spiritual wisdom), in order that we can do it. This was Paul’s great desire for the church for which he continually prayed.

Ephesians 1:17-18 - 17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, **the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him. 18 I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, so that you may know** what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, NASB

Philippians 1:8-11 - 9 And this I pray, that your love may abound still more and more **in real knowledge and all discernment, 10 so that you may approve the things that are excellent,** in order to be sincere and blameless until the day of Christ; 11 having been filled with the fruit of righteousness which comes through Jesus Christ, to the glory and praise of God. NASB

Colossians 1:9-10 - 9 For this reason also, since the day we heard of it, we have not ceased to pray for you and **to ask that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,** 10 so that you may walk in a manner worthy of the Lord, to please Him in all respects, bearing fruit in every good work and increasing in the knowledge of God; NASB

Because the days are evil, and our minds naturally tend toward the flesh and to folly, we must be in pursuit of spiritual wisdom and understanding. As the Proverbs tell us.....

Proverbs 4:5-7 - 5 **Acquire wisdom! Acquire understanding!** Do not forget, nor turn away from the words of my mouth. 6 "Do not forsake her, and she will guard you; Love her, and she will watch over you. 7 **"The beginning of wisdom is: Acquire wisdom; And with all your acquiring, get understanding.** NASB

Proverbs 23:23 - 23 **Buy truth, and do not sell it, Get wisdom and instruction and understanding.** NASB

Is the wisdom of God resident within you mind by nature? Do you know all of the treasures of God? Certainly you do not, therefore you must acquire it! Here again the exhortation of wisdom, it must be our chief pursuit!

Proverbs 2:1-7 – 1 My son, if you will receive my sayings, And **treasure my commandments within you, 2 Make your ear attentive to wisdom, Incline your heart to understanding; 3 For if you cry for discernment, Lift your voice for understanding; 4 If you seek her as silver, And search for her as for hidden treasures;** 5 Then you will discern the fear of the LORD, And discover the knowledge of God. 6 For the LORD gives wisdom; From His mouth come knowledge and understanding. 7 He stores up sound wisdom for the upright; He is a shield to those who walk in integrity, NASB

Six things we are exhorted to do here to acquire wisdom.

- **TREASURE** my commandments within you,
- **2 MAKE YOUR EAR ATTENTIVE** to wisdom,
- **INCLINE YOUR HEART** to understanding;
- 3 For **IF YOU CRY** for discernment,
- **LIFT YOUR VOICE** for understanding; (that is to pray)
- 4 If you **SEEK** her as silver, And **SEARCH** for her as for hidden treasures;

God has clearly revealed His will to us in the scripture. More than this, He has given us the Holy Spirit to give us illumination of Himself and understanding of the truth. As Paul has said we are to **“try and learn what is pleasing to the Lord”** and to **“understand what the will of the Lord is.”** (John 16:7-15, 1 John 5:20, Col 2:1-3)

Ephesians 5:18-20 - And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit, 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; NASB

A. 18 And do not get drunk with wine, for that is dissipation, but be filled with the Spirit - yet another contrast in Paul’s teaching here. This time is it the foolishness of “being drunk” with the wisdom of being “filled with the Spirit.” In context here this is a vivid picture.....

Ephesians 5:15-18 Contrast	
<p><u>Drunk</u> NOT “being careful how you live” v-15 Unwise v-15 NOT making the most of your time” v-16 Foolish v-17</p>	<p><u>Filled with the Spirit</u> “Being careful how you live” v-15 Wise v-15 “Making the most of your time” v-16 “Understanding the will of the Lord” v-17</p>

“Do not get drunk with wine!” Could this be any clearer? Let everybody hear the Word of the Lord, **“DO NOT GET DRUNK!”** Surely the exhortation is broadened beyond just wine itself, but do not get intoxicated with anything! When one loses their faculties or self-control to alcohol or any other substance, this is surely a foolish waste of time and this is why the Apostle calls it **“dissipation.”**

Proverbs 20:1 - 20:1 Wine is a mocker, strong drink a brawler, And **whoever is intoxicated by it is not wise.** NASB

Proverbs 23:29-35 - 29 Who has woe? Who has sorrow? Who has contentions? Who has complaining? Who has wounds without cause? Who has redness of eyes? 30 **Those who linger long over wine,** Those who go to taste mixed wine. 31 Do not look on the wine when it is red, When it sparkles in the cup, **When it goes down smoothly; 32 At the last it bites like a serpent, And stings like a viper. 33 Your eyes will see strange things, And your mind will utter perverse things. 34 And you will be like one who lies down in the middle of the sea, Or like one who lies down on the top of a mast. 35** "They struck me, but I did not become ill; They beat me, but I did not know it. When shall I awake? **I will seek another drink."** NASB

Beyond this, **“drunkenness”** is a sin and the bible warns of its destructive consequences over and over. Who among us has not seen first hand a life ruined or imprisoned by the disastrous affects of this murderous tool which Satan wields? More than this, it is again listed among those sins which Paul says keep us from Heaven’s glorious gate!

1 Corinthians 6:9-11 - 9 Or do you not know **that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God?** Do not be deceived; neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, 10 nor thieves, nor the covetous, **nor drunkards,** nor revilers, nor swindlers, **shall inherit the kingdom of God.** NASB

Galatians 5:19-21 - 19 Now the deeds of the flesh are evident, which are: immorality, impurity, sensuality, 20 idolatry, sorcery, enmities, strife, jealousy, outbursts of anger, disputes, dissensions, factions, 21 envying, **drunkenness,** carousing, and things like these, of which I forewarn you just as I have forewarned you **that those who practice such things shall not inherit the kingdom of God.** NASB

In fact says Paul, if any **“so-called”** brother is a **“drunkard,”** you **“should not even eat with him”** but rather should “shun him” and **“remove”** him from fellowship. A harsh sentence indeed, but one of great love!

1 Corinthians 5:11-13 - 11 But actually, I wrote to you **not to associate with any so-called brother if he should be** an immoral person, or covetous, or an idolater, or a reviler, **or a drunkard**, or a swindler — **not even to eat with such a one**. 12 For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Do you not judge those who are within the church? 13 But those who are outside, God judges. **Remove the wicked man from among yourselves**. NASB

But **“be filled with the Spirit!”** Now here is a careful, wise way to spend our time. We are to **“understand the will of God”** and **“be filled”** with those things which He approves and considers excellent! Since the Spirit of God resides in us He is readily available to fellowship and fill our lives with His good bounty! We must therefore avail ourselves of His good presence by ready submission to the divine will, and set our minds and hearts on things above!

Colossians 3:1-2 - 3:1 If then you have been raised up with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. 2 **Set your mind on the things above, not on the things that are on earth**. NASB

One might ask, “how do I do this,” that is **“be filled with the Spirit?”** This Paul answers in the next verse.....

B. 19 speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; 20 always giving thanks for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to God, even the Father; - Here is how we are filled with the Spirit! It is to lift our hearts in worship to God and allow His divine presence to overcome us to the point of taking on His character. It is to set our minds and hearts on Him and be filled with all of His goodness. We are to sing, and be thankful, for “all things!” The sister passage in Colossians gives very practical advice on this.....

Colossians 3:12-17 - 12 And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, **put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; 13 bearing with one another, and forgiving each other**, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, **so also should you**. 14 And beyond all these things **put on love**, which is the perfect bond of unity. 15 And **let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts**, to which indeed you were called in one body; and **be thankful**. 16 Let **the word of Christ richly dwell within you**, with all wisdom **teaching and admonishing one another with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with thankfulness in your hearts to God**. 17 And whatever you do in word or deed, **do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks** through Him to God the Father. NASB

Here are nine things we can do to be filled with the Spirit!

- **PUT ON A HEART** of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience
- **BEARING WITH** one another, and **FORGIVING** each other
- **PUT ON LOVE**
- **LET** the **PEACE** of Christ **RULE** in your hearts
- **BE THANKFUL**
- the **WORD OF CHRIST RICHLY DWELL** within you
- **TEACHING AND ADMONISHING** one another
- psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, **SINGING WITH THANKFULNESS** in your hearts to God
- do **ALL IN THE NAME OF THE LORD JESUS**, giving thanks

It should be said that this contrast would have significant meaning to the Ephesian Christians as the pagan feasts of worship in Ephesus were in fact drunken celebrations of immorality and revelry, filled with the practice of every kind of impurity with greediness.

Ephesians 5:21 - 21 and be subject to one another in the fear of Christ.

A. be subject to one another – Submission is a primary characteristic of a Christian. We are to submit continually to God, with reverence do we obey His will. We are to submit to those older than us(1 Pet 5:5), submit to the governing authorities(1 Pet 2:13,Rom 13:1-5), submit to the leaders of the church(Heb 13:17), to our parents and masters(Eph 6:1-6), and here to **“one another.”**

be subject – to subordinate, to line up under, - **gk.** hupotasso, 5293; to subordinate; reflexively, to obey:--be under obedience (obedient), put under, subdue unto, (be, make) subject (to, unto), be (put) in subjection (to, under), submit self unto.

