

# Bible Study: Ephesians

## (Part 1—Chapters 1-3)

by Gary T. Panell

**Outline:** I. Wealth of the Believer (Doctrinal) Chapters 1-3  
II. Walk of the Believer (Practical) Chapters 4-6:9  
III. Warfare of the Believer (Tactical) Chapter 6:10-24

**Key verses:** "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast." (Ephesians 2:8-9)

**Key phrase:** In Him, in Christ

**Background:** The letter was written in Rome and the date for the writing of the letter is A.D. 61. It is the first of the prison letters (Acts 20-27; Acts 28:30-31). Paul is waiting for his trial (Ephesians 3:1; 4:1; 6:20).

"Ephesians is in the same chronological group of Paul's epistles as Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians, called collectively 'The Prison Epistles' because written during Paul's first Roman imprisonment. Paul evidently arrived in Rome in the spring of 61. The Acts speaks of his living two whole years in his own hired house (Acts 28:30), which would bring him to the spring of 63. He was probably released before the burning of Rome in 64. In Philippians he was expecting such release (1:19-26), a hope to which he refers also in Philemon 22. Ephesians, Colossians, and Philemon were dispatched at the same time by the same messengers (Ephesians 6:21, 22; Colossians 4:7-9; Philemon 12, 23, 24)." (The Wycliffe Bible Commentary)

"It has been much disputed whether Paul endured two Roman imprisonments from A.D. 60 to 68, or one. The tradition from Clement to Eusebius favors two imprisonments. It has been pointed out that the leaving of Trophimus sick at Miletus (2 Timothy 4:20) could not have been an occurrence of Paul's last journey to Jerusalem, for then Trophimus was not left (Acts 20:4; 21:29); nor could it have been on his journey to Rome to appear before Caesar, for then he did not touch at Miletus. To make this incident possible, there must have been a release from the first imprisonment and an interval of ministry and travel." (C.I. Scofield, D.D.) Paul may have gone to Spain after he was released for a year. It may be that God had given him a vision that he would go to Spain and this is why he says what he does in Romans 15:24, 28.

Some have questioned whether or not Ephesus was the church Paul was addressing in this letter, the first reason is because the words "in Ephesus" are not in the Codex Sinaiticus (Aleph) and Codex Vaticanus (B), but I personally do not believe these manuscripts are the most accurate. These words "in Ephesus" do occur in the Greek text, presently known as the "Textus Receptus," or Received Text, of the New Testament. The second reason there have been doubts as to whom the book is really addressed to is because of the letter referred to in Colossians 4:16. Where it says: "Now when this epistle is read among you, see that it is read also in the church of the Laodiceans, and that you likewise read the epistle from Laodicea." I believe there is an easy solution to this question. All the letters that are inspired by Paul, (there may have been some that were not meant for the whole Church) were to be passed from local church to local church. Such is the case with the letter first addressed to the Colossians, and such is the case with the letter first addressed to the Ephesians (the book of Ephesians now). So the letter that was in Laodicea was Ephesians, being read to the congregation in Laodicea

after it was read in Ephesus, it was to be read in Colosse.

"It seems unlikely that the Holy Spirit would inspire this command to read the Laodicean epistle, and then allow it to be lost. It is more likely that the Ephesian letter (which contains no personal names) was intended for all the churches of the region. Tychicus would have left it at Ephesus, whence it was to be circulated to Laodicea and eventually to Colosse. (The Defender's Study Bible, Dr. Henry M. Morris)

These doubts about where the letter was addressed to aside let us see why Paul addressed this very important theological letter to the church of Ephesus. "Ephesus was the capital and chief city of the Roman province of Asia, located on the west coast of Asia Minor, almost due east of Athens. So far as the record goes, Paul spent almost three years in Ephesus (Acts 18:18-21; 19), longer than any other place after he started his missionary ministries. A strong church was established there, and Timothy was eventually sent there by Paul as its pastor (1 Timothy 1:3). According to the early church fathers, the apostle John served as senior pastor of the Ephesian church in his later years, while he wrote his five New Testament books. Ephesus was evidently noted as the leading church among 'the seven churches which are in Asia' (Revelation 1:11).

"With such a long time spent by Paul establishing the church at Ephesus, it is noteworthy that, unlike his other epistles, the book of Ephesians contains no references to any individuals there, nor any references to specific problems or situations in the Ephesian church. The Ephesian epistle thus seems clearly designed for use in any church at all, and the probability is that Paul meant it as a circular letter to be shared with all the churches in Asia. It may even be the same as the letter to Laodicea mentioned in Colossians 4:16." (The Defender's Study Bible-Dr. Henry M. Morris)

Ephesians was carried by Tychicus. He also had with him Colossians and Philemon. Ephesians is not meant just for one particular local church, it was written also for the Universal Church (The Holy Catholic Church—The Indivisible Church), and Ephesus was just its first stop, as are all the letters of the New Testament. Yes, they are addressed to one particular church or individual to begin with, but they were meant to be circulated to all the Church. That is of course the reason they are included in the Canon of Scripture, because they are meant to be read and studied by every Christian. "All Scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness, that the man of God may be complete, thoroughly equipped for every good work." (2 Timothy 3:16-17)

Paul shares with those in the church how they were sought by the Father, saved by the Son, and sealed by the Holy Spirit. As a result of their salvation they need to be filled with the Spirit, walking in the Spirit, and in warfare against spiritual hosts of wickedness. It is also interesting to me that soon after Paul's writing of this letter, only about ten years later, the temple in Jerusalem would be destroyed by the Romans in 70 A.D. God was showing the Church through this letter that we are the true temple of God, and we are inhabited and filled by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 2:19-22; 5:18).

In chapters one and two Paul addresses the believers "Standing" in grace. In chapter 3 through 5:17 he talks about the believer's "Walk" and "Service." In 5:18 through chapter 6 we find out about our "Walk" and "Warfare" as Christians in this world.

