

Ephesians 1

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Tape # 8170
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Let's turn now to Paul's letter to the Ephesians.

The church in Ephesus, it seemed, was established by Apollos, who was a man who was mighty in Scriptures. Now there was an interesting couple that Paul met in Corinth. They were business people, tent makers by trade. So when Paul was in Corinth he got a job with them--Aquila and his wife Priscilla. They were Jews. They had first lived in Rome. They were expelled with all of the Jews from Rome, under Claudius. They had moved to Corinth, where Paul met them and labored with them in tentmaking, in order that Paul might provide for his needs in the ministry. They moved on from Corinth to Ephesus.

And there came to Ephesus, this man Apollos, who was a brilliant man, mighty in Scripture. He was able to prove from the Scriptures that Jesus is the Messiah. So a group of believers gathered in Ephesus. The thing with Apollos is that he only knew the baptism of John, so Aquila and Priscilla took him aside. They explained to him more fully concerning Jesus. Apollos went on to Corinth. Paul came to the church in Ephesus.

There were certain disciples, about twelve of them. There seemed to be something lacking in their joy or in their love, in their fervor and excitement for the Lord. So Paul asked them, did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed? They responded, we didn't even know there was a Holy Spirit. Paul said, well how were you baptized then? They said, by John's baptism. Paul said, well he baptized unto repentance but he spoke of Jesus Christ who would fill you with the Holy Spirit. So they were baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. And Paul laid hands on them. They received the Holy Spirit.

Paul stayed there in Ephesus for about three years. Again working, no doubt, with Priscilla and Aquila making tents and ministering as the body of Christ grew in Ephesus into a very strong body. In fact the influence of Christianity became so strong in Ephesus that the silversmiths created sort of a riot because they made little silver idols of Diana, the goddess of the Ephesians. People were not buying the idols. Business was down. They attributed it to the fact that Paul was preaching that Diana was not a god and that gods are not made with man's hands, these little images that they make are not really god. And so the riot ensued as a result of Demetrius and the silversmiths creating the turmoil. But Paul established very strongly the church in Ephesus. It became a very strong church. The area around Ephesus, that area of Asia, was sort of saturated with the gospel.

And so the other major cities in that area were evangelized and churches were established so that when Jesus, in the Book of Revelation, addressed the seven churches of Asia, Ephesus was the first church that He addressed. Paul's last recorded visit to the church of Ephesus was in the Book of Acts, when he was on his way back to Jerusalem, with an offering for the church that he had gathered from the churches in Macedonia and Achaia. Paul called for the elders to meet him at Miletus, which was the area, actually Ephesus was about ten miles from the sea. So he invited them to come on out. He ministered to the elders there and departed with tears. That was the last recorded visit of Paul.

There are early writings that are not Biblical but are sort of historical, that say that Paul's first appearing before Nero went rather well in that there were no charges really to be brought against him. Paul was released. Now we don't know this from the Bible, but from early records. And according to those early records, when Paul was released, he went back to Ephesus. Then Nero started a tremendous persecution against the church. Paul was arrested again. This time he was beheaded at the edict of Nero.

John the beloved disciple, spent his last days in Ephesus, prior to his being banished to the island of Patmos, as Polycarp became the minister or the overseer of the church in Ephesus, one of the early church fathers of whom there are a lot of historic records.

So the church of Ephesus, now the interesting thing is that when Jesus wrote to the church of Ephesus, they had left their first love. They were still very a strong, influential church, but they lacked the first bloom of love that they once had. The Lord was rebuking them for that loss of their first love.

This letter was written from Rome in about the year, 64 AD. It is the first of what are known as the prison

epistles of Paul. It was sent by Paul at the same time as the letter was sent to the church in Colosse, which is a companion letter to the church in Ephesus. These were to be sort of general letters to the churches. They were to be exchanged among the churches. You'll find that Paul will address many of the issues in the letter to the Colossians that he addresses here in the letter to the Ephesians. Also, it is thought that this letter was intended for the church of Laodicea. Some of the early commentators believed that this letter was actually sent to the Laodiceans, but that lacks any real substantial evidence.

