

Ephesians

The Crown Jewel of the Epistles of Paul,

Translation and Commentary

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EPHESIANS

Chapter 1

Ephesians 1:1

Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the holy ones[1], which are at Ephesus[2], and to the faithful **in Christ Jesus**[3].

Commentary · Ephesians 1:1 · Note 1

Those who have been born of God are called saints in the New Testament 60 times and are only referred to as Christians three times (Acts 11:26, 26:28, 1 Peter 4:16). Therefore, it is more proper to refer to a New Testament child of God as a saint. Many think of a saint as a special person who earned that status through some extraordinary deeds, but in reality it is part of God's unspeakable gift to all who would believe. The Greek adjective 'hagios' may be translated as "sacred," "holy," or "saint." It is used of God, Christ, the Holy Spirit, of angels, and of men who are consecrated to God. It indicates that which is made pure, perfect, worthy of God, and that which is set apart unto the service of God. This word is used 233 times in the New Testament and 831 times in the Septuagint. It first occurs in the Old Testament in Exodus 3:5, when God commanded Moses to remove his shoes because he stood upon holy ground. The Greek word 'hagios' is translated from the Hebrew word 'kodesh.' The first occurrence in the New Testament of 'hagios' is in Matthew 1:18, "and she was found with child of the Holy Ghost." Those who are holy, or saints, are those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus (Acts 26:18, 1 Corinthians 1:30, Hebrews 2:11, 10:10, 13:12). Holiness or purity is supplied to us through the purification that takes place through the blood of Jesus. The blood purifies by absorbing all sin and transmitting it into the offering, which in this case is not a goat or calf, but the Lamb of God, Christ Jesus. Jesus took all sin and bore it in his body and carried it away to Calvary where it was justly put to death. Our sanctification is found in the fact that we were crucified with Christ, we were buried by baptism into His death, we were raised up together with Him, and we are now placed in a position of authority with Him in the Heavens. Our life of sin, the old nature, was crucified with Christ insomuch that Christ is not only our representative, but we were also crucified with Him that the body of sin might be destroyed (Romans 6:3, Colossians 2:11-12). As new creatures begotten of the Father, having been born by the Spirit, we are holy and pure (1 Timothy 1:5, 3:9, 2 Timothy 2:22, Titus 1:15, 1 Peter 1:22, 2 Peter 3:1, Matthew 5:8).

Commentary · Ephesians 1:1 · Note 2

Ephesus was an ancient city of Ionia. Although it was a great city celebrated by the Greek inhabitants of Ionia, it no longer exists today. A temple of Diana was built in Ephesus that took 200 years to complete. The temple was burned to the ground, and the pillars were used by Justinian to beautify the Church of Sophia at Constantinople. There is a small village named Ayasaluk near the site of this once glorious city. Smyrna (Izmir), which is only 40 miles from Ephesus, still exists to this day as the third-largest city of Turkey. It is interesting to note that only the churches at Smyrna and Philadelphia enjoyed a good report from Jesus in His address to the churches in Revelation 2-3.

Commentary · Ephesians 1:1 · Note 3

The expression 'en Cristo Iesous' (in Christ Jesus), or its variants, are found fourteen times in verses 1 through 20 (verses 1, 3, 4, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, 20). It is an expression found many times throughout the New Testament, and clearly established the truth that the holy ones and Christ Jesus have been brought into a glorious union. Our relationship with God, granted to us in this covenant of love, is a relationship of oneness with the Father and the Lord Jesus (John 17:21-23). The church was brought into a holy union with God even in a greater way than the nation of Israel when they were joined unto God through the covenant at Sinai (Ephesians 5:31-32, Isaiah 54:5). Therefore, the blessings, position, identity, and ability of Christ are all ours because we have been made one with Him. We are in Him and He is in us – this is the theme of the New Covenant. Because of this oneness, we may boldly say that Christ abides in our hearts and the greater one lives inside of us (Ephesians 3:17, 1 John 3:24, 4:4, Colossians 1:27). Christ Jesus is not only at the right hand of the Father, but He is also in our inner man. Because of His great grace, we can see Him in the life that we now live.

Ephesians 1:2

Grace and peace to you from God our Father,[4] and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Commentary · Ephesians 1:2 · Note 4

Paul could not be accused of being in the company of those who wanted to leave the Son out and only have the Father, nor of those who would want to leave the Father out and only have the Son. His greetings and exhortations always included both persons (Romans 1:7, 15:6, 1 Corinthians 1:3, 8:6, 2 Corinthians 1:2-3, 11:31, Galatians 1:1, 3-4, Ephesians 1:2-3, 17, 3:14, 5:20, Philippians 1:2, 2:11, Colossians 1:2-3, 3:17, 1 Thessalonians 1:1, 3, 3:11, 13, 2 Thessalonians 1:1, 2, 2:16, 1 Timothy 1:2, 2 Timothy 1:2, Titus 1:4, Philemon 1:3, Hebrews 1:5). Although Paul was raised in the strictest sense as a Pharisee, and only understood the personality of Yahoah as the One and Only God, Christ Jesus, who was hidden in the Father, was revealed to him as the only begotten Son of the Father. In the New Covenant, the revelation of God and His oneness takes on a whole new dimension of revelation. To think that Paul believed in anything less than the distinct personalities of the Father, His Son Jesus, and the Holy Spirit would be void of honest evaluation of the things that he wrote and taught in his letters to the churches.

Ephesians 1:3

Blessed is the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us **in Christ** with all spiritual[5] blessings in heaven[6].

Commentary · Ephesians 1:3 · Note 5

The Greek word 'pneumatikos' ("spiritual") is only found in the New Testament. It was first used in Romans 1:11 with respect to Paul's desire to impart spiritual abilities or gifts to the brethren. The spiritual blessings include every benefit and manifestation of the Kingdom of God. Its association with the heavenly is essential – these are not spiritual blessings in an earthly realm, but a heavenly one. Paul

clarifies this when he reveals that we have been seated together with Christ in this heavenly place (Ephesians 2:6). When we were born of God, an invisible transition took place that transferred us from the kingdom of darkness to the kingdom of the dear Son (Colossians 1:13). It is the knowledge and consciousness of this present reality in God that causes us to think differently about our identity and how we are to function as the representatives of Christ in the Earth (2 Corinthians 5:20). When we consider the meaning of the spiritual, the emphasis is placed on the operation of the Spirit through those in the church. When God set up the church He empowered the church to fully reveal the power and glory of the risen Savior, Jesus Christ. If Jesus is to be revealed, then we must yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit who has come to make Him known (John 16:12-15, 1 Corinthians 12:7-11). The final words that Jesus spoke to His disciples before He ascended to the throne of God was, "You shall receive power after the Holy Spirit comes upon you, and you shall be my witnesses..." (Acts 1:8). Jesus turned us over to the same Spirit and the same anointing that He had received for His earthly ministry. He gave us the same ability to represent the Kingdom of God and to do the works of the Father that He had received. Paul solidifies the connection between the spiritual and the demonstration of the Holy Spirit that produces the manifestation of miracles, signs and wonders. We are to understand the spiritual as the administration, operation and manifestation of the Holy Spirit. Beginning with the confession that Jesus Christ is Lord, even to every gift of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:1-11). Paul makes our assignment clear in 1 Corinthians 14:1 and directs our attention to following after love and the realm of the spiritual. Our citizenship is in Heaven, our spiritual blessings are in Heaven and our life and conduct exist in the Spirit (Philippians 3:20, Galatians 5:20, Romans 8:4). Take hold of the good news of the gospel and be liberated to fully live your life in the kingdom of the dear Son!

Commentary · Ephesians 1:3 · Note 6

God dwells in a realm called "Heaven" or as the Greek word 'epouranios' expresses here: the "heavenly." The word "Heaven" refers to experiences that are heavenly and spiritual, as well as the place where the sun, moon and stars dwell. Of course, there are distinctions between the different ways that the same word is applied. One of the great revelations that was given to Jacob was that he dwelt in the house of God (Genesis 28:17-19). Some things that we think of as being only in Heaven also fill the whole Earth – that revelation was made clear to the servant of Elisha when his eyes were opened to see the great host of Heaven who was present to help them fight against the Syrian army (2 Kings 6:17). One day in the future, the heavens will be rolled back like a scroll and the throne of God will be made visible to those who are on the Earth (Revelation 6:14-16). The spiritual blessings that are in Heaven refer to all of the blessings, grace, and giftings that exist in the Kingdom of God. These blessings were purchased for us by Christ Jesus, and poured out upon all who would receive them as free gifts. Our place is with Christ Jesus, where we are also seated in authority above all things – including all principalities and powers of wickedness (Ephesians 1:20, 2:6). Although we would refer to the heavenly realm as exclusively belonging to God, His angels, and saints, there is also a similar unseen realm that belongs to the powers of darkness (Revelation 12:3-8, Ephesians 3:10, 6:12). The Authorized Version included a word that does not exist in any Greek text, "places." Therefore, it was deemed nonessential to the translation.

Ephesians 1:4

Just as He has chosen us **in Him** before the foundation[7] of the world, we should be holy and without blemish[8] before Him in love.

Commentary · Ephesians 1:4 · Note 7

In order to properly understand the meaning of "foundation of the world," one must first recognize that Jesus Christ, the Word, created everything by the commission of the Father in the beginning (John 1:1-3, Hebrews 1:2, Colossians 1:15-16). Yet, there is another time distinct from the beginning, which demarcates a great tragedy that took place at the time of Adam's sin and abdication to Satan. The meaning of the Greek word 'katabole' may be understood with respect to that overthrow, as it also means "throwing down" or "to fling down" with respect to planting seed – such an overthrow took place in the garden. The purpose for which Adam was created was interrupted by sin. However, Christ Jesus, who created everything, came and delivered man from the snare and power of sin so that the purpose of God may continue. It was not only and act of God's grace when man was redeemed from sin – it was also an act of His grace when He first created Adam and called him with a holy calling. It was not an unholy purpose for which God made man, but a holy one. The trick and snare of Satan did not change God's plan for man, but only temporarily interrupted it. The place of preeminence for which God created Adam to rule over the works of His hands has been restored to mankind through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus. The "foundation of the world" refers to the start of the period of time when man was formed upon the Earth (Luke 11:50, Revelation 17:8). These verses of scripture tell of the blood of the prophets that was shed since the foundation of the world, and of those who have been written in the book of life because they were obedient to God. The foundation of the world is the point in time when it became necessary for Jesus to shed His blood to redeem man (Hebrews 9:26, Revelation 13:8). In conclusion, when we think of the "foundation of the world," it is not the moment of creation, but the time in which it became necessary for Jesus to shed His blood to redeem man. This began the time period of prophets shedding their blood, obedient men being recorded in the Book of Life, and blood sacrifices representing the blood of Jesus being offered.

Commentary · Ephesians 1:4 · Note 8

God created us in His image and likeness so that we might live as His family throughout all eternity. Just as every family desires to be together, God desires us to be together with Him. His house is a place of love and peace. God loves life, and hates death and sin. He is consecrated to every good thing, and wants us to be consecrated too. God loves purity and every good and perfect thing. God will have nothing to do with all the evil things that are so familiar to us who live in this sinful world full of hate, betrayal, and wickedness. Life cannot dwell with death – righteousness and sin have no agreement. There cannot be a life where love and peace dwell as long as men hold on to evil. In order to turn sinful and rebellious man back to the right way, Father gave us the life and blood of Jesus Christ, His only begotten Son. He created us anew in Christ Jesus so that we might return to the right way (Ephesians 2:10, 4:24). Through the mercy and grace of God, a way was made for us to become everything that is holy and acceptable to

Him (Colossians 1:22, Romans 12:1, Ephesians 1:6, Hebrews 10:19). We need no longer walk in darkness and separation from what is right. The blood of Jesus will so perfectly wash us from all sin that there will be no trace or blemish of iniquity. Paul described the results of redemption in Christ Jesus in Colossians 1:22, saying that He has presented us "holy and without blemish and unreprovable before him." Every sin and offense has been removed and an entirely new life has been given through the miracle of the new birth. God has given us His Holy Spirit so that we may be taught and established in His way. Yet, His mercy does not end there – if we sin, the blood of Jesus cleanses us from all unrighteousness (1 John 1:7, 2:1, Romans 5:16-19). God's ways are full of everything that the heart of man desires – in Him alone is the love, joy, and peace that all men seek. In His presence is fullness of joy and the pleasure that only knowing God's life can bring. The life of God is in Christ Jesus, and everyone who has been born again and who now has Christ Jesus has life – otherwise they are dead while they live (1 John 5:11-12). The Holy Spirit desires to show us what we were created to be – all we must do is respond to His love. It is in God's Word, Christ Jesus, that we find the knowledge of who we really are, and the glory of pure and holy living that is not blemished with deathly sin (Proverbs 2:19, 9:10).

Ephesians 1:5

He predestined[9] us to sonship[10] unto Himself by Jesus Christ, according to the good pleasure of His will,

Commentary · Ephesians 1:5 · Note 9

God has appointed to anyone who will believe the privilege of sonship in Christ Jesus (John 1:12, see 'prooritzo' in "The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament," Kittle et al.). The Greek word 'prooritzo' may be translated as "predetermined," or "foreordained," both which mean "to decide beforehand." This Greek word shares a similar meaning to 'proetoimazo,' found in Ephesians 2:10, "these are the things that God has ordained and determined should be." To conclude that this refers to "determinism," or eternal predestination of one for Hell and another for Heaven, is completely out of context. The focus is the plan of God for man, and not God's individual predetermination of man. God is being praised in these verses rather than a system or fate. God elected to create mankind, and elected that they should be a holy people without blemish, standing in the midst of His love. He elected that all men should be saved, not willing that any perish (1 Timothy 2:4, 2 Peter 3:9).

Commentary · Ephesians 1:5 · Note 10

Our Father in Heaven predestinated us to sonship ('huiothesia'). The plan of God to redeem man so completely that they would be spiritually born from above by the Holy Spirit is available to all mankind – to anyone who would believe (1 Timothy 2:4, 2 Peter 3:9, John 3:16, 12:32, Titus 2:11, Matthew 7:24, 10:32, 12:50, Luke 6:47). Although there are many mysteries surrounding the past, we know that just as God created man to be holy and without blame, He also created us to be His sons. Before Adam transgressed and opened the door to Satan, Father God had placed him above all the works of His hands, and had given him a special place of dominion and authority (Psalm 8:4-7, Genesis 1:26, 28, 2:15,

Romans 5:12-21). The overthrow of man was only temporary, because as the Father had created man in Christ Jesus (the Word), He also set forth to redeem us through Christ Jesus (the incarnate Son). As the Holy Ghost worked the miracle of making the eternal Word into a child in the womb of a virgin, the same Spirit works the miracle of creating a new heart and a new spirit in those who are willing to believe (John 1:12-13, Ezekiel 36:26, Luke 1:35, 2 Corinthians 5:17-18, Titus 3:5, Ephesians 4:24). The special Greek word for "sonship" that is used here is 'huiothesia.' Although this word can refer to the adoption of a child, it is a word that may also be translated as "sonship," and in the New Testament this term is used for sonship ("The Theological Dictionary of the New Testament," Kittle et al.) It should not be translated as "adoption" – at the very least, one should translate it as "placed as sons." It is not just an imputed sonship, but a reality of the miracle of salvation. We must keep in mind that we have been born of the Spirit, begotten of the Word, and through the miracle of salvation made children of God (John 3:1-2). The new birth that has made us a new creation cannot be regarded as an imputed status, but a transformation of nature (2 Peter 1:4). The old man, the life that we had in which the Devil was regarded as our father, has been destroyed (Romans 6:6, Ephesians 2:2, John 8:44). God the Father is now our Father, because we have been born of Him (John 3:3, 1 Peter 1:23, 1 John 3:9, 4:7, 5:1, 4,18)! 'Huiothesia' relates our place as sons, born of God, who by the Spirit of the Son not only cry, "Abba," but also function as heirs (Galatians 4:5-6). Can legitimate birth and adoption ever be combined in the same person? In regeneration, we receive the nature of a son of God. In adoption we would receive only the position of a son of God. Regeneration is a change of nature, but adoption is merely a change of position. As sons of God by birth, we may say that God regards us as fully-matured sons with all the appropriate authority and rights (Galatians 4:5-6, John 1:12).

Ephesians 1:6

to the glorious praise of His grace, that endowed[11] us with grace **in the Beloved**,

Commentary · Ephesians 1:6 · Note 11

The Greek word 'charitoo' may be translated as "highly favored" or "endowed with grace." By parsing this verb, we see that the stem is 'charis' ("grace"), and its ending expresses causation, which means "to cause grace." In light of the gift of grace that has been given to us by Jesus Christ, who has brought grace and truth, this translation serves to underscore the divine ability that has been provided and poured into our hearts by Jesus Christ (Romans 12:5, John 1:15-17).

Ephesians 1:7

in whom we possess redemption through His blood, the release[12] from trespasses[13], according to the riches of his grace,

Commentary · Ephesians 1:7 · Note 12

Have you ever wondered just how forgiven you are? Has forgiveness just excused your debt, or has it removed it? When Jesus gave the cup of passover to His disciples, He said, “This is the New Covenant in my blood, which is shed for many so that sins may be wiped out” (Matthew 26:28). Redemption has come, and Christ Jesus has bought back that which was lost – our sins have been blotted out. Though the stain of sin upon our souls was like a garment deeply stained with an irremovable red dye, the blood of Jesus has erased them and made us whiter than snow (Isaiah 1:18, Revelation 1:5, Acts 22:16). The blood of Jesus became our fellowship and communion with God – our boldness to enter into the holiest realm of all (John 6:53-56, Hebrews 10:19). The blood of Jesus is the means by which the life of God was imparted to us. The Greek word used for forgiveness is ‘aphesis,’ which comes from the word ‘aphiemi,’ which means “sent away.” It also translates the Hebrew words ‘salach’ and ‘deror’ in the Septuagint, as in Isaiah 61:1 – it means “sent away” and “released” respectively. The Greek word ‘aphesis’ is a common word in the Septuagint, appearing 50 times, leaving little doubt concerning its intended meaning. It translates the Hebrew word ‘jubile’ in Numbers 36:4, and is translated as “release” in Deuteronomy 15:2, which describes God’s release of debts at the end of every seven years, or the release and complete restoration at the end of every 50 years. The forgiveness that we have received completely erases the offense, so that there are no future repercussions for the wrongdoing. Forgiveness also restores everything to the offender, so that they may enjoy the position that they held prior to the trespass. Be convinced that the love of God has purchased for us a forgiveness that both releases and restores. Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, we have received the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost (Titus 3:5). This glorious work of grace has brought forth a new creation. Everything old has passed away – behold, everything is new! The riches of God’s grace (that wiped out the old and raised up the new) extend beyond just the creation of a new heart and a new spirit – they continue to keep us spotless through a continual washing and cleansing by His blood. If we sin, the blood of Jesus is there to remove the offense and wash the sins away (1 John 1:9, 1 John 2:1-2, Romans 5:16). Through the rich grace of God’s immeasurable mercy and love, He restores us to our inheritance and position in Him – continually removing all offense if we are willing to walk in the light as He is in the light (1 John 1:7). It is through the mercy of God (expressed in forgiveness) that we find the opportunity to move forward when we have failed. It is through the loving grace of God that we are brought into a covenant with God, and kept by His power so that everything about our lives might be perfected through Him! As long as we are willing to be taught by God and respond to the leadings and conviction of the Holy Spirit, God will faithfully uphold us. If we are willing to receive His love and respond in obedience to walk in His ways, He will provide more forgiveness than we could possibly need: 490 times per day (Matthew 18:22). Almighty God found us polluted in the blood of sin and iniquity, walking as the children of disobedience, and yet He set His affections upon us (Ezekiel 16:6-14, Romans 5:10, Ephesians 2:2). He has loved us so freely, and He loves us still – all we need to do is respond in obedience, and the joys of His abundant life will be fully realized. Oh, know and believe the love that God has for you today (1 John 4:16)!

Commentary · Ephesians 1:7 · Note 13

The Greek word is 'paraptoma' and may be translated as "false steps" or "trespass." The first occurrence of this word in the Old Testament (Septuagint) is found in Psalm 18:12, and is translated as "errors." The first occurrence in the New Testament is in Matthew 6:14, "If you forgive men their *trespasses,* your heavenly Father will also forgive you."

Ephesians 1:8

which abounds to us in all wisdom and insight[14].

Commentary · Ephesians 1:8 · Note 14

All the treasures of wisdom and knowledge are hidden in Christ Jesus (Colossians 2:2-3). Through the life of Jesus, God has lavished upon us all the riches of His wisdom and insight, so that we might know the things that are freely given to us by Him (1 Corinthians 2:12). Our Father in Heaven has given us the ability to understand those things that He has described in His word. He wants us to understand the new creation and the authority that He has given to us in Christ Jesus. Therefore, He wants us to be filled with the Spirit of wisdom and revelation so that our eyes will be opened to our inheritance (Ephesians 1:17-18). It is God's earnest desire that we be filled with the knowledge of his will in all wisdom and spiritual understanding so that we can fully understand and cooperate with His will (Colossians 1:9). In the Old Testament, we read about a man named Bezal-el (Exodus 31:1-2). His name means "shadow of God." The Lord filled him with the Spirit of wisdom, so that he could create those things that had never been seen before. Through the wisdom and insight of the Spirit, he was given the ability to understand the heavenly things that were described by Moses, and make the fashion of them to adorn God's temple. His purpose from the time that he was named was to live closely enough to God as to be under His shadow, and it was there that he received such divine grace. All of us who have called upon the name of Jesus and put our trust in God have likewise been born for such a purpose. We are to show forth the praises of God through this glorious impartation of the Spirit of God. He has given us the ability to see what eyes have not seen and ears have not heard, nor has entered into the heart of man, but now is revealed to us by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:9-10). Everyone who has ever been used by God to show His miraculous and sovereign power was filled with the Spirit of wisdom. Joshua commanded the sun and the moon to stand still, and they obeyed. Joshua was filled with the Spirit of wisdom when Moses laid his hands upon him (Deuteronomy 34:9). Yet at the same time, it was also Joshua who, after encountering the presence of the Lord, did not depart from the door of the tabernacle (Exodus 33:11). He too dwelt under the shadow of God, and was made the servant of Moses and an heir to the anointing (Numbers 11:28, Joshua 1:1). Jesus was anointed with the Spirit of the Lord, and by that anointing preached the gospel (Luke 4:18, Acts 10:38). Isaiah listed the attributes of the anointing of the Spirit that was given to Jesus. The first thing mentioned in that list was the spirit of wisdom (Isaiah 11:2). Jesus was able to see the Father do the works. He functioned and moved in Spirit-knowledge. Jesus had the insights to what was going on in the heart and will of the Father. Stephen and Philip were men used mightily by God in signs and wonders, and one of the first things reported of them was that they were filled with the

Holy Ghost and wisdom (Acts 6:3). Even as God gave Joseph wisdom and favor through Spirit-knowledge, He has lavished the same upon us (Acts 7:10, Genesis 41:15-16). Because of this Spirit-knowledge, the great kings of the Earth knew that the Spirit of God existed in men, and a witness to the Kingdom of God was given (Genesis 41:38, Daniel 4:8-9, 5:11-14). The knowledge of God and the insights into the heart and mind of Christ are communicated to us by the same Spirit. Just as nothing was hidden from Elisha (2 Kings 6:12, 16-17), so today by word of wisdom, the word of knowledge, and the discerning of spirits, nothing should be hidden from us (1 Corinthians 12:8). The manifold wisdom of God is now expressed through us as we walk in the Spirit and function in the mystery of the fellowship and union with Christ (Ephesians 3:9-10, Colossians 1:28, John 17:21-23). The wisdom and insight that allows us to see causes faith to be released, and the miraculous works of grace are expressed through our lives! From salvation to the greater works, the Holy Spirit is here to lead us and to show us. Be blessed by what God has done already in your life, and continue to press in for more!

Ephesians 1:9

He has made known to us the mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure, which He has set forth **in Him**[15],

Commentary · Ephesians 1:9 · Note 15

We have been granted the ability to have insight into the glorious mystery of salvation. Jesus came, and the mystery was revealed. Through his life, the hidden things that had been kept secret were made known. In Christ Jesus, God unveiled the mystery of the fellowship – a mystery that was hidden from the ages, but is now made manifest in Christ: the mystery of oneness (Colossians 1:27-28, Ephesians 3:9, 2 Corinthians 6:16, 1 Peter 1:10-12). God, who became man, would also live and dwell in man (Colossians 1:27, John 14:24, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 1 John 3:24). Through the preaching of the gospel, the miracle power of the spoken word transforms the heart of man and establishes all who would obey in the Kingdom of God, regardless of their nationality (John 15:3, Romans 16:25-26, Acts 10:34, Ephesians 3:3-6, Colossians 3:11). The mystery of redemption was unveiled in the Lamb of God, who was offered upon an altar of a cross, to fully pay the penalty of every person's sin. It was there that Jesus revealed the Father's desperate love for all mankind. The mystery of salvation showed the work of the Holy Ghost who, through the blood of the cross, would overshadow the heart of anyone who would believe and produce the miracle of a new creation. Through the work of God's amazing grace, Christ Jesus would be formed in the heart. All who would believe would become the temple of the Holy Ghost. By the Spirit of the Lord, the ways of God and His Law would be inscribed on fleshly tables of the heart instead of stone (2 Corinthians 3:3, Hebrews 8:10, 10:16, 2 Peter 1:4). All these things were "set forth in Him" ('protithemai') who was the pattern Son. Jesus showed us everything beautiful about the creation of man. He showed us what God intended when they created man in their image and likeness (Genesis 1:26). In the mystery of redemption, Jesus came as the last Adam and condemned all sin in the flesh, proving that unrighteousness did not belong in men, thereby breaking its every claim (1 Corinthians 15:45-48, Romans 8:1-3). Through the transformation of the Spirit, we may now bear the image of the heavenly

and walk in perfect agreement with the Father (Titus 3:5, John 17:21-23). Through the fellowship that Jesus had with the Father, He modeled for us how to walk pleasingly to God, and has called everyone to follow in His steps (1 Peter 2:21, Matthew 3:17, 17:15, 2 Peter 1:17).