I. The Wealth of The Believer Chapters 1-3.

### ***Chapter 1:***

(1) "Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,  
To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:"

There can be no doubt about who wrote this book, because it says "Paul, an apostle." Paul was called by Jesus Christ on the Damascus Road. Ananias was told in a vision by the Lord Jesus that Paul was a chosen vessel of His "to bear His name before the Gentiles, kings, and the children of Israel." (Acts 9:15)

The book is addressed to the "saints" (saints- means believers). Saints (HAGIOS) "In the plural, as used of believers, it designates all such and is not applied merely to persons of exceptional holiness, or to those who, having died, were characterized by exceptional acts of saintliness. See especially 2 Thessalonians 1:10, where 'His saints' are also described as 'them that believed.'" (VINE'S)

It was first addressed to saints who are in Ephesus. As we saw in the introduction, the letter was addressed to Ephesus first, but was to be circulated to all the churches. Ephesus was a main seaport on the west coast of Asia Minor, near the present-day Izmir. Ephesus was also one of the seven churches that Jesus addressed His letters to in Revelation 2 and 3. Paul was first in Ephesus for only a short time (Acts 18: 19-21), but later in the winter of A.D. 55 he stayed and ministered there for over two years (Acts 19:8-10).

(2) "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ."

If you will look at all the letters known to be written by Paul, he has this greeting that is almost identical in each letter: "Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ." I do not believe this is some "trite" saying he uses to start his letters. I believe it means that He is saying this letter is sent directly from God the Father and Jesus the Son by the Holy Spirit through Paul to us. What does God want to say to His people? He wants to say to us I give you My *grace* and *peace*. How different our God is from the false gods. They do not give *grace* or *peace* to their followers. A Muslim never knows if he or she will make it to "heaven." This is the way it is with all false religions, there is no real lasting peace that they can have, nor do they even know what grace is. For us as Christians the word means "G"od's "R"iches "A"t "C"hris't's "E"xpense.

(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,"

God has abundantly blessed believers with "every" spiritual blessing. For example we have salvation, victory over sin, power for service, etc. "Literally, "in the heavenlies." The same Greek word is used in John 3:12, where "things" is added. In both places the word signifies that which is heavenly in contradistinction to that which is earthly.

In Ephesians "places" is added and is especially misleading. "The heavenlies" may be defined as the sphere of the Christian's spiritual experience as identified with Christ in nature (2 Peter 1:4); life (Colossians 3:4; 1 John 5:120); relationships (John 20:17; Hebrews 2:11); service (Matthew 28:20; John 17:18); suffering (Philippians 1:29; 3:10; Col. 1:24); inheritance (Romans 8:16-17); and future glory in the kingdom (Romans 8:18-21; 1 Peter 2:9; Revelation 1:6; 5:10). The Christian is a heavenly man, and a stranger and pilgrim on the earth (Hebrews 3:1; 1 Peter 2:11)." (C. I. Scofield) Notice: Whenever words are italicized, it means that they are not in the original language, but sometimes they are helpful, other times as here, it would have been better to use "the heavenlies" without *places*.

This phrase "in Christ" is extremely important! If you do not understand anything else I am saying, I hope you catch the significance of what it means here when it simply says "in Christ." This is the key to understanding this section, and salvation for that matter. We see the phrase "in Him" or "in Christ" used ten times in this first chapter, and at least thirty times in the whole book. We will see how important this phrase is, and what it means in the coming verses.

(4) "just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love,"

The best way I know how to explain "chose us in Him" is to use illustrations taken from Scripture. Please look at this story taken from the book of Joshua first. Rahab the harlot took in the spies of Israel and hid them so they were not discovered by her king. Then when she sent them on their way she asked that she and her family might be saved when Israel came to attack her nation. It is very interesting what the spies said to her. because it helps us understand this phrase "chose us in Him." "Then the men said to her: "We *will be* blameless of this oath of yours which you have made us swear, 'unless, *when* we come into the land, you bind this line of scarlet cord in the window through which you let us down, and unless you bring your father, your mother, your brothers, and all your father's household to your own home. So it shall be *that* whoever goes outside the doors of your house into the street, his blood *shall be* on his own head, and we *will be* guiltless. And whoever is with you in the house, his blood *shall be* on our head if a hand is laid on him...And she bound the scarlet cord in the window." (Joshua 2:12-21)

You see the "scarlet cord" is one of the many pictures of the blood of Christ in the Old Testament. Rahab had to be inside the house, and her family members had to be inside the house with the scarlet cord in order to be saved. They could have chosen not to believe the spies message, but if they had they would have perished with the rest. So it is with us, God has provided a way of salvation, it is through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ alone. Think of it like a circle made on the floor and a big cross in it. Those who choose to get into the circle of Christ, or choose to be saved by His blood shed on the cross will be saved. Those who do not choose to be "in Christ" will be damned. The choice is ours!

It is important to note though--God chose this circle of salvation, or manner of salvation before the world was created. It is His grace that saves us then not our choice. The reason we have a choice is because He made a way for us to be saved without grace we would not be saved! God chose everyone who would believe and receive Christ to be His. He did this by His foreknowledge, "elect according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, in sanctification of the Spirit, for obedience and sprinkling of the blood of Jesus Christ" (1 Peter 1:2a) He chose us to be holy and without blame before Him in love. In other words, when God sees those in the circle of Christ, He sees them as "just as if they had never sinned, and with the righteousness of Christ added to their lives." Why did He do this, because He loves us, and He wants us to love others!!!

Someone has said, "Salvation is like a gate, on the outside it says, WHOSOEVER WILL, MAY ENTER, but on the inside after a person has entered it reads, CHOSEN BEFORE THE FOUNDATION OF THE WORLD."

Another illustration that may help us understand this phrase "as He chose us in Him" is the story of the Passover. You remember that the Israelites were slaves in Egypt, and then they were assured by God through Moses that if they would put the blood on their door and stay inside the house, when the death angel passed over they would be saved from the last plague. We find this recorded in Exodus chapter 12:1-13- what God said to

Moses to tell the people. "Speak to all the congregation of Israel, saying: 'On the tenth *day* of this month every man shall take for himself a lamb, according to the house of *his* father, a lamb for a household...' Your lamb shall be without blemish, a male of the first year. You may take *it* from the sheep or from the goats. 'Now you shall keep it until the fourteenth day of the same month.