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, Take out the name, Paul. Take out the word, apostle. Insert your name in instead of Paul. Then you fill in the blank. What are you, by the will of God? God has a purpose for each of our lives. God has a ministry for each of us to fulfill.

When Paul was writing to the Corinthians, he said, are all apostles? Are all prophets? Are all evangelists? And these are rhetorical questions, which have the answer known. They were not all apostles.

But what are you? It's important that we know what we are by the will of God. It's important that we know what the will of God is for our lives. And so we ought to, all of us, be able to take out the name, Paul, insert our name and fill in the blanks, knowing what I am by the will of God.

I would have to write, Chuck, a pastor-teacher of Jesus Christ by the will of God. That's my calling. That's what God has called me to be and to do in my service for Him. It's important that what you are, you are by the will of God. It's extremely difficult trying to be something that God didn't make you or God hasn't willed for your life. For many years in the early ministry, I sought to be Chuck, an evangelist, but I couldn't really say by the will of God. It was by the will of the denomination that I was serving become everyone in that denomination should be an evangelist. But I wasn't. And thus I was frustrated because I just wasn't an evangelist. So until I really settled in to being what God made me, just a pastor-teacher, the ministry was a very frustrating experience. But how glorious it is to be what you are and to know what you are by the will of God. It's the hardest thing in the world is trying to be something God didn't make you or intend you to be.

to the saints which are at Ephesus, He's addressing all which are at Ephesus, the saints which are at Ephesus.

Now unfortunately, the Catholic Church, has set certain criteria for sainthood. If you do good deeds through your life and after you die, people pray to you and they will testify that their prayers were answered when they prayed to you and miracles were performed by prayers offered to you, then the Catholic Church will elevate you in time to sainthood. And so you have the various saints of the Catholic Church. Of course they say that Mother Theresa is on her way if now in time to come, enough people can pray, Mother Theresa, you know, help me or heal my grandmother or whatever. If they can get enough testimonies that prayers to Mother Theresa were answered in miracles, then she can be elevated to sainthood.

Well, I've got good news for you! You don't have to go through all of that. The Lord calls you a saint. So I am Saint Charles, whether, you know, I've designated that by the Catholic Church or not, I'm designated that by the Lord. That's good enough for me! So we are all saints. So it's something that just was not for special kinds of super kind of believers, but was just something that was attributed to all who believe in Jesus Christ.

So to the saints which are at Ephesus, *and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:* Now, this broadens the letter far beyond the church in Ephesus. When he said to the faithful in Christ Jesus, that includes us! So you can take this as a personal letter from Paul the Apostle to you. It is addressing you. It should be read as such, God's Word to me through the apostle Paul.

Typical of Paul's opening salutations, ²*Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.* Grace and peace, as we have noted in the past. The order never is reversed because you cannot know the peace of God until you have experienced the grace of God and you know the grace of God in your life.

Lord, Jesus Christ. That's not the first, middle and last name. Lord, is His title. Jesus, is His name. He is the Messiah, the anointed One. The word *Christos* in Greek, is the equivalent of the Hebrew, *Mashiyach*. He is the Messiah, the promised Messiah. The words, Messiah and Christos mean, Anointed One.

And in the Old Testament, the king was anointed by God as king over Israel. You remember how Samuel

went down to the house of Jesse and he poured the anointing oil over David, anointing him to be king. He had earlier poured it over Saul, anointing him to be king. David wouldn't touch Saul, because Saul had been anointed by God as king over Israel. The high priest was also anointed for his office. Whenever there would be a death of the high priest and a new high priest, taking his office, he would be anointed with oil for that ministry.

So that idea of the anointed One is God's anointed king and priest, which Jesus is. And they were looking for the Anointed One to come, the Messiah. It is unfortunate, really, that we have translated the Greek word, or we have translated the Hebrew word into Greek, if we read it as Messiah. If every time you read the word, Christ, you would read it as Messiah, you would catch the meaning. The title of Messiah has almost become as a name. And we think of Jesus Christ as His name. But it's really, Jesus the Messiah. And in the case of the Lord Jesus Christ, it is His title. He is Lord. I am His servant. Jesus is His name.