This is a fundamental element in ALL Christian relationships and it is the basis for the whole passage from Eph 5:22- Eph 6:9.

James 3:17 - 17 But the wisdom from above is first pure, **then peaceable, gentle, reasonable,** full of mercy and good fruits, unwavering, without hypocrisy. NASB

This attitude of submission **“to one another”** provides an atmosphere of peace every time. Each person should find that proper authority which God has ordained and line up underneath it or submit to it. If we submit to one another, we allow for each other’s shortcomings and do not demand our own rights, granting honor to one another for Jesus sake. This is dying to self. This is a major KEY to the marriage relationship.

Luke 9:23 - 23 And He was saying to them all, "If anyone wishes to come after Me, **let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me.** NAS

B. in the fear of Christ – The motivation for our submission to one another is reverence or **“fear of Christ.”** When we submit for this purpose, we hit the mark every time. If we expect some human response, we are likely to be disappointed. But if we submit to reverence and obey Christ, we succeed every time.

Example: *If a wife is submissive to her husband so that he will be the loving leader, provider and protector he should be, she will be sadly disappointed in his human failure. This is an **improper motivation** for submission.*

Ephesians 5:22-24 - 22 Wives, be subject to your own husbands, as to the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. 24 But as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives ought to be to their husbands in everything. NASB

A. Wives, be subject to your own husbands - Here is the wives’ duty. To **“be subject”** to your own husbands. The wife is to recognize and be subject to the God given authority of the husband, for God has appointed him as **“head of the wife.”**

1 Peter 3:1-3 - 3:1 In the same way, **you wives, be submissive to your own husbands** so that even if any of them are disobedient to the word, they may be won without a word by the behavior of their wives, 2 as they observe your chaste and respectful behavior. NASB

Titus 2:4-5 - that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, **being subject to their own husbands,** that the word of God may not be dishonored. NASB

Colossians 3:18-19 - 18 **Wives, be subject to your husbands,** as is fitting in the Lord. NASB

These terms describe the “role” of the husband and wife, not some God given right to “lord over” or “rule over” for the husband’s own selfish benefit. But in the loving attitude of Christ, he fulfills his God appointed role, to protect and to guide, to provide and nurture his wife and family. And for this the husband will give an account to God.

B. as to the Lord – The wife is to submit to the husband as she would to God himself. Anytime we subject ourselves to authority, it is for the sake of obedience to God. This submission is to take place regardless of the husband's personal worthiness or spiritual condition. A wife who doesn't respond properly to her husband's direction manifests a serious spiritual dysfunction, it is surely sin against the Lord. Would the church treat Christ with contempt? On the other hand, a wife who responds willingly and lovingly, honors God, her husband, her family, her church, and herself. Submission is the beauty of a godly woman!

1 Peter 3:4-6 - 4 but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable **quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God.** 5 For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, **being submissive to their own husbands.** 6 Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear. NASB

C. For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the church, He Himself being the Savior of the body. – The husband is the head of the wife in the same manner as Christ is the head of the church. The sense is, she is subordinate to him; and in all circumstances - in her attitude, her dress, her conversation, in public and in the family circle--should recognize her subordination to him.

1 Corinthians 11:3 - 3 But I want you to understand that Christ is the head of every man, and the **man is the head of a woman,** and God is the head of Christ. NASB

D. wives should submit to their husbands in everything. – This statement makes it very clear the *extent* to which the wives' submission should be. However, the wife should not submit in the case of a husband who would lead his wife into sin, neither should she submit to a physically abusive husband. The goal of submission is to please and obey Christ. Wives who are unwilling to lovingly submit to their husbands are robbing themselves of fulfillment in marriage. The very thing they desire to have, they are in reality rejecting. Not only this, but more importantly a non-submissive wife is disobedient and rebellious to God who commands the wife to respect her husband and submit to him **"in everything"** and **"as to the lord."** This rebel behavior is truly a blight to femininity, and it dishonors God's Word.

Titus 2:4-5 - that they may encourage the young women to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 to be sensible, pure, workers at home, kind, **being subject to their own husbands, that the word of God may not be dishonored.** NASB

Ephesians 5:25-27 - 25 Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her;

A. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself up for her - Here is the husband's duty. In submitting to God, he is to love his wife with the same self-sacrificing love that Christ gave for the church. In this love the wife would never be violated but rather always encouraged, supported, nurtured and protected. The husband should at all cost, give of himself in order to meet his wife's needs (whatever they are), even if it means his life! What an example of selfless love that we have in Christ! Truly husbands have a noble and lofty goal. How should a husband love his wife? – **"Just as Christ loved the church,"** consider the love of Christ.....

Christ's Love Is:

Sacrificial – Christ was willing to give everything He had for the well being of His bride the church. He gave "Himself." Even His very life He did not withhold from her. Here is an example of the *DEGREE* to which a husband should love and care for his wife.

Husband's should be willing to die for the protection and support of their wives. ***Are you a sacrificial husband?***

Gracious – Christ loves and gives regardless of merit. In fact, Christ gives to those who do not deserve it. Jesus gave His life in the midst of our rebellion. Oh that we would love so freely as our precious Christ! Husbands are to grant their wives honor, she is your partner, bone of your bone, the love of your life! Give all that you have for her joy, has not Jesus done this for you? ***Are you're a gracious husband?***

Romans 5:8 - 8 But God demonstrates His own love toward us, in that **while we were yet sinners**, Christ died for us. NAS

Patient - Husbands should be patient with their wives, allowing them time for Christ to be formed in them. Oh that we were as patient as Christ! His patience is endless for the objects of His love. His love is truly unfailing. When a husband is impatient with his wife, his love fails. Husbands must be patient with their wives, remembering the patience of Christ with them. ***Are you a patient husband?***

1 Corinthians 13:7-8 - 7 **bears all things**, believes all things, hopes all things, **endures all things. 8 Love never fails;** NAS

Kind – Jesus is kind to the church with a benevolent disposition which always seeks the comfort and blessing and joy of His church. He seeks her highest good, and her joy – no matter the cost. Husbands should speak kindly to their wives. Husband should practice kindness. This is the example of Christ. ***Are you a kind husband?***

Romans 8:28 - 28 And we know that God causes all things to **work together for good to those** who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. NAS

Meek & Gentle – Christ's love is gentle. Although He is "God very God" and has the command of angels, He stoops to wash the feet of those He loves. He speaks gently and possesses meekness toward all. Husbands must be gentle with their wives. They are precious gifts from God, made of "sugar and spice and everything nice." They ain't your huntin buddies! A godly husband treats his wife tenderly. ***Are you a gentle husband?***

Matthew 11:29-30 - 29 "Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for **I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls.** 30 "For My yoke is easy, and My load is light." NASB

Sincere – Christ has a sincere and genuine love for His bride. He loves in deed and in truth(1 John 3:18), not with a mask on the outside and grumblings in His heart. If a husband has an insincere love, although he will try to cover up his wicked heart and play the part, on the outside it will be quite obvious that his love is hypocritical for he will have true lack of affection, and devotion to his wife's joy. This will be destructive to the marriage indeed! Husbands must have a sincere and non-hypocritical love for their wives.

Romans 12:9-10 - 9 **Let love be without hypocrisy.** Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good. 10 Be devoted to one another in brotherly love; give preference to one another in honor; NASB

Selfless & Serving – Christ's love does not seek its own, but rather the benefit of its object. Jesus did the "work of love." He demonstrated His love in the washing of His disciples feet. He was willing to humble Himself and serve the ones He loved. He offered His back to be torn, He offered His hands to the nails. This was none to His own benefit, except the joy that it brought His beloved. ***Are you a selfless and serving husband?***

Love is a choice - Love is primarily an act of the will. Here it is a verb, "***Husbands, love your wives***" and it requires ACTION. Although it produces deep and profound emotions and affection, love is a commitment rather than a feeling, otherwise it could not be commanded. Here husbands are commanded to love their wives. God is not demanding an emotion from us but rather an ACTION motivated by the will.