Then the whole assembly of the congregation of Israel shall kill it at twilight. And they shall take some of the blood and put *it* on the two doorposts and on the lintel of the houses where they eat it...Now the blood shall be a sign for you on the houses where you *are*. And when I see the blood, I will pass over you; and the plague shall not be on you to destroy *you* when I strike the land of Egypt.'"

This helps us to see how God chose the method of salvation and He also chose the people who would believe and obey His will. He knew who would believe and obey, but that does not change the fact that they had a true choice. So it is with us and salvation through Christ, Jesus died to provide the way of salvation. He shed his blood on the cross for us, now all those who apply that blood to their hearts will be saved. Just like the Israelites had to apply the blood to the door of their houses by faith. It is first and foremost the grace of God that we can even have a way of salvation, and it is He that chose us before He even created the world. He chose us in His Son Jesus Christ.

Those who He knew would accept Jesus as their Savior will be saved. Those who do not chose Christ will not be saved. Notice also God wants people saved by families, if they applied the blood to the door post (which makes the sign of the cross), the whole family would be saved. When Paul and Silas were asked by the Philippian Jailer how to be saved they said, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved, you and your household." (Acts 16:31) God wants a people that want to be God's Holy people. He does not want robots that do what He says without a choice, but people who love Him because they choose to serve Him in love and holiness.

(5) "having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to the good pleasure of His will,"

This word "predestined" is taken wrong by people sometimes. They think of it meaning God chooses some people to be saved, and He chooses others to be damned not on the basis of choice on their part, but as a choice only on His part. This could not be further from the truth. So let us look at the meaning of this word "predestined" in the context of the passage. The American Heritage dictionary defines this word as: "determine in advance; foreordain." The Greek word used here is PROGNOSIS, foreknowledge, used only of Divine foreknowledge, Acts 2:23; I Peter 1:2. Foreknowledge is one aspect of omniscience; it is implied in God's warnings, promises and predictions. See Acts 15:18. God's foreknowledge involves His electing grace, but this does not preclude human will. He foreknows the exercise of faith which brings salvation." (VINE'S)

In other words, God knows who will receive Him, these He commands that they are to be adopted as sons and daughters into His family. He does this because He wants to do this for us. There is no thought here of saying arbitrarily, "OK I save you, but I do not want to save you." No, His choice to make us His adopted children is based on our choice to receive His Son Jesus Christ. When we are "in Him" we are adopted into the family.

(6) "to the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He made us accepted in the Beloved."

We are accepted into the family of God the Universal Church by God's "grace." We did not deserve it, but it was given to us as a free gift when we received Christ as our personal "LORD and Savior." In fact we deserved just the opposite; we deserved to be separated from God forever in a terrible place of punishment for our sins. But praise to God we were given a way out, and a way up, and that was through the blood of Jesus. He is the One who took our punishment on Himself at the whipping post and on the cross. All of chapter 53 of Isaiah is about this, but I will only quote three verses, I hope you will read the rest of the chapter. "Surely He has borne our griefs (sicknesses) and carried our sorrows (pains); yet we esteemed (reckoned) Him stricken (struck down), by God, and afflicted. But He *was* wounded (or pierced through) for our transgressions, He was bruised (crushed) for our iniquities (sins); the chastisement for our peace *was* upon Him and by His stripes (blows that cut in) we are healed. All we like sheep have gone astray; we have turned, every one, to his own way; and the LORD has laid on Him the iniquity of us all. (Isaiah 53:4-6)

(7) "In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace"

"Redemption" Greek (APOLUTROSIS) defined as "the forgiveness of our trespasses, "R. V.; so Colossians 1:14, "the forgiveness of our sins," indicating both the liberation from the guilt and doom of sin and the introduction into a life of liberty, "newness of life." (VINE'S) This all happens through the "blood of Jesus." We cannot overestimate the power in the blood of Jesus. This is so well illustrated in the story *The Chronicles of Narnia* by C.S. Lewis, *The Lion, The Witch and The Wardrobe*. Jesus gave His blood in place of ours so that we could be let free. God's righteous indignation on sin was vindicated when Christ died in our place. He did this again because of His attribute of grace. God is a Holy, Just, and Righteous God, and He cannot let even one sin go unpunished in His universe, but once that sin in the sinner has been dealt with the grace of God allows that one to go free. No other religion on earth sees God as the Christian sees Him, a God who is at the same time. a God of "Justice, but also a God of "Love" and "Mercy."

As I think about the blood, I remember a time we were having evangelist meetings in Trinidad, West Indies. There was a drunk that had entered into the tent to disrupt the service. The evangelist K.K. instructed the group to start singing that mighty old song; *There is Power in the Blood*. No sooner had we started singing and this drunken man spun around on his heels and left the service. The demon that was energizing this man, at that time, could not stand before the power of the blood of Jesus.

"according to the riches of His grace" Paul wants us to know how rich we are in Christ. You can take all the things of this world, which will soon be gone, and they are nothing in comparison to the riches we have in Christ!

(8) "which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence"

Again you have to go back to the fact that God does everything according to His attributes. He is not just a God of justice, but he is also a God of love and mercy. God uses all of His attributes in wisdom and prudence to bring us to Himself. (For more detail, look at our article *Christian Worldview* 'one.')

He cannot invite us to come to Him unless He has a way of getting ride of our sin, because He is a Holy God and He cannot have sin in His presence. So He made a way for us to be saved and to be with Him by using His wisdom. Paul says in Romans: "and that He might make known the riches of His glory on the vessels of mercy, which He had prepared beforehand for glory, even us whom He called, not of the Jews only, but also of the Gentiles?" Romans

9:23-24

(9) "having made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself,"

God has revealed to us the "mystery" (something not revealed in detail before) about His salvation and how it is by grace through faith. Also that God already knows who will receive salvation through His Son, but at the same time He does not violate our will. God wanted to do this and it is a pleasure for Him to save us. "The Lord is not slack concerning *His* promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance." (2 Peter 3:9)

(10) "that in the dispensation of the fullness of the times He might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven and which are on earth—in Him."