Ephesians 1:10

overseeing[16] the fullness of times, to bring together all things **in Christ,** both which are in Heaven and which are in Earth, **in Him –**

Commentary · Ephesians 1:10 · Note 16

The Only Begotten Son, Christ Jesus, was born in the fullness of time to redeem all things – and now the Father oversees the final hours of that time, bringing everything to a complete resolve in Christ Jesus (Galatians 4:4, 1 Corinthians 10:11). In these final hours before the creation of a new Heaven and new Earth, God is at work making ready every part and every person for that glorious day (James 5:7, Acts 1:7, Matthew 24:36, 1 Corinthians 15:24-28, Revelation 20:4). The Father has given Jesus a name that is above all other names, and He is now occupied with the administration ('oikonomia') of His kingdom. Through Christ Jesus, all things were reconciled unto God, whether they be in Heaven or Earth (Colossians 1:20). There is no redemption outside of Jesus, and it is to Him that all things must come and find restoration. Both the Father and the Holy Spirit are actively drawing men to Jesus, and glorifying His name in all the Earth (Titus 2:11, John 6:44, 14:13, 16:13). Preparations are being made at this very moment for the final events when all creation will be liberated into the glorious freedom of the redemption that was purchased by Christ Jesus (Romans 8:21-23). Father has given Jesus charge over everything, and in Him all things are summed up. His name and authority is superior to all others (Philippians 2:9-11). He is the Head over the church, and the focus of all things in Heaven. Every power is subject to Him in Heaven and Earth, and He shall reign until all rebellion is cast down, and the last enemy, death, is destroyed. Through the reign of Christ Jesus, all things will be brought back into their original order (1 Corinthians 15:24-28, Hebrews 2:8, Isaiah 65:17, 66:22, 2 Peter 3:13, Revelation 21:1). Jesus was manifested to destroy the works of the Devil, and He is set on their complete elimination. We are called to join with Him in His righteous cause, and preach the gospel of the kingdom! As citizens of Heaven and children of the light, we must stand against all rebellion and iniquity. As heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ, we are to participate with God's administration in this final hour (Daniel 9:24, 1 Thessalonians 5:5, Luke 10:19, Mark 16:17, Romans 13:14, Galatians 5:16, 25, Romans 8:14, 16). The Greek noun for "stewardship" or "administration" is 'oikonomia' (1 Corinthians 9:7, Colossians 1:25). The noun 'oikonomia' denotes the duty of a manager entrusted with a private estate. In the Old Testament (Septuagint), it is found in Isaiah 22:19 & 21, where it was translated in the Authorized Version as "station" and "government" ("I will drive you from your station," and "I will commit thy government into his hand"). In these two usages, 'oikonomia' is translated from the Hebrew words 'matztzav' and 'memshalah,' neither of which could possibly mean "dispensation," but rather are the Hebrew words for "garrison" or "dominion." In the New Testament, it is first found in Luke 16:2-4, where it is translated as "stewardship" ("give account of your stewardship").

Ephesians 1:11

in whom also we have obtained an inheritance[17], having been appointed[18] according to the plan of Him who works all things after the counsel of His own will,

Commentary · Ephesians 1:11 · Note 17

We have received a rich inheritance in Christ Jesus. The first part of that inheritance has been realized through the new birth (Ephesians 1:13-14). We have been given the riches of the Holy Spirit, and have been made partakers of His glorious divine nature (2 Peter 1:4). However, we are in need of having our eyes opened to the eternal realm that we have been born into, for it is here that our inheritance actually exists (1 Peter 1:4). God would have us set our affections in the realms of Heaven, and come to understand that we already have a place there in Him (Colossians 3:1-4, Ephesians 2:6). It is out of Heaven that the Son now speaks, and it is out of Heaven that the Holy Spirit operates in and through our lives. God wants us to have a heavenly vision! Abraham was a man with a heavenly vision. He looked beyond the possibilities of his earthly life, and pursued the city of God (Hebrews 11:9-10). The things that Jesus did – He saw out of the realms of the heavenly, where He heard the Father speak. It is there in the realms of Heaven that we will spend forever. What a terrible tragedy it would be to have access to our eternal home, the place where we will spend forever, and yet have it remain a strange place. Oh what faith would be released, should we begin to see that place where Father dwells. Should we become aware each moment of that place of eternal glory, and our relationship to it – surely our conversation would be in Heaven, and our thinking spiritual, and our relationship with the Holy Ghost powerful (Philippians 3:20, 1 Peter 1:15, Romans 8:5-6). May we all reach into a realm of spiritual hunger, where the spirit of wisdom and revelation will cause us to see the riches of the inheritance that has been given to us. It is only right that we live our lives out of a heavenly realm with a heavenly vision – for an eternal purpose, not trapped in the frustration of temporal things!

Commentary · Ephesians 1:11 · Note 18

We were appointed by God to have an inheritance. That inheritance is a place in Christ Jesus as heirs of God and joint heirs with Christ. The Greek word, translated as “appoint,” is only found six times in the New Testament. Although the King James Bible translated it as “predestinated,” the word in the passive voice may simply mean “appointed by lot” (“Pillar New Testament Commentary”). In either case, it pertains to those things that God chose for all who would receive. God has divided out an inheritance for us by lot. To have this inheritance, a person must be born of God – something only possible by the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 1:12

that we should be to the praise of His glory, who first had confidence[19] **in Christ –**

Commentary · Ephesians 1:12 · Note 19

The Greek word 'elpis' may be translated as "confidence," "expectation," or "hope." Confidence and expectation more accurately communicate the biblical meaning of 'elpis'. The Greek word used in this verse is 'proelpitzo,' which is from two words: 'pro' meaning "before," and 'elpitzo,' which means "trust" or "hope." This word is derived from the Greek word 'elpis.'

Ephesians 1:13

in whom you also, when you heard the Word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom, you also believing, were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise[20],

Commentary · Ephesians 1:13 · Note 20

The means by which we were saved is expressed in full in this verse, along with its wonderful results. We heard the gospel, the word of truth, and a new creation was brought forth in those who believed (2 Corinthians 5:17). The new creation is the seal of the Spirit. As a seal stamps its own image upon the wax that receives it, our lives are marked with the identity of the Spirit. The Holy Spirit has imprinted us with the image of Christ and sealed us with His nature (2 Peter 1:4, Romans 8:29, 1 Corinthians 3:18). All of the lineaments of the divine nature and the life of Christ were stamped within our souls by this one act of grace. Jesus, who was the express image of the Father, has sealed us by His own hand. He now commands that we bear His image – so He stamped us with His Spirit (Hebrews 1:2, John 16:13-15). All we have to do is believe the report of the Lord. Confess these things that God has said and call them true. We only have to believe and stand firm in faith, and all of the wonders of His glory will be revealed in our lives. Everyone who has been sealed by God are marked as His own. He will protect us, keep us, and perfect everything that concerns us (Ezekiel 9:4-6, 2 Corinthians 1:22, Ephesians 6:10-18, 1 Peter 1:5).

Ephesians 1:14

which is the first installment[21] of our inheritance, as a ransom payment for the purchased possession[22], unto the praise of His glory.

Commentary · Ephesians 1:14 · Note 21

We have been given an advancement on our inheritance, a foretaste of all that the Father has laid up for us: the Holy Spirit of promise (Ephesians 1:13). The awesome glory that has been provided for us in the Holy Ghost is but a fraction of all that we shall receive. The endowment of the Spirit is the promise of the Father that Jesus referred to when He commanded the disciples to go and tarry in Jerusalem (Luke 24:49), the Holy Spirit whom Jesus promised to send to lead us and guide us into all of the truth (John 16:12-15), the One who would bring forth the rivers of God from our belly (John 7:38-39), and the One who would write God's laws and ways in our minds and hearts (Jeremiah 31:33, Hebrews 8:10, Hebrews 10:16, 2 Corinthians 3:3). It is by the Holy Spirit that the miraculous realms of Christ Jesus are revealed in our lives (1 Corinthians 2:4, 12:7). The Holy Spirit could not be given to men until the redemption of man was purchased at Calvary. Once the penalty of death was paid and the just claims of disobedience

were broken, the door was opened for restoration to come (Genesis 3:15, Romans 5:12, 1 Peter 2:24, Titus 3:5-6). The Holy Spirit came not only to be with God's people, but also in them (John 14:17, Ezekiel 36:26-27). The Spirit of promise was poured out, and the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit was made available to all. All those who would receive this great salvation would have this witness: the soul of man was changed, and the life of God was restored in them. Our glorious inheritance in Christ as heirs and co-inheritors began the day that we called upon the name of the Lord Jesus – when He transformed our lives by the Spirit of promise (John 3:3-6). The noun 'arrabon' may be translated as "first installment," "deposit," "down payment," or "pledge" – all of which denote paying the first part of a purchase price. When the Lord wanted to convince Abraham of His promise, He swore an oath (Luke 1:73, Hebrews 6:13). The Lord so wanted to prove to us the completion of redemption and the guarantee of eternal inheritance that He gave us the Holy Spirit. God made a payment to redeem us: the blood of Christ. God has made a payment to convince us, providing proof that we have been "bought with a price" – a foretaste of our glorious inheritance, the gift of the Holy Ghost. The terms of this transaction are that we agree to belong entirely to Christ Jesus – in exchange, Father gives us the Holy Spirit through Christ Jesus (1 Corinthians 6:19-20). This experience of His grace is the initial evidence that we have been purchased, and that death and sin no longer have claims upon our lives. Subsequently, in keeping with the covenant, we no longer live for ourselves – we rather glorify God in our bodies and spirits that He purchased. When we received the gift of salvation, a miracle took place – God made everything about our lives new. Now with a new heart and a new spirit, the Holy Spirit rules over our lives as a testimony to the inheritance that we have received (Romans 8:16, 1 Corinthians 6:17). What a glorious and inexpressible gift! Begin to more fully enjoy your inheritance by submitting yourself to the Holy Spirit in a more consistent way. Rejoice in the Holy Ghost, who is your guarantee of an inheritance in the glory that is to come!

Commentary · Ephesians 1:14 · Note 22

We have been claimed by the Lord as His portion, His purchased possession, and His favorite treasure! The people of God are referred to as a treasured possession in the Old Testament as well (Exodus 19:5, Deuteronomy 14:2, 26:18, Psalm 135:4, Malachi 3:17). Paul speaks with all plainness of speech with regards to God's ownership of us in 1 Corinthians 6:19-20, saying, "you are not your own, you are bought with a price...". Because we were purchased, we are His chosen people, called and elected of Him, and formed by His Spirit to show forth His praise (Isaiah 43:21, Ephesians 2:10, John 15:16, Acts 20:28). The ransom payment for man was valued at the life of God who became flesh to purchase our salvation (1 Peter 1:18). The Greek noun 'peripoiesis' may be translated in a variety of ways. It denotes possessing property or acquiring goods. It may be understood as the act of saving or preserving life. In Malachi 3:17, it is translated from the Hebrew word 'segullah,' which means "peculiar treasure," "treasured possession," "personal property," or "jewel" as rendered by the Authorized Version (Also, Exodus 19:5, Deuteronomy 14:2, 26:18). It is with this same sentiment that the word is used in 1 Peter 2:9 and Titus 2:14, where it is translated as "peculiar": "...a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a *peculiar* people...".

Ephesians 1:15

Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the holy ones[23],

Commentary · Ephesians 1:15 · Note 23

Faith initiates a relationship with Christ Jesus, and faith grows as that relationship grows. Jesus is the one that we look to as the Author and Finisher of faith (Hebrews 12:2, Romans 3:22, Galatians 2:16). Faith is a confidence and a complete assurance that allows us to completely trust in Him and cleave to Him (Deuteronomy 10:20, 11:22, 13:4). When faith is present, then there is a need for a greater insight and revelation concerning who Jesus is! Faith in Christ Jesus is the acknowledgment that He is God! Faith in Christ Jesus is the certainty that He is the Savior, the Healer, the Resurrection, and the Life (Matthew 1:21, 1 Peter 2:24, John 11:25). All authority has been given to Him in Heaven and Earth – and faith in Him causes us to know that He possesses sovereign authority over all things (Ephesians 1:20-22, Philippians 2:9-11). He is the Judge of all of the Earth, the Redeemer, yet also the One who decides who will come into the Kingdom, and who will be cast out into the eternal dwelling place of darkness called Hell (John 5:22, Romans 2:12, 2 Corinthians 5:10, 2 Timothy 4:1, Matthew 25:31-46). Faith in Jesus gives us assurance that He who baptizes in the Holy Ghost and fire, and blesses with all spiritual blessings, will also pour out all these heavenly things on us. Faith allows us to know that the fullness of the Godhead dwells in Him – that He is One with the Father, and the express image of His person (Colossians 2:9, Hebrews 1:2-3, John 10:30). He is the eternal Word and the creator of all things (John 1:1-3, Colossians 1:16, Hebrews 1:2, Ephesians 3:9). To fully grasp these things, and be in awe of all that Jesus is and all that He has done, we must receive the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him (Ephesians 1:17).

Ephesians 1:16

cease not to give thanks for you, making petition for you in my prayers[24],

Commentary · Ephesians 1:16 · Note 24

The way to solve problems and bring change to our church and community is through the activity of prayer. Paul saw a need for the saints at the church of Ephesus to be able to more fully understand what had been given to them in Christ. Therefore, to see that need met, he began to pray for them. Those at Ephesus had positioned themselves to receive more from God by their faith in Jesus and their love for all of the saints, so Paul began to make petition for them that they could go deeper in wisdom and revelation. We may observe that even as in the life of Jesus, Paul placed the activity of praying for the people right alongside of preaching the word to them (Romans 1:9, Philippians 1:4, Colossians 1:9, 1 Thessalonians 1:2, 2 Thessalonians 1:11, Philemon 1:4). The disciples of Jesus saw the results when Jesus prayed, and were earnest to learn to move in the same kind of prayer (Luke 11:1). One of the most important aspects of prayer is believing that those things that you ask for will be done (Matthew 21:22, James 1:6, Mark 11:24). The power of faith must be surging through the prayers that we pray if we are going to see the power of God revealed. God has ordained that we have the kind of relationship with Him

that results in receiving whatever we ask (John 15:16, 1 John 3:22). We must be persistent in believing, and continue to ask until everything that He has purposed for our lives and for the lives of those in the church takes place (Luke 11:8, 18:1-8). The power of prayer has a transforming and transfiguring effect. We are commanded to cooperate with God through prayer and to take up this dimension of His mighty power – continuing with all prayer and supplication in the Holy Ghost (John 11:41-42, Matthew 17:20, Ephesians 6:18). God heard Hannah's prayer, Elijah's prayers, Jonah's prayers, and Daniel's supplications – He will hear your prayers too (1 Samuel 1:27, 1 Kings 18:36-39, James 5:16-18, Jonah 2:1-2, Daniel 10:12).

Ephesians 1:17

that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father[25] of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge Him[26] –

Commentary · Ephesians 1:17 · Note 25

Jesus Christ is God, and His God and Father is the Father of glory. Jesus told Mary after His resurrection, "Go to my brethren and say unto them: I ascend unto My Father and your Father, and to My God and your God" (John 20:17). Paul opens his address to the Ephesians saying, "Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," and then further focuses his petition to the Father of Jesus, to whom we bow our knees (Ephesians 1:3, 3:14). This is a distinction that Paul makes many times in his epistles. He directs the Romans to glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, with one mind and one mouth (Romans 15:6). He told the Corinthians that, in the end, Jesus will deliver up the Kingdom to the Father (1 Corinthians 15:24-25). He told the Galatians that the Father raised Jesus from the dead (Galatians 1:1). He told the Philippians that every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of the Father (Philippians 2:11). Although both Jesus and the Father are God, a distinction is made between them in the Epistles of Paul more than 40 times. Jesus referred to His Father more than 80 times, in which He says "My Father." There is a perfect unity and oneness that exists between the Father, Jesus, and the Holy Spirit – a unity that we are also allowed to share in. The glory of the oneness of God can be more fully comprehended in that we are allowed to participate in this fellowship (John 17:21-23). Although God the Father, God the Lord Jesus, and God the Holy Spirit are one God, and we will always be the redeemed subjects of God – the oneness and unity that they share has been extended to us, so that we might have the most intimate fellowship with them possible. What cannot be emphasized enough is that they are not three Gods, but one God. One may say, "How can this be?" The answer is: "It's a miracle!" Everything about the Father, the Lord Jesus, and the Holy Spirit is miraculous. Their existence, their oneness, their love, and their deeds go far beyond all that we can think or imagine. The Word, who was hidden away in the Father, was incarnated into flesh, and became the only begotten Son – for the sole purpose of redeeming us (John 1:1-16, 3:16, Acts 13:33, Hebrews 1:5, 5:5). Once redemption was accomplished through the shedding of the blood of Jesus, God the Father and God the Lord Jesus sent God the Holy Ghost to train us, guide us, and teach us all the ways of the life of God.

Commentary · Ephesians 1:17 · Note 26

Spiritual wisdom and revelation is the ability to see, understand and function in what God has provided for us through redemption and brought to us by the Holy Spirit. The wisdom of God goes far beyond human ability and intelligence. It has been rightly said that wisdom is the ability to apply the knowledge that is gained. God gives us that special insight to understand how to live out the life that we have been given in Christ Jesus. Men attempt to understand the things of God through their intellectual pursuits and their analytical tools of investigation. Though a limited knowledge of God and the Kingdom of God can be gained, the knowledge is still much greater than men can grasp, and the wisdom to apply that knowledge is completely out of reach through human means. It is God who opens our eyes to understand the scriptures even as Jesus did for His disciples after His resurrection (Luke 24:45). God wants us to function in a spiritual realm where we are empowered to speak to mountains so that they are moved, to raise the dead, and to do greater works than these. However, faith must be activated in our lives – a faith that takes hold of seeing and understanding what God demands. There is no way for us to even begin to comprehend what God has done for us through Jesus Christ without divine insight! God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenlies, but it is only through this work of grace that we are able to accept these things as a present and living reality and then function in them (Ephesians 1:3). Jesus did the great miracles and signs and wonders by revelation – He was able to see the Father do it. Now this same relationship with the Father has been granted unto us. Everything that belongs to the Father has been freely given to us and is transferred to us by the Holy Spirit (John 3:3, 16:14-15, 1 Corinthians 2:10). If we are to mature and develop in these things of the Spirit, then we must allow the Holy Spirit to continually fill and strengthen us. We must be as dedicated to be instructed by Him as He is to training us if we are to function in all these spiritual blessings and divine abilities. Wisdom is the exact knowledge of the Fathers will (Colossians 1:9). The spirit of wisdom is first called out in Isaiah 11:2 regarding the anointing that the Messiah would have. It is wisdom that the world cannot have nor understand, and therefore cannot be discovered among the intellectual pursuits of men – but rather in brokenness and submission to the Holy Spirit, who gives it to those who ask (1 Corinthians 2:6-16, James 1:8). Above all other things, it is wisdom and revelation that unveils the mystery of the fellowship – Christ in us. The revelation of oneness with God and the fellowship of Christ in us brings us into a submission to the Holy Spirit and an authority that we otherwise could not have. (John 17:21-23, Colossians 1:27, Ephesians 3:9, 1 Corinthians 3:16). We must have an ongoing penetration deeper into the gospel and the will of the Father (Philippians 1:9, compare 1 Thessalonians 3:12, 4:10).

Ephesians 1:18

the eyes of your understanding being enlightened to know the confidence[27] of His calling,[28] and what is the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the holy ones[29],

Commentary · Ephesians 1:18 · Note 27

The choice was made to translate ‘elpis’ as “confidence.” The definition of “hope” is to wish for something that seems possible or likely, with the implied meaning of wanting something to be true. On

the other hand, 'elpis' may be equally translated, "confidence" or "expectation," both of which remove the element of uncertainty that is found in the definition of "hope." The definition of confidence is: "a belief in your ability to succeed." Expectation is: a "confident belief that a particular event will happen." This difference is emphatic when a doctor who wants to bring encouragement and certainty to a sick or dying person says, "I am confident that you will be better," rather than "I hope you will get better." This translation made His calling the focus of the confidence, because it is His purpose for our lives that has given us a full assurance concerning the certainty of our success (Hebrews 10:22).

Commentary · Ephesians 1:18 · Note 28

His calling has placed upon our lives a new identity and a heavenly purpose. The call that we are to live out everyday is heavenly and holy (Hebrews 3:1, 2 Timothy 1:9, 1 Peter 1:15, 1 Thessalonians 4:7). The riches of our inheritance are that we are heirs of God and co-inheritors with Jesus (Romans 8:16-17). We are those called to show forth the praises of Him who has called us out of darkness, and into this marvelous light (1 Peter 2:9, Matthew 5:14, Colossians 1:13). We are called the sons of God, and called unto eternal glory, to obtain the glory of Jesus (John 1:12, 1 John 3:1, 1 Peter 5:10, 1 Thessalonians 2:12, 2 Thessalonians 2:14). We are called to inherit the blessings of God, and to shine as the lights of the world – to live and reign with God forever and ever (Romans 8:17, 2 Timothy 2:12).

Commentary · Ephesians 1:18 · Note 29

The "eyes of our heart" are the spiritual sensory realm. If we are to understand things that far surpass the natural sensory realm, then we are going to have to be given a divine ability to perceive the imperceptible. We are to have a confidence that is communicated to us by the word of God and taught to us by the Spirit of God. We are supposed to know a love that passes knowledge, so our hearts must be given the ability to understand things that our natural senses cannot perceive and the human experience cannot teach. Therefore, our Heavenly Father, in His grace, has granted to us a divine ability to interact with the Holy Spirit and to understand the heavenly plan. He has empowered us with the ability to go beyond the confines of an earthly realm – to live out our lives in the Spirit and be taught His ways. We now have the provision to perceive things that cannot be seen with the natural eye: those things that before had never entered into the hearts of men (1 Corinthians 2:9-10). Through the illumination that comes by the Spirit of wisdom and revelation, we are able to understand the greatness of our calling and the glory of His inheritance that is provided for us in Christ Jesus. We should have great confidence in the promises of God and the calling of God upon our lives. We have been called to walk in oneness with God. We have been called to not only have the ministry of Jesus, but a greater works ministry. We are the temples of the Holy Spirit, who have been given the fullness of the Spirit by baptism into His presence. God has granted to us the ability to comprehend the marvelous world of the heavenly so that we could begin to take our place in this divine inheritance. When we were dead in our trespasses and sins, our hearts were darkened, and we were alienated from this life that we now live in God. Now, because the light of the gospel has shined into our hearts, we have the ability to comprehend union with God – and live in such a relationship that whatever we ask, Father will do it (John 15:16, 1 John 3:21-22).

Ephesians 1:19

and what is the exceeding greatness of His power[30] to us who believe, according to the working power of His mighty strength,

Commentary · Ephesians 1:19 · Note 30

The Champion of our faith, Jesus Christ our Savior, has made all of the divine power and ability that we will ever need available for anything that we will ever face. The biggest challenge that we have is our willingness to believe Him in time of trouble and to look to Him for everything – for without Him, we can do nothing! If we will simply turn to the Author and Finisher of our faith, He will supply to us all that we need, according to His mighty power (Philippians 4:19, Ephesians 3:16, Luke 11:13, Matthew 6:26, 32, 2 Corinthians 9:8). The creative power of the One who rules the universe with His sovereign might has supplied to us all of the strength that we could ever need to be His people and representatives. The Holy Spirit, so desiring to convince us of all the power made available to us in Christ Jesus, used almost all of the words in the Greek language for "power" in this one verse of scripture: 'dunamis,' 'energeia,' 'kratos,' and 'ischus.' The Greek word 'dunamis' is the creative, miracle-working power of Almighty God by which He created all things. This power was observed as virtue that flowed out of Jesus to heal the woman with the issue of blood, and as the power that the church would receive once the Holy Spirit came upon them. It has been said that 'dunamis' is the ability to accomplish the promise, while 'energeia' is the unstoppable force of God that builds and throws down. It is brute or muscular power, or working efficiency, and by application "supernatural strength" (Philippians 3:21, Colossians 1:29). 'Kratos' is the absolute and sovereign power by which God rules the universe: the power to overcome obstacles, or execute "dominion," the controlling power over all things. 'Ischus' is the power or strength that is contained within the essence of something. It is the natural force of God's own capabilities to produce and be the things that He is. It is potential power – the power that will come to bear when needed (1 Peter 4:11). The word 'ischus' is first used in Genesis 4:12: "When you till the ground, it will not yield her strength ('ischus') to you." And thus the Scripture could read: "And what is the exceeding greatness of His creative power according to the unstoppable force of His absolute sovereign rule that resides within His own abilities." The use of four of the six "power" words in one verse is similar to Ephesians 6:10, which commands the saints to be 'endunamoo' ("strong") in the Lord and in the 'kratos' ("might") of His 'ischus' (strength), or "to be endued with the power of the Lord in in the absolute sovereign rule that throws down all opposing forces, and upholds everything according to His dictates through His own divine abilities." Our Father who is in Heaven wants us to be bold and have a strong assurance that we can do all things through Christ who strengthens us (Philippians 4:13). There is a power that works with in us, and this is the fullness of every dimension of God's own power (Ephesians 3:20). He wants us to know that He has not withheld any of His power or resources from us, but has entrusted us with all that He has so that we might fulfill His will on Earth just as it is in Heaven. Just as Father wanted Abraham to be certain of the promise and swore an oath, He has also given us a guarantee: the guarantee of the Spirit. In this, God has done something even greater for us: He sealed us and endued us with His Spirit so that our faith would know no limits (Luke 24:49, Hebrews 6:13-19, Hebrews 10:22-23). God has given us this

great potential. However, that potential energy and power cannot be released until movement begins. It is like a great boulder that hangs on the edge of a cliff. The boulder has an enormous potential power, but until it is released from the clutches of the Earth it will only remain a potential threat.