Colossians 3:19 - 19 **Husbands, love your wives**, and do not be embittered against them. NASB Husbands should **“not be embittered against their wives,”** this is very destructive. Consider the attitude of Christ toward His church. Although she falls short of His favor in her practice, in position before Him she is **“holy and blameless”** and **“in all of her glory.”** A husband's contempt towards his wife tears her down, it does not edify her or grant her the healing she needs. Instead he should **“nourish and cherish her.”**

Ephesians 5:28-30 - 28 So **husbands ought also to love their own wives** as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; 29 for no one ever hated his own flesh, **but nourishes and cherishes it**, just as Christ also does the church, 30 because we are members of His body. NASB

Ephesians 5:26-27 - 26 that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, 27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. NASB

A. that He might sanctify her - Why is it that Christ loves the church? He will stop at nothing to make us holy, even give His own flesh for crucifixion, if it will purify us. And all of this **“that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless.”** Now a husband is to seek this holiness in His wife at all costs, and why? Because it is the example that was given of Christ, more than that, that she might be **“in all her glory,”** for she is a fellow heir of the grace of life. Any godly man has a great desire for his wife to be holy and pure. He seeks the holiness of his wife and marriage, even as he seeks the holiness of himself. It is his highest goal in glorifying God because they are one flesh. **Purifying** – Christ's love is a righteous love. It always seeks the holiness of its objects, for holiness is the very essence of His character and His great desire for His beloved. Husbands should have a holy zeal to purify their wives and families. This, for the husband, is a relentless pursuit. **Are you a purifying husband?**

Galatians 4:19 - 19 My children, with **whom I am again in labor until Christ is formed in you.**

Protecting – Jesus has given us the greatest protection of all, the hope of eternal life. He has secured for us an eternal salvation, indeed we are in for an eternity of blessing and fulfillment. Wives should feel secure in the love of their husbands. Husbands, it is your responsibility to be sure your wife has a sanctuary in your love. She must know that she is loved unconditionally and accepted by you at all times. You must communicate your love and affection to your wife! **Are you a protecting husband?**

Matt 11:28-30 - 28 "Come to Me, all who are weary and heavy-laden, and **I will give you rest.** 29 "Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for **I am gentle and humble in heart;** and you shall find **rest for your souls.** 30 "For **My yoke is easy, and My load is light."**

B. having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word - So how does a husband purify his wife?

- He being the head and spiritual leader in his home, continually holds the Word out before her. Purifying his own life, in order to lead her by example, he **keeps bringing the Word before her** that she might be transformed by the renewing of her mind.
- Prayer and scripture reading should be a regular practice in the home, **at the husbands lead**. The husband is to set standards and give wisdom and guidance according to God's will for his family.
- He is Prophet, Priest, and King in his home. Christ fills these three offices to the church. The **Prophet** sees, hears, and speaks the Word of God, the **Priest** mediates between God and family, the **King** rules the home through servant leadership and lovingkindness. Not in the sinful human character, but in the gracious character of Christ.

Romans 12:2 - 2 And **do not be conformed to this world**, but be **transformed by the renewing of your mind**, that you may prove what the will of God is, **that which is good and acceptable and perfect**. NAS

C. 27 that He might present to Himself the church in all her glory, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she should be holy and blameless. – Christ sanctifies His bride in order to **“present her to Himself.”** This looks forward to that day when the church will be united to Christ forever in heaven. There she will be presented to Him **“in all her glory,” “having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing.”** At that time, the church will be **“holy and blameless”** in practice, even as she is now in position. Even so, husbands ought to have this same motivation, that she should be “holy and blameless,” without “any spot or blemish or any such thing!” Husbands should seek to sanctify their wives from all forms of impurity, even as they do themselves.

2 Corinthians 7:1 - 7:1 Therefore, having these promises, beloved, **let us cleanse ourselves from all defilement of flesh and spirit, perfecting holiness in the fear of God**. NASB

Jude 24 - 24 Now to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling, **and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless** with great joy, NASB

Ephesians 5:28-30 - 28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; 29 for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, 30 because we are members of His body. NASB

A. 28 So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies. He who loves his own wife loves himself; - Again Paul speaks of the **DEGREE** to which a husband should love his wife, **“even as he loves himself,”** or to the degree that he loves himself. Even as a man cares for the needs and desires of his own body, so should he care for the needs and desires of his wife. This also will bring the benefit to the marriage it does to life, when you love yourself your needs are met and the body is fulfilled. So also in marriage, when you love your wife and care for her needs, there is a fulfillment in marriage. Consider what a shameful matter it is for a married woman to be unloved by her husband.

Proverbs 30:21-23 - 21 **Under three things the earth quakes, And under four, it cannot bear up:** 22 Under a slave when he becomes king, And a fool when he is satisfied with food, 23 **Under**

an unloved woman when she gets a husband, And a maidservant when she supplants her mistress. NASB

B. 29 for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ also does the church, 30 because we are members of His body – Here Paul seeks to enforce the husbands responsibility to love his wife by saying “*just as Christ also does the church.*” Here he describes Christ’s love as “*nourishing and cherishing.*”

Nurturing – Christ nurtures us each and every day. Why, He gives us life and breathe and all things! He richly provides for us His abundance of Joy and Peace, his mercy and His love endure forever! Husbands should nurture their wives. We are their provider and should seek to meet all of their needs, spiritual, emotional, social and physical. ***Are you a nurturing husband?***

How does Christ nourish His church?

Cherishing – Christ treasures His church. He loves her and cares for her. He continually seeks her joy and blessing. This is the great focus and entire purpose of His life and ministry. In fulfilling the Father’s plan, he labored and strived to redeem the church, giving His own life in sacrifice to show His love and “win her to Himself” by His great devotion to her. Husbands cannot show their wives genuine lovingkindness unless they genuinely cherish them in the hearts. Otherwise it is only duty and not motivated by true affection and desire. Husbands should mimic Christ’s devotion to His bride. ***Do you cherish your wife?***

How do we know that Christ treasures His church?

Can a husband cherish his wife if he does not genuinely value her in his heart? _____
Why/Why not?

Affectionate – If a husband genuinely cherishes his wife, he will manifest it by godly affection. This meets a deep and profound need in the life of a wife, she ***needs*** affection. A husband must tenderly give visible manifestations of his affection to his wife, and not for the motive of sexual gratification but out of genuine affection in his heart. This would include actions and words. ***Are you an affectionate husband?***

In what ways do we see Christ’s affection for His church?

Rewarding – We often focus on bad things rather than good and noble. Christ overlooks our failures and *commends us for our righteousness*. We often take our wives for granted. Christ appreciates and *rewards our love to Him*. When you’ve worked hard, do you reward yourself? Of course, if nothing else you rest when you’re tired. How then can you disregard rewarding your wife if you are to love her as your own self? ***Are you a rewarding husband?***

Does Christ reward His church? _____ How? _____

C. **Meeting a woman’s emotional needs** – Husbands have a divine calling to meet the needs of their wives, just like they care for their own. You wouldn’t deprive yourself of food or clothing. Nor would you ignore your own spiritual and emotional needs, would you? We are therefore to meet these same needs for our wives. You wouldn’t starve yourself, so why then would you starve your wife of affection?

- The an important thing to many wives is a *daily time of intimate communication* with their husbands.
- Woman have a need to feel appreciated and accepted as do men. A husband must *verbalize his appreciation and acceptance* of his wife.
- Husbands need to praise their wives and *speak affectionately* to them! They must know that we adore them! Remember how you would speak to her when you were courting....
- A husband’s love should not be controlling and binding, but generally speaking it should be *freeing, encouraging and uplifting*.
- The most beneficial thing a father can do for his children is to love his wife.

What are some of a woman’s emotional needs?

1. Quality *time together* with husband, doing whatever, the time is what is important.
2. A husband who is spiritually whole, who meets her spiritual needs. One who models Christ in his behavior and *leads her and her family to Christ continually*.
3. A husband who is sincere in his love to her and *expresses genuine love* from his heart.
4. When overloaded or stressed, a woman needs “*space*” or a brief time away to unwind, or at times “*help*” with her responsibilities or even a “*break.*” The stresses and work of motherhood and wifery are constantly there to weigh her down.
5. A husband that will *comfort her frequently*, rather than lecture or criticize. She needs your shoulder not your mouth in times of failure or crisis.
6. She needs your *understanding, kind-hearted attention and listening ear*.
7. Constant *criticism is destructive*. At times criticisms may be necessary, but they should be done gently and tenderly and motivated by prayerful godly love.
8. *Verbally express your love to her* and her kids. Saying “I love you” when you leave to the family gives them security. Don’t just think they know you love them, tell them. Consider what evil may be in your heart that would keep you from verbalizing your love to your wife? Pride is often a huge stumbling block here.

Ephesians 5:31 - 31 For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh.

A. 31 For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife; and the two shall become one flesh. – *Quote from Gen 2:24...* The marriage is to be **unbreakable union** between husband and wife. Death alone is the cause for separation. (Mark 10:9) Husband and wife are to be united as one not only socially but also physically, mentally and spiritually. They are united in the purpose to love and serve one another, to be the one who completes the other. Man and woman are incomplete without the other.

1 Corinthians 11:8-9 - 8 For **man does not originate from woman, but woman from man**; 9 for indeed man was not created for the woman's sake, but woman for the man's sake. NASB (Adam Clarke) – “for Adam, knowing how the woman was formed, said, **This is flesh of my flesh, and bone of my bone.** God could have formed the woman out of the dust of the earth, as he had formed the man; but had he done so, she must have appeared in his eyes as a distinct being, to whom he had no natural relation. But as God formed her out of a part of the man himself, he saw she was of the same nature, the same identical flesh and blood, and of the same constitution in all respects, and consequently having equal powers, faculties, and rights. This at once ensured his affection, and excited his esteem.”