In the future, when we are with the Lord and everything has been accomplished on this earth Jesus will be all in all for the believers. There will be no difference between men and women, Jews and Gentiles, people we will be one in Christ. We will be one in the love of Christ because of the salvation that is in Him alone. "And I have declared to them Your name, and will declare it, that the love with which You loved Me may be in them, and I in them." (John 17:26)

(11) "in whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestined according to the purpose of Him who works all things according to the counsel of His will."

It is in Christ that we have eternal life and heaven coming to us. Why, because that is the way God willed it to be. He willed that whoever receives His Son Jesus Christ will be saved, and will be with the Holy Trinity, one day.

(12) "that we who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory."

There will be those who will be saved in the future who will not be in the Church Age as we are in, but we are the first to be saved. Why again? So God could bring glory to Himself for saving us out of the world. We did not deserve salvation, but He gives it to those who put their trust in Christ.

(13) "In Him you also *trusted*, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise,"

The first part of this verse is reminiscent of Romans 10:13-14: "For 'whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.' How then shall they call on Him in whom they have not believed? And how shall they believe in Him of whom they have not heard? And how shall they hear without a preacher?"

Then the second part of the verse goes on to assure us that after we believed we "were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise." What does this mean? It means just what it says, that God has put his seal upon us. You know that in the time of Christ on this earth that a seal of the king was the sign of the authority, ownership and security of the king. Like when Pilate put his seal on the tomb so no one could open the tomb, he and they did not count on angels breaking the seal. But the seal was extremely important, anyone who had the seal of the king (sometimes a ring) had the same authority that the king had. So too when God puts His seal on us we are

His, nobody better "monkey" with us not even the Devil himself. We belong to God!

There are two other verses in the New Testament that make this perfectly clear. "Nevertheless the solid foundation of God stands, having this seal: 'The Lord knows those who are his,' and, 'Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity.'" (2 Timothy 2:19) "who also has sealed us and given us the Spirit in our hearts as a guarantee." (2 Corinthians 1:22) What does this mean, well it means that Jesus "will never leave us or forsake us." (Hebrews 13:5) We have God's Holy Spirit living within us when we are born again. How much stronger assurance of salvation could God give us?! Notice too that He goes on to say, "Let everyone who names the name of Christ depart from iniquity." In other words if you belong to God, you better act like it because others are watching your actions! You are to be Holy, like your Heavenly Father is Holy! So we cannot say, "Well since I am saved and sealed in the Church age, so now I can go out and sin all I want." First, Paul addresses this in Romans 6-8. Second, if you think this way, you are not really saved according to 1 John, because Christians do not practice sin!

I personally do not believe this promise applies to Old Testament believers, why else would David pray, "Do not cast me away from Your presence, and do not take Your Holy Spirit from me." (Psalm 51:5) I do not believe we will see King Saul in heaven or Balaam, but Ananias and Sapphires from Acts 5 will be there. We have something special in the Age of Grace or the Church Age; something that they did not have under the Age of Law. In this age if we are "in Christ" we are saved and sealed. I know this is a controversial subject and that it has been debated down through the centuries. I also know this debate has divided Christians for centuries and up until the present time. I do not believe God wants there to be division in the Church over this subject.

The problem is that we cannot see the heart of man, only God can do this. He alone knows if a person is "in Christ" so we are not to judge. Yes, we can be fruit inspectors because Christ has said we will know them by their fruit, but beyond this we really do not know if a person is saved or not. We do know that Scripture says that if we are "in Christ" we are His. Let us not be divided over this issue in the Church any longer, we know He has all the answers, and that when we get to heaven He will explain it for us, but right now we know He wants us to love each other and not be divided over this issue because of John 17.

(14) "who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory." (Go into the work of the Holy Spirit.)

We are actually sealed not just "by" the Holy Spirit, but "with" the Holy Spirit. "Now He who has prepared us for this very thing is God, who also has given us the Spirit as a guarantee." (2 Corinthians 5:5) guarantee literally means "deposit," "down payment," or "first installment." The Holy Spirit invested in us is God's title to possessing us entirely and forever. (New Spirit Filled Life Bible) "Not only *that*, but we also who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, eagerly waiting for the adoption, the redemption of our body." (Romans 8:23) We were bought with the "blood" of Jesus. "...the church of God which He purchased with His own blood." (Acts 20:28) We are His so as a result we want to praise Him for saving us, but also others will praise Him for how great He is in redeeming us. This shows His attributes such as love, mercy and especially grace. Also we have a little taste of heaven on this earth as we have the Holy Spirit living within us!

(15) "Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints,"

Paul always liked hearing of the progress that other Christians were making, and so should we be. In this case he had had a vital part in starting the work in Ephesus (Acts 18:21; 19:8-10 20:17-38). We should not want to hear about negative things that are happening to Christians, but should be glad when God's work is prospering.

(16) "do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers:"

We should be in prayer for the ministries that we hear about or are involved in. Through prayer we are a vital part of the ministry. Only in heaven will we know how much our prayers did to promote the work in different parts of the world. I remember praying for parts of Russia to open up to the Gospel when they were still under Communism when there seemed to be no way that God could answer these prayers, but He did. God is taking our prayers and weaving them into the makeup of the universe. How powerful our prayers are! If we believed this more, we would pray more! We need to pray for those Christians around the world that are suffering for Christ even today. Then too, we should not forget to thank God for His answers to our prayers. We can thank Him ahead of time because we know that if we pray in the will of God in faith He will answer our prayers according to His perfect will.

Here is where praying in the Spirit helps as well, because we do not always know how to pray for people, but the Holy Spirit does. "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit," (Jude 20) ""Likewise the Spirit also helps in our weaknesses. For we do not know what we should pray for as we ought, but the Spirit Himself makes intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered." (Romans 8:26) "Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, in everything give thanks; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you. Do not quench the Spirit." (1 Thessalonians 5:16-19)

(17) "that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him,"

We do not know Christ as we should so often. Maybe those who have gone through real suffering for the Lord, or those who have experienced real trials do know Him better than most; but for most of us we do not really get to know Christ as we should. That is why Paul wants God to give us the "spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him."