Ephesians 1:20

which he worked[31] **in Christ**, when He raised Him from the dead, and set Him at His own right hand[32] in the heavens,

Commentary · Ephesians 1:20 · Note 31

God brought to pass all of this divine ability, which He has given to the saints through the power in the resurrection and ascension of Jesus. When Jesus ascended up on High, He poured out the Holy Spirit, who brought to us the ability of God. This verse establishes that the power that is available to us and working on our behalf is not something that may happen or that we hope for in the future, but has already been poured out on us through Christ Jesus. The function and manifestation of this power can only be observed through the operation of the Holy Spirit, which was given to us as our guarantee from the Father that all of these blessings and promises are surely ours. The Greek word 'energeo' used in this verse shares a common stem with 'energeia,' which is used in verse 19. The stem that both of these words are derived from is 'energes,' which means "powerful" or "effectual." The same Greek word 'energeo' used in this verse is also used in James 5:16: "The *effectual* (energeo) fervent prayers of a righteous man..."

Commentary · Ephesians 1:20 · Note 32

The exaltation of Christ Jesus once again underscores the power that God poured out on the believer when He sent the Holy Ghost. The rivers of the Holy Ghost, which are an expression of this unlimited ability of God's power and presence, could not be realized until Jesus was glorified (John 7:39). It was only then, when Jesus was "exalted by the right hand of God having received of the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit," which Peter declared on the day of Pentecost (Acts 2:33), that the exceeding greatness of God's power begin to be realized in all those who would believe.

Ephesians 1:21

far above all principality, and authority, and power, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in the one to come[33],

Commentary · Ephesians 1:21 · Note 33

The power that has been invested in us is that power that Christ Jesus now possesses. The power is so immense, and the work of grace so great, that we need the Spirit of wisdom and revelation to begin to understand it. This power was given when God raised Jesus from the dead, set Him at His own right hand, and poured out the Holy Ghost upon us. We cannot imagine for ourselves some small position that we have earned in the framework of divine authority, but that which has been fully vested in Christ Jesus.

We have nothing other than that which Jesus has. There are not various degrees of favor or a structure of hierarchial positions around Christ Jesus. We are seated together with Him, and there are no other positions available (Ephesians 2:6, John 1:12, 15:1-5, 17:21-23). The power of Christ Jesus is superior to every imaginable hostile power. There are principalities, powers, and dominions that exist in the heavenly or spiritual realm, but all of them are subject to Christ Jesus (Matthew 28:18, Colossians 1:16, 2:10, 15, 1 Peter 3:22, Philippians 2:9, Hebrews 7:26). They are also subject to us, because we are seated together with Christ Jesus in this heavenly realm and vested with His authority (Ephesians 3:10, 6:12, Luke 10:19, Matthew 10:1, Mark 6:7). The power and authority of Christ Jesus has no limits, but extends to to all situations everywhere and for all time. There are at least two more ages to come: there will be the age when Christ Jesus will rule with His saints for 1000 years, and after that there is the final and eternal age of the new Heaven and the new Earth (Revelation 21:1-2, Isaiah 65:17, 66:22, 2 Peter 3:13). In the final age, Christ Jesus will offer up to the Father a kingdom where all rebellion has been subdued and death has been destroyed (1 Corinthians 15:24-28). Christ Jesus reigns now and throughout the coming age for 1000 years to subjugate all things to the will of the Father, and to destroy forever the last enemy, death (1 Corinthians 15:25-26, Psalm 110:1, Matthew 22:41-45, Acts 2:35, Hebrews 1:13, 10:13). His reign and dominion are everlasting – they reach unto time without end. Hallelujah – our God and His Christ shall reign forever and forever! (Revelation 11:15, 12:10, Isaiah 9:7, Daniel 4:3, 7:27, 2 Peter 1:11).

Ephesians 1:22

and has placed all things under His feet, and appointed Him the head over all the church[34],

Commentary · Ephesians 1:22 · Note 34

The church is to function in all the fullness of God's power and glory. There are hundreds of passages of scripture devoted to the divine order that we are to function in. However, if we do not comply with God's demands, then the glory of the church, the person of the Lord Jesus Christ, will not be revealed. The word "church" is found 80 times in the New Testament. The church was first mentioned in Matthew 16:18 by Jesus in connection with the revelation of who He was. It was in this context that Jesus promised He would be the one who would build His church (Matthew 16:18, Acts 2:47). The purpose of the church is to reveal Jesus, not in a unique way, but by the same anointing and Spirit that rested upon Him in His earthly ministry. The church, by definition, is a gathering of many people that are to function as one person, Christ Jesus (1 Corinthians 12:12, Acts 11:26, 14:27, 15:4, 1 Corinthians 11:18, 1 Corinthians 14:1-40). This miracle can only take place by the work of the Holy Spirit who baptizes all of us into one body, Christ Jesus, and thereby creates a divine and glorious unity of God's presence and love (1 Corinthians 12:13). This will not happen if we do not believe what the word of God says and submit ourselves to the Holy Spirit and as a result the fullness of God will not be seen in our assemblies. Jesus established the leadership and authority in the church so that His people could be trained up in all of His ways and learn to function in this unspeakable gift (Ephesians 4:11-16, 1 Corinthians 12:28, Acts 20:28, Matthew 18:17, 1 Timothy 3:5). It is through this holy interaction with the Holy Spirit in the context of the church that we are the body of Christ and members of His body functioning in various supernatural

gifts by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:7-11). If the church community refuses to recognize and submit itself to the leadership of the Holy Spirit, then God's people are deprived of all that the Holy Spirit would do, and as a result, the church is incapable of functioning as the body of Christ, and Jesus will not be revealed (Ephesians 4:16, Colossians 2:19, James 5:14). The church began when about 120 people had gathered together to wait on the Holy Spirit. When the Holy Spirit was poured out, that is when the church was born. There is no model for the church other than what was set forth at its birth in the book of Acts. It is essential that we give the Holy Spirit His proper place and understand that we cannot be witnesses of Jesus without His work. The Holy Spirit must be allowed to take over our meetings as He did in the first church meeting if the church is to function as it was ordained to be. Only the Holy Spirit can reveal Jesus, and if He is not given full control, then what God ordained cannot function. Just as the body is dead with out the spirit, the church is dead without the Holy Spirit.

Ephesians 1:23

who is his body[35], the fullness[36] of Him that fills all in all.

Commentary · Ephesians 1:23 · Note 35

The mystery of how the church is the body of Christ is revealed in part in Ephesians 5:31-32. Because the church has been joined unto the Lord even as a man is joined unto his wife, the church is one flesh with Jesus even as a man is with his wife – bone of bone and flesh of flesh (Genesis 2:23).

Commentary · Ephesians 1:23 · Note 36

The church is able to be the fullness of the Lord Jesus Christ because of the fullness of the Holy Spirit that has been given. The Greek word 'pleroma' designates something that is filled up and overflowing. This same word is used in John 1:16 which declares of all the saints, "And of His fullness have all we received..." It is also used of the believer in Ephesians 3:19, "...that you may be filled with all of the fullness of God". And again in Ephesians 4:13, "come to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ." All fullness dwells in Christ, and Christ dwells in us (Colossians 1:19, 1 John 4:4, 3:24, John 14:23). Those who would relegate the function of the Holy Spirit and the measure that was given to the apostles solely to the first century church have no bases to do so. In fact, scriptures such as these emphasize that the same revelation and measure of the Spirit is available to all for all time (John 14:16, 16:13-15, Colossians 1:26, Galatians 3:14, Luke 11:13, Acts 2:39, 11:15-16, 15:8-9).

EPHESIANS

Chapter 2

Ephesians 2:1

But you were dead in your trespasses and sins[37],

Commentary · Ephesians 2:1 · Note 37

Although all men experience the basic functions of natural life, they are dead to the life of God (Genesis 2:17, Romans 5:12). Mere human existence is different than the life that God created us to have. True life is the life of God, the life supplied only by the Holy Spirit, which has been restored to men through the blood of the cross (Titus 3:5, Colossians 1:20). Those who have Jesus Christ in their lives have life – otherwise men are dead while they live (1 John 5:11-12, John 14:6, 15:1-5, Romans 8:2). It is a terrible thing to be under the dominion of sin and death, where the only pleasures that can be understood are those found in lust and greed. Under the stronghold of sin, the way of life is not known. The joy and pleasure of being in the presence of God have never been realized by those held under sin's dark domain. The only happiness and peace is temporary, and then the sorrow of sin and death overwhelms the heart again. The nature and instincts of men imprisoned in this realm are opposed to God and His life in every way (Ephesians 2:3). While dead in sin and disobedience, there can be no understanding or agreement with the ways of life. The mind is blinded and the soul imprisoned through its lust. Sin is one of the primary subjects of the bible, occurring more than 2836 times. When combined with "transgressions," "iniquities," and "disobedience," more than 3801 scriptures are devoted to the subject. It is sin that separates men from God. Every act of sin is against God alone. It is the one thing that God justly hates and upon which His wrath abides (Romans 1:18, Colossians 3:6, Psalm 45:7, 97:10, Hebrews 1:9). It was because of these sins that God Almighty became flesh and died in our place. God so loved the world that He bore our sins in His own body – to break the power of sin and its cruel reign of death for all who will receive (1 Peter 2:24, Hebrews 2:14, Matthew 26:28, Revelation 1:5). He commended His love to us, not regarding our sins even though they deeply grieved His soul. Through His love, He laid down His life and made a way for us to escape (Romans 5:8, Luke 4:18). The way of life is righteousness, and in that pathway there is no death (Proverbs 12:28). The way of life has been opened before us by the mercy and love of God (Psalm 16:11, Hebrews 10:19, John 10:9). Christ Jesus is the Door, and through Him we enter in – leaving behind a dark world of sin and death.

Ephesians 2:2

according to that which you once walked in, after the course of this world[38] according to the ruler, the authority of the atmosphere[39], the spirit[40] that now works in the sons of disobedience.

Commentary · Ephesians 2:2 · Note 38

Paul has already introduced to the Ephesians who Jesus is with respect to all the powers and authorities of this world. Jesus is the One who has been highly exalted above all things, whose name and authority is far more powerful than any power that exists in the world (Ephesians 1:21, Philippians 2:9). Through Christ Jesus, demon spirits are subject to us because we have received His power and authority over them (Ephesians 1:18-23, 2:6, 6:10-18, Luke 10:17-19). The good news of the gospel is that Jesus delivered us

from this present evil world (Galatians 1:4, 1 Corinthians 2:12). Satan has been judged, and so has the world that he has designed and ruled. Although Satan and his worldly powers execute dominion over men, those who have been translated into the kingdom of the Son are not subject to his powers and his wicked imaginations (Colossians 1:13, 18, Ephesians 1:22-23, 4:15, 1 Corinthians 12:13, 2 Corinthians 10:4, Philippians 3:20). The word translated as "course" is from the Greek noun 'aiones,' which means "ages" or "aeons," defining a stretch of time. The expression, "the age of the world," may be understood in the same light as "the age of the Roman Empire," for example. It is a period of time that God allows Satan and his worldly influence to continue before he meets his eternal damnation (1 John 2:16, Hebrews 2:14, Revelation 20:10, 14).

Commentary · Ephesians 2:2 · Note 39

Jesus called Satan the prince or ruler of this world (John 12:31, 16:11). Paul referred to him as the "god of this world" who blinds the minds of men (2 Corinthians 4:4). The Greek phrase 'exousia tou aeros' may be translated as "authority of the air" or "authority of the atmosphere." All those things that we see manifested in the worldly system are the direct influence of the Satanic mind and will. Satan is the evil mastermind behind all of the things that men lust after, and that permeate what is popular and fashionable. It is satanic influence that creates the vile imaginations of this age. Every God-denying antichrist spirit that infects and pollutes the common opinions of men will continue only for a short time (1 Timothy 4:1, Ephesians 6:11). Although Satan's reign of terror and deceptive lies saturate the atmosphere of the social fabric of the nations, he has no power over those who have been set free by Christ Jesus the King – those who are now seated in a heavenly realm of authority over every evil spirit (Mark 16:17, Luke 10:19). Sin no longer has dominion over us (Romans 5:21, 6:12, 14). All those who have been delivered from the bondage of this evil age are now under the governorship of the Prince of peace, The King of kings, and the Lord of lords – with divine power and authority to represent the kingdom (Matthew 28:18, Acts 1:8, 1 John 2:13-14, 4:4, 5:18).

Commentary · Ephesians 2:2 · Note 40

The "spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience" is the demonic realm, which has dominated men since the day that Adam sinned (Romans 5:12-19). The spirit of disobedience is the opposing nature, which is not in the heart of the redeemed, but is in all that is in the world. All that is in the world opposes the things of the Spirit of the Lord that we have received through the washing and cleansing waters of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Ghost (Titus 3:5, John 3:3, Ephesians 4:24, Hebrews 10:15-16). Everywhere that disobedience to the ways and nature of God is manifested, we observe the manifestation of the god of this world, the prince and power of sin. The spirit that now works in the sons of disobedience is opposed by the sons of God, who live under the leadership and authority of another Spirit, the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:14, 16, 2 Corinthians 6:15-16). This spirit of the world is the spirit of disobedience – the same power which Paul spoke of in Romans as "the motions of sins," and "sin that dwells in me" (Romans 7:17). The power of sin entered into the world through Adam's transgression, and then passed upon all men (Romans 5:12). The good news is that Jesus was manifested to destroy the

works of the Devil, and for all those who will believe, the spirit of disobedience has been put to death, cut off by the circumcision of Christ, and defeated by His resurrection (Romans 6:1-6, Colossians 2:11, 1 John 3:5-8, John 12:31, Hebrews 2:14). Jesus conquered Satan – now the church, the saints of God, are commissioned to enforce His conquest.

Ephesians 2:3

In this we also all conducted ourselves in the desire of our flesh, fulfilling the will of the flesh[41] and of the imagination, and were by nature children of wrath even as others.

Commentary · Ephesians 2:3 · Note 41

Although flesh is often communicated in a positive sense, in this verse it refers to a depraved nature that lives only for the gratification of its lust. Although Jesus was manifested in the flesh and suffered for us in the flesh, there was no dimension of depravity or immorality in His life (John 1, 1 Peter 4:2). The depraved nature that lives only for vile affections takes center stage in Genesis 6. Men had become so given over to their fleshly lusts that the imaginations of their hearts were constantly bent on evil (Genesis 6:5). Because of the vile and wicked state of the heart of man, God repented that he had made men (Genesis 6:6). The wicked state of the heart corrupts every thought and action, and the only remedy is a new heart (Ezekiel 36:26, 2 Corinthians 3:3, Colossians 2:11, Hebrews 10:16). Flesh may also describe the muscles of the body, meat used for sacrifice or food, human ability, the body of man, and even the complete man (including the soul and spirit, as in “all flesh”). There is nothing unholy or unacceptable about the body of men. The body has been made the temple of the Holy Ghost and we are to glorify God in our bodies, which are His (1 Corinthians 6:19-20, John 2:21). Yet when men live under the dominion of sin and the power of the spirit of disobedience, then the natural desires are turned into every lust and unholy work of the flesh. The nature of sin dominating the heart is expressed in every fleshly lust and wicked imagination that demons and men can invent to work unrighteousness. The spirit that works in the sons of disobedience turns everything that God had made for His holy purpose into the worst kinds of human depravities. In this sense, flesh and fleshly lust describe the state and works of the sons of disobedience. Humanity, under the dominion of sin, has no fellowship with God or ability to please God (Romans 8:8-9). Now that we have been delivered and made the sons of God, if we walk in the Spirit of obedience, then we will not fulfill the lust of the flesh (Galatians 5:16, 24). To be the children of wrath is equivalent to being the children of disobedience. Sin is disobedience to God, and the wages of sin is death (Romans 1:18, 6:23). Paul includes himself with all men as those who were once the children of wrath and the servants of sin (Romans 6:16-18, 20). Men without a new heart and new spirit are alienated from God by wicked works (Colossians 1:21). Without Christ Jesus, the wrath of God abides upon mankind because of these fleshly lusts that work in those who are by (sinful) nature the children of wrath (John 3:26).

Ephesians 2:4

But God who is rich in mercy through His abundant love[42] with which He has loved us,

Commentary · Ephesians 2:4 · Note 42

The message that we must hear and believe is that God is rich in mercy. His mercy flows from a deep and passionate love for all mankind! Oh how much more shall we be able to benefit from the rich mercy of the One who loves us now that we have been reconciled by faith in the blood of Jesus and born of the Spirit (Romans 8:32)? To know and believe the love that God has for you will cause you to be firmly rooted and grounded in love (1 John 4:16, Ephesians 3:17). Just believe God! Whether you have walked perfectly before the Lord or not – just believe God. Trust that just as He rescued you from your sins and saved you by His blood when you were dead in sins, He will also save you now. The Lord saved us by His mercy when we were dead in our trespasses and sins, and He will save and heal us now no matter how we have failed or what state we are in. He washed and renewed us, giving us life and blessings – not because of any works of righteousness which we had done – and he will do it once again. When we were alienated from the life that is in Christ Jesus, God commended His love to us so that we may say, "By His grace we were saved!" God has not run out of grace, nor has He run low on mercy. The love of God that purchased your salvation is also the love of God that will perfect you and keep you, so just believe God! The most important thing for you to consider is that God wants you to look to Him for deliverance, no matter what your circumstance. If there is a reoccurring sin, or a circumstance that is too much to bear, our God wants us to turn to Him for help. He will come and rescue you. If nothing else, just believe the love that God has for you. Believe the record that God has given of His Son. If you will just fall down on your knees and cry out to Him again, He will do nothing less than love you freely and show his rich and abundant mercy for you. His mercies are new every morning (Lamentations 3:23).

Ephesians 2:5

even when we were dead in trespasses, **made us alive together[43] with Christ** – by grace you are saved –

Commentary · Ephesians 2:5 · Note 43

One of the great wonders and miracles of salvation is how God is able to forgive sinners. God, who is holy and pure, who will not justify the wicked and will have nothing to do with sin, commended His love toward us (Exodus 34:6, Romans 5:8). He was able to move our sins out of the way, reach into our hearts, and change us. The great miracle of salvation takes place in our lives simply because we are willing to receive the love of God and accept the life of union with Christ Jesus. By accepting that Jesus died for us and that through His death He paid our just penalty for sin, we are made alive together with Him. We can only live in Christ – without Him we are dead while we live (1 John 5:11-12, Romans 5:14, 1 Corinthians 15:22). There is no spiritual life outside of Jesus – He is the One who has brought to us the ability to live, and to know God (John 1:4, Romans 5:17, Colossians 2:13). All of our interactions with God exist only through the life of Jesus Christ (John 14:6, Hebrews 9:8, 10:19-22, Matthew 11:27, Acts 4:12, Romans 5:2, Hebrews 7:25). The love and grace of God has made this precious, holy, and beloved life available to even the vilest of sinners. If we accept His life that He gave us, then we can receive the love and grace of God. When we embrace His life and the identity that He he gave to us, we accept that Jesus was more

than our substitute or representative – rather, we died with Him that we might also live in Him. Through the miracle of salvation we received a brand new life, and all the former things were put to death by His crucifixion – for we were "crucified with Christ" (Galatians 2:20, Titus 3:5, 2 Corinthians 5:17). We are buried with him by baptism into His death, and our entire existence is now in Him (Romans 6:4). He is all our righteousness, He is all our holiness – and in Him we have acceptance and are dearly loved by the Father (1 Corinthians 1:30, Ephesians 1:6, John 14:23, 16:27). Now we know that if one died for all, then all died – and Jesus died for all so that we would no longer live for ourselves or unto ourselves (2 Corinthians 5:14-15, 2 Timothy 2:11). Through this amazing love and grace of God, we who were dead are alive together with Jesus. All of our relations with God the Father and the world around us are affected by this amazing life of Christ that we now possess. It is no longer by the knowledge and consciousness of the self that we live, but by the acceptance of a new life and identity in Christ Jesus. He is in us and we are in Him, and God demands that we dwell here (John 15:1-6, 17:21-23, Colossians 1:27). In this glorious salvation, we set aside the self – we deny it and accept a heavenly call to live by the One who died, rose again, and now dwells within us. We must lay aside the identity of the "self," the "I," and the "me," and instead see Jesus. It is in His life and through His life that we receive all that God has freely given. God's grace has produced for us what we could never supply for ourselves – the life of Christ. All we have to do is accept what He has done for us and surrender ourselves to this glorious relationship. It is not a vicarious relationship, but the acceptance of a new identity in which we choose to come and dwell in Him and find all our life and purpose in Christ.

Ephesians 2:6

and has raised us up together, and has **made us sit together in the heavens[44] in Christ Jesus,**

Commentary · Ephesians 2:6 · Note 44

Through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus, we are raised up into the realm of authority that is above all authorities and powers (Ephesians 1:20-22). We have been empowered to rule with Jesus Christ and execute the will of the Father on the Earth (Romans 5:17, Galatians 4:7, Romans 8:17). God the Father gave us the authority to be His sons, to bind and loose things on Earth, and to walk in the same glory that Jesus has (John 1:12, 17:21-23, Matthew 16:19, 18:18). He has given us the authority of Heaven to cast out devils, and to tread upon snakes, scorpions, and over all the power of Satan (Luke 10:19, Romans 16:20, Matthew 10:8, Mark 3:15, Acts 8:6-7, Ephesians 1:18-20). We have been given the ability to turn the souls of men from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God, and to open their eyes to the truth of the gospel (Acts 26:18, Luke 4:18). We have been called by God to advance His kingdom in the Earth through the power and authority that has been imparted to us by the Holy Spirit. God has given us a position of authority in His kingdom that whatever we ask, He will do (John 15:16, 1 John 3:21-22). He has made it our responsibility to go into all of the world and proclaim this gospel of the kingdom (Mark 16:15, Matthew 24:14, 28:19). Heaven is not just a place, but it is the realm of the spiritual and the place of oneness with God that we were born into when we were born of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 14:1, 15:44, 46, 2 Corinthians 4:18, Hebrews 12:22-25, Romans 8:6, 9, Galatians 4:26, Philippians 3:20). It is to this

realm that we were raised up to walk in when we were raised up together with Christ (Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:12). It is here that we are to set our affections, and to exercise the rights of rulership over everything that is opposed to God (Colossians 3:1-4). As heirs and joint-heirs together with Christ, we are more than conquerors and victorious in everything we do (Romans 8:37, Philippians 4:13, 1 John 5:4, Revelation 3:21). We are standing in the place of Christ Jesus on this Earth, and we have been given the responsibility to do the works of Jesus and execute the will of the Sovereign God. We were sent by Jesus to do the same things that the Father sent Him to do – we are to put an end to the works of the Devil everywhere we encounter them (2 Corinthians 5:20, John 14:12, 20:21, Colossians 2:6, Galatians 3:27, 1 John 3:8, Mark 16:17-18, Romans 8:29).

Ephesians 2:7

so that throughout the ages to come[45] He might demonstrate the immeasurable riches of His grace in kindness towards us by Christ Jesus.