The importance of this truth cannot be overstated. Man and woman become one family unit, distinct from the one they were raised in. “**For this cause a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife.**” Two very important matters here:

1. That the husband and the wife **make that proper separation from the parents** and family they were raised in. Many a peril enters a marriage from its in-laws.
2. That **every parent should allow for that separation** when they marry off a child. It is a shameful thing for the in-law parents to seek control and improper influence in their offspring's marriage.

This union is furthermore a symbol of something much greater, the union of Christ with His bride, the church. To this the apostle looks and causes us to ponder in the following verse.

Ephesians 5:32 - 32 This mystery is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.

A. This mystery is great – What is the “*mystery*” here? Not our human relationship, we are accustomed to that. But the true reality to which it points, the relationship of Christ with His bride the church. This is indeed “*mysterious*” and “*great.*” Paul makes it clear that the whole matter of the marriage union is a great mystery, in how it typifies the Christ church relationship.

B. but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church - Marriage as a **TYPE**(a typical prophecy) of Christ's relation to His people – There are many resemblances of marriage to the union of Christ, the Living God, and His “bride” the church.

- The first **Adam, the father of the whole human race**, is an image of Christ the last Adam, the father of the church universal, and the company of the redeemed and living body, the church, throughout the ages to come.(Rom 5:14, 1 Cor 15:45)
- Eve, the “**mother of all the living,**” is a type of the Church, “the mother of all the Living,” that elect company of people who shall live forevermore.
- The **deep sleep** at the formation of Eve, was a type of Christ's death.
- The **taking of the rib from Adam's side** was a type of the broken body of Christ, which produced Eve(the Church), and she originated from his opened side. The

Church also originated from the opening of the side of Christ upon the cross. We are only a people through the broken body of Christ.

- The **formation of Eve from the opened side of Adam**, and of Adam's flesh, is a type of the regeneration of believers in Christ, to life eternal, her life was a picture of our life "**in Christ.**" She was "bone of his bone, and flesh of his flesh", so we shall be like Christ at the resurrection. (1 Cor 15:45-49)
- The **love which Adam expressed towards Eve**, and his union with her by marriage, were lively images of Christ's love to believers, and of his eternal union with them in one society after their resurrection.
- The **procreation of Adam's children** is a type of the evangelism of the Church. Through the intimate love of Christ and His church (sexual intimacy of Adam and Eve), offspring are produced. Indeed all the living are alive by this one fact only, that they have become a member of the church through the union with Christ by faith in His death and atonement.

C. The Bride of Christ – The church is over and over called the bride of Christ in the scriptures. She is forever joined to Christ, and the two shall become one, forever and ever, world without end. This is indeed a "profound mystery."

(Rev 19:7, 2 Cor 11:2-3, Isaiah 54:5, Jer 2:2, 3:14, Eze 16:8-32, Hos 2:19-20, Matt 25:1-10)

Revelation 19:7-8 - 7 "Let us rejoice and be glad and give the glory to Him, **for the marriage of the Lamb has come and His bride has made herself ready.**" 8 And it was given to her to clothe herself in fine linen, bright and clean; for the fine linen is the righteous acts of the saints NASB

D. The Church a type of marriage – Conversely, shall we look at marriage symbolized by Christ and His church. A truly Christian marriage has an excellence, holiness, and unity in it, that cannot be easily described; and it should be full of the joy and purity of the Lord and His people. Husbands should view their wives through the eyes of Christ, loving and nurturing and cherishing and protecting them. He should serve her in love, gently giving his leadership and always seeking her purity in everything. Wives should view their husbands through the eyes of the church, respecting and serving him in love. Our marriage should to large degree, typify this marvelous relation.

Ephesians 5:33 - 33 Nevertheless let each individual among you also love his own wife even as himself; and let the wife see to it that she respect her husband. NASB

A. This scripture sums up the passage before. It identifies the basic roles of both husband and wife. The husband is to give himself in sacrificial love to his wife, to level that he cares "**for himself**" and that "**Christ does His church.**" And she is to respect her husband, "**as to the Lord**" and "**in everything.**" The unity of marriage is a beautiful and profound mystery, which in its original design, should bring great fulfillment and blessings to its participants.

B. let the wife see to it - Here is inferred the responsibility the wife bears in obedience to God. She must "**see to it**" that she respect her husband!

C. that she respect her husband – Respect here dealing with the inward condition of the heart, not merely the outward expression of it. The wife should genuinely respect her husband in her heart in like manner as the church does with Christ. She should not hold an inner resentment and disdain for him, for she will surely bear the fruit of this in her actions. A wife who holds bitter resentment toward her husband dishonors God and has forgotten that good grace which was extended to her in Christ!

How is it that the wife should respect the husband and to what **DEGREE**? This is answered in verse 22 and verse 24; she should do it.....

- **As to the Lord** - The wife is to submit to the husband as she would to God himself, or as is proper in the Lord.
- **In everything** – Here the extent of submission, in all matters in life and marriage. In every single thing, not that she does not retain the right to appeal, but her ultimate resolve is submission to the husbands will.

1 Peter 3:4-6 - 4 but let it be the hidden person of the heart, with the imperishable **quality of a gentle and quiet spirit, which is precious in the sight of God**. 5 For in this way in former times the holy women also, who hoped in God, used to adorn themselves, **being submissive to their own husbands**. 6 Thus Sarah obeyed Abraham, calling him lord, and you have become her children if you do what is right without being frightened by any fear.
NASB

John Piper (from the book-What's the difference):

This is the way God intended it before there was any sin in the world: sinless man, full of love, in his tender, strong leadership in relation to woman; and sinless woman, full of love, in her joyful, responsive support for man's leadership. Two intelligent, humble, God entranced beings living out, in beautiful harmony, their unique and different responsibilities. Sin distorted this purpose at every level.

Biblical headship for the husband is the divine calling to take primary responsibility for Christlike, servant leadership, protection and provision in the home.

Biblical submission for the wife is the divine calling to honor and affirm her husband's leadership and help carry it through according to her gifts.

Ephesians 6:1 - Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. NASB
A. Here the apostle shifts the discussion from practical teaching to the married to “*children*.” The instruction is to children and it is very clear and concise. Children are to “*obey*” their parents. This is the children’s role in mutual submission. They are to “*submit*” or “line up under” the God ordained authority in their lives as verse 5:21 commands.

Ephesians 5:21 - 21 and **be subject to one another** in the fear of Christ.

B. Children, obey your parents - What does “*obey your parents*” imply? – There is an authority/submission principle at work. Parents are to implement directives and children are to obey them. Several points could be made here;

- The order and welfare of the family and society depend on it.
- Children are not qualified to direct themselves. They are in need of guidance and direction and are not naturally competent to make decisions about their personal welfare.
- How will they learn this obedience? – You **MUST** teach them.
- How can we teach them obedience? – You must command them and cause them to follow through. You must **ASSERT AND ENFORCE** your authority.

C. in the Lord, for this is right - This he says is “*in the Lord*” or consistent with the Lord and His teaching or for the Lord’s sake, and furthermore points out that “*this is right*”. This is the commandment of God, the 5th, “honor your father and mother.” There is a right and a wrong. In the case of children, “*right*” is obedience to their parents. Further, God is “*well pleased*” by this!

Exodus 20:12 - 12 "**Honor your father and your mother**, that your days may be prolonged in the land which the LORD your God gives you. NASB

Colossians 3:20 - 20 Children, be obedient to your parents in all things, **for this is well-pleasing to the Lord**. NASB

Are there exceptions? As far as their commandments agree with those of God, and no farther. No parent can have a right to require a child to steal, or lie, or cheat, or assist him in committing murder, or in doing any other wrong thing. No parent has a right to forbid a child to pray, to read the Bible, or to worship God.

Ephesians 6:2 - Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise) NASB

A. Honor your father and mother – Another directive to children, this time dealing with the heart. They are to honor their parents. This means that the inner attitude of the heart must be one of respect and honor. Outward acts of honor only follow a truly respectful heart. This has always been the standard of God.

Leviticus 19:2-4 - 2 "Speak to all the congregation of the sons of Israel and say to them, 'You shall be holy, for I the LORD your God am holy. **3'Every one of you shall reverence his mother and his father**, and you shall keep My sabbaths; I am the LORD your God. NASB

Exodus 21:17 - 17 And he who curses his father or his mother **shall surely be put to death**. NASB

Proverbs 30:17 - 17 The **eye that mocks a father, And scorns a mother**, The ravens of the valley will pick it out, And the young eagles will eat it. NASB

What relation do you suppose “*honor*” has to do with authority? Children must respect and submit(verse5:21) to the authority of their parents. Parents must assert and enforce their authority and bring the child to obedience. How can a child learn this behavior unless their parents teach them? In fact, if a child does not learn to submit to the authority

of his/her parents through discipline, they will not learn to honor and obey any authority including God Himself, which WILL eventually lead to their eternal death. Consider, even as a child does not naturally obey their parents, neither do they naturally honor them.