The angel said to Joseph, you shall call His name, Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins. That's what the name means. The name, Jesus, is the Greek for the Hebrew word, *Joshua*, which is the contraction of *Yehowshuwa*, which is Jehovah is salvation. Jehovah, Shuwa, Jehovah is salvation, Jesus. And so, it's His name. His name actually bespeaks His ministry and mission. He came to seek and to save those who were lost.

So the Lord, (title), Jesus (His name), and He is the Messiah.

³*Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ*, The God and Father. We believe that the Scripture teaches that there is one God, who is made up of three persons—the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. But these three are one.

As Paul said, great is the mystery of Godliness. It is something that our human mind cannot fully comprehend because we are talking about the infinite God, made up of the three persons, Father, Son and Holy Spirit. Now it is interesting that the Holy Spirit is referred to as God. Jesus is referred to as God and of course the Father is referred to as God.

It is interesting that the Hebrew word, in Genesis 1:1, "In the beginning, God", is the Hebrew word, *Elohim*, which is plural. The word *El* is singular for God in the Hebrew. "In the beginning, God", *Elohim*, and so there you even have a hint of the three persons, why plural? I reject the idea that it is for intensity. It is a plural. The "*im*" on the end is a plural form.

And so (Genesis 1:26), "Let us make man in Our image and after Our likeness." Again, a plural pronoun, rather than I will make man in My image and in My likeness, "Let Us make man." And there in verse two we find the Spirit of God moving over the face of the waters.

We have Paul telling us in the letter to the Colossians, that Jesus was before all things and all things were made by Him and for Him. In John, he tells us, "In the beginning was the Word. The Word was with God and the Word was God. And the same was in the beginning with God."

So God the Father is God and the Father of our Lord, Jesus Christ. And in the seventeenth verse, we will find that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ is referred to, the God of our Lord Jesus Christ referring to the Father.

But it is also interesting that over in Hebrews, chapter one, verse eight, He said but unto the Son, talking of God the Father, unto to the Son, He saith, "Thy throne oh God." So God addresses the Son, Jesus as God. Great is the mystery of Godliness. There are three persons. There is one God, manifested in the three persons, the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit.

So blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, *who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ*: A few years ago there was a lot of heretical teaching concerning physical blessings. The teaching was that God wanted us to prosper physically. He wanted us all to drive Cadillacs or Mercedes or Rolls Royces or some fancy kind of an automobile. Now, that's fine but it isn't Scriptural. That you know, hasn't God chosen the poor of the world, rich in faith. They were making a big issue over things, that if you were Godly, you'll be rich. They also said that Godliness is a way to riches. They were making a big emphasis on the material riches.

I am far more interested in the Spiritual blessings than I am in the material blessings. Jesus said, "Seek first the Kingdom of God and His righteousness." These other things will be added to you. But, the other

things should never be our goal of amassing material wealth or whatever. In fact the Scripture warns that they will be rich will fall into diverse temptation. And the Scriptures tell you that if riches do increase, it's wonderful if they do, but don't set your heart on them. The Spiritual blessings, that's what I'm interested in. And thank God for all of the Spiritual blessings in heavenly places that have come to us through Jesus Christ.

⁴*According* (And now he starts to list the Spiritual blessings. I trust that as you read you underlined these Spiritual blessings that are ours. Now chapter one starts the list, but he goes on for three chapters listing Spiritual blessings. But we are only going to look at those that are in chapter one tonight.)

First blessing. According *as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world*, God chose us! Jesus said to His disciples, you have not chosen Me, but I have chosen you and ordained that you should be My disciples and that you should bring forth fruit. And that your fruit should remain. I've chosen you, Jesus said.

And so with each of you tonight, who have received Jesus Christ as your Lord and as your Savior, you discover that He has chosen you before the foundations of the world.

Now there are people that have a problem with this. Basically the problem is the fact that God chose them and has chosen those that would be with Him before the foundations of the earth. But the problem is with our thinking, because God is the infinite God who is omniscient, by which we mean He knows everything.