Commentary · Ephesians 2:7 · Note 45

Mankind had no way out of sin and death. Adam's disobedience ensnared his soul and the souls of his descendants forever. Therefore, God in His immeasurable love made a way for a new beginning. God would be put to death as a descendant of Adam, to pay the penalty of sin for all mankind. We are to die with Him, be buried, raised up, and made alive together with Him that we might also be seated with Him. He so lavishly poured out His love upon sinful man that He gave coinheritance with Jesus to all who would receive. God has made the redeemed the heirs of all that He has, and He made them to be those that will reign forever with His Son (Romans 8:17, Galatians 4:7, 2 Timothy 2:12, John 1:14, 1 John 3:1-2). Our old man of sin is dead – because Jesus died (Romans 6:6, 2 Corinthians 5:17). We are raised up because Jesus was raised up (Romans 6:4, Colossians 3:1). We are exalted in the heavens because Jesus is exalted there (Ephesians 2:6). We have nothing outside of Jesus, and all that we may boast of and all we have received is only by Him and in Him! God has not accepted sin or sinful men, but has made a way for all men to be saved from sin and delivered from its power. We have been rescued from the prison of sin, from controlling demonic power, and from the works of a wicked heart. He cleansed our souls with His own soul – by pouring out His life's blood for our redemption (Revelation 1:5, Hebrews 10:22, Matthew 20:28, 26:28). He washed our spirits with the waters of regeneration, and made all things new (1 Peter 2:24, Titus 3:5, Ezekiel 36:26). For years to come that no one has even yet imagined, the redeemed of the Lord will be a demonstration of the greatness of God's love and mercy. One might compare our lives now to being in the womb of life, awaiting to be born into the ages that God has prepared for us. God calls all men to be saved, and extends His longsuffering – not willing that anyone should perish (1 Timothy 2:4, John 12:32, 2 Peter 3:9). The decision is ours: will we receive such love? Will we enter into this life that has cost God so dearly? Will we participate with His plan and unspeakable gift of salvation? Will we allow the Holy Spirit to teach us to walk in all of His ways and to execute His judgments?

Ephesians 2:8

For by grace[46] you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves[47] – it is the gift of God,

Commentary · Ephesians 2:8 · Note 46

The grace of God that does for us what we could never do for ourselves empowers us with the supernatural ability of faith to please God and live out those things that His gift has provided (Hebrews 11:6). When we consider the meaning and definition of grace, we must look to what God describes it to be. There are many different facets of grace that allows us to view the splendor of all of God's goodness. When we consider all its attributes, we discover that grace is God's presence working for us and in us to produce all that He has desired (2 Corinthians 4:7, Ephesians 3:20, Philippians 2:13, John 1:16). Grace is the active working of the Spirit of the Lord in us and in the world (Titus 2:13, John 12:32, Acts 2:17). Every action of the Holy Spirit reveals grace. Grace is not a passive stance of God toward man, but the *activity* of the Holy Spirit and the *demonstration* of His divine will and power. Grace is not dependent upon the works of men any more than the power of the Holy Spirit is dependent upon human ability – both are to be supplied to us by the love of God, willingly received, and then submitted to (Romans 11:6, 22-23, Galatians 3:3, Romans 8:1-9, John 3:3-6). Grace is the goodness and favor of God that is extended to all men alike and the means by which all of His gifts are given to anyone who will receive. Grace is how God saved us at great expense to Himself. Grace came through Jesus Christ, and without Him it cannot be received. Jesus may be viewed as grace personified. He did for us what we could have never done for ourselves (Ephesians 2:5, John 1:14, 17). Through the love, sacrifices, and righteousness of God our Savior, we were given the right and privilege to be born of the Spirit. Through the good pleasure of God's own will, grace made possible for us what works could never earn. Through His blood, our sins were washed away and we were made as those who had never disobeyed. Through His death we died, through his resurrection we were raised, through His life we live, and by His obedience we were made obedient. He has given to us His righteousness and holiness, and by Him we are sanctified, justified, glorified, and united with God in oneness (Romans 3:22, 26, Philippians 3:9, 1 John 2:29, John 14:20, 17:21-23). His gift of life has freely given us all things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3). He has abundantly poured out the riches of His mercies, and His life flows like rivers of living water to whosoever will accept it. Now when we consider the washing of regeneration, the miracle new birth, we recognize that such a thing could never be accomplished by any works that we could do, but only by the supernatural operation of the Spirit of God (Titus 3:5). God's grace brought the change of life that human effort never could have achieved! Through Jesus Christ alone we are allowed to live in a realm of unlimited interaction with God – a realm that we have access to by faith, this is grace (Romans 5:2, Galatians 5:22-25, Romans 12:3). Faith is the inseparable companion of grace. The faith that comes from God stands ready to act upon our hearts. When the Word of God is heard, the Holy Spirit supplies faith to everyone who will respond in obedience to what God commands (Romans 10:17, Galatians 5:22). Some have said that grace is God's part and faith is ours, but God has supplied them both. What is ours is to simply be willing and obedient. The gospel is the word of faith that imparts the faith of God into the hearts of everyone who will obey (Romans 10:8, James 2:17-26). Once faith that is imparted by the Holy

Spirit is mixed with the word of God, then the promises that God's grace supplied will be evident in our lives (Hebrews 4:2). The faith that grace supplies is only activated by obedience to the word of God, not just a testimony of belief (Matthew 8:8, 14:28-29, Galatians 3:5, James 2:19, Matthew 8:8, 14:28). Faith is the active work of grace that enables us to receive what has already been done.

Commentary · Ephesians 2:8 · Note 47

It must be emphasized that this faith has no human origin, but has come to us directly from God as a gift. There is only one faith: it exists only in the realm of God, and comes by Jesus Christ (Acts 3:16, Galatians 2:16). God has given us His faith by the supernatural working of the Holy Spirit. Faith takes hold of grace, and in submission to the power of the Holy Spirit, all of the will of God is produced in our lives (Philippians 2:13, Ephesians 3:19, Hebrews 13:21). It is not a faith that humanity obtains through religious beliefs, knowledge, discipline or works. Rather, the grace that has appeared to all men provides this amazing gift of God to all who would obey: the faith of God (Mark 11:22, Galatians 2:20, Romans 12:3, Titus 2:11).

Ephesians 2:9

not of works, so that none may boast[48].

Commentary · Ephesians 2:9 · Note 48

Works cannot save you. Good deeds cannot change your heart. Religious acts, no matter how faithfully they are followed, cannot erase the sin and remove the spirit of disobedience that is inherited by every man. When God looked for a man, there was no one who could help. There was no intercessor, so He by His own right hand interceded for the plight of men (Isaiah 59:16). We were without strength, without any sense of direction, and Christ died for the ungodly (Romans 5:6). God intervened in human affairs and commanded the light of the gospel to shine in the gross darkness of human circumstance (Isaiah 60:2). God's immeasurable love and grace were not revealed by flesh and blood, but by the Father in Heaven (Matthew 16:17). The notion that sinful man can somehow earn anything with God is far from rational. God can have nothing to do with any measure of sin – the only remedy for it is death (Genesis 2:17, Romans 6:23). It would be impossible for those who were dominated by wicked imaginations and ruled by the spirit of disobedience to find within themselves a movement towards holiness and righteousness. Man was lost in darkness under the domination of satanic deception, but God in His mercy intervened. There will be no one who can boast that they discovered God, or that through their conduct or behavior they captured His favor or attention. Rather, God came and sought us out. Before we sought Him, He said, "Behold here am I," and before we called He answered (Isaiah 65:1, 24, Romans 10:20). One of the great examples of this is a Samaritan woman who was living in adultery that came to draw water from a well. Jesus came to her, revealed the secrets of her heart, and invited her to receive the gift of salvation (John 4:10, 29).

Ephesians 2:10

For we are His workmanship[49], **created in Christ Jesus** unto good works, which God ordained that we should walk in them.

Commentary · Ephesians 2:10 · Note 49

Paul opens up his Epistle to the Ephesians by declaring why we were made. We were created to be blameless before God, walking in holiness and love (Ephesians 1:3). When Adam turned his face away from the Lord in pursuit of his own interests, he lost this glory and stepped over into the shame of sin and death. The twisted nature of sin produced its destructive ruin in Adam's spirit instantaneously. Adam was left trembling in fear and shame, unable to endure the presence of God. Every generation that followed Adam sank deeper into the spiritual darkness and ruin, because of the evil reign of sin and separation from God. When Adam fell, God immediately went to work by calling out to him and making a way for him to return to the glory that he had lost. God ordained a way to spiritually recreate and bring forth that which He purposed when He created man in His own image and likeness. He has made the only way for man to come back to Him. A miraculous recreation and regeneration has been provided for anyone who is willing to call upon the name of the Savior. As death and sin ceased the heart of Adam, the life and righteousness of Christ Jesus can cease your heart right now. God has poured out the life-giving Spirit through the blood of Jesus, and a new creation can spring forth in anyone who would ask (2 Peter 1:4, Ezekiel 36:25-27, Hebrews 8:10, 2 Corinthians 3:18, 2 Peter 2:20). The unspeakable gift of salvation makes us His workmanship, where we are now recreated in Christ Jesus. The works of the Law, human discipline, and all of the religions of the world combined could not erase the sins of the past or change the nature of man. There is no reconditioning program for the heart that could bring about the necessary change in the mind and spirit of man. God had to become flesh to defeat the power of death and sin. Man's salvation could only come from God, for the power of death had sealed his fate, and the power of sin could not be broken by any works of men. A way to end the old life by putting it to death and a means to bring forth a new life from the resurrection of the dead had to be made so that all things could be new. One who had the power to destroy death and sin would have to break the yoke. One who had the authority to raise up from the dead would have to die for every man, and this is what Christ Jesus did. Through His death, we died and were buried with Him. By the power of the Living God, we were then raised up together into His resurrection life so that all things could be new! Through His death, every claim of satanic dominion was broken (Hebrews 2:14, 2 Timothy 1:10). Through the miracle of the resurrection, God worked the miracle of a new creation with a new heart and a new spirit wherein only righteousness now dwells. The new creation is in Christ Jesus. Its life is from the Father, possessing His nature, holiness, and purity. The new creation is the workmanship of God not shaped from dust, but from the blood of Jesus Christ. God breathed into us His abundant life by the Holy Spirit to enjoy and fulfill His purposes – to "be holy and without blemish before Him in love" (Ephesians 1:4, Luke 1:74-75, Romans 8:29, Ephesians 4:24, 5:27, Philippians 2:15, Colossians 1:22, 2 Peter 3:13-14, Colossians 3:10). Jesus has given us everything that he has, for we are in Him and He is in us – life does not exist outside of Him. He has freely given His nature and glory to anyone who would receive them. All that we are and all

that we will ever be is only obtainable by being in Him and His life being in us (John 17:22, 1:16). He sowed His life as a seed at Calvary, and the fruit of life sprang forth. Now He is the Vine, and we are branches that bear the fruit of being one with Him: Christ in us our confidence of glory (John 12:24, 15:1-6, Colossians 1:27).

Ephesians 2:11

For this reason remember that you were once Gentiles in the flesh[50], called uncircumcised by those called circumcised in the flesh made by hands[51].

Commentary · Ephesians 2:11 · Note 50

Circumcision has been elevated beyond the removal of the foreskin of mere flesh to a change of heart and nature. Before true circumcision was made available, every person who was not born of the seed of Abraham and circumcised in the foreskin of their flesh was considered unclean and separated from any type of good relationship with God. Now it is no longer the circumcision made with hands, but the circumcision of Christ in the heart that marks the true covenant-child of God (Colossians 2:11, Romans 2:28-29, Galatians 5:6, 6:15, Philippians 3:3). Those who have been redeemed are no longer called by the unclean name of "gentiles," but are called sons of God (John 1:12, Romans 8:14, 2 Corinthians 6:18, 1 John 3:1). God's desire for man was to deliver him from the dominion of sin and the "god of this world," and restore him to a place of union with Himself – circumcision of the flesh could never accomplish that. The only way that the instinct and nature of man could be changed was for his heart to be changed and made pure. An uncircumcised heart denotes a nature that is twisted and dominated by sin, and causes uncleanness of spirit and soul. Through the circumcision of Christ Jesus, that uncleanness was removed, and a new heart and spirit sprang forth out of the darkness that was shrouded by sin (Ezekiel 36:26, 2 Corinthians 3:3, Hebrews 8:10). This spiritual circumcision of the heart is the bringing forth of a new creation in Christ that possesses the divine nature (Galatians 6:15, 2 Peter 1:4, 2 Corinthians 5:17). Through the death and resurrection of Christ Jesus, we became dead to the former life and were raised up together with Christ Jesus to walk in newness of life (Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:12-13, 3:1-3). The circumcision of Christ is more than the removal of the body of a foreskin, it is the removal of the body of the sins of the flesh (Romans 6:6, Colossians 2:11). It is the liberation of a heart once bound by sin to worship God in Spirit and in truth (John 4:23).

Commentary · Ephesians 2:11 · Note 51

The "circumcision made with hands" takes on a specific meaning when it is contrasted with "a circumcision made without hands." The circumcision made without hands is the spiritual circumcision that is provided by Christ Jesus. This circumcision removed the body of the sins of the flesh, so it is understood to be the event that removed our sins when Jesus took them in His own body and bore them away during His death on the cross (1 Peter 2:24). God had commanded Israel to deal with their disobedience and rebellion against His Law by circumcising their heart (Jeremiah 4:4, Deuteronomy 10:16). He also described their inability to hear his Word as "uncircumcised ears" (Jeremiah 6:10).

However, God promised that he would circumcise their heart so that they would love Him, "And the LORD your God will circumcise your heart, and the heart of your seed, to love the LORD your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, so that you may live" (Deuteronomy 30:6). Moses called his lips uncircumcised, because after he had delivered the word of the Lord to Israel, they did not respond (Exodus 6:12). Once again, the uncircumcised cannot receive or communicate the things of God.

Ephesians 2:12

Because at that time[52] you were separated from Christ, alienated from the citizenship of Israel, and strangers to the covenants of promise[53], having no hope and without God in this world[54].

Commentary · Ephesians 2:12 · Note 52

Although circumcision was first established in God's covenant with Abraham, circumcision also represents the covenant of the Law. It was circumcision that made Israel fit to participate in what God was doing. For example, in order for them to participate in the Passover, they had to be circumcised (Exodus 12:43-49). Paul's argument to the church in Romans and Galatians do not really link circumcision to Abraham, but to the Law. He argues that those who feel obligated to be circumcised, in order to be accepted by God, are obligated to keep the whole Law (Galatians 5:3-4). In fact, Paul equates obligation to circumcision for acceptance by God to seeking justification by the Law. Paul also makes it very clear that the proper view of circumcision is not a physical condition, but a spiritual one – so that if the uncircumcised keep the righteousness of the Law, they are counted as circumcised. Also, if the person who is circumcised does not keep the Law, he is considered uncircumcised (Jeremiah 9:25-26).

Commentary · Ephesians 2:12 · Note 53

God called out the nation of Israel from all of the other nations to make them a nation of priests, from which He would be able to bring the Messiah (Exodus 19:6). As such, the covenant was directed to them and excluded all other nations. The only way any other people could be included was to become a proselyte and enter into the covenant of the Law.

Commentary · Ephesians 2:12 · Note 54

All those who are outside the covenant have no hope, and are without God in this world. The hope of every person is Christ Jesus, for there is only one covenant between God and man, and that is the one that was made for everyone, both Jew and Gentile, at the cross of Calvary. It was at the cross that God dealt with the sin of all men. Today, it does not matter who you are or what you can say of your forefathers, each person enters into this world under the power of sin. Every person has sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23, John 8:34-38, 44-46, 9:41, 1 John 1:8, 10). God, in His abundant love, has made a covenant for all who would believe. Anyone who calls on the name of the Lord Jesus will have their sins removed and will be filled with the life of God. The divine connection with the Almighty God can only be made through His covenant, His contract of mercy and grace to redeem all who would come to Him. Now there is neither Jew nor Gentile, but one new humanity in Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:14-15).

There are many who would say that there can't be just one way. They would argue that all religions have something to contribute. The problem with that kind of thinking is a failure to realize that the problem with man is sin. Men do not have a shortage of ideas and philosophies, but all those insightful things that men can imagine cannot undo one act of sin. God's law, the law of all creation, is that the soul who sins shall die (Ezekiel 18:4, 20, Romans 6:23, Genesis 2:17). Sin will be erased from all creation (Isaiah 65:17, 66:22, 2 Peter 3:13, Revelation 21:1-2). It will either be put to death at the cross of Christ or it will be put to death in Hell (Romans 6:6, Galatians 2:20, 5:24, 6:14, 1 Corinthians 2:2)). Previously, Paul made it clear that all men who are without Christ are under the rulership of the god of this world, the prince and power of the air, the spirit at work in the children of disobedience (Ephesians 2:3). Christ Jesus has destroyed the power of Satan for all who of their own volition choose to come and follow Him.

Ephesians 2:13

But now in Christ Jesus, you who were once far away have been brought near by the blood of Christ[55].

Commentary · Ephesians 2:13 · Note 55

Israel was allowed a limited access to God through the covenant of the Law, but now the Gentiles who did not know God are invited in along with Israel into an unlimited relationship. Now through the blood of Jesus, both Jew and Gentile, bond or free, could come by the blood of Jesus into a place that no one had access to before. Understanding the consecration of Aaron and his sons helps each person to more fully comprehend the meaning of this verse. Aaron and his sons were consecrated to the Lord by the blood of the covenant so that they could draw near to Him and engage in the awesome splender and ecstasy of ministering in His presence (Leviticus chapters 8-9). Other than Moses, this had not been allowed since the rebellion of Adam (Genesis 3:24). Through the mercy of God, access would be once again granted through the blood of the covenant – but only for the few that the Lord would sanctify. Previous to this event, the Lord had come to make Himself known to all of Israel, but even in this act of mercy He demanded that they keep their distance – only Moses was allowed to draw near to the Lord (Exodus 19:12, 12:20-21). Though even in the first encounter that Moses had with the Lord, he heard "do not draw near" (Exodus 3:5). The removal of sin is so complete in Christ Jesus that now whosoever is willing can come with all boldness into the presence of God (Hebrews 10:19). Our faith in who Jesus is and what He has done for us should so radically change us that we no longer have a conscience that condemns us of sin (Hebrews 10:22, 1 John 3:21, Romans 8:1). The powers of darkness continually condemn us, and through that condemnation they attempt to hold us back from drawing near to Him (Zechariah 3:2). However, with our faith in Christ Jesus alone, we take the blood of the covenant and find the power of complete confidence and the full assurance of His acceptance! The way into the holiest place of all has been revealed through the blood of Jesus, and everyone is invited. Our righteousness is not our own, but was given to us as a gift. We now have a life that is different from the one we were born with. It is the life of Christ, given to us through His blood. Behold, the stains of sin have been removed – let there be no more consciousness of it. Let the life of God and His promises of oneness with Him now

occupy your minds (Ephesians 4:23-24, Romans 12:1-2, 1 Corinthians 2:16, 1 Peter 4:1, John 17:21-22, Galatians 3:27). Today anyone can stand beyond that place where only the High Priest could go, for an entrance has been made into the heavenlies of God – the place that is the most holy of all (Hebrews 9:8, 10:19-21, 12:22, Ephesians 2:6).

Ephesians 2:14

For He is our Peace, who has made both of us one, and dissolved the enmity, the middle wall of partition[56], in His flesh,

Commentary · Ephesians 2:14 · Note 56

What is translated as "the middle wall of partition" is literally "the dividing wall of the fence." The Greek word 'phragmos,' which is translated as "wall," may be properly translated as "partition." Although we may understand this division as pertaining only to Jew and Gentile, we may also expand it to include the division that existed between God and man. The first time that a partition or fence was made as a boundary between God and man was at Mount Sinai – here God made a distinction between Himself and the rest of Israel. A wall or boundary is also observed in the curtain or veil that stood between the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies. Another wall or partition was in the temple precincts between the Court of the Gentiles and the Court of the Women. Josephus describes this wall as being five feet high – but positioned in such a way that the Court of the Women could not be seen. To reach the temple, one would have to pass through the Court of the Gentiles, the Court of Women, the Court of the Sons of Israel, and finally the Court of the Priest. Gentiles who brought offerings could not go past the wall separating the Court of the Gentiles and the Court of the Women. This partition was so important to the Jews that an inscription in Greek and Latin warned that any trespasser beyond the court of the Gentiles would be punished by death. This austerity is observed in Acts 21:28 & 31 when Paul was dragged from the temple to be killed because he was accused of bringing Gentiles in and defiling the sanctuary. However, the most important clue to understanding what partition was removed is revealed in the fact that Jesus destroyed it in his own flesh. We know that Jesus bore our sins in His own body on the tree (1 Peter 2:24), which is the barrier that the prophet Isaiah revealed was responsible for separating God from His people (Isaiah 59:2). We also know that we enter into the Holy of Holies through the veil of the flesh of Jesus as though His own body has taken the place of the curtain that divided the Holy Place from the Holy of Holies (Hebrews 10:20). This is further emphasized in the veil of the temple that was torn open when Jesus was crucified (Matthew 27:51). The middle wall of partition was effectually more than a law that divided Jew from Gentile, and both from God, but it was the strength of sin, which was the Law. When Jesus did away with sin through the sacrifice of His own self, He destroyed every barrier and wall of division. The most important point is that God has provided a new covenant in Christ Jesus so that both the uncircumcised and circumcised are given the same opportunity. The new covenant allows all to come boldly into the Holy of Holies, which before was forbidden to everyone except the High Priest – and even that was allowed only once per year (Hebrew 10:19). Both the Jew and the Gentile come to God the same way and there is no difference between them now or in the future. If they are going to walk with

God, then they must be born from above and made into a new creature. When Adam sinned and was separated from God, it was not the Law that God desired to restore to man – it was fellowship. The fellowship that God wants to have with man could not come by the Law because the Law could not impart the life of God into man (Galatians 3:21). The Law was just, good, and holy, but it could only point out man's sinful nature. In Ephesians 4:24, Paul exhorts us to put on the "new man," which is created in true righteousness and holiness. Jesus has created, from both Jew and Gentile, one new man, and everyone has been offered the opportunity to enter into this intimate fellowship through the Door, Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:15

abolishing the Law of commandments in ordinances[57], so that in Himself He created of the two[58] one new man[59], making peace,

Commentary · Ephesians 2:15 · Note 57

What Paul calls the "law of commandments" here, he calls the "certificate of indebtedness" in Colossians 2:14. These ordinances were abolished and blotted out when Jesus spoiled principalities and powers. The Law of Commandments, which is another name for the Law of Moses, was given to reveal the domination of sin and its evil effects on man. Now, through the power of the blood and death of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, the power of sin and death has been destroyed. The testimony of condemnation that is contained within the Law has also been destroyed for whoever would call upon the name of the Lord Jesus (2 Corinthians 3:7, 9, Romans 8:1). When we understand that the Law of Moses was revealed to Paul to be both the Law of Condemnation and the Law of Death, we are enabled to understand that it was the witness against man's sinful state. Therefore, when the power of sin that dominated man was destroyed, the witness of condemnation against that sin was also destroyed. God no longer deals with His covenant people as the sons of Adam, but as His own sons (Romans 8:15-16, Galatians 3:26). We are no longer held under the Law of Condemnation, but have been brought into the glorious liberty of the sons of God and into the ministry of righteousness (Romans 8:21, 2 Corinthians 3:9). The relationship is not based upon man, who rebelled, sinned, and must be condemned, but on the One who was obedient and righteous. Through Christ Jesus, that same righteousness has been extended to us so that we are made righteous, holy and pure. God interacts with us as heirs and coinheritors with His Son, Christ Jesus. We have been born of the Spirit and have been joined unto the Lord as part of His family. There is no condemnation against the new creation who have been recreated in Christ Jesus.

Commentary · Ephesians 2:15 · Note 58

God has provided a new covenant in Christ Jesus so that both the uncircumcised and circumcised are given the same opportunity. God has provided a level playing field where there is neither Jew nor Greek, circumcision nor uncircumcision, but a "new creation" (Galatians 6:15, 5:6, 1 Corinthians 7:19). The new covenant allows all to come boldly into the Holy of Holies, which before was forbidden to anyone except the High Priest, and even then only once per year (Hebrew 10:19). Both Jew and Gentile come to God

the same way, and there is no difference between them now or in the future. If they are going to walk with God, then they must be born from above and made into a new creature. When Adam sinned and was separated from God, it was not the Law that God desired to restore to man, but fellowship. The fellowship that God wants to have with man could not come by the Law, because the Law could not impart the life of God into man (Galatians 3:21). The Law was just, good, and holy, but it could only point out man's sinful nature. Paul, speaking of "one new man," certainly refers to believers becoming partakers with Christ so that we become those who are "in Him," thus establishing in Himself perfect fellowship and union with us. The "one new man" may be understood as a "single new man" made from both Jew and Gentile. Both are referred to as one new man, because all must be in Christ Jesus in order to be saved and established in the new covenant. The one new man may also be understood as the church, which is His body. The church has already been mentioned in Ephesians 1:23, and is being alluded to in view of the fact that Jesus is described as the Cornerstone of the house that God has built. Therefore, Jesus is both the Head from which the whole body (His Church) functions and the Cornerstone that holds the whole building (His Church) in place. That which Jesus created in his person from both Jew and Gentile may be understood as the new covenant (2 Corinthians 3:6), the new creation (2 Corinthians 5:17), and the new man of Ephesians 4:24 – all of which are the glorious newness given in Christ Jesus.

Commentary · Ephesians 2:15 · Note 59

God has created one new humanity in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 2:16

and completely exchanged[60] both to God in one body through the cross, destroying the enmity[61] in Himself,

Commentary · Ephesians 2:16 · Note 60

The Greek word, 'apokatallaso' (apo-kat-allasso), is a composite of two prepositions, 'apo' and 'kat,' and a verb, 'allasso'. The verb 'allaso' means "to change" or "to exchange," and 'apo' and 'kat' may be translated as "of" and 'according' respectively. It appears that the double prefix serves to intensify the verb's meaning, and thus could be properly translated as "completely changed" or "completely exchanged." This form of the verb is not found outside of Christian literature. Therefore, we have to lean heavily on both the contextual meaning and the purely secular definition. To keep with the context of the passage, the choice was made to translate it as "completely exchange," which enforces Jesus Christ's representative or substitute role at the cross, which was for all mankind.