Proverbs 19:18 - 18 Discipline your son while there is hope, **And do not desire his death** . NASB

B. By what means do we cause and teach them to honor us?

- By means of gracious love and care for them. A parents' kind and patient love affords a child reverence and honor for the parent.

Romans 2:4-5 - 4 Or do you think lightly of the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing **that the kindness of God leads you to repentance?** NASB

Proverbs 31:26 - 6 She opens her mouth in wisdom, And **the teaching of kindness is on her tongue.** NASB

- By means of instruction, and training. Children must be trained to honor authority. They will not learn unless they are *continually* encouraged by teaching and correction.

Proverbs 22:6 - 6 **Train up a child in the way he should go,** Even when he is old he will not depart from it. NASB

2 Timothy 3:16 - 16 All Scripture is inspired by God and **profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, for training in righteousness;** NASB

- By means of reproof and correction, by discipline. Dictionary: Discipline - "Control obtained by enforcing compliance or order." Not only does obedience need to be enforced, but the child needs to be taught to love correction.

Proverbs 15:31-32 - 31 He **whose ear listens to the life-giving reproof will dwell among the wise.** 32 He who neglects discipline despises himself, But he who listens to reproof acquires understanding. NASB

Proverbs 12:1 - Whoever **loves discipline loves knowledge, But he who hates reproof** is stupid. NASB

C. (which is the first commandment with a promise) – Here the apostle points out that God has promised prosperity to those who will hear this commandment. This commandment has special privileges enjoined to it by the providence of God!

Ephesians 6:3 - that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth NASB

A. Here the apostle repeats the promise referred to in verse 2. He speaks of the fact that God is providentially involved in their lives either rewarding or disciplining for obedience. God sees to it that we are blessed for obedience and cursed for disobedience. This is an imperative lesson for parents to teach their children. God is the one who gives prosperity and reproofs the wayward!

Proverbs 12:2-3 - A good man will obtain **favor from the LORD, But He will condemn** a man who devises evil. 3 A man will not be established by wickedness, But the root of the righteous will not be moved. NASB

Proverbs 13:18 - 18 **Poverty and shame will come to him who neglects discipline,** But he who regards reproof will be honored. NASB

Proper parental training affords the child great blessing in life, it yields a harvest of righteousness! Parental training is the chief *means* God uses to bless our children.

Hebrews 12:11 - 11 All discipline for the moment seems not to be joyful, but sorrowful; yet **to those who have been trained by it, afterwards it yields the peaceful fruit of righteousness.** NASB

B. that it may be well with you, and that you may live long on the earth - What is meant by "that it may be well with you?" That you may prosper in life and be blessed. It is

implied that if there is disobedience, things will NOT be well with you and you will NOT live long.

Deuteronomy 30:19-20 - 19 I call heaven and earth to witness against you today, that **I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse. So choose life in order that you may live**, you and your descendants, 20 by loving the LORD your God, by obeying His voice, and by holding fast to Him; for this is your life and the length of your days NASB

Ephesians 6:4 - And, fathers, do not provoke your children to anger; but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord NASB

A. Here the apostle turns his attention to the “*fathers*.” Now his directives give the fathers instruction in parenting, dealing with their relationship with their children. Further, it should be noted that these directives also apply to the wife for her role is to be a suitable helper (Gen 2:18) to the husband who is charged with this duty. It goes without saying that mother should “*not provoke your children to anger*” either, and that she should “*bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord*.”

B. fathers, do not provoke your children to anger – Paul tells the parents not to provoke the children to anger for this will surely cause tremendous problems in life for a child. The untold misery of an angry person is pitiful. It robs a person of God’s peace and joy and causes them to sin again and again by anger. Consider, in what ways may a father provoke his children to anger?

- By *unreasonable* commands; these can make a child angry.
- By *needless* severity; severity without restraint will make a child angry.
- By the manifestation of anger, by disciplining out of ANGER - Do not discipline a child in the heat of the moment, but wait until your temperament has cooled. A child *will* become angry if you discipline in anger.
- So govern them, and so punish them that if punishment is necessary, that they shall not lose their confidence in you, but shall love you. Make every effort to communicate your sincere love to the child in the disciplining process.
- Be sure they understand **WHY** they are being disciplined. A child can become angry if they think they are being disciplined needlessly. Teach them how the discipline is for their good so that they will learn to love it and honor you for it!

Hebrews 12:9 - Furthermore, **we had earthly fathers to discipline us, and we respected them;**

C. bring them up in the discipline..... of the Lord - Here parents are told to “*bring them up*”, that is, to train them up, to instruct, to aid in the maturing process.

Proverbs 22:6 - 6 **Train up a child in the way he should go**, Even when he is old he will not depart from it. NASB

Consider, what it means to “*bring them up in the DISCIPLINE of the Lord?*”

Discipline – to train and to chasten - **gk.** paideia 3809; tutorage, i.e. education or training; disciplinary correction:--chastening, chastisement, instruction, nurture.

- To *establish proper authority* and use it wisely and with loving guidance. You cannot establish your authority unless you **ASSERT** it! Does God assert His authority with you? By what means? By means of constant teaching, by threatenings and consequences, and by loving discipline and correction.

Hebrews 12:5-11 - 5 and you have forgotten the exhortation which is addressed to you as sons, "My son, **do not regard lightly the discipline of the Lord**, Nor faint when you are reproved by Him; 6 **For those whom the Lord loves He disciplines, And He scourges every son whom He receives.**" 7 It is for discipline that you endure; God deals with you as with sons; for what son is there whom his father does not discipline ? 8 But if you are without discipline , of which all have become partakers, then you are illegitimate children and not sons.

- To so govern them as to always do what is in their **BEST** interest, not yours Train them to obey, teach them obedience. You must see to it that they follow through in obedience, **DISCIPLINE** them! You must command them and cause them to follow through. You must **ENFORCE** your authority. **Proverbs 22:15** - 15 **Foolishness is bound up in the heart of a child**; The rod of discipline will remove it far from him. NASB
If you are unwilling to discipline your children, you do not truly love them, or you do not understand how to implement godly love. Does God discipline you?
Revelation 3:19 - 19 **Those whom I love, I reprove and discipline**; be zealous therefore, and repent. NASB
- To make sure they obey God, it is God's will(not yours) that they must *ultimately* obey. We teach them to obey as a *means* of teaching them to obey God which is the ultimate goal in parenting.
Proverbs 19:18 - 18 Discipline your son while there is hope, And **do not desire his death**. NASB
- Teach them the value of self-discipline and hard work. The diligent will prosper and the lazy sluggard will come to poverty!
Proverbs 10:4 - 4 Poor is he who works with a negligent hand, But **the hand of the diligent makes rich**. NASB

D. bring them up in the.....instruction of the Lord – Consider what it means to **“bring them up in the INSTRUCTION of the Lord?”**

Instruction - a mild reproof, to admonish – **gk.** nouthesia, 3559 calling attention to, mild rebuke or warning:--admonition.

- To understand and apply the didactic(teaching) nature of parenting. The very nature of parenting is one of constant teaching and instruction, training and reproof. Use the scripture to convict, correct and train them continually. **Deuteronomy 6:6-7** - 6 And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; 7 and **you shall teach them diligently to your sons and shall talk of them when you sit in your house and when you walk by the way and when you lie down and when you rise up**. NASB
- Teach them to fear God. Folly is in the heart of a child by nature, your child's nature is sinful, by nature your child naturally provokes God to wrath(Eph 2:3). You must teach them to **HONOR** God, His authority, and **FEAR** His judgment. These must be constantly reaffirmed in order for them to become part of the child's thinking process and for obedience to God to become their ordinary behavior.
Proverbs 9:10 - 10 **The fear of the LORD is the beginning of wisdom**, And the knowledge of the Holy One is understanding. NASB
Ecclesiastes 12:13-14 - 13 The conclusion, when all has been heard, is: **fear God and keep His commandments, because this applies to every person**. 14 For God will bring every act to judgment, everything which is hidden, whether it is good or evil. NASB

- Teach them that wisdom is supreme and that they should constantly pursue it. You must teach them that wisdom will guide them and protect them all the days of their life and keep them from the destruction and misery brought to us by foolish choices.

Proverbs 3:13-18 - 13 How **blessed is the man who finds wisdom**, And the man who gains understanding. 14 For its profit is better than the profit of silver, And its gain than fine gold. 15 **She is more precious than jewels; And nothing you desire compares with her.** 16 Long life is in her right hand; In her left hand are riches and honor. 17 Her ways are pleasant ways, And all her paths are peace. 18 **She is a tree of life to those who take hold of her, And happy are all who hold her fast.** NASB

- Teach them to love God. This is the most important thing in life. Parents must teach their children to love God by means of constant training in His Word, and modeling in their life and speech a holy affection and desire for God.