James said concerning God, known unto Him are all things from the beginning. He knew it all before it every started. He is omniscient. He knows the end from the beginning. And God said to Isaiah the prophet, to prove that I know the end from the beginning, I'm going to tell you things before they ever happen.

Jesus said, now I have told you these things before they come to pass, so that when they come to pass, you might believe. Believe what? That I am the eternal God, the omniscient God. I know all things. Now if God knows all things, can He learn anything? Of course not. If He could learn something, then He wasn't omniscient. The fact that He is omniscient, He can't learn anything. He knows everything!

Second question. Will God ever know who are going to be saved? We say, oh yes, when we are all there in heaven. Then He'll know. Well, if He is omniscient, He already knows, because He can't learn anything. So there will be no surprises. God won't say, how did you get here? What a surprise. You actually made it! I didn't think you would be here, you know. No, that won't happen because God knows all things. If He will ever know who is going to be saved, He's always known who is going to be saved.

Now what's so wrong with God choosing? Has He given you the capacity of choice? Don't you appreciate the capacity of choice, especially when it comes a wife or a husband? God just didn't say, him or her! You have the choice. And it's only right that you would have the choice who you would spend the rest of your life with, that's only right! It's only right that God should be able to choose who He is going to spend all eternity with. I'm just glad He chose me. I don't argue with it. I mean it's just sort of thrilling to realize that to realize He chose me.

But you say, wait a minute. That's not fair. What's not fair? That God should choose, that's not fair? It's surely fair that you can choose. Why isn't it fair that God can choose? You say, well, it's not fair maybe He didn't choose me? Well, how do you know? Well, I'm not a Christian. Why aren't you a Christian? Well, I don't think I want to be. Then it's really your choice isn't it? You have made your choice. You see it would be wrong for God to force you to go to heaven if you wanted nothing to do with it. If you don't want to be around Him, don't like the idea of fellowshiping with God, it would be extremely cruel if God said, well, you are going to go to heaven, anyhow. You are going to be with Me, I'm going to force you. No, He won't.

You say, but that isn't fair. Wait a minute. He has given you the capacity of choice. You can chose to receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior. And if you choose to receive Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior, you will make a fascinating discovery. You were chosen by Him from the foundation of the world.

But what if I don't want to chose Jesus Christ, well maybe you weren't. But all you have to do is choose to follow Jesus Christ and you will discover that you were! So you see, you can't blame God, because He gave you choice. Now the fact that He knows all things and knows the choices that you are going to make, that's another category. But that's the difficulty with us trying to figure God out because I don't know

everything. I'm learning new things every day. God isn't learning anything new. And yet I'm learning new things everyday.

Now what would it be like to know everything? I have no idea what it would be like. How do you think when you know everything? Do you actually have to think if you know everything? It's in a realm that we just, you know, can't conceive. God knowing everything. And knowing everything, He makes His choices according to what He knows, His foreknowledge.

Now what if you did have this capacity of knowing everything? And you decided, since I know everything, I'm going to go to Santa Anita and I'm going to clean up this Saturday. And you would have whatever they give you. And you pick and you place your bet on the horses, knowing which horse was going to win every race. Would you bet on the losers? You are dumb if you do. No, you'd bet on the winners because you know this horse is going to win. You know everything. You know which horse is going to win. Naturally you would choose the winners. That's what makes me so excited about God choosing me because He doesn't choose losers. He only chooses winners! What a thrill! He's chosen us!

Before the foundation of the world. What? *that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:* He wants you to walk in holiness, without blame.

Now, that is the position that I have in Jesus Christ. And that is the way the Father sees me because He sees me in His Son. He sees me in the righteousness of Jesus Christ that has been accounted to me by my faith in Jesus Christ.

Now unto Him, Jude said, who is able to present you faultless without blame before the presence of His glory with exceeding joy. And one day when Jesus presents me to the Father, I won't be presented with all of the flaws and odd characteristics of my personality, I'll be presented faultless, holy, without blame before God in love.