Commentary · Ephesians 2:16 · Note 61

The Greek word used here is 'ecthar,' which is derived from the word 'echthros,' meaning "enemy," and 'echtho,' meaning "to hate." The curse of sin that had cursed man was destroyed at the cross when Jesus was made a curse for us (Galatians 3:13, 1 Corinthians 15:22). The sin that once put all men at enmity against God has now been removed because of the exchange that took place when Christ Jesus died at

Calvary. Although Paul began by talking about the enmity between Jew and Gentile, He is now addressing the enmity that exists between sinful man and a Holy God! That sin was dealt with when Christ Jesus exchanged His life for ours, and the One who knew no sin became the sin offering for us so that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him (2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 3:22-23). This exchange is essential for all men – both Jew and Gentile. All men must be recreated in Christ Jesus. Only in Christ Jesus can the power of sin and death be destroyed or a person be made acceptable to God. This gospel is for the Jew first, and if it is rejected, there is no other means of salvation. God deals with both Jew and Gentile on the exact same basis, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 1:16, 2:10, 3:9, 23, 6:23, Ephesians 2:3). The Gentiles, who were enemies of God, have now been changed, but the Jews, who were covenant children, also must be changed, because the nature of sin is enmity against God (Romans 5:12-21). Christ Jesus died so that we might be made a new creation through the miracle work of grace, which can only take place through Him (Galatians 6:15, John 3:3). Christ Jesus came to change all things, whether they be in Heaven or on Earth (Colossians 1:20, 22). The idea that Christ Jesus is only for the Gentiles, and that the Jews are made a new creation by some other means, is completely foreign to Scripture. The Law was given to bring all men, both Jew and Gentile, to Christ (Romans 3:19, 21, 4:16, 10:3-4, John 1:17). The Law has been done away with – the Old Covenant has passed away and is no longer in effect (2 Corinthians 3:13, Hebrews 10:9, Colossians 2:14). To believe that someone can be made right with God by trusting in the Law, or relying on a covenant that has been done away with, is to reject the New Covenant, and thus to reject Christ Jesus. What Scripture makes clear is that the Law could not save – it could only reveal the sinful state of men, and offer a means to atone for those sins through the sacrifices of animals, which pointed to the coming Redeemer, Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:10, 13, 21, Hebrews 10:1-4, Romans 7:10-23). The cross is an altar that is indispensable for the removal of sin and death. Paul included himself when He wrote, “When we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of His Son...” (Romans 5:10). Praise God for His amazing love, His abundant mercy, His unending faithfulness, and His unspeakable gift!

Ephesians 2:17

and came proclaiming peace[62] to you that were far away and those that were near[63].

Commentary · Ephesians 2:17 · Note 62

The Hebrew word ‘shalom’ (peace) is far more than just a Hebrew way of saying “hello.” The expression declares a state of plenty and well-being, and includes security, empowerment and prosperity. It is upon the announcement of peace that the Holy Spirit comes (John 20:21-22). At the proclamation of peace, nature obeys as the stormy seas are calmed and the wind and the waves respond (Mark 4:39). When God’s people walk in obedience, they enjoy His blessings of peace – they have peace like a river, and righteousness as the waves of the sea (Isaiah 48:18)! God so secured Gideon’s life, and empowered Him with the words “peace to you,” that Gideon built an altar and called it “YHWH is the source of our peace” (Judges 6:23-24). Peace speaks of the fellowship that God’s people enjoy with Him, a communion witnessed by the peace offerings of the Old Testament (Exodus 20:24, Leviticus 3). God’s peace is a

"covenant of peace" that causes the wild beasts to leave, brings safety in the wilderness, makes His people and their dwellings a blessing, results in spiritual showers of blessings that causes the trees of righteousness to produce fruit and the Earth to produce a harvest, and it breaks the yoke of slavery and oppression, giving God's people the dominion over all other powers (Ezekiel 34:25-29, Leviticus 26:6, Numbers 25:12). The peace that God gives is part of His armor and one of the manifestations of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 6:15, Galatians 5:22, Romans 14:17, 15:13). This peace comes to us through Jesus Christ, who has removed the offence and disobedience and bestowed all the blessings of God upon us. The phrase found here is very similar to that of Isaiah 57:19, "I create the fruit of the lips; Peace, peace to him that is far off, and to him that is near, says the LORD; and I will heal him." There is great authority and confidence in peace – do not allow yourself to step outside of its influence.

Commentary · Ephesians 2:17 · Note 63

God has sent His servants to proclaim peace to all mankind, regardless of who they are or what they have done, for all have sinned and come short of the glory of God (Romans 3:23). God has made a way through Christ Jesus that all men everywhere can come into His presence and behold His holiness. From the time that Adam and Eve's disobedience resulted in their expulsion from the garden, mankind has been forbidden to come into the presence of God. There is no event that makes this more perfectly clear than when God brought Israel out of Egypt to Mount Sinai. Even though God loved Israel, and in His mercy and grace rescued them from their slavery, He refused to allow them to come into His presence. God is holy and it was impossible for man in his sin and disobedience to enter into His presence. Therefore He said, "...set bounds unto the people round about, saying, take heed to yourselves, that you go not up into the mountain or touch the border of it: whosoever touches the mountain shall be surely put to death (Exodus 19:12). When the tabernacle was built in the wilderness, it was embroidered with cherubim angels inside and out (Exodus 26:1, 31, 36:8, 35). The same angel that the Lord stationed with his flaming sword at the entrance to the garden stood as a warning to all who would try to draw near. Man had rebelled against God, and so he was driven out of the presence of the Lord and prevented from returning back into the splendor of His paradise (Genesis 3:24). God mercifully made provision for one man to come in and stand before His presence once per year, but when he stood ready to pass behind the veil, he was faced with the cherub angel and the warning that no man was allowed back into the presence of God (Leviticus 16:13). Today, if any person calls upon the name of the Lord Jesus, they can take up the blood of Jesus and come boldly into His holy presence (Hebrews 10:19). The veil embroidered with cherubim has been removed, and Jesus now stands there as the Door by which all men can enter in to behold the glory and majesty of the Father (Hebrews 9:8, 10:20, John 10:9, 14:6). Regardless of who you are or what you have done, God has made provision for you to come. However, we must still realize that God is the high and lofty One that inhabits eternity, whose name is holy. He is the One who dwells in the place where no man can approach unto, but has opened the door to those who have a contrite and humble spirit, and who will take the precious blood of Jesus and draw near. We must realize that He demands that we be holy even as He is holy (1 Peter 1:15). If we stand in His presence, behold His beauty, and are unwilling to learn to walk in obedience, then a fearful and dreadful end awaits us.

Ephesians 2:18

For through Him we are both brought by one Spirit[64] to the Father.

Commentary · Ephesians 2:18 · Note 64

The announcement of peace was the proclamation that all men everywhere have access back into the presence of God – an access that was lost the day that Adam sinned (Hebrews 9:8, 12:18-21, Exodus 19:12, Genesis 2:16, Romans 5:12). In this one verse, some of the most important doctrines of the New Testament are expressed. Let all men most assuredly know that there is no way for anyone anywhere to come to the Father except by Jesus Christ and the Holy Spirit. Anyone who believes that there is another way into the presence of God, whether Jew or Gentile, is both a thief and a liar (John 10:1, Acts 4:12). There were three who were co-participant in the redemption for all who would believe: the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. God, in His great love by which He loved us, has reconciled both the Jews who were near and the Gentiles who were far away. Christ Jesus, the only begotten Son, provided the remission of sins and redemption through His blood (Matthew 26:28, Colossians 1:20-22, Ephesians 2:13, 1 John 2:2, Revelation 1:5, 1 Peter 1:18, John 10:9, Romans 5:2). It is Christ Jesus and the Holy Spirit together who supply the only access available into the presence of the Father. It is impossible for religion to provide such an access – Jesus is the Door and the Holy Spirit is the one who enables us to come into this place of union with the Father (John 3:3-6, 4:24, 6:44, 16:12, Titus 3:5, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 8:15). Both the Holy Spirit and the Lord Jesus intercede for us and equip us in every way to be holy, acceptable, and well pleasing to the Father (Romans 8:26-27, 34, Hebrews 7:25). Christ Jesus has forever perfected them that are sanctified, and the Holy Spirit is devoted to perfecting all of our imperfections (Hebrews 7:25, 10:14, 13:21, 1 Peter 5:10, Ephesians 4:13, Philippians 2:12-13). Jesus purified us with His blood and destroyed the claims of Satan so that the Holy Spirit could come and work the miracle of salvation. By the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, the power of death was destroyed (Hebrews 2:14). By the blood of Jesus, the Holy Spirit created a new man and raised up from the ruins of our life a holy temple where He could dwell (1 Corinthians 6:16, 19, 3:16, Ephesians 2:20-22). Now being raised up together with Him we are seated together with Him in the heavenly realm (Ephesians 2:6, Colossians 3:1-2, Romans 6:5). Now we are the new creation, the circumcision that worships God in the Spirit (Philippians 3:3, Colossians 2:11, John 4:23-24). By the Holy Spirit, we receive everything that belongs to Jesus (John 16:13-15). Through the ministry of the Holy Spirit, we come to know and understand all of the things of God and learn to function in all of His ways (1 Corinthians 2:9-10). All of the things that have been freely given to us by God through Jesus Christ are revealed by the Holy Spirit. That which eye has not seen, nor ear heard, nor the heart understood, are made known to us by the Spirit so that we might fully participate with the will of the Father. The Holy Spirit guides us as we follow Him into this heavenly realm and interact with Him there. As we interact with Him, we come to know those things that are freely given, and receive all of God's goodness and glory (Ephesians 3:18-20). He fills us with the love of the Father, the love of Christ Jesus, the joy of the Lord, and the peace of the Prince of Peace (Romans 14:17, Romans 8:14, 16, John 17:22, Galatians 5:22-23). Christ Jesus dwells in us by the Spirit that He has given to us and He is also revealed through our lives by what the Holy Spirit does

through us (John 14:17-19, 1 John 3:24). The Holy Spirit leads us into the presence of the Father, and there we are strengthened, taught of God, and continually matured by His power. In His presence, we go from glory to glory, beholding His face, because we have received all of His fullness (2 Corinthians 3:17-18, John 1:16, 17:22-23, 2 Corinthians 4:6).

Ephesians 2:19

Now then, you are no longer foreigners and strangers, but are fellow citizens[65], holy ones, and of the house of God,

Commentary · Ephesians 2:19 · Note 65

God has made a new covenant and invited both Jew and Gentile into the fellowship of a new creation. The gospel of the new covenant was first announced to the house of Israel and to Judah, but was extended to all nations so that whosoever is willing to call upon the name of the Lord can become a part of the Kingdom of God (Jeremiah 31:31, Hebrews 8:8, Romans 1:16, 2:10, Isaiah 49:6, Luke 2:32). God made a new covenant and has done away with the old, leaving no room at all for it (Hebrews 8:8-13). There cannot be a new covenant and an old covenant existing at the same time. The Lord only established the Law in the sense that the Law of God was established in our hearts, not the first covenant, being the Law of Moses (Hebrews 10:16, Galatians 2:21, Romans 8:2-3). The Law of Moses testified of the Law of God, but it could not establish it in our hearts until the New Covenant was made. This is not a replacement theology, but an inclusion theology in which all men are brought unto the Father by Jesus Christ the Lord – for there is no salvation for any man outside of Christ Jesus (John 1:17, Galatians 5:14, Acts 4:12, John 14:6). Now, all men who will obey the gospel are made heirs of God and citizens of the kingdom. Anyone hanging onto the old covenant cannot be a citizen of the kingdom or an heir of the promises. God's promise to Abraham and to the sons of Israel were not established through the Law, but through the Seed, Christ Jesus (Galatians 3:16-18, 21, 29). We are members of God's household and are fellow citizens with all those who trust in the Lord Jesus. Through Christ Jesus, all the covenants of promise have been extended to everyone so that we may enjoy all that God has planned for those who love Him (John 14:21, 1 Corinthians 2:9). We now have both our citizenship and lifestyle in the Kingdom of God, where we are seated with Christ Jesus and living in a heavenly realm (Philippians 3:20, Ephesians 2:6, Galatians 4:26, Hebrews 12:22). We now enjoy all the authority and rights and privileges of the sons of God. We are those who are of the house and family of God who should now bear the image of the heavenly, for it is Christ Jesus who lives in us and must be witnessed through our lives so that all men might see through the actions and conduct of our lives the glory of the Father (John 15:1-5, Philippians 1:21, 2 Corinthians 3:3, 4:10).

Ephesians 2:20

built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets – Christ Jesus Himself being the cornerstone[66],

Commentary · Ephesians 2:20 · Note 66

Both Jews and Gentiles are in one house (the Church) and this is the one that the Lord has made without hands. It is the house of God in which Jesus is the "Cornerstone" (or "Keystone") and the Head (Ephesians 1:23). As sojourners, the Gentiles were outside the house – a meaning upheld by the etymology of the Greek word for sojourner: 'paroikos.' It is very fitting to refer to Jesus as the Cornerstone in this passage that brings Jews and Gentiles into equality and in need of the same blood of the new covenant. As Peter points out in 1 Peter 2:6, He is the Cornerstone that is elect and precious. However, to those builders in Israel that reject Him, He is the Stone of Stumbling and the Rock of Offense. It also must be understood that a new foundation has been laid. The old foundation of the Law has been removed and that which belongs to the new covenant cannot be built upon the old covenant (1 Corinthians 3:16). The new foundation of the Church is built upon Jesus Christ and the apostles and prophets. The apostles and prophets are two of the primary features of the Church (1 Corinthians 12:28). We may be certain that Paul is not referring to revelation given in the Old Testament to the prophets or holy men of old, for in Ephesians 3:5 he points out that this is a new revelation that has now been given to His holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit. Furthermore, it is made clear that apostles and prophets are new gifts that have been given to the church after Jesus ascended up on high (Ephesians 4:11).

Ephesians 2:21

in whom the whole building fitted together grows[67] into a holy temple[68] in the Lord,

Commentary · Ephesians 2:21 · Note 67

The Greek verb 'auxano,' which is translated as 'grow,' means increase of every kind and may be understood as referring to every dimension of the church, including size, number, age, maturity, glory and power. This growth is not something that is automatic, but demands action and responsibility as Jesus taught in Mark 4:26-29. A seed is cast into the ground and the power is within the ground to give the seed life so that it can produce of itself, but the farmer rises day and night to tend and care for the seed lest it be eaten or overrun by weeds and disaster. The proper growth and increase of the church is only possible when God's people are submitted to the Holy Spirit, for only He can provide the needed ingredients to bring forth the increase. In Ephesians 4:14-16 we learn that the church both grows and makes increase of itself by functioning in love. Of course this is divine love that can only be supplied by the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:22). It is God's desire that we mature into the fullness of Christ. He has purposed that we be fully matured sons of God standing in the full measure of the anointing of Jesus now in this present world (Ephesians 4:13, 1 John 4:17). It is by the love of Christ that we are able to comprehend every dimension of God's person and purpose. We mature and grow in the precise knowledge of God by coming to know the love of Christ that passes knowledge so that we might be filled with all of the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:18-19). Our lives both individually and collectively must find their existence in the Vine, Christ Jesus, for without Him we can do nothing (John 15:1-8).

Commentary · Ephesians 2:21 · Note 68

There are two Greek words for temple, 'hieron,' which is used for the whole building including the courts, and 'naos,' which is used here. The Greek noun 'naos' is specifically used for the Holy of Holies where God dwells and manifests Himself.

Ephesians 2:22

in whom also you are built together[69] into a habitation of God by the Spirit.

Commentary · Ephesians 2:22 · Note 69

Through the mercy and grace of God we are brought into the family of God and are being taught and prepared by the Holy Spirit to live the life of God. Both Jew and Gentile believers must submit themselves to this work of grace and allow God the Holy Spirit to take control of their lives. There is no doubt that God has future plans for Israel as a nation, but everyone must realize that the only way that they can come into the kingdom is through Jesus Christ. Jesus was not just the means by which the nations' or Gentiles' sins were washed away, but is also the means for Israel as well (Acts 4:12, Romans 10:1-4). It is through Jesus that we grow into a holy temple and it is through Jesus that we are built together as a holy habitation where God dwells (1 Peter 2:5). This does not take away from the miracle that made each person the temple of the Holy Spirit and the habitation of the Lord (1 Corinthians 3:16, 2 Corinthians 6:16, John 14:23). Rather, this expands it into how we are brought together in the culture and relationship of God's eternal kingdom. There is only one church, one company of the redeemed, and they are made up of all the nations of the Earth including Israel. There are no walls or partitions to make room for different expressions and beliefs. There is one Lord, one faith, one baptism, one God and one Father (Ephesians 4:4-6). The Greek verb 'sunoikodomeo' is a compound verb of 'sun' and 'oikodomeo'. The verb 'oikodomeo' is used in the same context in 1 Peter 2:5 and Matthew 16:13. This Greek verb is in the form of a present passive indicative which denotes a continuous process. Each time someone is born of the Spirit they are incorporated into this building of God.

EPHESIANS

Chapter 3

Ephesians 3:1

For this reason, I, Paul, the servant of Jesus Christ for the sake of you Gentiles,

Ephesians 3:2

surely you have heard of the grace of God given to me to administer[70] to you,

Commentary · Ephesians 3:2 · Note 70

The Greek word 'oikonomia,' which may be translated as "stewardship" or "administration," is used in the same sense as in its corollary verse in Colossians 1:25. Paul is describing the purpose of the grace that was given to him – the ability to administer grace to others. The grace that God gave to Paul was the divine ability to be an apostle (Romans 1:5). God's grace is the entire package of divine ability and assistance given to us in the Holy Ghost to minister in His place. It is clear here and in verses 7 and 8 that Paul is speaking of the grace that imparted this ministry ability. The active power and endowment of grace that Paul referred to earlier in Ephesians 1:6, he also credits as his ability to do everything that he did in ministry – as noted in 1 Corinthians 15:10 ("...but I worked more than all others; yet not I, but God's grace that is in me").

Ephesians 3:3

that by revelation He made known to me the mystery as I have briefly written[71].

Commentary · Ephesians 3:3 · Note 71

Paul makes it very clear that he is not speaking on his own, but by revelation from Jesus Christ Himself. Paul made it clear that the authority of that which he wrote was equal to what was written in the Old Testament. He was acting as the spokesman of God, just as Moses and the prophets. Paul is speaking as an apostle of the church who has received revelation that was not made known in the Old Testament or other ages (Ephesians 3:5). Paul says in the opening statement to the Hebrews that as God spoke in times past by the prophets, He was now speaking in these last days by His Son (Jesus). In 1 Corinthians 14:37, Paul demands that every discerning person recognize that what he had written were the commandments of the Lord.

Ephesians 3:4

Thus reading[72] will enable you to perceive[73] my understanding[74] in the mystery of Christ.

Commentary · Ephesians 3:4 · Note 72

The Greek word 'anaginosko' is derived from two words: 'ana,' meaning "by" or "amidst," and 'ginosko,' which means "know," It is commonly translated "read," especially in the Authorized Version. The vast majority of people during Paul's time were illiterate, so this probably refers to the public reading of what Paul had written. Paul viewed what he had written as the direct commandment of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul praised them at Thessalonica because they received the Word, which he spoke to them as the Word of God that worked with divine power on the inside of them (1 Thessalonians 2:13). The words that Paul spoke, he spoke by Christ Jesus who not only revealed them to him, but actually spoke through him (2 Corinthians 13:3). In fact, Paul curses anyone who would preach any other gospel than the one he had already ministered to them (Galatians 1:8-9).

Commentary · Ephesians 3:4 · Note 73

The Greek word 'noeo' means "to think" or "to perceive" – it is derived from the word 'nous,' which means "mind," and is understood to mean "perceive with the mind".

Commentary · Ephesians 3:4 · Note 74

The Greek phrase 'sunesin mou en' literally means "my understanding in." The Greek word 'sunesis' is most commonly translated as "understanding," but could also be translated as "running together." It is derived from the word 'suniemie,' which means "to understand." This Greek word refers to the connection that is made when information flows together in such a way as to give insight into a subject. Thus in the public reading of the words of Paul, those who heard were able to perceive what Paul understood in the mystery of Christ.

Ephesians 3:5

In other generations it was not made known to the sons of men as it is now revealed by the Spirit to His holy apostles and prophets,

Ephesians 3:6

that the Gentiles[75] **should be co-inheritors** and of the same body, and joint partakers of the promise in Christ[76] through the gospel,

Commentary · Ephesians 3:6 · Note 75

The mystery of the gospel was revealed to be more than just the incorporation of the Gentiles into the family of God. It also includes the indwelling of Christ in all those who would believe and be converted. Paul writes to the Colossians saying, "To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the confidence of glory" (Colossians 1:27). The indwelling of Christ is at the heart of the Gospel. It was in John chapter 14 that Jesus announced the mystery of the indwelling (John 14:17-23). Jesus announced that He and the Father would come and make their dwelling in the obedient person through the 'Paraclete' (Holy Spirit). However, it was still a mystery to the apostles that the Gentiles would also be included in this grace. So when the Holy Spirit was poured out upon the Gentiles at Cornelius's house, as it had been on the Jews at Pentecost, there was much amazement (Acts 10:45, 11:17). Paul had received grace from the Lord to focus on the Gentiles and make known their incorporation as co-inheritors of all of the promises and blessings that had been previously thought to belong only to Israel. The indwelling of Christ, which is a result of being baptized

into Christ, does away with Jew and Gentile and makes one new man and one new family that exists in Christ. The benefits and blessing of God are not a result of the family that a person was born into, but of Christ Jesus who redeemed all men, and by whom we now exist. “For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ. There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither free nor slave, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:26-28). When an individual is classified among those who are part of the promises and blessings of God, they are not classified as either Jew or Gentile, but “in Christ” (1 Corinthians 3:23, 15:23, 2 Corinthians 10:7, Galatians 3:29, 5:24, Mark 9:41). The privilege of being in Christ is the result of the new birth that placed “Christ in us” (Galatians 2:20, Romans 8:10, 2 Corinthians 13:5, Colossians 1:27). The unity of all in Christ is further emphasized by the description of the church as the body of Christ (Ephesians 1:23, 2:19, 4:4, 12, 5:21-33, Colossians 1:18, 3:15, Romans 12:4-5, 1 Corinthians 12:12-27). The unimaginable riches of God that have made us co-heirs with Jesus Christ are for everyone who believes, whether they are Jew or Gentile. God did not make a new covenant in which Gentiles were incorporated into either the covenant of the Law or Judaism. God made a new covenant allowing all men, both Jew and Gentile, to be incorporated into the family of God through God’s only begotten Son, Christ Jesus. The only possible way to become a part of this glorious promise is to be born of the Spirit. Therefore, what Jesus told Nicodemus that he must do, who was part of the covenant of the Law, was the same thing that He told the Samaritan woman, who was a Gentile and separated from the covenant and the promises (John 3:3, 4:14). There is only one entrance into the presence of God: Christ Jesus. He alone died to pay our debt of sin and arose again from the dead that we might be born again. When we were born of the Spirit, it was then that we were made one with Jesus Christ. If a person has not been born of the Holy Spirit, then they are not part of the family of God – no matter who they say they are. Through the new birth, the life of Jesus becomes our life, and our life becomes His – this is the faith! Whereas before we bore the image of the earthly, we are now commanded to exist in Christ Jesus and be conformed to His image which is the image of the heavenly (Romans 8:29, Ephesians 4:24, Colossians 3:10). The inheritance that we have received is that which Christ Jesus received. God’s promise to Abraham that all the nations would be blessed through His seed is only comprehended in Christ Jesus, for there is no other name whereby men must be saved (Genesis 12:2-3, Romans 4:16, 8:17, 16:26, Colossians 1:27, Galatians 3:16-21, 4:1-7).