Deuteronomy 6:5-6 - 5 "And **you shall love the LORD your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your might.** 6 And these words, which I am commanding you today, shall be on your heart; NASB

- To make sure they learn to discern good and to hate evil. Parents must teach their children the value of proper discernment and judgment. If they are to serve God in an acceptable manner all the days of their life, they must master this skill. Parents must continually point out what is holy and what is profane and give honor to that which is holy and disgust for that which is evil.

Ezekiel 44:23 - 23 "Moreover, they shall **teach My people the difference between the holy and the profane,** and cause them to discern between the unclean and the clean. NASB

Romans 12:2, 9 - 2 And do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind, **that you may prove what the will of God is,** that which is good and acceptable and perfect. 9 Let love be without hypocrisy. **Abhor what is evil;** cling to what is good. NASB

Ephesians 6:5-8 - 5 Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; 6 not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. 7 With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, 8 knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free. NASB

A. Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling. - Paul now turns his attention to "*slaves*" or servants. This is again a continuation of the thought begun in chapter 5:21.... "be subject to one another in the fear of Christ." Here the slaves are to be subject to their masters by responding in obedience to them. "*Masters according to the flesh*" is to say your earthly masters not your heavenly One. Further, he says this is to be done "*with fear and trembling.*" This is for the benefit of the slaves as their masters have authority over them to punish them and they would not want to incur their discipline. Righteousness for the slave or servant looks like obedience, submission, and reverence for authority. Surely this instruction in modern terms word speak directly to employer/employee relations.

1 Peter 2:18 - 18 **Servants, be submissive to your masters with all respect,** not only to those who are good and gentle, but also to those who are unreasonable. NASB

B. in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; 6 not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart. – Here Paul points to the genuine heart of the Christian servant. He commands that their obedience come from the heart, sincerely, even “*as to Christ.*” This shows God’s high and holy standard for reverence to authority. To emphasize this, Paul brings into perspective the fact that in our service we serve God first and men second. Therefore, we should see our obedience to our employers as “*God’s will*” and desire to fulfill it with a “*sincere heart.*”

Colossians 3:21-22 - 22 Slaves, in all things obey those who are your masters on earth, not with external service, as those who merely please men, but with sincerity of heart, **fearing the Lord.**
NASB

C. With good will render service, as to the Lord, and not to men, 8 knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free. – The Christian servant or slave should remember that he lives by a higher rule than that of his earthly masters, and this the service to his heavenly master, Christ. They should remember that their life is governed by divine providence and that their lot in life is governed by God. Therefore they are to serve “as to the Lord, and not to men.” This is to say that they remember that they serve God first, and men second. Further that the good hand of Providence will be in the last the hand which renders reward to them. Good service rendered from the heart glorifies God and God will reward each one according to this good work.

Colossians 3:23-24 - 23 Whatever you do, do your work heartily, **as for the Lord rather than for men;** 24 knowing that from the Lord you will receive the reward of the inheritance. **It is the Lord Christ whom you serve.** NASB

Ephesians 6:9 - 9 And, masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him. NASB

A. Again Paul turns his attention to yet another Christian, the Christian master. Here he says “*do the same things to them*” referring to the aforementioned instructions to the slaves. That the Christian master should like wise do his governing “*as to the Lord, and not to men,*” that they should serve God first and men second, that they should have good will and sincerity of heart in the relations with their subjects. This he makes clear when he states that “*both their Master and yours is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him*” so that even these Christian masters should have no partiality as well.

Colossians 4:1 - 4:1 **Masters, grant to your slaves justice and fairness,** knowing that you too have a Master in heaven. NASB

Paul exhorts the masters that they should “give up threatening” and to treat their subjects with impartiality. This has long been the standard of God for ruling over servants. Masters are to treat servants with that good character which is consistent with God Himself.

Leviticus 25:43 - 43'You **shall not rule over him with severity,** but are to revere your God.
NASB

Ephesians 6:10 - 10 Finally, be strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might.
NASB

A. Finally, be strong in the Lord - With the words “*finally my brethren,*” Paul begins to close his letter to the Ephesians. Having given them such lengthy instruction in how to live the Christian life, he realizes their great dependence on God to whom he points them to find the strength they need to be victorious in the battle. In fact, he now begins a short discussion bringing the analogy of warfare to apply to Christian life. In this warfare he exhorts them to find their strength “*in the Lord,*” and not in themselves. This is a theme in the writings of Paul. We cannot live the Christian life apart from divine grace to empower us and to grant us victory against our foes, the world, the flesh and the devil.

Philippians 4:13 - 13 I can do all things through **Him who strengthens me.** NASB

2 Timothy 2:1-2 - 2:1 You therefore, my son, **be strong in the grace that is in Christ Jesus.**
NASB

B. in the strength of His might – Consider, if one find themselves with the strength of the living God, what foe could stand, as Paul describes in Romans 8?

Romans 8:31 - 31 What then shall we say to these things? **If God is for us, who is against us?**
NASB

Even though our strength is weakness, the Lord’s power is mighty and it is our possession, as we learned earlier in the book.

Ephesians 1:19 - 19 and what is the **surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.**
These are in accordance with the working of the strength of His might NASB

What shall overcome us if we are availed of the power and authority of the Sovereign King Himself? Is this not an encouraging and emboldening promise of victory in all of the areas of Christian life which Paul has just instructed us? With such divine strength, how can we fail?

Colossians 2:9-10 -9 For in Him all the fullness of Deity dwells in bodily form, 10 and **in Him you have been made complete,** and **He is the head over all rule and authority;** NASB

Ephesians 6:11-13 - 11 Put on the full armor of God, that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. 12 For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places. 13 Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. NASB

A. Put on the full armor of God – Here Paul instructs the Christian to “*put on*” the “*full armor of God.*” This suggests that we have a real responsibility to avail ourselves of the great devices which God has provided for us in this warfare. We must “*put them on.*”

Romans 13:12-14 - 12 The night is almost gone, and the day is at hand. Let us therefore lay aside the deeds of darkness and **put on the armor of light.** 13 Let us behave properly as in the day, not in carousing and drunkenness, not in sexual promiscuity and sensuality, not in strife and jealousy. 14 But **put on the Lord Jesus Christ,** and make no provision for the flesh in regard to its lusts.
NASB

Further, he tells us to put on the “*full armor of God.*” This is to say “*all of it,*” the complete armor. The Greek word used here “*panoplia*” describes the entire suit of armor used in warfare of those days and means “*full or whole armor.*” Therefore Paul contends that we should readily employ the protection that God has granted in this great warfare of Christian life. He will now go on to describe what that armor or protection is in detail.

Not only this but it is the full armor **“of God.”** It is not the armor of men, but of God. It is not carnal, but spiritual and divinely furnished to equip us with everything that good armor can provide.

2 Corinthians 10:3-4 - 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not **war according to the flesh, 4 for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful** for the destruction of fortresses. NASB

B. that you may be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. – Here Paul makes us well aware that we have a real foe in the devil, that is, Satan. He is that enemy against which we must be **“strong in the Lord, and in the strength of His might”** if we hope to **“stand.”** Our ruthless adversary is described in many places in the NT.

1 Peter 5:8 - 8 Be of sober spirit, be on the alert. **Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion,** seeking someone to devour. NASB

If we are equipped with the **“full armor of God”** says Paul, we will be **“able to stand.”** That is versus falling, which is analogous of spiritual defeat, falling into sin and disgracing our Lord and His glorious name. Therefore we are to possess good hope and courage that we can stand by the mighty power of God, who possess all power and dominion over that enemy which we fight.

Jude 24 - 24 Now **to Him who is able to keep you from stumbling,** and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy NASB

1 Corinthians 10:13 - 13 No temptation has overtaken you but such as is common to man; and God is faithful, who **will not allow you to be tempted beyond what you are able,** but with the temptation will provide the way of escape also, that you may be able to endure it. NASB

It is interesting that in this war the Christian need only stand to be victorious. And here is described what we must stand against, that is, the **“schemes of the devil.”** The Greek word used here is **“methodeia,”** and means trickery and carries the idea of a carefully planned method or scheme. It describes the devils warfare, it is the **“deceitful scheming or cunning craftiness,”** as Paul described in chapter 4:14. This is how the devil fights. He seeks to deceive us and lead us into sin, just as he did Eve in the garden.