⁵*Having predestinated* (that interesting word) *us unto the adoption of children* God has predestined that I should be adopted as His child. But again, you remember, we are dealing with the omniscience of God and thus it's in that realm that is beyond our capacity to fully grasp. And that's why there is so much problem in the church over words such as election and predestination and chosen and so forth, is that we are looking at it from the finite, limited, understanding of man rather than from the infinite, omniscience of God.

So He has predestined us to the adoption of children *by Jesus Christ*

So I was chosen in Him. And then I've been adopted as His child by Jesus Christ *to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,* God's will, that I be a child, chosen by Him. Adopted by Him.

An adopted child has some advantages over the natural child. At least, he was chosen. The natural child, you get what you get. The adopted child is one that you have chosen. God has chosen and adopted us as His children by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His will. The Scripture talks about (Romans 9:16) not the will of him that runs, but the will of Him who calls.

⁶*To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved.* So another blessing, God has accepted me in Christ. I've not been rejected, I've been accepted by God. Now I've been rejected by people. There are certain clubs in this area if I tried to join, I'd be rejected. When I was in high school, I was rejected by some of the girls that I asked for dates. But God doesn't reject me. He has accepted me in Christ. But the acceptance is in Christ.

It isn't accepted by virtue that I'm Chuck Smith. Here's my card, I want to see God. But it's through Christ, that I have access and I have been accepted. There is one God and one Mediator between God and man, and that's the Man, Christ Jesus. And He is the One that brings me to the Father. And it is because of Him that God accepts me because I am His. And thus God accepts me in Christ.

Now, this phrase *to the praise of the glory of His grace*, an interesting phrase. The idea is that, God desires that by His grace that He manifests to you, the work that God accomplishes in your life, will bring glory to Him.

The Bible warns against glorying in the flesh. The Bible warns against trying to gain glory for ourselves but the glory is always to God.

In the New Testament, the church, in Acts, the people were constantly trying to glorify the instruments that God was using. When Peter and John were going into the temple at the hour of prayer and the lame man

was there, and Peter said, hey look at me. And he reached out his hand. Peter said, I don't have any silver and gold, but what I have, I'll give to you. In the name of Jesus Christ, rise and up and walk. He lifted the man to his feet and immediately the man was healed. He had been lame from birth. He was over forty years old. It was astounding. People were amazed. Here was this man running. He was jumping up and down. He was leaping for excitement and joy, hugging Peter. And a huge crowd began to assemble there on Solomon's porch. And Peter said, ye men of Israel, why marvel you at this, and why do you look on us as though we through our own righteousness have done this good deed to this lame man? Be it known unto you that the God of our fathers has glorified His Son Jesus, and he points them away from himself and gives the glory to Jesus.

When Peter was called to the house of Cornelius, the Roman centurion in Caesarea, when Peter came to the door, here, this Roman centurion, kneels down, he bows down to Peter. Peter said, stand up, man! I'm just a man like you are.

You remember there was Paul and Barnabas, they went to the priest of Jupiter, they said, hey man, your god in down here in the streets. He came dragging an ox down the street. He was going to offer a sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas. They figured Barnabas was Jupiter and Paul was Mercury, because Paul was smaller. And the guy was going to offer a sacrifice. They ripped off their clothes, they said, look, we're men. We're not God!

God wants to work but God wants the glory for the work that He does. And so He does things in order to bring praise and glory unto Him that no flesh should in His sight. So we are to the praise of the glory of His grace. Oh, it's the grace of God and thus we rejoice and we praise God and we glory for the grace that God has manifested to us.

Now, the next Spiritual blessing as he talks of, we're accepted in the beloved, that is in Christ, ⁷*In whom* That is in Christ. Let me suggest that as you go through the Book of Ephesians you also underline every place where it says, in Him or by Him or through Him. You are going to find that all these glorious blessing that God has for you, are all wrapped up in Christ, through Christ, by Christ. And if you will underline it, you will catch on to it, that all of these wonderful things that God has done and wants to do for you are all bound up in the person of Jesus Christ. All of the riches and the blessings are yours in and through Jesus Christ.