Our whole lives as Christians should be given over to getting to know Christ on an intimate basis. However, so often things of this world crowd out this intimate fellowship with Christ that Paul is talking about. We need to pray as Paul did for this to happen in our lives. It has to come by "revelation," what better place to find this than the revelation of Christ in His Word. As we spend time with Him in His Word we will experience this, but it comes as a matter of choice as well. We must put Christ first in our lives for this to happen.

(18) "the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,"

The eyes of our heart are being spoken of here; our spirit in touch with His Spirit. When we are in fellowship with Him by the Holy Spirit we know what we have in Him, now and in the future. We see that the things of this world are temporary, but what God has for us are worth more than all the wealth of this world!

(19) "and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power"

If you think about it, the most powerful thing that has happened in this universe is when God took us out of sin and made us right with Him through the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. He has transformed us from the kingdom of darkness into the kingdom of light!

(20) "which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated *Him* at His right hand in the heavenly *places*,"

You see the same power that raised Jesus from the dead and seated Him beside the Father will raise us from the dead if we die, or rapture us up to heaven which every the case may be. One day we will physically be in heavenlies, but right now we are seated there positionally because of the predestination that was spoken of earlier.

(21) "far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come."

Jesus is above all fallen angels, including Satan; He is above all the holy angels and any other name that might be named! He will always be above everyone and everything even for eternity to come.

(22) "And He put all *things* under His feet, and gave Him *to be* head over all *things* to the church,"

Christ conquered every enemy when He died on the cross and rose again. There is no pope or any other leader anywhere in the church that is the head of the church, it is only Christ! He alone rules and reigns in the church! It is rightly so, since He is the only one who is the perfect lamb of God that died for our sins! We are under shepherds, under His authority.

"Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away." (1 Peter 5: 2-4)

(23) "which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all."

The church is the body of Christ on this earth, we are His hands, His feet, His heart. "For as the body is one and has many members, but all the members of that one body, being many, are one body, so also is Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body—whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free—and have all been made to drink into one Spirit." (1 Corinthians 12:12-13) We are the church the body of Christ on this earth now. He fills us as individuals and as a church by His Holy Spirit. He is the head of this body. "For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body." (Ephesians 5:23) He wants us to make Him known to the whole world through this body the church as we live and preach His Gospel in love!

I. The Wealth of the Believer Chapters 1-3.

**Chapter 2:**

(1) "And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins,"

Before we are saved we are considered dead spiritually. That is why no amount of good works can save us, it is only the blood of Jesus transfused into our lives can make us new creatures in Christ. "Therefore, if anyone *is* in Christ, *he is* a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new." (2 Corinthians 5:17)

(2) "in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,"

The "course of this world," is living just for self and for this lifetime, the here and now. The world says, "You only go around once," and "The one with the most toys wins." The only thing is, we don't just go around once, and I have never seen anyone taking their "toys" with them. There is no getting around it; we were slaves to Satan and sin before we received the Lord Jesus into our hearts and lives. Paul says, "...knowing this, that our old man was crucified with *Him*, that the body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves of sin." (Romans 6:6)

(3) "Among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others."

We were part of the world's system which belongs to Satan at this time. That is why John says, "Do not love the world or the things in the world. If anyone loves the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that *is* in the world—the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life—is not of the Father but is of the world. And the world is passing away, and the lust of it; but he who does the will of God abides forever." (1 John 2:15-17) Once I was witnessing to a Hindu man in Trinidad, and he said to me, "You Christians teach that I am a child of the Devil." I had to agree with him, even though it seems very strong, and very offensive, but it is the truth of the word of God. Either you are in God's family or in Satan's family there is no other family than these two.

(4) "But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,

We cannot comprehend the love that God has for the world, BUT this is what it says in John 3:16, "For God so loved the world..." This is the "agape" love of God that is used here and other places when God speaking of how He cares for us. "In respect of *agapao* as used of God, it expresses the deep and constant love and interest of a perfect Being toward entirely unworthy objects, producing and fostering a reverential love in them towards the Giver, and a practical love towards those who are partakers of the same, and a desire to help others to see the Giver." (VINE'S)

(5) "even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

Paul says, "Now all things *are* of God, who has reconciled us to Himself through Jesus Christ, and has given us the ministry of reconciliation, that is that God was in Christ reconciling the world to Himself, not imputing their trespasses to them... For He made *Him* who knew no sin *to be* sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God in *Him*." (2 Corinthians 5:18-21) Jesus took our punishment for us even though we deserved eternal separation from God for our sins. We are now living through Christ. "I have been crucified

with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the *life* which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me." (Galatians 2:20) It is only the "grace" of God that could do this!

(6) "and raised *us* up together, and made *us* sit together in the heavenly *places* in Christ Jesus,"

We now are looked on by God as part of the family, we are joint heirs with Christ. "and if children, then heirs—heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ..." (Romans 8:17) All that is His is ours too! How amazing this is to think that God loves us this much!

(7) "that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus."

As we look at this in the ages to come, in other words in the future, we will see how much God loves us, by seeing our standing in the family as equal brothers and sisters with Christ (even though adopted)! What a wonderful, wonderful family this is! What a great God we have!

(8) "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; *it is* the gift of God,"

This is the key to the whole book really, because in these verses 8 and 9 we see in a "nutshell" the whole truth of the gospel message. This was the message that Martin Luther and many of the reformers proclaimed. This is the message of the Old and New Testament. This is the message that we as true Christians must proclaim! "Behold the proud, his soul is not upright in him; but the just shall live by his faith." (Habakkuk 2:4)

This is how everyone who has ever lived in the world that has been saved has been saved. It is by "faith," look what the writer of the book of Hebrews says: "But without faith *it is* impossible to please *Him*, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and *that* He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him." (Hebrews 11:6)

It is not enough either to just believe there is a God; the Bible says that demons believe there is a God, but this does not save them. "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!" You must go on to show your faith by actions. If we are really saved people will be able to see it in our lives, by the way we live.