Commentary · Ephesians 3:6 · Note 76

The Greek work ‘Christos’ may indeed refer to anyone who is anointed. However, in the New Testament the usage is specific for Jesus only. The word ‘Christos’ translates the Hebrew word ‘Masiach’ in the Septuagint and is further emphasized as equivalent in John 1:41, “We have found the Messiah (which means Christ).” If this usage refers to the Gentile believer, who through the grace of God had received the anointing through the gift of the Holy Spirit, then it can not be supported in any place in Paul’s writings. Paul never uses the word ‘Christos’ in any other way than to specifically refer to Jesus. The Greek word ‘Christos’ is applied to the individual believer by its usage as ‘Christianos’ (Christian). An equivalent in the Old Testament is found in the Septuagint in Psalms 104:15, which contains ‘ton christon

mou' (my anointed ones). Paul speaks of "Christ in you, the expectation of glory," but in view of the fact that he always uses this word in reference to Jesus Himself and not an anointing that has been received by the believer, it must be recognized that he is referring to the indwelling of Christ in the believer (Colossians 1:27, John 14:23, 1 John 3:24). The first time that the Greek word 'Christos' appears in the Septuagint is in Leviticus 4:5, where it refers to the priest. The first time that this word is found in the New Testament is in Matthew 1:1, where it refers specifically to Jesus. Paul uses the word 'Christos' 43 times in the book of Ephesians alone, and a total of 382 times in all of his letters. The first time that Paul uses the word 'Christos' without 'Iesous' (Jesus) is in Romans 5:6, in which case he is specifically referring to Jesus. Paul uses the word 'Christos' many times without 'Iesous' and there is no question that he is referring specifically to Jesus. The question is, did Paul ever use the word 'Christos' to refer to the one who has been transformed by the Spirit? We know that we have certainly received the Spirit of Christ or the Spirit of the Anointed One (Romans 8:9). However, Romans 8:9 is referring to the same Spirit of Jesus Christ and not the anointing of the Spirit. Similarly the same concept of the Spirit of Christ is given in 1 Peter 1:11 in reference to the Old Testament prophets. We know that the Spirit of Christ is referring to the Holy Spirit, which He was baptized in and has baptized us with. When it is recalled how God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and power, the Greek word 'chrio' is used, such as in Acts 10:38. Although 'chrio' is only used once by Paul, it is used in contrast to 'Christos' in 2 Corinthians 1:21 – "Now He which confirms us with you in Christ (Christos) and has anointed (chrio) us, is God". The message being conveyed is that the believer has received a 'chrio' that has united us with the person 'Christos.' It cannot be said that the 'chrio' (anointing) that the believer received made him 'Christos' (the Anointed One). The one other Greek word that is specifically used of the anointing that the saints receive is 'chrisma,' which is used three times in the New Testament (1 John 2:20, 27), and is never applied to Jesus.

Ephesians 3:7

of which I have become a minister[77] according to the gift of the grace[78] of God given to me **according to the mighty[79] working of His power**.

Commentary · Ephesians 3:7 · Note 77

The Greek word 'diakonos,' which is translated as "servant," may also be translated as "minister." It is a word that denotes a servant who waits on tables. There are other Greek words that express different functions of a servant, such as 'doulos' (slave), 'oikonomos' (steward), or 'leitourgos' (public servant).

Commentary · Ephesians 3:7 · Note 78

It is only by the working power of the Holy Ghost that we are able to do anything for God. It is only by strict obedience to His Word that we learn the ways of the Holy Spirit and how to yield to Him in order to participate with the glorious realm of His power. Those things that we are willing to do of ourselves breach the abundance of His grace and goodness that has been extended to us. We must learn to do everything by the working of His mighty power that is at work in us, a treasure that we have received

from Heaven (2 Corinthians 4:7, Ephesians 3:20, John 15:5). God, in His goodness and grace, has freely given all of the riches of His majesty and power, but there is no way that God will compromise with sin and wrongdoing. These things belonging to His power and majesty are the most holy and precious things of a Holy God. The revelation of His grace and power at work in us is all about the transformation of our life and the conformity of our will and actions to every holy and perfect thing that belongs to His life. Too many people have confused the grace of God with the idea that they can do whatever they please in whatever way they choose, and that it will be acceptable to the Father and blessed by Him. There is nothing further from the truth. Moses stood before a mountain on fire with the glory of the presence of the Lord, but we have come to the Heavenly Jerusalem, which should invoke a far greater awe and honor within our hearts (Hebrews 12:21-25). The priests of old stepped into the Holy of Holies with the blood of goats and they feared and trembled at His holiness. Now that we can come into the holiest place of all by the blood of Jesus, can we possibly believe that we can do it our own way? Because of the gift of salvation brought to us by the grace of God, we are one with the Father, Jesus the only begotten Son, and the Holy Spirit. We are the representatives of who God is and what He desires. What an awesome and holy thing that should cause all men to tremble (1 Corinthians 2:3)!

Commentary · Ephesians 3:7 · Note 79

Paul was able to represent Jesus in His own life by signs and wonders because he was given this same miracle power (Acts 19:11-12, 15:12, Romans 15:19, Hebrews 2:4, 2 Corinthians 12:12). That same miracle power of the life of Jesus resides on the inside of each one of us, but will only be revealed if we learn to move with the Holy Spirit's direction (John 15:5, Mark 16:17, Acts 1:8, 1 John 4:4, Colossians 1:27). There are two Greek words used here for power: 'energeia' (working power/supernatural strength/ divine activity) and 'dunamis' (the power of Pentecost/God's power). The ability that Paul had to represent Jesus and live the Christian life was supplied directly to him through the Holy Spirit (Galatians 3:5). This is not some esoteric activity of God that takes place absent of our will and consciousness. Rather, this is an activity of the Holy Spirit in our life not unlike any other relationship (Ephesians 3:16, 6:10, Colossians 1:11, Isaiah 40:29-31). We must recognize His presence by yielding to and obeying His direction. The Holy Spirit desires to supply us with miracle-working power every day. We must learn to depend upon the ability that God supplies to us through His power at work in our life. Through interacting with the Holy Spirit in praise and worship, reading the Word of God, and giving ourselves to prayer, He trains us to yield to Him. He builds up our faith and expectation to do everything that He said we can do (John 14:12, Philippians 4:3, John 15:7). As we walk with God, we learn to expect a miracle instead of wondering how things are going to work out. Miracles should be an everyday experience for the child of God who is in expectation of seeing God at work in their lives. Our life in Christ Jesus began with a miracle. As we yielded to the Holy Spirit and responded to the promise of salvation, He performed the greatest miracle of our lives by transforming us into a new creation (John 3:6, 2 Corinthians 5:17, Romans 8:9). As we learn to walk in the love, joy and peace of the Holy Spirit, we will find ourselves continually overwhelmed with His presence. As we grow and mature in Christ, we become more confident of what God will do than what we can do (Philippians 3:3, 1:6, 2 Corinthians 9:8, 2

Thessalonians 1:11, 2 Timothy 2:21, Hebrews 13:21, Zechariah 4:6). If we will simply take hold of the reality that without Jesus we can do nothing, then we will begin to put our faith in the activity of God working through us. Right now, the Holy Spirit has a supernatural supply of power for you, and it is God's will that you be endued with His divine ability (Romans 13:12, 14, Galatians 3:27, Ephesians 4:24, Ephesians 6:11, Colossians 3:10, 12, 14).

Ephesians 3:8

To me, who am less than the least of all the holy ones, is this grace given, to announce to the Gentiles the good news of the unfathomable riches of Christ[80],

Commentary · Ephesians 3:8 · Note 80

What happens to a person who spends his whole life doing everything he can to make himself worthy of God's acceptance and then mets Jesus? Paul is an example of one who was blameless concerning the righteousness of the Law (Philippians 3:6). His whole life was devoted to conforming to the strictest sect of the Jews, the Pharisees (Acts 26:5). (The Pharisees are believed to have originated from those called the 'Hasidim' ("the righteous") during the Maccabean revolt. However, it is also believed that they find their origin in Ezra and the Great Assembly. They were essentially classified as a movement dedicated to obeying the Torah in daily life. Their name means "separated ones," which is translated from the Hebrew 'perushin.' It was the Pharisees who were believed to be the producers, or at least the strong influencers of, the rabbinic literature contained in the Mishnah, Gemara, and Talmud. Some scholars view the Pharisees as those who were devoted to an uncompromising dedication to holiness in every dimension of life (Josephus, "The Antiquities of the Jews," pp. 13.5.9; Baeck, L. 1927, "The Pharisees and Other Essays," New York. 1947). It was within this environment of dedication that Saul of Tarsus met Jesus and was promoted into a whole new dimension of righteousness. When Paul met Jesus, he was given a free gift that was far greater than he ever thought was attainable: he stepped into the unfathomable riches of Christ. The concepts of continual spiritual elevation by the observance of the Law lost all its value when he was instantaneously lifted into the righteousness of God by faith (Romans 3:21-22, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Philippians 3:9, Ephesians 4:24). Paul described an instantaneous union with God through the miracle of salvation that brought to pass the indwelling of God the Holy Spirit and the Lord Jesus Christ (Galatians 1:16, 2:20, 3:27, Colossians 1:27, 1 Corinthians 3:16, 6:19, 2 Corinthians 6:16, 13:5, Philippians 1:21, Titus 3:5). Paul was not demoted into some lascivious compromise with the world that many would call grace, but was elevated into a righteousness and true holiness that could only come to pass by faith in Jesus Christ. It was not a righteousness that had no outworking, but instead the very image of Christ and glory of God produced by the Holy Spirit in all who would believe (Romans 10:10, Ephesians 5:9, Philippians 1:11, Romans 6:16, 18, 19, 22). Having received the righteousness of God, he lamented over his brethren who were missing out on a righteousness that far surpassed what they understood and going about to establish their own righteousness through observance of the Law (Romans 9:31-32, 10:3). The beauty of stepping over into the righteousness of the Kingdom of God and the knowledge of the full acceptance and approval of God all by the faith of Jesus Christ was indeed

unsearchable and incomprehensible riches (Romans 14:17, 2 Corinthians 3:9, 18). The unfathomable riches of Christ was not looked upon as something off in the future, but that which had been freely and abundantly poured out upon all those who by faith received heirship with God, being made co-inheritors with Jesus Christ the Lord (Ephesians 1:18, 3:18-20, Romans 8:17, Galatians 4:7)!

Ephesians 3:9

and to give light to all of the mystery of the fellowship[81], which has been hidden from the ages in God, who created everything through Jesus Christ,

Commentary · Ephesians 3:9 · Note 81

We cannot limit the mystery of the fellowship to a fellowship between Jews and Gentiles – that would be a narrow view of the greatest and most glorious relationship between God and His saints. The fellowship that God purposed for all of us to have with Him predates the existence of Abraham and the nation of Israel. The mystery of the fellowship is actually Christ in us (Colossians 1:27). God created Adam and everything that has ever existed through Christ Jesus, who was called the Word (John 1:1-2, 14). It was also through Christ Jesus that the new man came into being – those who have been born of God, having been made heirs and joint heirs with Jesus Christ, the only begotten Son of God (Ephesians 4:24, Romans 8:17, Galatians 4:7). The mystery of what God created us to be is revealed through Jesus. Through the unfathomable riches of Christ, we have been given the same glory that Father gave to His Son (John 17:21-23, Ephesians 3:19, John 1:12, 16). We may now boldly say that Christ is in us and that we are the dwelling place of the Most High. Jesus has made us a part of everything that He did. We may say that we are crucified together with Christ, we are buried together with Him, we are raised up together with Him, we are alive together in Him, and are seated together with Him in the heavenly realm. He has not only redeemed us but also glorified us together with Himself (Romans 8:30). Therefore, because we are in Christ and made partakers of His divine nature and possessors of His life, for us to live is Christ (2 Corinthians 5:17, 2 Peter 1:4, 1 John 5:12, Galatians 2:20, Philippians 1:21). The mystery of the fellowship was hidden from men until the time when Christ Jesus purchased us with His own blood and made a way for us to be born again! It is impossible to be more acceptable to God than being one with Him. An acceptance and oneness that did not come through a mystical process of God-consciousness nor through a legal process of an earned relationship, but through the instantaneous and miraculous change brought to pass by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit (Titus 3:5, John 3:5, Ephesians 5:26).

Ephesians 3:10

in order to now make known through the church the manifold wisdom of God to rulers and authorities in the heavens[82],

Commentary · Ephesians 3:10 · Note 82

The rulers in the heavens are watching the church, observing the glorious transformation of each sinful man that is made one with God through Christ Jesus and empowered with authority by the Holy Spirit. One thing that we must understand is that "heaven" refers to several things, as also noted by Paul when he referred to the third heaven (2 Corinthians 12:2). The most common understanding of heaven is the place where the stars and galaxies exist. Equally common is the reference to where God dwells, and the place where the saints go when they die. However, Heaven also refers to the unseen realm in general. Therefore it is used in reference to the place where Satan and fallen angels exist (Ephesians 4:10, 6:12, 2 Peter 3:10-12, Galatians 1:8, 1 Corinthians 8:5, Revelation 12:3-12, Daniel 8:10). The heavenly realm may also be referred to as "high places," even though it is integrated with the sphere in which we exist (Ephesians 6:12, 2 Kings 6:17). Satan is presently confined there, and rules as the prince and the power of the air, the god of this world (Ephesians 2:2). Though Christ Jesus has spoiled their power and authority, giving the saints of God the rule over them - they will yet in the future be ultimately cast out of this realm forever (Colossians 2:15, 1 Corinthians 15:24). The church is the fullness of God and the expression of the person of Christ Jesus on the Earth (Ephesians 1:22-23, Colossians 1:18). The individuals in the church are seated with Christ Jesus in His place of power and authority over all principalities and powers (Ephesians 1:3, 19-22, 2:6, Matthew 28:18, Luke 10:19). We have the authority of God as the sons of God, the heirs of God and joint-heirs with Christ Jesus – to execute the will of the Father in all things (John 1:12, Galatians 4:7, Romans 8:17). We are on center stage in the grand theater of life (Greek word 'theater,' meaning "a spectacle"), engaged in a battle against angels of darkness and against the threats of men (1 Corinthians 4:9). Although the battle rages strong against us, we have been given the place of all authority over everything in Christ Jesus' place (Ephesians 6:10, John 20:21). It is the mystery of the fellowship (which is Christ in us) that God wants to demonstrate to the rulers and authorities in Heaven (Ephesians 3:9, 4:24, Colossians 1:27, John 17:22, Philippians 1:21, Galatians 2:20, 2 Peter 1:4, 2 Corinthians 5:17). We have been empowered to make disciples out of all nations (Matthew 28:19). We are to take charge over all demon spirits that would torment men through sin, sickness, and disease. We have been empowered to cast down and to build, to pluck up and to plant (Jeremiah 1:9-10, John 14:12, Mark 16:17-20). We have been put in charge of all these things in the world of men. We serve directly under Christ Jesus our Head – yet someone is going to have to believe this and engage in the battle that rages against the truth. We have submitted ourselves under too many things that are nothing more than satanic tricks to neutralize the authority that we have been given in Christ. It is time to rise up and begin to shine, for our light has come and the glory of Almighty God is upon us (Isaiah 60:1).

Ephesians 3:11

according to the plan[83] of the ages, which was made in Christ Jesus our Lord,

Commentary · Ephesians 3:11 · Note 83

God set forth a plan to redeem men through Christ Jesus. This plan was only faintly revealed through the ages, until God was manifested in the flesh. The mystery of the fellowship that was hidden from the ages

would only come to light through the redemption that Jesus would accomplish by dying on the cross and defeating death in His resurrection. God first announced the plan of sending His only begotten Son in Genesis 3:15. The entirety of the plan of God to redeem man and deliver him from the snare of the Devil was "set forth" in Christ Jesus from the beginning. Jesus was not only the One who created all things and planned them, but was the centerpiece of the plan by which every corrupt thing would become new. Paul captivates us in this verse with the use of an important word that describes Jesus as the one that was "set forth." He used the word 'prothesis,' which is translated as "set forth" or "plan." The Greek word 'prothesis' is translated as "showbread" in the Old Testament, which is also called the "bread of the presence" (Hebrew: 'lechem hapanim') or the bread set before the Holy Place. The showbread consisted of twelve loaves of unleavened bread that were set in the Holy Place just outside of the veil of the Holy of Holies (Exodus 26:35, Leviticus 24:5-9). Any time that the priest would approach the veil, they would see the bread "set forth" before it. In fact, one might say they could see the plan, even though they did not understand what they saw. The bread was treated with many of the same sacred procedures as the Ark, which highlighted its importance and significance (Numbers 4:5-8, 9-14). The bread represented a covenant for all times (Leviticus 24:8). The bread in the tabernacle also represented the unleavened bread of the Passover, which predated it and launched the ministry of the tabernacle in the wilderness. The bread that was set before the veil throughout the age of the Law would ultimately be made flesh, and rend the veil with His sacrifice for sin so that all men could enter into the presence of God. When Jesus came, He revealed that He was the Bread of Heaven (John 6:32-51, Matthew 26:26). He was the Passover Bread whose body was broken for us (Matthew 26:26, Exodus 12:8, 1 Corinthians 5:7). The Bread of Heaven gave us His body so that we might partake of His life and live forever in Him. The plan and election of the scripture are all focused on Jesus Christ as the Redeemer and Savior of fallen and corrupted men. God, who wills that all men be saved, has extended His love to the worst of His enemies and is not willing that any should perish. He has revealed His grace to all men and has set forth Jesus Christ, the Plan of redemption, so that all who partake of this Bread may step into His presence and live in communion with Him forever (1 Timothy 2:4, 2 Peter 3:9, Titus 2:11, John 12:32, John 3:16, Acts 17:30, 1 John 2:1). Note: The Greek word 'prothesis' is translated as "showbread," which is the bread of the presence (Hebrew: 'lechem hapanim') or the bread of setting before the Holy Place. The Septuagint renders the Hebrew phrase 'lechem panim,' ("bread of presence"/ "bread of face") as 'artos enopion' (Exodus 25:30) and 'artos protheseos,' which literally mean "the bread which is in the presence of" (Exodus 40:23, 1 Samuel 21:6 BHS/LXX).

Ephesians 3:12

in whom we have boldness[84] and access[85] by confidence[86] through His faith[87],

Commentary · Ephesians 3:12 · Note 84

Boldness and confidence are absolutely essential to our interacting with God and our ability to function in the anointing. Our boldness and confidence is found in knowing and believing the love that God has for us. When we are certain of God's good pleasure towards us as well as His desire to fully empower us with

all of the resources of Heaven, then we can be bold and confident. The Greek word 'parrhesia' (boldness) in its most ancient usage refers to free speech, which would include the meaning of importunity or impertinence and courage. It conveys the meaning of a shameless confidence before rulers (Acts 2:29, Luke 21:28, Colossians 2:15). The first occurrence of this word in the Old Testament is in Leviticus 26:13, and the first occurrence in the New Testament is found in Mark 8:32. In the Old Testament it is translated from the Hebrew word 'komemiyyut', which may be translated as "erect" or "upright," and it conveys the meaning of Israel's dominion over all other nations. A similar call to such boldness is given in Luke 11:5-8, in which a man's friend comes and places a demand on him to get out of bed to get the food that he needs for his visitors. Such boldness is the result of the saints being fully persuaded of the redemption and exaltation that has been given to them in Christ Jesus. It is a word closely associated with relationship and interaction with God on the highest level (1 Timothy 3:13, Hebrews 4:16, 1 John 2:28, 3:21, 4:17, 5:14).

Commentary · Ephesians 3:12 · Note 85

We have access into the Holy of Holies, and the grace and plan of God, by Christ Jesus. We also have access to the Father by the Spirit (Romans 5:2, Hebrews 10:19, Ephesians 2:18).

Commentary · Ephesians 3:12 · Note 86

Do you know in whom you have believed? Are you persuaded that God will do what He said He would do? From Genesis to Revelation, the Bible is a message about God's desire for us to trust Him and have confidence in His love. The faith that we walk in, which is the faith of Christ, should produce the greatest confidence possible. The need for trust, courage, and faith are continually repeated throughout God's dealings with His people. One of the great "trust" words of the Old Testament is the Hebrew word 'batach.' Psalm 27:3 uses this word: "Though a host should encamp against me, my heart shall not fear; though war should rise against me, in this will I be confident ('batach')." When translators of the Greek Old Testament (LXX) translated this word, they used the word that is translated as "hope" in the New Testament: 'elpitzo.' It is vital that we recognize that God has given us something far more than just hope! He has given us a great consolation! He has done more than just swear an oath! We must recognize that His desire is for us to trust Him – to feel safe, confident, secure, and unconcerned – all of these things are conveyed by 'elpitzo.' Generally, when we speak of "hope" it conveys uncertainty. Uncertainty can never be associated with the faith of Jesus. Uncertainty leaves us vulnerable to Satanic lies, and spooked by every shadow. There needs to be a strong bond of confidence in our relationship with the Lord. In the Old Testament, the word 'elpitzo' conveys the meaning of confidently relying on God, and it should convey the same meaning in the New Testament as well. There are several good examples of 'elpitzo' being translated with a much stronger meaning than "hope" in the New Testament: Ephesians 1:12 – "That we should be to the praise of His glory, who first trusted ('pro-elpitzo') in Christ" Hebrews 10:23 – "Let us hold fast the profession ('elpidos') of our faith without wavering, for He is faithful who promised." Unfortunately, there are many scriptures that would have conveyed a much stronger meaning with the word "confidence," but were instead reduced to "hope." Observe these scriptures when "hope" is

replaced with "confidence": Romans 5:2-4 – "By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in *confidence* of the glory of God. And not only so, but we glory in tribulations also: knowing that tribulation worketh patience; And patience, experience; and experience, *confidence*" Romans 12:12 – "Rejoicing in *confidence*, patient in tribulation, continuing instant in prayer" Romans 15:13 – "Now the God of *confidence* fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in *confidence* through the power of the Holy Ghost" Colossians 1:27 – "To whom God would make known what are the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles: which is Christ in you, the *confidence* of glory." The word for "confidence" used in Ephesians 3:12 ('pepoithesis') is yet another word that equally expresses a state of certainty, and must be regarded as a synonym of 'elpitzo.' God wants us to be persuaded in our hearts that all of His promises are "yes" and "amen!" He wants us to be confident about our salvation and relationship with Him. We cannot be left to a mere hope when it is God who has spoken! We must have the greatest confidence in the One who loves us so. We can be certain regarding those things which we have not yet seen, because God has told us so! If we are going to do what God expects, we must be valiant, certain, and confident. We cannot expect to enter into the realm of all His power and authority if we remain timid and uncertain (Ephesians 3:12). How can the skier release from the edge of the steep mountain cliff without the utmost confidence? Though others who had never skied might look with terror as the skier released, the one with the confidence would have a smile of adventure and pleasure. The skier would not throw herself down the steep slope with only a hope to make it down alive! Confidence is vastly superior to hope – we are saved by faith, not by hope! Our confidence is a display of the faith that we now have, even the faith of Jesus! We must be strong and very courageous if we are going to walk in our inheritance (Joshua 1:6-9). Satan is the enemy of God and His saints. He makes war against us through every means within his power. Some of his primary instruments of war are the lies and propaganda that he speaks against God and His saints. He would intimidate us and bring God's love into question. His strategy is to first discourage and then to defeat. Demon spirits would create doubt, confusion, and uncertainty in the mind of God's people in order to neutralize us and ultimately prevent us from walking in the glory that is ours. We must have a great confidence, which only comes through faith: the confidence that comes from the God of all confidence. His Word must be our sword, and His presence a shield about us! When assailing thoughts would rise up against us along with accusations from our enemy, we must have a certainty that God is on our side!

Commentary · Ephesians 3:12 · Note 87

Our access, confidence, boldness, miracle ministry, and relationship with God exist by the faith of Jesus Christ acting on our behalf (Acts 3:16, Romans 3:22, Galatians 2:16, 20). We most certainly must have faith in Jesus Christ, but we should also recognize that our Lord also has faith that He exercises on our behalf. We read in this scripture: 'dia tes pisteos autou,' which can be rendered as "through the faith of Him." Paul also said to the Galatians that He "lived by the faith of the Son of God" (Galatians 2:20). There are those who feel better saying that we "live by the faithfulness of Jesus," which of course is also true, but there should be no reluctance to accept that the faith of Jesus is involved in our lives. If Paul and other ministers can be a helper of our faith, then why would there be a problem with the concept of Jesus

being a helper of our faith (2 Corinthians 1:24, Romans 1:11). Jesus is the Author and Finisher of our faith, and it is by that which He has done and that which He continues to do that we find our provision, protection and perfection. The power and dominion of sin that once prevented our access into the presence of God has been completely eliminated by the One who died, rose again, and lives to make intercession for us. Our acceptance by God has been sealed and guaranteed by Jesus, whose blood is the only means that we can continue to boldly enter into the presence of the Lord. Jesus is an active participant in helping and strengthening us. He is the Greater One on the inside of us that strengthens us, and by whom we overcome the world because He is in us (Ephesians 3:16, 1 John 4:4).

Ephesians 3:13

on which account you should not lose heart by my tribulation for you[88], which is your glory.

Commentary · Ephesians 3:13 · Note 88

In order for Paul to bring the gospel to the Gentiles, he had to suffer rejection and persecution by his own countrymen and the Gentiles. Had Paul not been willing to obey the Lord Jesus and preach to the Ephesians, they would have never known the glory of being in Christ that Paul refers to. Although not much is said specifically about the things that Paul had to suffer specifically for the church of Ephesus, we do know that when he addressed the elders of the Church of Ephesus in Acts 20:19, he spoke of the many tears and trials which he had to endure by the Jews due to bringing the gospel to the Ephesians. Of the persecutions in general that Paul had to experience for the gospel to be preached to the Gentiles, a summary is given in 2 Corinthians 11:23-29. Ultimately Paul was accused of bringing Gentiles into the temple, because the Jews had seen Trophimus (an Ephesian) with Paul, whom they supposed Paul had brought into the Temple (Acts 21:28-29).

Ephesians 3:14

For this favor[89], I bow my knee to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Commentary · Ephesians 3:14 · Note 89

Paul considered it a privilege to have been allowed to bring the Ephesians the gospel no matter the cost. The Greek word ‘charin,’ which means “favor,” is derived from the Greek word ‘charis,’ which means “grace.” It is by the favor and grace of God that we are allowed to be the representatives of Jesus Christ to the world.