So, in whom, that is in Christ, *we have redemption through his blood*, Peter said, we are not redeemed with silver and gold from the empty life that we once lived, but with the precious blood of Jesus Christ, who was slain as a lamb without spot or without blemish. The price of their redemption, the Scripture said, is precious. The precious blood of Jesus Christ was shed in order that you might be redeemed from your sin. That was the price that was paid. So we have redemption, glorious blessing, Spiritual blessing! And it's through the blood of Jesus Christ that we have been redeemed!

Now with this redemption comes *the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace*; David, speaking of the mercies of God, said as high as the heavens are above the earth, so high is His mercy over those that fear Him. But the riches of His grace, who can measure? And the forgiveness of your sins is according to the riches of His grace.

⁸*Wherein* (that is, in this grace) *he hath abounded toward us* (This abounding grace. Paul said, where sin abounds, grace does much more abound! Or as some have translated, where sins abound, grace overflows.)

So wherein He has abounded toward us *in all wisdom and prudence*;

Another blessing, ⁹*Having made known unto us the mystery of his will*, God's revelation of His plan and of His purposes of you and for me and for the church. He's made known to us the mystery of His will.

What is it? *according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself*: ¹⁰*That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him*: The good pleasure of His will. As Paul wrote to the Philippians (Phil. 2:5-11), he speaks about Jesus being in the form of God. Not thinking of it as something to be grasped, to be equal with God, and yet emptying Himself, and coming in the form of man as a servant, and obedient even to the death on the cross. Wherefore God has also highly exalted Him and given Him a name that is above

all names. That at the name of Jesus, every knee shall bow and every tongue confess of things in heaven and earth, that Jesus Christ is the Lord to the glory of God the Father. It's all and the purpose of God that it all be wrapped up in Jesus.

So that in the dispensation of the fulness of times, when it all comes together, in that glorious day, when we stand before throne of God, complete in Christ Jesus, with the whole body of the church and the redeemed, that all will be there in Christ. That He will be all and in all, King of Kings, Lord of Lords! And He will gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in Him. Every knee shall bow.

¹¹*In whom* (There you have it again. Underline that one.) *In whom also* (That is, in Christ. The next blessing) *we have obtained an inheritance*, Through Jesus Christ, I've been adopted into the family of God. I've been redeemed. My sins are forgiven. I've been adopted into the family God. Thus, I have become an heir, an heir of God and a joint heir with Jesus Christ.

So in whom we have this inheritance as he is *being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will*: God just does as He pleases, is what it says. He doesn't come and seek your advice or my advice. He doesn't say, well, Chuck, how shall I handle this? He does everything after the counsel of His own will.

¹²*That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ*. So that our lives bring glory to God by our trust in Jesus.

¹³*In whom* (again, underline it) *ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth*, (You trusted in Jesus.) *the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed*, (the next blessing) *ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise*, Ephesus was a major seaport. The goods that flowed from the east to Rome, passed through Ephesus for the most part. It was a great commercial center. There would always be merchants from Rome in Ephesus, buying the goods that came overland from the east, destined for Rome. And the merchants, as they would purchase the goods, they would have them sealed or they would have them wrapped, crated and all. Then they would put their seal on the merchandise. They would put a bit of wax and then he would put his seal, so that when the ships arrived in the port of Puteoli, which was the Roman port, the servants would go to the ship. As the cargo was unloaded, they would spot the seal of ownership of their master and they would claim the goods. But it was an indication that this belongs to me. I purchased this. And it was the seal or the stamp of ownership, on the merchandise.

So it was a figure of speech that was very common to those in Ephesus. They knew all about the big markets there and the merchants from Rome and all that were purchasing the goods and were shipping them back to Rome with their seals of ownership. And so he tells us that after we believed, we were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise. God put His seal on us. What is it? The gift of the Holy Spirit, that is God's seal of ownership. God says you belong to Me.

The Bible says (1 Cor. 6:20), don't you realize that your body is not your own? You have been bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body and your Spirit which are His. You are not really your own. God has put the seal of ownership. He owns you! He redeemed you! You belong to Him. And the Holy Spirit is God's seal of ownership on our lives.