2 Corinthians 11:3 - 3 But I am afraid, lest as **the serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness,** your minds should be led astray from the simplicity and purity of devotion to Christ. NASB

2 Corinthians 2:10-11 - 10 But whom you forgive anything, I forgive also; for indeed what I have forgiven, if I have forgiven anything, I did it for your sakes in the presence of Christ, 11 in order that **no advantage be taken of us by Satan; for we are not ignorant of his schemes.** NASB

C. For our struggle is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world forces of this darkness, against the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places – The very nature of Christian life is a **“struggle.”** We wrestle or struggle with powerful foes as we live out our days. But these foes are not physical, that is, they are NOT **“flesh and blood,”** NOT men or women, but are described as **“spiritual forces of wickedness in heavenly places.”** This is a spiritual warfare and it is waged on a spiritual battlefield with spiritual weapons. Here our adversaries are described as:

rulers - a world-ruler - 2888 **gk.** kosmokrator, an epithet of Satan:--ruler.

powers - delegated influence:--authority, 1849 **gk.** exousia, (in the sense of ability); force, mastery (concretely, magistrate, superhuman, potentate, token of control), jurisdiction, liberty, power, right, strength.

world forces - principality, principle 746. **gk.** arche, (concretely) chief (in various applications of order, time, place, or rank):--beginning, corner, (at the, the) first (estate), magistrate, power, rule.

These no doubt refer to that heavenly rank and order of demonic powers arrayed against God and His saints in the great conflict of the ages of history. These are described elsewhere in the NT.

Here Christ is the creator of them;

Colossians 1:16-17 - 16 For by Him all things were created, both in the heavens and on earth, visible **and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities** — all things have been created by Him and for Him. NASB

Here we have been delivered from them by Christ's mighty work;

Colossians 1:13-14- 13 For He delivered us from **the domain of darkness**, and transferred us to the kingdom of His beloved Son, 14 in whom we have redemption, the forgiveness of sins. NASB

Here Christ has made a public demonstration of their condemnation;

Colossians 2:15 - 15 When He had **disarmed the rulers and authorities**, He made a public display of them, having triumphed over them through Him. NASB

These spiritual forces of wickedness are said to be **"in heavenly places,"** this the same term used in Eph 1:3, 2:6, 3:10 used to denote the spiritual nature of the enemies and promises of God.

D. Therefore, take up the full armor of God, that you may be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. - Although the Christian's warfare is against a host of powerful spiritual enemies, he/she stands by the strength of God's might and is availed of the **"full armor"** so that he/she is able **"to stand."** The Christian must **"take up the full armor of God"** if he/she hopes to stand in this struggle. The goal of the Christian's striving is **"to resist"** or **"to stand,"** that is, not to give way or lose ground but to stand resisting the [schemes, temptations, cunning methods] of the spiritual forces of wickedness around them, designed to cause us to sin and defame the glory and praise of God, for whom we live. It is **"in the evil day,"** or at times of temptation and testing that we must **"have done everything to stand."**

1 Corinthians 16:13-14 - 13 Be on the alert, **stand firm in the faith**, act like men, be strong. 14 Let all that you do be done in love. NASB

Ephesians 6:14-17 - 14 Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. NASB

A. Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness, 15 and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; - Here Paul mentions the first three articles of armor. These were devices which were worn at all times on the battlefield, whereas the [shield, helmet, and sword] were taken up only at the moment of battle. Paul uses these implements of armor to describe by analogy the fundamental elements needed in the **"struggle against evil"** which the Christian endures. It is with and in these, **"truth-righteousness-peace,"** that the Christian is to **"stand firm."**

having girded your loins with truth, - The people of the first century often wore long flowing robes and needed to cinch them up before undertaking laborious tasks such as running or working or fighting. In the same way the Christian is to "cinch up" or **"gird up"** his/her clothing **"with God's truth."** Truth is the very nature of God and the antinomy of the devil's warfare, which is lying, deceiving, cunning crafty deceit, etc...the Christian stands in the truth of God's unwavering promises of deliverance and casts down

every false thought or temptation, remembering God's truth and forsaking the devil's lies at every turn.

Philippians 4:8 - 8 Finally, brethren, **whatever is true**, whatever is honorable, whatever is right, whatever is pure, whatever is lovely, whatever is of good repute, if there is any excellence and if anything worthy of praise, **let your mind dwell on these things**. NASB

Matthew 4:3-4 - 3 And **the tempter came and said** to Him, "If You are the Son of God, command that these stones become bread." 4 But He answered and said, **"It is written**, 'Man shall not live on bread alone, but on every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.'" NASB

The Christian will often be assailed with lying, deceiving, tempting situations, but must **CAST THEM DOWN** with the **TRUTH** of God's Word in order to **"stand firm."**

having put on the breastplate of righteousness, - The breastplate was that piece of armor which covered the body from the neck to the thighs, both front and back, and undoubtedly was meant to protect all the vital organs. In the same way, righteousness of Christian life, is that vital-central-fundamental element of warfare which makes us to stand. For the Christian to live an integral, holy and pure life of devotion to God is to cause him/her to **"stand firm"** against the enemy who seeks to draw him/her into sin and wickedness. That Paul intends this to be practical righteousness(the righteous living) and not positional righteousness(rightstanding with God because of Christ) is obvious because of his use of it elsewhere in(1 Thess 5:8) a similar manner.

1 Thessalonians 5:8 - 8 But since we are of the day, let us be sober, **having put on the breastplate of faith and love**, and as a helmet, the hope of salvation. NASB

The Christian will often be assailed with lying, deceiving, tempting situations, but must **WARD THEM OFF** with **OBEDIENCE** to God's Word in order to **"stand firm."**

having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace; - The shoes were that piece of the panoply that gave the soldier sure footing and good balance, even in slippery places. In the same way, the Christian is afforded that wholehearted assurance that he/she has been reconciled unto to God and is not subject to the lying, deceitful accusations that the evil one whispers in our ears in order to cause us to loose confidence. Instead we **"stand firm"** in the gospel of peace, reconciled to God with full assurance of His favor which has been merited for us by Christ.

Ephesians 2:8-9 - 8 For **by grace you have been saved through faith**; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, that no one should boast. NASB

The word rendered preparation— **gk.** hetoimasia means, readiness, fitness for, preparation, and speaks of the sure footing of God's peace which keeps us even in the darkest hours of doubt and fear.

John 16:33 - 33 "These things I have spoken to you, **that in Me you may have peace**. In the world you have tribulation, **but take courage**; I have overcome the world." NASB

The Christian will often be assailed with lying, deceiving, tempting situations, but must **TRAMPLE THEM** with the assurance of **PEACE** from God's Word in order to **"stand firm."**

B. in addition to all, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. - The words **"in addition to all,"** are more properly understood as **"above all"** and mean that these are the more principal and vital pieces of armor which we must **"take up"** for battle. Here Paul mentions the second three articles of armor. These were devices [shield, helmet, and sword] which were taken up only at the moment of battle. The former elements [belt, breastplate, shoes] he says we were to "have" implemented....having gird, having put on, having shod.....whereas these he tells us to **"take them up."**

taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming missiles of the evil one - Here Paul mentions “*faith*” and likens it to the soldiers “*shield*.” This faith is that trust in and reliance on God which is our strength and constant dependence on the power of His might is a sure victory. In the same way that a soldier is protected from very specific attacks of the enemy by deflecting attacks with his shield, the Christian is “*able to extinguish*” the attacks of his/her enemy by faith. Therefore as the evil one launches his “*flaming*” schemes and methods against us by temptation, lies and deceit, fears and doubts, we employ our trust in God’s promises and power to meet each and every attack which are quenched and overcome. The “*flaming missiles*” have been described as blasphemous thoughts, unbelief, sudden temptation to do wrong, or thoughts that wound and torment the soul. Yet with the mighty “*shield of faith*” in God, the Christian “*extinguishes*” the burning of each and every attack.

1 John 5:4 - 4 For whatever is born of God overcomes the world; and this is **the victory that has overcome the world — our faith**. NASB

1 John 4:4 - 4 You are from God, little children, and have overcome them; because **greater is He who is in you than he who is in the world**. NASB

Romans 8:35-39 - 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall **tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword?** 36 Just as it is written, "For Thy sake we are being put to death all day long; We were considered as sheep to be slaughtered." 37 But **in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him** who loved us. 38 For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, 39 nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord. NASB

take the helmet of salvation, - “Though the body they may kill” says Luther, “God’s truth abideth still.” In all the Christian warfare we have the overwhelming confidence of eternal life which has been given to us freely by God through Christ. And even if the “spiritual forces of wickedness” by so vicious as to take our very life, we shall be saved by the precious blood of Christ. How then can we lose? Death for the Christian is the doorway to heaven! In Thessalonians Paul describes the helmet of salvation as our “*hope*.” Even as the helmet covers the head, we have the good hope of eternal life as a helmet to cover the most vital part of our spiritual life.

1 Thessalonians 5:8 - 8 But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a **helmet, the hope of salvation**. NASB

the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God – Here is the great offensive weapon by which the enemy is slain, the WORD OF GOD. It is by this most powerful of all things that no devil can stand and every temptation is dashed to pieces. As the Christian is assailed by every lie and tempting attack, he/she employs the mighty promises of God’s truth to render them helpless and of no affect. Even as Jesus met the tempter in the wilderness, the Christian is to cast down every lying temptation which stands opposed to God’s truth.