Ephesians 3:15

from whom the whole family in Heaven and on Earth are named[90],

Commentary · Ephesians 3:15 · Note 90

This refers to the title that is given to those who have already gone into Heaven beginning with Abel, which is the first man of faith in the Bible. We can not be certain as to whether or not this also includes angels, but we may conclude that all of mankind that has been redeemed by Jesus Christ is included. This same Greek word is used in Mark 3:14 when Jesus gave his twelve disciples the title of apostles: "to whom he gave the name apostles." When we bear God's name and have received the title that He has given to us we both belong to him and function in his authority. Jesus Himself has been given a name that is above every name. The disciples were told to rejoice in the fact that their names were written in Heaven. God's people are commissioned to go and preach in the name of Jesus, which also represents His authority. This is not unique to the church, for God had also placed His name on the children of Israel (Numbers 6:27, Isaiah 43:7, 44:5).

Ephesians 3:16

so that He would grant you according to the riches of **His glory strengthening[91] power by His Spirit in the inner man,**

Commentary · Ephesians 3:16 · Note 91

Spiritual riches far surpass any material riches that we could receive from the Lord. While it is certain that the riches that come from the glory of the Lord have no limits, nothing can compare to His anointing to do the same works that Jesus did (Acts 10:38, John 14:12). God has provided all spiritual blessings to us in Christ Jesus so that we can live in every dimension of His goodness – but nothing can compare to the glory of having fellowship with Him. The riches of God's glory are measured by the supernatural supply of the Spirit that is given when God anoints men with His power. The display of these riches of His glory has been seen upon men since the beginning – from Enoch to Paul, men have been granted the divine ability to walk with God in such a way that all the world was impacted. What the Holy Spirit has purposed to do, if we allow Him, is to strengthen us with every dimension of the power that was poured out upon the church when the Holy Ghost came (Acts 1:8). The dunamis (power) of the Holy Ghost supplies the kratos (strength) of the Lord so that we can do all that He has purposed us to do as His sons. The Greek derivative of kratos used here is 'krataiothenai,' which means "to strengthen" or "to make strong.' Kratos describes the power to exercise dominion over principalities and rulers. Paul brings up this supernatural ability when he tells us how to deal with the spiritual wickedness that we are engaged against: with the strength of the Lord and the power of His might (Ephesians 6:10). Biblical dunamis refers to the power that Jesus gave to the disciples on the day of Pentecost when He baptized them in the Holy Spirit. It is the anointing of the Holy Ghost and power sent down from the throne of God that changes the world (Romans 15:19, Acts 6:8, 10:38). We must be strengthened in the inner man to be who we are called to be and to do the works that we are called to do. The Holy Spirit gives us an ongoing supply of 'dunamis.' Paul specifically applies the strengthening power to the establishment of the saints in the love of Christ that passes knowledge, helping us to grasp that it is within this atmosphere of divine glory that we are filled with all of Gods fullness (Ephesians 3:19). Paul concludes with the testimony that

it is by the power that is at work on the inside of us that God will do far more than we can ask or even think for this union of love. Our ability to live in union and agreement with Christ Jesus far surpasses all other riches. Jesus gave us the same glory that the Father gave Him: nothing less that the sum total of all the riches contained within the glory of God (John 17:21-23, John 1:16, 2 Corinthians 3:18, Romans 8:28). All who have experienced the glory of His manifest presence in their lives know first hand how wonderful and empowering it is. Yet there is still more, for there is an ongoing maturity and an ever-increasing manifestation of this glory and presence available to all who hunger and thirst for it – and only fellowship with God can supply it. If we are willing to live our lives in pursuit of the inheritance that we have been given, then we will be strengthened with the power to live in all that the scriptures testify of.

Ephesians 3:17

that **Christ may dwell in your heart** by faith[92], being rooted and grounded[93] in love.

Commentary · Ephesians 3:17 · Note 92

Christ Jesus does not dwell in our hearts by an ideology or concept or some unrealized hope, but by the miraculous power of faith! Too many have been duped into believing that faith is less than a miracle. That which is by faith produces radical change, and there is no change more radical than the change that comes by salvation. If we just stop for a moment and consider that we have been born of God by the Holy Spirit and by the Word, and united with God through this work of grace – our definition of "by faith" should take on a biblical definition. If you look every place in the scripture where the phrase "by faith" or "through faith" are found, you will be surrounded by the miracles of God working in and around His people. (You would not have to travel further than Hebrews 11!) When the gospels are combined with the epistles of Paul, it is clear that "by faith" must be be associated with the miracle power of the Holy Spirit. The question that demands an answer is: "does Christ Jesus dwell in you?" Have you received the miracle of faith that brings the change of spirit, heart, and life, or have you only agreed with a religion for philosophical reasons? Did the Holy Spirit come upon you and give you this new spirit and new heart so that you know that you have a different spirit and heart than those that you were born with? (John 3:1-5, Ezekiel 36:26). The faith that we speak of is this: through the miracle work of God, Christ was formed in us, and now by His life we live and walk in the Spirit of God. For those of us who have believed, we have put on Christ, are clothed with the mind of Christ, have been made partakers of His divine nature and heavenly calling, are co-inheritors with Christ, are united with Him in oneness, and live by His faith (John 14:23, 17:21-23, Galatians 3:27, 1 Corinthians 2:16, 2 Peter 1:4, Hebrews 3:1, Romans 8:17, Galatians 4:7). It is through the hearing of God's testimony and the record that He gave of His Son that this life of God is realized in us – for The Faith comes to us because we hear the Word and believe it. If your banker writes you a letter and tells you that a million dollars has been deposited into your account, and you do not write it into your ledger – then you will only use that which you have made. We must not be like those who heard the Word but did not allow it to be mixed with faith, otherwise the miracle of faith will not take place, and the inheritance will never be realized (Hebrews 4:2). Too many

people will talk about the riches and glory of salvation, but never spend a dime of it. The life of Christ and the glory of the Kingdom remains unrealized in their daily life. Instead they wander around in the wilderness of their own existence – going from problem to problem, experiencing one defeat after another – when all the time the life of Christ is there to live if they would only agree with what God has said. Too many witnesses say we can not cross over to the life of Christ, that it is too great to have, and that no man can obtain it. Yet the opportunity remains for the Joshuas and Calebs of our generation to believe God and move past all of those hindrances, doubts, and fears, and to step into their inheritance! It is by The Faith that we cross over into God's plan and live in Zion (Hebrews 12:22-24, John 15:1-5, Ephesians 1:3, 2:6). Come be strengthened by the Spirit in your inner man with all the power of Christ Jesus! Let the Word of Christ dwell in you, and experience oneness with your God (John 15:6, 16, Colossians 3:16). Today expect everything from God, and yield everything to Him. Through this oneness in the Holy Spirit, we are established in all the fullness of Christ, and are filled with all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:19-20, 4:13). Begin to think differently today, and never conform to the world and its ideas again (Ephesians 4:23, Romans 12:2).

Commentary · Ephesians 3:17 · Note 93

There is a double allegory in this thought: being rooted as a tree and founded as a building on a good foundation. Both express the stability and commitment to what our primary responsibility is as God's people. We are called to walk in divine love – the same love that Father has for us! Jesus said that all men would know that we are His disciples by our love one for another (John 13:35, 1 John 4:7). Knowing and believing that Christ dwells in you releases the faith of God to produce all the benefits of His divine nature.

Ephesians 3:18

So that you may have strength[94] to lay hold of, with all the saints, what is the breadth and length and height and depth,

Commentary · Ephesians 3:18 · Note 94

The Greek word that is used here is 'exischuo,' which is derived from two Greek words: 'ek' ("with," "from") and 'ischuo' ("to be strong"). The Greek word 'ischuo' is from the root word 'ischus,' which means "strength" or "might." Laying hold on the deepest depths and highest heights of the fullness of God takes revelation and insight that only the Holy Spirit can give (1 Corinthians 2:9-10). This insight that surpasses the human intellect requires supernatural ability.

Ephesians 3:19

and to know the love of Christ that surpasses knowledge so that you may be **filled[95] with all the fullness of God.**

Commentary · Ephesians 3:19 · Note 95

The very idea of the possibility of being filled with God's fullness is unimaginable. However, when we consider that we have been filled with the Holy Spirit and that Jesus and the Father have come to dwell in us, we recognize that this is indeed the will of God for our lives (John 14:17, 23, Colossians 1:27, Ephesians 3:9, Luke 3:16). The indwelling fullness of God is viewed in chapter 4 as "the measure of the maturity of the fullness of Christ" (Ephesians 4:13). The growth and maturity that we are called to in God is directly related to knowing His love. John said that if we dwell in love then we dwell in God (1 John 4:16). If there is any Godly principle that we must grasp, it is that we must walk in love (Ephesians 5:2, John 13:34, Ephesians 4:15). The way of love must determine all of our responses and direct all of our decisions. The child of God must be willing to actively participate with the working of the Holy Spirit, whose desire is to reveal Jesus and express the love of God through our lives (Galatians 5:22, John 16:14, Acts 1:8, Galatians 1:16, 2:20, Philippians 1:2, Romans 5:5).

Ephesians 3:20

Now to him who has the power to do super-abundantly above all that we think or ask according, to the **power[96] that works in us**,

Commentary · Ephesians 3:20 · Note 96

God desires that we be filled with all of His fullness. Such a thing goes beyond all that we could think or ask, but God is at work in us to teach us how to cooperate with His abundant life (Ephesians 1:19, 2 Peter 1:3-4). The gift of God has provided us with the ability to live a life full of His divine nature and goodness. The gift of God is a wellspring of God's power springing up from the depths of our soul – a river of God's presence flowing from our lives. The gift of God is the Spirit of the living God at work in those who believe. It is the life of Jesus established in our souls (Colossians 1:28, 1 John 3:24, 4:4, 2 Corinthians 13:5). This glorious power of the Holy Ghost that resides in us is a treasure of divine power at work both strengthening and perfecting those who are willing to participate with His will (Philippians 2:18, 2 Corinthians 4:4). If we are willing to obey, the power of God that has been supplied to us will perfect everything that concerns us (Hebrews 13:21). If we desire to walk in the Spirit, then we will be strengthened with all might so that we may walk worthily and be fruitful in very good work (Colossians 1:11, Ephesians 6:10). The ability to do everything and have everything that God has purposed for us is given to us by the power (dunamis) that works in us. There is a connection that each individual must make with the power of God that is at work in them – otherwise it remains of very little consequence, and the outworking of God's glory is not manifested through their lives. We must first be convinced by the Word of God that it is God's will for us to have His abundant life (John 10:10). We must recognize that it is God's will for us to prosper and be in health even as our soul prospers (3 John 1:2). When we are certain that Jesus is our Savior, our Healer, and our Provider, then we will also be certain that God will supply all of our needs according to His riches in glory (1 John 4:14, 1 Peter 2:24, Philippians 4:19). We can then rise up with the psalmist and say, "Oh bless the Lord oh my soul and forget not all of His benefits!" We can find ourselves calling those things which God has promised done and announcing the

wonderful works of God. We make the faith-connection with God's promises by agreeing with His Word and by the connection supplied to us by the Spirit of God. God has baptized us in the language of the Spirit so that we might learn how to speak the words of God and declare His wonderful works (Isaiah 28:10-11, 50:4, 1 Corinthians 14:21, Acts 2:11, 17-18, 19:6, Jude 20-21). The operation of the Holy Spirit in our life flows out of the power that works within us. Our connection and submission to Him is the connection between us and all of God's signs and wonders (Acts 1:8, 2:4, John 7:38-39). Every dimension of the outworking of God through our lives is a result of our fellowship with God in the Holy Spirit. As we yield to the Holy Spirit and take seriously the commission to advance the Kingdom of God through ministering to the lost, there is an ever-increasing revelation of the power of God in and through our lives. If we will give ourselves to the ministry gifts that were given to reveal the living Jesus, then we can be certain that faith will increase and the ability to operate in the power of God (who is doing far beyond what we are able to think or ask) will be enlarged (Mark 16:17, John 14:12, Matthew 24:14, Romans 12:6, 1 Corinthians 12:7, 31, 14:1, 12, Joel 2:28, Titus 2:14, Matthew 25:21, 23). In order to understand the meaning of 'dunamis' (divine power), one must be willing to embrace Pentecost, where the 'dunamis' was and is poured out on the believer by the Holy Spirit (Acts 1-2). Although, the Greek word 'dunamis' is used in the Septuagint with various meanings, a special meaning is given to it by its application in the New Testament – where it is always used to describe the divine power of God to save, heal and provide. A summary statement for 'dunamis' is given in Acts 10:38: "God anointed Jesus with the Holy Spirit and *power*, who went about doing good and healing all of those oppressed with the Devil." We gain insight into the meaning of 'dunamis' from the power that flowed from Jesus into the woman with the issue of blood, as well as the power that was poured out on the saints in Jerusalem when Jesus baptized them in the Holy Spirit (Mark 5:30, Luke 6:19). That same power is at work in those who believe right now, and through it, the One who is all-powerful is super-abundantly supplying all that we ask and think and more!

Ephesians 3:21

unto Him be glory in the church by Jesus Christ, throughout every generation[97] forever and forever, amen!

Commentary · Ephesians 3:21 · Note 97

The church is sacred to God, and it has been created by God to reveal the brightness and radiance of Christ Jesus on Earth. The church is the body of Christ, purchased by the blood of Jesus and given life by the Holy Spirit (Acts 20:28, 1 Corinthians 12:7-11). God receives glory in the church by Jesus Christ, who rules in His church, and whose manifest power and presence are to be witnessed by all. God's glory in His church cannot be separated from His glory in Christ Jesus. Christ Jesus is the one who reveals the Father, and the church is supposed to reveal Jesus. How can it be that any man would be so arrogant and defiant as to attempt to take control of the church, and behave themselves as though the risen Christ Jesus was not present? How can we be so deceived to think that Jesus is revealed if His works are not present? The Holy Spirit is the one who brings the expressions of Christ Jesus to every member of the

body, and if He is not submitted to – Jesus will not be revealed. The church must be a place where people are taught to yield to the Holy Ghost, and are also taught how sacred these things are. The unmodified model of what the church is supposed to look like is given in Acts chapter two. Men in their arrogance and defiance against God demand that it be different, but Acts chapter two will stand for the entirety of the church age, while the opinions of men pass away. Christ Jesus established the church by baptizing it with the Holy Spirit and fire (Acts 2:3-4, 33, John 7:37-39, Matthew 3:11, Luke 3:16). It is this glory of Jesus which only the Holy Spirit can express that is in every generation – not just the first century church! Jesus loves and cherishes His church, and washes and cleanses it with the water of His Word so that it might be spotless, without wrinkle, and clothed with the majesty of His perfection and glory for all the world to see (Ephesians 5:26-27). He stands in the midst of His church with mercy and judgment, yet many would make it little more than a social club (Matthew 18:20, Revelation 1:1-3:22). Every kind of spiritual violation can be found in His holy place, especially the sowing of discord among the brethren, which God abhors (Proverbs 6:16-19). Men defy the authority that God has placed in His church, and think they can treat the apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers however they feel like treating them and get away with it. There is anarchy, sedition, strife, and the pride of life ruling everywhere – and yet we dare call it the church of Jesus Christ? The church of Jesus Christ is under the leadership of Jesus Christ, and taught and instructed by the Holy Spirit. Men had better learn to fear, for Father will not tolerate this disgracing of His Son for long. If the church that you are in is truly the church of Jesus Christ, then men eat and drink damnation to their soul when they do not discern the body of Christ (1 Corinthians 11:29, Romans 12:5, 1 Corinthians 10:16, 12:12, 27, Ephesians 4:12). God is jealous over His sacred things. He will not allow them to continually be desecrated. He will glorify the name of His Son, no matter what it takes. Men must learn to fear if they are ever going to see the glory of God in His house. God is in His house, let all the Earth keep silence. If we are truly the church yielded to the Lord, then the Holy Spirit builds us up together as a holy habitation for God (Ephesians 2:22, Habakkuk 2:20). It is the demand of God that those who have been made the shepherds, the rulers, and the authorities in His house both teach and demand the proper conduct and disposition in the saints (Ephesians 4:11-13, Hebrews 13:7, 17, 24, 2 Timothy 3:16, 4:2). It is by knowing the love of Christ that passes knowledge that we find ourselves filled with all God's fullness, that there may be glory in the church by Jesus Christ (Ephesians 3:18-21). It is by being filled with the Spirit that we are given the divine disposition to submit ourselves one to another in the fear of God – and come to value how sacred the Church really is (Ephesians 5:18-32).

EPHESIANS

Chapter 4

Ephesians 4:1

I call[98] to you myself, as the prisoner of the Lord, to walk worthy of the calling[99] to which you are called,

Commentary · Ephesians 4:1 · Note 98

The Greek root 'kaleo,' which means "call," is used three times in this verse. It appears in the form 'parakalo' meaning "I call to." Next it is in the form of the noun 'klesis,' meaning "calling," and finally in the verb form 'eklethete,' meaning "your calling."

Commentary · Ephesians 4:1 · Note 99

To walk worthy of the calling should be the desire of everyone's heart who is in love with the Father. To be pleasing and fruitful in every good work is certainly a requirement of following Jesus (Colossians 1:10, John 8:29, Luke 9:23, Romans 12:1). Bringing honor to the name of the Lord is the disposition of the Son, Christ Jesus, and should be the disposition of every son that has been brought into this glory (Hebrews 2:10, 1 Thessalonians 2:12). Paul has described the opportunities that God has given to us in the loftiest terms. We have been blessed with all spiritual blessings in the heavenlies and brought into a fellowship of love that would allow us to be filled with all of God's fullness (Ephesians 1:3, 3:18-19). To step into this realm that God calls sacred and holy demands the greatest response of humility and lowliness on our part. Humility, meekness, and lowliness are the dispositions of the Son (Matthew 11:29). If we are to walk in the heights of God's glory, then we must be willing to allow this same mind that was in Christ Jesus to also be in us (Philippians 2:5).

Ephesians 4:2

with all humility[100] and meekness – with longsuffering forbearing one another in love.

Commentary · Ephesians 4:2 · Note 100

This Greek word may be translated as "humility" or "lowliness of mind." This word is derived from two Greek words: 'tapeinos,' meaning "low degree," and 'phren,' meaning "understanding." The Greek word 'phren' also refers to the faculty of perceiving and judging. God's people are not to have high thoughts of self-exaltation, thinking that they are better than another – we are called to bless and show mercy in this present age.

Ephesians 4:3

Giving diligence[101] to keep the oneness of the Spirit[102] in the bond of peace,

Commentary · Ephesians 4:3 · Note 101

Diligence is a word that is often used in the bible. It is a word that is associated with discipline and focus. It is unfortunate how many may be diligent and focused with respect to academics, business, and

athletics, but as soon as the same kind of disciplines are applied to walking with the Lord and doing those things that our heavenly Father has called us to do, it is labeled as "religious." That ploy should be easily discerned. Being diligent about the things of God is evidence that you are being led by the Holy Spirit and seeking those things which are above instead of that which is earthly (Matthew 6:33, Colossians 3:1, 1 Corinthians 15:10). The notion of being zealous and passionate about the gifts and callings of God are embodied in the word diligence, which may be found in excess of 124 times with more than half of the occurrences existing in the New Testament. Greek words that we translate as "diligence" are words like 'spoudazo,' 'spoude,' and 'ekzeteo.' These words are found in the context of Hebrews 11:6, where we are told that the Lord rewards those who diligently seek Him. They are also in 2 Peter 1:5 & 10, where we are exhorted to make our calling and election sure by giving all diligence to the development of the virtues that the Holy Spirit supplies. We can expand the call to diligence even more when we include words like 'zeto,' which is a call to passionately run after or seek (Matthew 6:33, 7:7, 1 Corinthians 14:12). At the heart of these words is a hunger and a thirst for all those things that Father has freely supplied through Christ Jesus, but will only be fully realized when we seek after them with all that is within us. As the elect of God, we are to "put on" (enduo) Christ Jesus. We are to be clothed with His virtue, glory, mercy, kindness, humility of mind, meekness, and longsuffering – all of which testify to the rulership of the Holy Spirit in our lives (Colossians 3:12, Romans 13:14, Galatians 3:27, 5:22-23, 2 Peter 1:4-8, 2 Corinthians 6:6, Romans 12:19-21). We find that lowliness and meekness, as wonderful virtues and fruits of the Spirit, are central to the message that Jesus would have us learn and follow Him in (Matthew 11: 29, Philippians 2:3-5). To have these things of the Spirit expressed in our lives demands an active participation of our will with the Holy Spirit's. He has come to lead, guide, teach, and empower us, but we must follow. If we yield ourselves to Him, then He will provide us with an unlimited flow of all that belongs to God (John 7:38-39, Galatians 5:16, 25, Romans 8:14, 16).

Commentary · Ephesians 4:3 · Note 102

Only by yielding ourselves to the miracle work of the Holy Spirit are we able to have unity with God and one another. (John 17:21-23, Ephesians 4:4, 1 Corinthians 1:16). The oneness or unity of the Spirit has been provided for the believers through salvation and baptism in the Holy Spirit. If the church is going to function properly we must guard against anything that would oppose oneness. When anyone begins to function outside of humility, meekness, longsuffering, forbearance, and love, they have stepped outside of the will of God and begin to violate the body and person of Christ Jesus. It is our responsibility to guard ourselves against the snares and the temptations of the Devil that would lead us astray into self-exaltation and strife. Demonic manifestations that are directly opposed to the unity of the Spirit are strife, envy, and divisions (James 3:16). We must understand that it is the strategy of Satan to prevent or to STOP the unity that is essential for the body of Christ to function properly (1 Corinthians 1:10, 12:12-27, Romans 12:16, Philippians 3:16). Therefore it is essential to resist every contrary thing that opposes the ways of God and submit to lowliness and meekness. The oneness that has been granted to us is first oneness with the Holy Spirit, the Lord Jesus Christ, and God the Father – then as a result of oneness with God we may have oneness with one another. It is in this divine disposition that the church

functions in such a way that Christ Jesus is revealed through the operation of the Holy Spirit in each member of the body. We must allow the Holy Spirit to baptize us into the body of Christ every time we assemble ourselves together (1 Corinthians 12:13). The church is the fullness of God, but unless we participate with God, the glory of His fullness is never realized or witnessed (Ephesians 1:23). It is the will of God that the arresting power of His love be manifested in our fellowship with each other. His love will produce oneness – by this all men will know that we are His disciples and that Christ Jesus is who He said He was (John 13:35, 17:23). The kingdom of the Lord Jesus is witnessed by righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Ghost (Romans 14:17). If the demonstration of the Kingdom of God is going to be manifested in our assemblies then we must allow righteousness, peace, and joy to reign in all our emotions and conduct. The rivers of God's presence would flow through us to reveal the nature and disposition of Christ Jesus in all the splendor of His servitude and humility (1 John 3:16). The reign of peace will calm every storm, His joy will refresh and strengthen every soul, and the righteousness of all His goodness will produce days of Heaven in the midst of the church.

Ephesians 4:4

as one body and one Spirit, just as you are called into one expectation of your calling.

Ephesians 4:5

One Lord, one faith, one baptism,

Ephesians 4:6

one God and Father of all, who is upon all, and through all, and in all.

Ephesians 4:7

And to each of us is given grace, according the measure of the gift of Christ[103],

Commentary · Ephesians 4:7 · Note 103

The 'metron,' or "measure," of Christ Jesus will be more perfectly described in Ephesians 4:13. The measure of Christ described in verse 13 is the fullness of that which Jesus had. Knowing that God is able to make all grace abound unto us through Christ Jesus, what are the limits of the measure of the gift of Christ (2 Corinthians 9:8)? Are we to assume that this verse is referring to only a portion of the measure of Christ, or is the gift of Christ the same unlimited measure that Jesus had received? While it is certainly true that unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of faith that we have received, there are no limits defined for Christ's measure (Romans 12:3). Although we start with only a measure in this baptismal anointing, we know that fullness of faith and an unlimited supply is what God wills for our lives (Acts 6:8). What we are allowed to do in the Kingdom of God certainly has nothing to do with our own innate abilities. God is willing by His grace to supply more than we can think or ask, and from our lives produce the unlimited expressions of His goodness like rivers flowing from us (Ephesians 3:20, John 7:39). If we are faithful with the grace that we have received, then much more shall be given

(Matthew 25:21, 23). Through the grace contained within the gift of salvation, we have been given an opportunity to mature into all the fullness of the measure of the ministry of Christ (Ephesians 4:13, John 14:12). The limits of God's grace for us is all the fullness of Jesus our Lord (John 1:16). Through obedience to our Master, we grow and mature into all that He has given as we abide in Him and He abides in us (John 15:1-6, 16). Some of the most important things to God are our love for each other and the unity that is produced through that love. The most important thing of all is our unity with Him and the unity of the Spirit mentioned in Ephesians 4:3, which ultimately finds its full maturity in the unity of the faith in Ephesians 4:13. As newborn babes we desire the sincere milk of the Word, and through obedience to the faith and submission to the Holy Spirit, we grow in grace (1 Peter 2:2, 2 Peter 3:18, Titus 2:12). What we grow up into is as certain as the growth itself: we grow into a fully matured man in Christ Jesus. The measure of the gift that Christ Jesus received was an unlimited measure, and now He has poured out His abundant life on all those who will receive in an unlimited baptismal measure (John 7:38-39, Acts 1:5). Jesus has not withheld any of His glory, but has freely given it to those who will receive (John 17:23-24). We have received the gift of salvation, the gift of the Holy Spirit, and the measure of the gift of Christ. With these gifts, we are both called and empowered to walk just as Jesus walked (1 John 1:7, 2:6, 4:7). We are called to do those works which Jesus did and even greater works, but we must understand how to be faithful with what He has given, and then grow and mature in faithfulness (1 Timothy 1:12, 2 Thessalonians 1:11, 2 Corinthians 9:8). Jesus referred to the impartation of His ministry that He had entrusted to the church when He spoke of the distribution of responsibility: to one He gave one talent, to another two, and to another five. The most important thing was that each steward of the manifold grace of God was to be faithful with those things that they had received. To those who were faithful and allowed the gifts to be multiplied, more was to be given, but to those unfaithful with what God had bestowed, not only was there no increase – but that which they had was taken away (Matthew 25:15-29, 2 Peter 1:8-10). The grace that has been given to us must have an outworking in our lives. Paul was willing to boast that the grace that was given to Him was not given in vain, but worked within Him and through Him to cause Him to labor more than anyone else in the kingdom (1 Corinthians 15:10). The call of God is on each one of our lives, and although the starting point may be different for all of us and the role each one plays unique, the goal of maturity is the same: the measure of Christ – the fullness of His maturity (Ephesians 4:13, 1 Corinthians 12:4-6). The purpose is the same, and that is the ministry of the gospel – that people might be delivered from the power of Satan and be saved (Acts 26:18-19, Mark 16:17). Let each of us be faithful with those things that we have received so that we might be entrusted with more of the measure of the gift of Christ.