¹⁴*Which is* (he said) *the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession*, The Holy Spirit is sort of the down payment, so to speak, of our inheritance, until He redeems the purchased possession. I'm the purchased possession. He purchased me. I've been redeemed by the blood. And He has given me the seal of the Holy Spirit, as His mark of ownership. One day He is going to claim His goods. The Holy Spirit in the meantime, is just God's demonstration of His intention of completing the transaction of my redemption.

If you were selling a car and you advertised it, say in the paper, and a person calls up and asks you about it. They say they would like to see it. So you give them your address. They come over. They say, oh, this is exactly what I'm looking for. I want this car. I want to buy it. I'll go to the bank and get the money. What will you say? Well, would you like to give me a deposit? Oh, no, no, I'll be right back. But don't you sell it to anybody else because I want it. Well, wouldn't you like to give me a deposit? Well, no, but you

know, hold it for me.

If you are smart and as they leave, someone comes up and says oh, that's it and dishes out the cash, you would be wise to take the cash. You don't know if that person is going to come back. They didn't give you any earnest money. And we call it earnest money, it's showing me that you are really in earnest. You want to really buy it. Give me some earnest money. A lot of people have lost good sales because they were holding it on a promise, but they had no earnest money. So, God gives us the earnest. I am serious. I really intend to complete this transaction of your redemption. I've purchased you.

And the Holy Spirit is the earnest of the inheritance until He redeems the purchased possession *unto the praise of his glory*.

Now Paul talks about his prayer for them. This is the first of two prayers that we have in the Book of Ephesians. And both of them are just classics. So ¹⁵*Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,* Isn't it interesting that that's the thing that began to wane? He heard of their love for all of the saints. But when Jesus wrote, that love was waning.

But since I heard of your faith and your love, I did not ¹⁶*Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;*

And this is what he prayed, ¹⁷*That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:* No man has seen God at any time. The only Begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, He has manifested Him. But Jesus said no man knows what is in the spirit of man but man himself. So no man knows God, but the Spirit and whom so ever the Son will reveal Him.

It is necessary for us to have a Spiritual revelation if we are to know God in truth. God is not comprehended by the human intellect. The friend of Job, Zophar, said, who by searching can understand God to perfection?

People say, well, I'm an agnostic. I believe there is a God, but I don't think He can be known. It is true He can't be known to the natural mind. For the natural man cannot receive the things of the Spirit neither can he know them because they are spiritually discerned. Yet, he which is Spiritual, understands all things.

So Paul is praying properly that they will receive the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of God. You can only really come to a knowledge of God by virtue of the work of the Holy Spirit as He reveals the truth of God to you.

And that ¹⁸*The eyes of your understanding being enlightened;* Your eyes of your understanding now being enlightened by the Holy Spirit.

that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, I think that probably one of the most important things that all of need is to know the hope of our calling. To know how glorious, heaven is. How glorious it will be to be there in the Kingdom of God and all of the glories of that Kingdom. If we only knew what is the hope of our calling, to dwell with Him eternally in His glorious Kingdom!

and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, Now note, earlier Paul talks about our inheritance in Christ. Here he is talking about if you only knew the riches of His inheritance in the saints. In other words if you only knew how much God values you! You want to know how much God values you? He values you so highly that He sent His Begotten Son to die for you that you might be redeemed from your sins and that you might become a child of God. That's how much He treasures you. And Paul is praying oh, if you only knew how much God treasures you!

We have a granddaughter, who for some reason, is always deprecating herself. I've been getting after her lately for this. She's always saying, I'm the worst in the world. Oh, I'm so...and she's always putting herself down. She is a straight "A" student. She's beautiful, sharp, but she's always putting herself down. It's always, just, you know, I'm so horrible. And I've made sort of a joke out of it. Every time she says it, I sort of tease her on it now because just, and some people, they don't have much of a self-worth. But, I'll tell you what, God surely values you! And Paul is praying that the Spirit of God will help you to realize just how valuable you are to God, how much He prizes you. The riches of His inheritance in the saints.