2 Corinthians 10:3-6 - 3 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, 4 for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses. 5 We **are destroying speculations and every lofty thing raised up against the knowledge of God, and we are taking every thought captive to the obedience of Christ**. NASB

If this be true, how shall we “*take up the sword of the Spirit?*” We must study, meditate on and memorize the bible. We should have the Word of God “*hidden in our hearts*” and ready to meet the tempter even as Jesus did in the wilderness.

Psalms 119:9-11 - 9 How can a young man keep his way pure? By keeping it according to Thy word. 10 With all my heart I have sought Thee; Do not let me wander from Thy commandments.

11 **Thy word I have treasured in my heart ,That I may not sin against Thee**. NASB

Ephesians 6:18-20 - 18 With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, 19 and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. NASB

A. With all prayer and petition pray at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, - In summing up this great section on spiritual warfare, Paul now leads us to the crowning jewel of all our battles, prayer. Here he says that we should pray “*with all prayer and petition.*” This is to say that we should pray for everything and everyone, and in every way, both public and private, and that these prayers are a “*petition*” to God.

Proverbs 3:5-6 - Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And do not lean on your own understanding. 6 **In all your ways acknowledge Him,** And He will make your paths straight. NASB

Our prayers have One to whom they are addressed and He alone has the power to grant our requests, therefore we “*petition*” Him.

Philippians 4:6 - 6 Be anxious for nothing, but **in everything by prayer and supplication** with thanksgiving let your requests be made known to God. NASB

God is disposed to answer prayer.

Proverbs 15:8 - 8 The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD, But **the prayer of the upright is His delight.** NASB

John 16:24 - 24 "Until now you have asked for nothing in My name; **ask, and you will receive,** that your joy may be made full. NASB

Luke 11:9-10 - 9 "And I say to you, ask, **and it shall be given to you; seek, and you shall find;** knock, and it shall be opened to you. 10 "For everyone who asks, receives; and he who seeks, finds; and to him who knocks, it shall be opened. NASB

James 1:5 - 5 But if any of you lacks wisdom, **let him ask of God, who gives to all men generously and without reproach, and it will be given to him.** NASB

Here Paul says we should “*pray at all times*” and that our prayer should be “*in the Spirit.*” To pray at all times means that we should constantly pray all day long, we should be on the alert in prayer and that we should not cease from praying. Since our struggles are with an enemy who never sleeps, we should be constantly in that state of spiritual awareness and ready to meet His schemes with trust in God’s power.

Luke 18:1 - 18:1 Now He was telling them a parable to show that **at all times they ought to pray and not to lose heart.** NASB

1 Thessalonians 5:16-18 - 16 Rejoice always; 17 **pray without ceasing;** 18 in everything give thanks; for this is God’s will for you in Christ Jesus. NASB

This prayer Paul says should be “*in the Spirit.*” This is to say that it should be in accordance with and consistent with God’s Word and will. To pray in the Spirit is to pray what God would have us pray, according to His will which He is therefore favorably disposed to answer.

1 John 5:14-15 - 14 And this is the confidence which we have before Him, that, **if we ask anything according to His will, He hears us.** 15 And if we know that He hears us in whatever we ask, **we know that we have the requests which we have asked from Him.** NASB

B. be on the alert with all perseverance and petition for all the saints, - Here Paul says to be “*on the alert with all perseverance*” and “*petition for all the saints.*” This is to emphasize the great importance of continual prayer but that this should be for all the saints, that is, for every Christian and all our beloved family of God. Christians have a great need to be on the alert in our spiritual lives as we have a tendency to slumber and are given to frequent wandering from our Lord precious care.

Colossians 4:2 - 2 Devote yourselves **to prayer, keeping alert in it** with an attitude of thanksgiving; NASB

Mark 14:37-38 - 37 And He came and found them sleeping, and said to Peter, "Simon, are you asleep? Could you not keep watch for one hour? 38 "**Keep watching and praying, that you may not come into temptation**; the spirit is willing, but the flesh is weak." NASB

1 Thessalonians 5:4-6 - 4 But you, brethren, are not in darkness, that the day should overtake you like a thief; 5 for you are all sons of light and sons of day. We are not of night nor of darkness; 6 so then let us not sleep as others do, **but let us be alert and sober**. NASB

1 Peter 5:8 - 8 Be of sober spirit, **be on the alert**. Your adversary, the devil, prowls about like a roaring lion, seeking someone to devour. NASB

C. and pray on my behalf, that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel, 20 for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak. – Here Paul entreats the church for their intercession for his labor in the gospel. He asks that they pray for God to give Paul bold words to **“proclaim the gospel.”** One would not think that Paul would need **“boldness,”** for he seems to us bold as a lion, yet this is the very thing the Apostle requests of God. There is much opposition in the world to the gospel and it is a heated and constant warfare to make known the truth of the gospel with clarity and conviction.

Acts 4:1-4 - 4:1 And as they were speaking to the people, **the priests and the captain of the temple guard, and the Sadducees, came upon them, 2 being greatly disturbed because they were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead. 3 And they laid hands on them, and put them in jail** until the next day, for it was already evening. 4 But many of those who had heard the message believed; and the number of the men came to be about five thousand. NASB

Acts 16:19-24 - 19 But when her masters saw that their hope of profit was gone, **they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the market place before the authorities,** 20 and when they had brought them to the chief magistrates, they said, "These men are throwing our city into confusion, being Jews, 21 and are proclaiming customs which it is not lawful for us to accept or to observe, being Romans. " 22 And **the crowd rose up together against them,** and the chief magistrates tore their robes off them, and **proceeded to order them to be beaten with rods. 23 And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison,** commanding the jailer to guard them securely; 24 and he, having received such a command, threw them into the inner prison, and fastened their feet in the stocks. NASB

Let us never cease to keep praying for our spiritual leaders as they are many times the focus of intense warfare with the enemies of our souls. He who prays for his pastor prays for himself as well. Paul frequently sought the prayers of the church as in Rom 15:30, 2 Cor 1:11, Phil 1:19, Col 4:3, 1 Thess 5:25, 2 Thess 3:1, Philem 22, Heb 13:18.

Romans 15:30 - 30 Now I **urge you, brethren, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, to strive together with me in your prayers to God for me,** NASB

Ephesians 6:21-22 - 21 But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you. 22 And I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know about us, and that he may comfort your hearts. NASB

A. I have sent him to you for this very purpose, so that you may know about us, and that he may comfort your hearts – Here we get a glimpse into the heart of Paul and see with what tender affection he loves the church. He wants them to know of his progress as they labor together with him in the gospel and he sends his fellow minister Tychicus to them to comfort them and care for them. It was a common practice of Paul if he could not be with the church to send others to care for their needs. These were an expression of his

great love for the church, and more than this, an expression of the heart of God for the care of His church.

1 Thessalonians 3:1-3 - 3:1 Therefore when we could endure it no longer, we thought it best to be left behind at Athens alone; 2 and **we sent Timothy, our brother and God's fellow worker in the gospel of Christ, to strengthen and encourage you as to your faith,** 3 so that no man may be disturbed by these afflictions; for you yourselves know that we have been destined for this.
NASB

Ephesians 6:23-24 23 Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. 24 Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with a love incorruptible. NASB

A. Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. – As is common with Paul, he closes with a benediction wishing his beloved hearers “*peace*” and “*love with faith.*” Here is an example for us all to follow, that we would have such a heart of love toward one another that our departures would be attended with expressions of that love. Further, that we Christians would live in these graces would surely fulfill the longing of God for us! Oh that the brethren would live in peace and that our faith would be fired with love! Let us look to God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ from whom these benefits flow!

Galatians 5:6 - 6 For in Christ Jesus neither circumcision nor uncircumcision means anything, but **faith working through love.** NASB

B. Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ with a love incorruptible – Paul adds a further wish, that of “*grace*” to be with all who love our Lord Jesus. Here the Apostle wishes God favor upon his subjects. What higher privilege could we have? After all of the descriptions of God’s amazing grace that have been given us here in the book of Ephesians, to possess these is to be truly rich beyond our wildest imagination! These he wishes on those “*who love our Lord Jesus Christ with an incorruptible love.*” One would do well to consider if they be the one Paul wishes for. Do you have an incorruptible love for the Lord Jesus?

From William Birkitt.

Question. But when, and how, may a person know that he loves Christ in great sincerity?

Answer. If Christ be enthroned in thy heart as a chief commander; if he be esteemed by thee as thy chiefest excellency, and thy choicest treasure; if he be thy chiefest delight and joy; and if he be thy chiefest refuge, unto which thou fliest in all dangers and distresses; thou mayest conclude thy supreme love is placed upon him, that thou lovest him in sincerity.

And the more thou lovest him, the more lovely wilt thou be unto him, and the more will thy heart be let out in desires after him, and in fervent longings for the full fruition and final enjoyment of him; for those whom we love we long to be with. Come then, Lord! down to me, Or take me up to thee.