We will not be ashamed to confess Christ with our mouth, "...The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, the word of faith which we preach): that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." (Romans 10:8-10)

(9) "not of works, lest anyone should boast."

So many people think that salvation is by good works, but the Word of God is very clear on this. There are even those who would use what James said to claim that we are saved by works. So let's look closer at what James said, "But someone will say, 'You have faith, and I have works.' Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works." (James 2:18) James is not saying he is saved by works, he is saying that we show our faith by our works or actions. "You see then that a man is justified by works, and not by faith

only." (James 2:24)

This seems to fly in the face of the clear statements of Ephesians 2:8-9 and what Paul says in Romans about salvation being a free gift. "For if by the one man's offense death reigned through the one, much more those who receive abundance of grace and of the gift of righteousness will reign in life through the One, Jesus Christ." (Romans 5:17) As we find in Romans we are made right in God's sight by faith, in James we are justified in man's sight by works. God can see our heart, but man can only see our actions. We are not saved by works or else we could get to heaven and walk around in our pride. We could say, "See I got here by my good works." God says, it is not of works, but salvation is a free gift that we receive by faith through God's grace.

(10) For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them."

Now once we are saved we show our love to God and man by doing good works. So the good works do not save us, but they are a result of our salvation. We are to be "little Christs" that is what the word "Christian" means. Saint Peter says of Jesus, "...God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power, who went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him." (Acts 10:38) This should be the testimony people could give of our lives after we have passed from this earthly scene.

(11) "Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh—who are called Uncircumcision by what called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands—"

Gentiles were thought of as the "Uncircumcision" (because most Gentiles are uncircumcised) by the Jews who thought of themselves a little bit better than Gentiles because they had been physically circumcised.

(12) "that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world."

And really we were not as well off as believing Israelites, because we were not part of Israel and did not have the promises that the Jewish nation had because of Abraham. We had no hope in the world without God as our Savior. That does not mean that there were no Gentiles saved, because the Old Testament, and Jesus mention some were believers. It does mean that we were not as privileged as the Jews were at that time. You see they had the covenant between God and Abraham, they had the Law and the Prophets, however, they were also held more accountable before God.

(13) "But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ."

Now the tables are turned, God is working specifically with Gentiles. That is not to say that Jews cannot be saved, because they are being saved, but they have to come just as the Gentiles do, through the blood of Christ.

You might ask what does it mean when it says, "...brought near by the blood of Christ?" It means that the "blood of Christ will save us if we apply it to our lives. Remember how in chapter one, we gave the example of the Israelites having to put the blood on the door posts of their houses in order to be passed over by the death angel on the first Passover. So too, today we have to say to God the Father we want the blood of Jesus to take away our sins, and the death angel will pass over us. In other words we do not go to hell, but to heaven when we die.

(14) "For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,"

"Prior to the New Covenant, Gentiles were excluded from citizenship in the commonwealth of Israel and were foreigners to the covenant promises of God. There was no hope in this life and no ability to know God's presence in the world. The covenant sacrifice of Christ's blood took Gentile believers who were far from God and joined them together with the Jews in the new Covenant. Gentiles were grafted in to enjoy the covenants of promise through the New Covenant and were included as heirs with the patriarchs of all God's promises." (New Spirit Filled Life Bible)

(15) "having abolished in His flesh the enmity, *that is*, the law of commandments *contained* in ordinances, so as to create in Himself one new man *from* the two, *thus* making peace,"

In other words when Jesus died on the cross as a sacrifice for us He broke down the bad feels between Jews and Gentiles. The only way this could happen is through a miracle because the Jews had the commandments from God and the religious services that He had ordained. This in itself would tend to make the Jews proud of what they had and us as Gentiles jealous. To illustrate, sometimes there is a question is this the answer, or is that the answer; is this one right or is that one right? Then comes the answer both are right. It is no longer the Jews only but the Gentiles also. By dying on the cross Jesus brought both Jews and Gentiles together making peace between us.

(16) "and that He might reconcile them both to God in one body through the cross, thereby putting to death the enmity."

You see the beauty of this union, it is like a marriage between the Jews and Gentiles. The cross was the wedding ceremony, so the two groups are no longer enemies, but brothers and sisters in Christ. Every truly born again Gentile Christian loves Jews, and born again Jews loves Gentiles, because we are now one body in Christ. The many unsaved Gentiles hate Jews, and the unsaved Jew often hate Gentiles, but it does not have to be this way. The world cannot understand this kind of love, a love that would cause two groups that have been enemies to become close friends.

This love caused Corrie ten Boom and her sister to sacrifice their lives so that Jews could live. "When the Nazis overran Holland Corrie ten Boom, her father and sister, chose to risk death by making their quietly respectable home a haven for refugees." (*A Prisoner and yet...* by Corrie ten Boom) This love can also cause Christian Jews to love Arabs and vice versa. In the Church there should be no division between Jewish Christians, and Gentile Christians. One day the whole Jewish nation will become believers in Christ as their Savior. "For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should be wise in your own opinion, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in. And so all Israel will be saved, as it is written: 'The Deliverer will come out of Zion, and He will turn away ungodliness from Jacob; for this My covenant with them, when I take away their sins.'" (Romans 11:25-26)

(17) "And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near."

This was all prophesied as one of the ministries of the Messiah, and was to bring light and peace to the Gentiles.

That is why when Jesus was born the angels said: "Then the angel said to them, 'Do not be afraid, for behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy which will be to all people. For there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord...And suddenly there was with the angel a multitude of the heavenly host praising God and saying: 'Glory to God in the highest, and on earth peace, good will toward men!'" (Luke 2:10-14) Then Simeon was brought to the Temple by the Spirit of God to hold Jesus in his arms, and to say: "Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, according to Your word; for my eyes have seen your salvation which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, a light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, and the glory of Your people Israel." (Luke 2:29-32)

(18) "For through Him we both have access by one Spirit to the Father."