And that you might know, and this is the fourth petition, that you might know ¹⁹*And what is the*

exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, If you only knew and Paul has prayed that you'll know that the power that God has made available to you. If you only knew the power that's at your disposal. Praying that God will help you to know that.

The power by which Jesus Christ was raised from the dead and sat at the right hand of the throne in glory. That power is available to you. Jesus said to His disciples, that you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you. If you only knew, Paul said, the power that God has made available to each of us. The power to live a life of victory. The power over sin over the world, the flesh and the devil. If you only knew of the power available.

Now as he talks about this power that raised Jesus, he goes on showing just how far He was raised. He raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand in the heavenly places. ²⁰*Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places,* ²¹*Far above all principality, and power, and might,* Principality and power and might are words that we read in the New Testament. These are words that have to do the rankings of the fallen angels. They are in ranks of authority and power. It's like saying, lieutenant, major and colonel and all. It's the rankings and the orders of power of the spirit forces of evil and of course they are fallen angels. So there, no doubt, are similar rankings in the angels of God.

But often we read of principalities and powers and might and dominion, all of these forces of darkness, the powers of darkness, Jesus has been raised far above them! It is wrong for us to think of Satan as an opposite of Jesus. He's not even in the same class. Satan is a created being. Jesus has existed from the beginning. Satan has limited powers. Jesus is omnipotent. And it is wrong to think of them as opposites. Satan is opposed to Jesus, but in no way an opposite of Jesus. He would probably an opposite of Michael, the archangel, for Satan at one time was an angel of very high order. As Ezekiel says of him, he was the anointed cherub that covered, but not an opposite of Jesus.

In Colossians chapter two (Col. 2:15), we find that Jesus foiled or defeated those principalities and powers that were against Him as He triumphed over them at the cross. So there is no contest!

He is far above all principality, and power and might *and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:* He is exalted! The King is exalted on high!

²²*And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,* As God said to Him, sit at My right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. The Bible tells us how God has put all things in subjection unto Him. But yet the Book of Hebrews adds, but we do not yet see all things in subjection. This is yet future. God has put all things in subjection to Jesus Christ, but we don't yet see all things in subjection. He hasn't yet assumed the authority and the power that He won by virtue of His victory on the cross.

We have this dispensation of time, in which God is drawing out from among the Gentiles a bride for His Son, the church, the bride of Christ. And one day, we'll be united with Him. And in the bride of Christ, I say Gentiles, but in the bride of Christ, there is neither Jew nor Greek, Barbarian, Scythian, bond or free. We are all one in Him, the bride of Christ.

So He has put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be the head over all things to the church. It's interesting when our board meets on a monthly basis and we go over, prayerfully, the issues of the church. It's a glorious thing. I thank God for the board at this church. I think they are unlike any board I've ever heard about in any church. They all gather early and they pray before we ever start the board meeting. And as we pray we acknowledge that Jesus Christ is the head of the church. None of us are. We acknowledge Him as the Lord and the head over the church and we're just here to hear from Him and to receive instructions and direction on what He wants done, that we might implement and do His will, acknowledging Him as Lord and head over His church! And what a glorious thing it is and what a thrill it is to work with these men, who are acknowledging the Lordship of Jesus over His church.

The church, its says, ²³*Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.*

So, an introduction into Ephesians and it just gets richer. So, read ahead, it's allowed in this class. Again note the blessings that we have in Him, through Him, by Him and all that God has wrought for us through

Jesus Christ. Thank God for the Spiritual blessings that we have in Christ in heavenly places.

Father, how rich we are in the things that count forever. And how thankful we are, Lord, that You've chosen us and ordained that we should be Your disciples. How thankful we are, Lord, that You have filled us with Your Spirit, given to us the earnest of our inheritance. Lord, we look forward to that day when You claim that which is Yours, Your church. Work in us, Lord, and may our lives bring praise and glory unto You. May You look upon us and be satisfied and be glorified. Be pleased with what you see. Let our lives, Lord, be as a pleasant fragrance unto You. In Jesus' name we pray. Amen.