There is no other way of salvation only through the name of Jesus for both Jews and Gentiles. "Nor is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:16) You will hear some people say, "There are many roads to heaven." This is not what God's Word says. Jesus says: "I am the way, the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through Me." (John 14:6) So Jews and Gentiles are saved by Christ alone, and now we both have equal access to God the Father by the Holy Spirit.

(19) "Now, therefore, you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God,"

We should be excited as Gentiles to think about the changes that have taken place between Jews and Gentiles. The thing is if we have grown up in the church we probably do not even think about the differences. Suppose, though we were born as a Gentile before the Church was started by Christ, what would it have been like for us then? Thinking about this should make us glad to be part of the Church Age where all are welcome, Jews and Gentiles! We are no longer outsiders or foreigners but fellow citizens in the family of God! This is part of wealth that Paul is talking about that we have "in Christ."

(20) "having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief *cornerstone*,"

The Church is thought of as a building, a Temple, with the foundation being the apostles the first twelve, and other apostles like Paul. Apostles are the first to go to an area to start a new work, we think of them as missionaries the word is really "sent one(s)." Prophets are those who prophecy and preach the Word of God. (If He were speaking here of Old Testament prophets he would have said that he was speaking of them.) Jesus Christ Himself is that Rock that holds it all together. We as born again Christians are being built up into a holy spiritual temple not made with hands. "Coming to Him *as to* a living stone, rejected indeed by men, but chosen by God *and* precious, you also, as living stones, are being built up a spiritual house, a holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ." (1 Peter 2:4-5)

(21) "in whom the whole building, being fitted together, grows into a holy temple in the Lord,"

"For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, *you are* God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus

Christ." (I Corinthians 3:9-11) We are building this "Holy Temple" in the Spirit just as the Old Testament Jews built a physical temple. What we do with our lives will determine what happens in this temple. One day in heaven we will look back and see how this told place in the Church Age. It is exciting to have a part in this work, but also a serious responsibility as Paul says: "but let each one take heed how he builds on it." (I Corinthians 3:10c)

(22) "in whom you also are being built together for a dwelling place of God in the Spirit."

Paul makes it clear that our bodies are part of that temple: "Do you not know that you are the temple of God and *that* the Spirit of God dwells in you? If anyone defiles the temple of God, God will destroy him. For the temple of God is holy, which *temple* you are." (1 Corinthians 3: 16-17)

"Or do you not know that your body is the temple of the Holy Spirit *who is* in you, whom you have from God, and you are not your own? For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's." (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)

I. The Wealth of the Believer Chapters 1-3.

### ***Chapter 3:***

(1)"For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles—"

Paul was appointed as an apostle to the Gentiles mainly, but now he is not only their apostle, he has also been willing to suffer prison for Jesus and the sake of getting this Gospel message out to the Gentiles.

(2) "if indeed you have heard of the dispensation (stewardship) of the grace of God which was given to me for you,"

Paul says you have probably heard about this important message of the grace of God being bestowed on the Gentiles, because I have been busy getting it out to you. Paul knew God had given him, and him alone this "stewardship" or responsibility concerning the "Gospel of Grace" to the Gentiles. No other apostle wrote like Paul did, probably 13 books of the New Testament, mainly on this subject of grace.

The reason it is important is because many people do not even see the significance of the differences between the "grace" (Church) age, and the work of the Lord in the Old Testament. We see people who over stress the importance of buildings, religious robes, and rituals. I am not saying these are wrong, but if Christians think of God's program today, exactly like the worship in the Old Testament, they will be hung up on making beautiful buildings, wearing beautiful religious garments, and doing beautiful religious rituals. If one thinks this is what the New Testament age is about they have missed the point!

Now there is a difference, Paul is saying. We are no longer concerned about the golden temple, but about our bodies as the temple of God. We are not concerned about religious robes, but about the robes of righteousness that Christ gives us. We are not into rituals, but we are concerned about being filled to overflowing with the Holy Spirit, which results in praise, worship, and evangelism!

(3) "how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already),"

Paul had shared before that Christ had revealed to him about the mystery of the Church Age and the stewardship of the Grace of God in Ephesians 1:9. In Galatians Paul goes into more detail how he was given this ministry to the Gentiles, while Peter and the other apostles ministered mainly to the Jews. "...and when James, Cephas, and John, who seemed to be pillars, perceived the grace that had been given to me, they gave me and Barnabas the right hand of fellowship, that we *should go* to the Gentiles and they to the circumcised." (Galatians 2:9)

(4) "by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),"

Paul wants people to read and understand that Christ has given to him the knowledge to understand and reveal this mystery that was once unrevealed about the "grace" of God.

(5) "which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets:"

You see this was not given to people to understand until Jesus came: "And of his fullness we have all received, and grace for grace. For the law was given through Moses, *but* grace and truth came through Jesus Christ." (John 1:16-17) So now we are in the Age of Grace in the Church.

This message was not given in the Old Testament, because they were under the Age of Law. The New Testament apostles and New Testament prophets have revealed this message of grace. (That does not mean that God was not a God of grace in the Old Testament, but He had not revealed it in detail before. We can see examples of "grace" being applied in the lives of Old Testament saints such as Moses, Samson, David, and so on, but we do not see a Church revealed in detail as it is now by the apostles and prophets.) We do see that God would in the future call a people for Himself from the Gentiles in the Old Testament. "I was sought by *those who* did not seek Me. I said, 'Here I am, here I am,' to a nation *that* was not called by My name." (Isaiah 64: 1)

In the Old Testament we see prophecies of the First Coming of Christ as one large mountain in the distance, and we see the Second Coming of Christ prophesied, but we do not see the Church prophesied. The reason for this, I believe, is because Israel had a real choice to choose Jesus as their Savior and King (Messiah). But since they did not receive Jesus as their Messiah, God went to the Gentiles. Did it take God by surprise that the nation of Israel would not accept His Son at this time? No, God knows everything, but He waited until after Israel had made their choice, then God revealed the Church Age, which is in the valley between the two mountain peaks.

(6) "that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel,"

Paul is just so excited about the fact that now God is working with the Gentiles not just Jews (and so should we be excited too). Oh yes, in the Old Testament times Gentiles could become Jewish proselytes, but they had to in effect become Jews. Now God has started a "program" where Gentiles do not have to become Jews in order to be saved, but are in a new body where both are welcome just like they are. They have the same inheritance as the Jews, that of eternal life, through receiving the message of salvation in Christ (the Gospel).

(7) "of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power."

This was a gift of the Holy Spirit that Paul, once a blinded Pharisee, could reveal to the Church something far greater than the Law. The religious leaders of his day would die for the Law, but now isn't it ironic that one of blinded leaders can be transformed by the Christ so that he becomes a preacher of Grace.

(8) "To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,"

Paul was a walking testimony to the "grace" of God. He should have been killed by God for trying to destroy the Church before he was saved. But God knew his heart, that he really thought he was pleasing God by persecuting Christians. Now God takes Paul and turns his life into a "Trophy of Grace!" Now he is sharing with us Gentiles all the riches we have in Christ. How sad it is that so many Christians never even understand what the Word says about this, or even care, for that matter.

No! We should get all excited about grace, and share the good news with others!

(9) "and to make all see what *is* the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God."

"Paul's duty (and now our duty) was 'to make all men see' the 'fellowship' with God which this mystery reveals. This great plan was made by God 'from the beginning of the world;' but it was kept hid until the Gospel of grace had come. This most glorious work of God—the building of this temple—is going on before our eyes. We believers are a part of it and we may have a part in it—winning souls to Christ and building them up in Christ. Everything which God has revealed about this great mystery should be taught and known and valued by us all." (Studies in Ephesians by J. Irvin Overholtzer, founder of Child Evangelism Fellowship)

(10) "who created all things through Jesus Christ;"

As we see in Colossians where it says, "For by Him all things were created that are in heaven and that are on earth, visible and invisible, whether thrones or dominions or principalities or powers. All things were created through Him and for Him. And He is before all things, and in Him all things consist. And He is the head of the body, the church, who is the beginning, the first born from the dead, that in all things He may have the preeminence." (Colossians 1:16-18)

(11) "to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly *places*,"

I do not think here that he is speaking of the fallen principalities and powers in the heavenly places, like it speaks of in chapter six. Here I believe he is speaking of the Holy Angels that have their divisions of ranks. There would be no need for fallen angels to understand or learn anything since they are condemned; however it would be very helpful for the Holy Angels to learn more about God's 'manifold wisdom' through the ministry of the Church.

(12) "in whom we have boldness and access with confidence through faith in Him."

We are to go boldly now into the throne room of God through prayer. It was not so in the Old Testament, the High Priest went in fear and trembling to the Holy of Holies only once a year, as the book of Hebrews points out. But now, we are told we can go in boldness and confidence by faith into the throne room of God! "Therefore, brethren, having boldness to enter the Holiest by the blood of Jesus, by a new and living way which He consecrated for us, through the veil, that is His flesh, and *having* a High Priest over the house of God, let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith, having our hearts sprinkled from an evil conscience and our bodies washed with pure water." (Hebrews 10: 19-22)

(13) "Therefore I ask that you do not lose heart at my tribulations for you, which is your glory."

Paul was in jail for preaching the gospel and the Christians in Ephesus knew this very well. He was afraid that they would feel overwhelmed by his suffering, since he had been their pastor for about three years. He wanted them to think of how privileged they were to have a pastor that was seen worthy to suffer for the cause of the gospel. Do we look at suffering and persecution this way today?

(14) "For this reason I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,"

Paul was praying for them, we pray to the Father in the name of Jesus.

(15) "from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,"

The family of God is in heaven and on earth. Some have died in the Lord, and others are still living, but they are all part of the whole family. Those who are born again will live together in a wonderful family of God. "And I heard a loud voice from heaven saying, 'Behold, the tabernacle of God is with men, and He will dwell with them, and they shall be His people, and God Himself will be with them *and be* their God.'" (Revelation 21:3)

(16) "that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man,"

Paul wanted them to be blessed with the blessings of heaven. He wanted them to be given the power of the Holy Spirit into their souls. "But you, beloved, building yourselves up on your most holy faith, praying in the Holy Spirit, keep yourselves in the love of God, looking for the mercy of our Lord Jesus Christ unto eternal life." (Jude 20-21) When we pray in the Holy Spirit He gives us strength outside of ourselves to accomplish the ministry that He wants us to do, and to take us through the hard times.

(17) "that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love,"

This word "dwell" in Greek (KATOIKEŌ) means: "to settle down in a dwelling, to dwell fixedly in a place. Besides its literal sense, it is used of (a) the indwelling of the totality of the attributes and powers of the Godhead in Christ, Col. 1:19; 2:9; (b) ...the indwelling of Christ in the hearts of believers ('may make a home in your hearts') (VINE'S) God wants to fill our hearts with His love and His life and power. He wants us to become like His Son Jesus, who was filled with the fullness of God all the time. "For it pleased *the Father that* in Him all the fullness should dwell,...rooted and built up in Him and established in the faith,...For in Him dwells all the fullness of the Godhead bodily; (Colossians 1:19; 2:7; 2:9).

(18) "may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height—"

In Spanish there are two terms for "to know," one is "saber" and it means to know with your mind, and then there is the "conocer" which means "to be acquainted with" or "to know with your heart." That is what Paul is saying here, that we can "know with our hearts" Christ our Savior. Sometimes you run out of words to express yourself, the best Paul could do was to say "the width and length and depth and height—".

(19) "to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge; that you may be filled with all the fullness of God."

We can only know the love of Christ through experience; it is not something that we can have as head knowledge. God wants us filled with His Holy Spirit. This is covered in Ephesians chapter five verse eighteen.

(20) "Now to Him who is able to do exceedingly abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that works in us,"

This is a doxology of praise closing this section.

(21) "to Him *be* glory in the church by Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever, Amen."

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