Ephesians 4:8

on which account He said, "Ascending up on high, He led captivity[104] captive, and gave gifts[105] unto men[106]."

Commentary · Ephesians 4:8 · Note 104

Jesus went down into the lower parts of the Earth into a place called Abraham's bosom (Luke 16:22). Abraham's bosom was the place that contained all of the righteous dead. It was the place that Jesus referred to as Paradise (Luke 23:43). When Jesus was resurrected from the dead, He liberated all of those who had been held captive in this prison. Prior to the resurrection of Jesus from the dead, those who died in faith went into Abraham's bosom, or Paradise – in the Old Testament, it was called 'gebar' ("the grave"), 'shachat' ("the pit"), or 'sheol' ("Hell"). The model of what happened to God's people when they died may be observed through the events that took place when Jesus died. When Jesus died, he went down into the belly of the Earth just as the poor man Lazarus did (Luke 16:19-31). It was from this place called Paradise that Jesus preached to the departed spirits. It was from Paradise that Jesus lead captivity captive when he ascended up on high (Ephesians 4:8).

Commentary · Ephesians 4:8 · Note 105

The word 'doma' or "gifts" is found four times in the New Testament. It is used twice in the gospels: "If you then being evil know how to give good gifts unto your children, how much more shall your heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them who ask Him" (Luke 11:13, Matthew 7:11). Then Paul uses it in Philippians 4:17 in the context of an offering. The word 'doma' may be understood as something given that is essential to survival.

Commentary · Ephesians 4:8 · Note 106

Jesus led the spoils of war to Heaven – every man that had been held the prisoner of Satan who looked for the day of God's liberation. When Jesus victoriously stepped into glory, He was crowned with many crowns, and having received gifts for men, He gave them liberally. Christ Jesus divided the spoils that day with the strong – those whom the Lord made mighty (Isaiah 53:12). Ephesians 4:8 is quoted from Psalms 68:18, which prophesied of what Christ Jesus would do for us when He arose from the dead and ascended up into Heaven. When God gave His covenant to Israel at Mount Sinai, it was said: "You have ascended on high, you have led captivity captive: you received gifts for men; yes, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them." God brought Israel out of slavery to separate unto Himself a people through which the redeemer of all mankind might come. He brought the captives of His people who had been held in Egypt into His inheritance. Just as God ascended to the heights of Mount Sinai in His triumphant glory and majesty, Christ Jesus ascended to the heights of Heaven (Psalms 68:16-17). On the day that Jesus resurrected, having led captivity captive, His church was born. When Jesus ascended up to Heaven, He ascended to Zion, the heavenly Jerusalem, and there He took His place at the right hand of God (Hebrews 12:22, Acts 2:33, Ephesians 1:20-22, Revelation 21:10). In His triumphant glory over every claim of Satan, He poured out the gift of the Holy Ghost upon the church, as well as the ministry gifts, which were given to empower those who would be the leaders of His church. These ministry gifts were poured out upon men so that those in the church might be perfected, matured, strengthened, and equipped even unto the fullness of Christ. These special abilities and anointings exist in the church so that Christ Jesus might dwell in our midst. In times past, God gave the special anointings of

priest, prophet, judge, and king to lead His people, but today His leaders are apostles, prophets, evangelists, pastors, and teachers (Ephesians 4:11, 1 Corinthians 12:28). The supply of the Spirit flows to every member of the church from the Head, which is Christ Jesus (Ephesians 4:15-16, Colossians 2:19). Through the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, that special anointing of Jesus flows down upon His whole body (Psalm 133:1-2, John 3:34, Acts 10:38, Luke 4:18). Each person's connection in the body brings them into contact with the supply of divine goodness that flows from Christ Jesus (Ephesians 4:16, Colossians 2:19). If we fail to cooperate with and submit to God's divine order, then we will miss out on that which God has supplied for our perfection and for the manifestation of His presence in our midst. All those things that God the eternal Word had possessed were restored unto Him when He returned unto the Father, but when Jesus ascended up on high, He had won access into that realm for every man. Satan could no longer, by right or claim, stand between God and men to prevent the good things of Heaven. Through the gifts that Christ Jesus gave, He poured out access to all His glory and authority over everything contrary to His ways – especially power over the enemy of man: the Devil. Christ Jesus and His church are inseparable, and it is through our connection one to another as the members of His body that the fullness of God is revealed among us (Ephesians 1:23, Colossians 1:24).

Ephesians 4:9

Now that He is ascended, is it not He that also went down first into the lower parts of the earth[107]?

Commentary · Ephesians 4:9 · Note 107

Jesus died and descended down into Hades. Just as Jonah was three days and three nights in the belly of a whale, Jesus was in the lower parts of the Earth (Jonah 1:17, Matthew 12:39-40). He went down and preached to the spirits in prison (1 Peter 3:19). Paul referred to this as the "place of the deep" ("abyss" or 'abyssos') in Romans 10:7 and also under the Earth as in Philippians 2:10. The first dimension of His descent was when He laid aside His eternal glory as the Word and took on the robes of flesh to die at Calvary and destroy death (Hosea 13:14, 1 Corinthians 15:26, 2 Timothy 1:10, Philippians 2:5-11, Hebrews 2:14). Christ Jesus, having destroyed him who had the power of death, spoiling and making an open shame of him, has the keys of Hell and death (Colossians 2:15, Revelation 1:18).

Ephesians 4:10

He that descended is also He who ascended up above all the heavens, so that He might fill all,

Ephesians 4:11

and He gave the apostles[108], and the prophets, and the evangelists, and the pastors, and teachers,

Commentary · Ephesians 4:11 · Note 108

These special gifts that Christ won for the church reveal the offices that have been set in the church, and not the individuals in those offices. The Champion and Captain of our salvation who won these gifts for the church is the chief example of these special anointings and gifts. We may find the true definition and

example of apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher in Christ Jesus. To be placed in one of these offices, one would have to be called, not by men, but by the Lord Jesus Christ. A New Testament apostle ('apostolos') is a divinely-appointed representative of Christ Jesus. Jesus had many disciples, but out of those He appointed twelve apostles (Matthew 10:1-4). It was these that Christ Jesus sent out to do His work. The word 'apostolos' means "to send forth." Jesus was sent forth by the Father and then He sent forth the apostles just as the Father had sent Him. It is within the framework of this meaning that we find 'apostellein,' and its Hebrew counterpart 'shalach,' used many times in the Old Testament, LXX, and BHS respectively. One great example in the Old Testament is Isaiah 6:8, "Also I heard the voice of the Lord saying, whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then I said, Here am I; send me." The same could be said of Abraham, Moses, and others. It is important to recognize that in every example, both in the Old and the New Testaments, an 'apostolos' is called and sent by a sovereign act of God in which He was personally involved in the sending. The apostle Paul, who was appointed as an apostle to the Gentiles, would be our chief example of an apostle apart from first twelve. It would be through the apostle Paul that we would find an example of how apostles might come into being after the ascension of Jesus. Of course, it is important to recognize that all of these gifts were given to the church after the ascension. The first twelve were only unique in light of the fact that they were the first, but they were certainly not the last. The apostles are the foundation of the church, both at the beginning and today – without them, the church would lack what Christ Jesus gave for the perfecting of the saints (Ephesians 2:20, 1 Corinthians 12:28). Of these five offices, apostles and prophets are given a premier role in the Church. These are the first two offices placed in the church, and they function as the foundation upon which the church is established (1 Corinthians 12:28, Ephesians 2:20, 3:5). It certainly is noteworthy that the apostles related the word 'episkope' to the office of the apostle, which they held (Acts 1:20). 'Episkope' is also translated in the New Testament as "bishop," "elder," and "overseer" (Acts 20:28, 1 Timothy 3:2, 1 Peter 2:25, 5:2). The prophetic office ('prophetes') of the New Testament begins with John the Baptist, but finds its ultimate fulfillment in Jesus (Luke 7:28, John 4:44, Acts 3:22, 7:37, Deuteronomy 18:15). As in the Old Testament, the prophet is one who makes known or unveils the word of God. The prophets have always been the chief spokesmen for God, and it was from the prophets that we received the majority of the Old Testament writings. Although there are those who have almost exclusively associated the prophetic office and gift with the word of knowledge in foretelling future events, the scripture does not have such a narrow view. This confined definition is from the post-Christian era. The primary role of the prophet is consistent with the ministry of Jesus, who made known the will and commands of the Father. The prophets (besides Jesus) listed in the New Testament begin with John the Baptist, followed by Anna, then finally Agabus, Barnabas, and others, some of which are not distinguished from teachers (Luke 2:36, Acts 11:28, 13:1, 21:10). The prophet is the speaker who makes known the will of God. The chief action of the prophet is to prophesy. The chief gift that characterizes the outpouring of the Holy Spirit is prophecy. The Spirit of the Lord has been poured out upon all flesh, and the testimony of that in a person's life is the gift of prophecy (Acts 2:17). Paul said that it was one of the ways that he communicated the word of God to the hearer (1 Corinthians 14:6). Prophecy is something that everyone is called to both covet and do, and each person is called to function in the gift in the church (1

Corinthians 14:24-31, 39). The prophet is the one who can speak out as the oracle of God, declaring His divine will. Peter demands that if anyone speak on behalf of Christ Jesus that they speak as the oracles ('logion') of God (1 Peter 4:11). Most importantly, these attributes of prophecy would be the hallmark of the one who operates in the office of a prophet. The Evangelist is the herald of the good news. There can be no one who can compare to Jesus in the proclamation of God's salvation. The heralds ('evangel') proclaim God's faithfulness and salvation – they publish His deeds to the people (Psalm 9:11, 40:10, 68:11). The heralds of God go forth proclaiming good tidings, announcing peace, and publishing salvation (Isaiah 52:7). God has put His words in their hearts and mouths so that as His heralds they might proclaim His salvation from day to day (Psalm 96:2). Even the man who lay at the gate called Beautiful may be counted as an evangel, as he went walking, leaping, and praising God (Acts 3:8). Philip is the one clear example of a person holding the office of an evangelist in the New Testament (Acts 6:3-6, 8:5, 21:8). Paul, however, admonished Timothy to also do the work of an evangelist (2 Timothy 4:5). Every person is called to be a herald of the gospel, and in this sense to function in the gifting of an evangel (Mark 16:15). "Shepherd" ('poimen') is the more exact word for pastor in both the Old and New Testaments. God is referred to as a Shepherd (Genesis 49:24, Psalm 23:1, 80:1). Although the title was never used for any king of Israel except David, the shepherd role is implied (2 Samuel 5:2, Psalms 78:71, Jeremiah 23:2, Ezekiel 34:23, 37:24). The pastoral ministry is also used more than anything else to describe the ministry of Jesus (Zechariah 13:7, John 10:11-18, Hebrews 13:20, 1 Peter 2:25, 5:4). The terminology of the pastoral ministry is also observed in the call of Peter (John 21:16). Pastors also function as overseers and elders of the church (Acts 20:17, 28). They are part of the company who are called to feed the flock and rule in the house of God (Acts 20:28, 1 Thessalonians 5:12, 1 Timothy 5:17, Hebrews 13:7, 17). The teaching gift that God placed in the church is third in the list of 1 Corinthians 12:28. Jesus was first identified by Nicodemus as a teacher come from God because of the miracles that He did (John 3:2). A teacher would have the ability to teach others how to do what God has commanded. The greatest example of this teaching gift today would be the Holy Spirit, who has come to teach us all things (John 14:26, 16:12-15, 1 John 2:27). As a preacher, Paul referred to himself as both an apostle and a teacher (1 Timothy 2:7, 2 Timothy 1:11). Some believe that pastor and teacher are to be combined as a single office – though there may be only slight differences, the offices are surely distinct. Finally, there is a list of prophets and teachers given at Antioch found in Acts 13:1.

Ephesians 4:12

for the perfecting[109] of the holy ones to work a ministry[110] to the building up of the body of Christ –

Commentary · Ephesians 4:12 · Note 109

The Lord has set His heart on perfecting us. This is the chief work of Christ Jesus and the Holy Spirit, and the ministry gifts were established in the church for this purpose. God is able to make us everything that He desires us to be if we are willing to cooperate with Him. God has purposed to perfect our abilities to function in His grace so that we might live and function as Jesus did. God is the one that perfects and completes everything that concerns us and we must be willing to believe and accept that this is His plan

and promise (Psalms 138:8). The Greek word 'katartismos' is found only one time in the New Testament. This word may be translated as "perfecting," "mending," "preparing," "equipping," and it means "to cause to be fully qualified", or "to make adequate or sufficient for something." The idea is to supply what is lacking so that there may be a complete furnishing. This Greek word is derived from the word 'kataritizo,' which means "to perfect," or "to render fit, sound or complete." The root word for 'kataritizo' is 'aritios,' which is the same word found in 2 Timothy 3:17 and may also be rendered "perfect." The word "perfect" is rendered from several Hebrew and Greek words in the Bible. The first time it appears in the Bible is in reference to Noah who was both 'tzadik' ("righteous") and 'tamim' ("perfect") (Genesis 6:9). The Lord also told Abraham to walk before Him and to be 'tamim.' However, it is exceedingly important that we recognize that God empowered Abraham to be what He requested (Genesis 17:1). God called three men perfect in the Old Testament: Noah, Jacob and Job (Genesis 6:9, 25:27, Job 1:1, 8, 2:3). We should all be willing to recognize that God is able to do what He desires, and if He wants to give us the grace that would allow us to be fully developed into the ministry of Jesus, then it will be so if we will believe. God in His great mercy has provided everything that we need so that we may be without blemish before Him. He has given a grace that we can stand before Him on that day unblameable and unreproveable in His sight (Colossians 1:22). He has given the ministry gifts to the church so that we may be perfected and fully equipped for the work of the ministry and the strengthening of the body of Christ. The goal of this work of grace is to bring us into the fullness of the measure of the maturity of the ministry of Christ – and nothing could be more perfect (Ephesians 4:13).

Commentary · Ephesians 4:12 · Note 110

The Greek word for ministry is 'diakonia,' and is first found in the New Testament in Luke 10:40 where it is translated as "serving": "Martha was cumbered about much serving..." The next time that it is found is in Acts 1:17 where it is translated as "ministry": " For he was numbered with us, and had obtained part of this ministry." There are nine ministry gifts that are named in 1 Corinthians 12:8-10, as follows: 1 – The word of wisdom 2 – The word of knowledge 3 – Faith 4 – The gifts of healing 5 – The working of miracles 6 – Prophecy 7 – Discerning of spirits 8 – Families (diversities) of languages 9 – Interpretation of languages The Holy Spirit gives an order as to how these ministries are added to the church in 1 Corinthians 12:28-29, and in addition adds both helps and governments to the list: First – Apostles Second – Prophets Third – Teachers Fourth – Miracles Fifth – Gifts of healings Sixth – Helps Seventh – Governments Eighth—Families (diversities) of tongues We also know that there are deacons (diakonos/ministers), elders, and special ministries such as waiting on tables, which may be grouped under helps and governments. The word for deacon means both minister and servant, and its first appearance in the New Testament is in the context of a servant (Matthew 20:26). Elders would fall under the classification of government, especially in light of the fact that they are those who have the oversight and rule of the church (1 Peter 5:2, Hebrews 13:7). Finally, the manifestations of these ministry gifts may be seen in the following ways: 1 – Casting out devils (Mark 16:17) 2 – Laying hands on the sick (Mark 16:18) 3 – Anointing the sick with oil (James 5:14) 4 – Power against the poison of serpents (Mark 16:18) 5 – Power against the poison of drink (Mark 16:18) 6 – Visions (Acts 2:17) 7 – Dreams

(Acts 2:17) 8 – Singing in the Spirit (1 Corinthians 14:15) 9 – Praying in the Spirit (1 Corinthians 14:15) 10 – Everyone with a psalm (1 Corinthians 14:26) 11 – Everyone with a doctrine (1 Corinthians 14:26) 12 – Everyone with a language (1 Corinthians 14:26) 13 – Everyone with a revelation (1 Corinthians 14:26) 14 – Everyone with an interpretation (1 Corinthians 14:26) 15 – Praying with the understanding (1 Corinthians 14:26) 16 – Singing of hymns (Colossians 3:16) 17 – Demonstration of the Spirit (1 Corinthians 2:4) 18 – Signs (Romans 15:19) 19 – Wonders (Romans 15:19) 20 – Special miracles (Acts 19:11) 21 – Power (1 Thessalonians 1:5) 22 – Prayer and supplications (Ephesians 6:18) 23 – Exhorting (Romans 12:8) 24 – Giving (Romans 12:8) 25 – Ruling (Romans 12:8) 26 – Showing mercy (Romans 12:8) 27 – Righteousness in the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:17) 28 – Peace in the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:17) 29 – Joy in the Holy Spirit (Romans 14:17) 30 – Divine love (Ephesians 3:19) 31 – Fruit of longsuffering (Galatians 5:22) 32 – Fruit of gentleness (Galatians 5:22) 33 – Fruit of goodness (Galatians 5:22) 34 – Fruit of meekness (Galatians 5:23) 35 – Fruit of temperance (Galatians 5:23) 36 – Godliness (2 Peter 1:6) 36 – Glory (2 Peter 1:3) 37 – Virtue (2 Peter 1:3) 38 – Brotherly kindness (2 Peter 1:7) 39 – Holiness (Hebrews 12:14) 40 – Oneness of Spirit (Ephesians 2:18) 41 – Unity of faith (Ephesians 4:13) 42 – Raising the dead (Matthew 10:8) 43 – Hospitality (1 Peter 4:9) 44 – Prophecy (1 Corinthians 12:10) 45 – Discerning of spirits (1 Corinthians 12:10) 46 – Rejoicing (Philippians 4:4) 47 – Boldness (Ephesians 3:12) 48 – Irresistible words (Luke 21:15) 49 – Edification (1 Corinthians 14:3) 50 – Comfort (1 Corinthians 14:3) 51 – Thanksgiving (1 Thessalonians 5:18) 52 – Esteeming everyone better than themselves (Philippians 2:3) 53 – Greater works (John 14:12) Paul gave four ways to minister under the inspiration of the Holy Spirit in 1 Corinthians 14:6, by: 1 – Revelation 2 – Knowledge 3 – Prophecy 4 – Doctrine

Ephesians 4:13

until we all come to the oneness of faith and the full knowledge[111] of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, to the measure of the maturity[112] of the fullness of Christ[113],

Commentary · Ephesians 4:13 · Note 111

The Greek word is ‘epignosis,’ which means “full, precise, or complete knowledge.”

Commentary · Ephesians 4:13 · Note 112

The phrase “measure of maturity” in the Greek language is referring to a unit of measurement. The Greek noun ‘metron’ (“measure”) refers to a vessel that is used to measure something such as a graduated cylinder or a measuring cup. The idea of any individual growing into the spiritual maturity of Jesus would seem impossible if it were not for the fact that He has given us his fullness as a gift (John 1:16). Though the fullness of Christ is received by all believers, it must be matured into. When we begin this life as a new creation, we are newborn babes (1 Peter 2:2). It is necessary that we grow and mature in the realms of the Spirit. We must remember that despite being blessed with all spiritual blessings in Heaven in Christ, unless we are obedient to God we will not benefit from them (Ephesians 1:3, Hebrews 4:2). Paul rebuked the Christians in Hebrews, for when the time had come that they should have matured into being

teachers of the things of God, they were still in need of being taught basic things. Paul likened them unto babies who could not be given meat, but must remain on milk or baby food (Hebrews 5:12). God, with His unsearchable riches and unspeakable gifts, opened the door for us so that if we are willing to totally comply with His will, we may be filled with everything that He has.

Commentary · Ephesians 4:13 · Note 113

There are two challenging and yet glorious privileges expressed in this verse: First, "the measure of the maturity of Christ," and second, the "fullness of Christ." Jesus promised His fullness in ministry to the believer when He said, "...he that believes on Me, the works that I do shall he do also and greater..." (John 14:12). When Jesus was baptized in the Spirit, He was filled with the Spirit without measure (John 3:34, Matthew 3:16). Jesus came as the express image of the Father, filled with all of the fullness of God (Colossians 1:19, 2:9). God made it possible for us to be filled with all of the fullness of Christ Jesus: firstly by the new birth and secondly through the baptism of the Spirit. When we were born of the Spirit, Christ Jesus was formed in us (Colossians 1:28, Galatians 4:19, 1 John 4:4, Romans 8:29). This new creature that is created in Christ Jesus possesses the abiding presence of the Father, the Lord Jesus, and the Holy Spirit (John 14:23, 1 John 3:24). Paul testified that he had received the fullness of Christ when he declared to the Romans that he would "come in the fullness of the blessing of Christ" (Romans 15:29). He also made it known that he no longer lived, but Christ lived in him (Galatians 2:20, Philippians 1:21). Paul also revealed that the fullness of God was made available to all of the saints through knowing the love of Christ "to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge so that we might be filled with all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:19). He revealed that the church was the fullness of Him who fills all things (Ephesians 1:23). Although we look at such a promise and are overwhelmed with amazement and a sense of impossibility, we must with awe and expectation embrace the call to this unspeakable gift of God. Father has revealed these things to us by His Spirit because it is His will for our lives. If we refuse to believe and take hold of the faith, by both accepting and expecting this to be the reality of our lives, then we will certainly never realize this glorious privilege.

Ephesians 4:14

so that we are no longer children tossed by the waves and carried about with every wind[114] of doctrine by the trickery[115] of men and craft by which deceivers[116] mislead.

Commentary · Ephesians 4:14 · Note 114

If you want to mature in the things of the Spirit, then you are going to have to start speaking the Word of God over your life. You can either remain as a child and continue to be tossed, or you can begin to speak the truth and grow. As children, the spiritual realm remains out of reach. All you will be able to receive are the elementary and carnal things (1 Corinthians 3:1, Hebrews 5:12). You will not find an escape from the temporal and mundane, but will continue to find yourself taken prisoner by circumstance. Your life will be comprised of human struggle and fleshly existence, ruined by strife and envy, running from one disappointment to the next, and from one problem to another (1 Corinthians 3:2-3, Romans 8:6). Because

of disappointment and failure, many make the mistake of altering the Word to fit their experience. Instead of standing firm in the faith and authority of the Word, they compromise the promises of God and settle for something earthly and human. People go through difficult and trying times, and then interpret their situations and come up with beliefs different than those taught to us by God. Their experience becomes the basis for what they believe, instead of holding fast to what God has promised. We cannot afford to corrupt the Word of God, for if we do, we will never realize its life and promises, nor grow in the faith and authority that it describes (2 Corinthians 2:17, 11:3). We cannot allow ourselves to be spoiled by vain philosophy and deceit (Colossians 2:8). If we listen to the traditions of men, we will become stripped of confidence, faith, and authority – and never grow into the ministry of Jesus. Instead of going from glory to glory, increasing with the increase of God – we will grow callous, hard, and unbelieving. Disappointment and the traditions of men will so mess you up that you will make void the commandments of God. To grow and increase, you must begin to speak the truth: God's Word is truth. The Word of God is powerful and living, and should be superior to all that you see with your eyes and hear with your ears. We must hold fast to our confession of faith, and not waver (Hebrews 4:12-14, 10:23). If we let the Word of Christ dwell richly in us, we will continue to bring forth the promises of God out of His rich treasure of the Word (Colossians 3:16). By holding fast to the Word even when everything around us says differently, we will grow in faith (Romans 3:4, 2 Thessalonians 1:3). We will grow in the knowledge of God, and begin to see and understand the things of the Spirit that we were blind to before (Colossians 1:10). Through living by the Word and making what God has said our reality, we will increase with the increase of God, and find divine power over all the things that oppose us (Colossians 2:19). Refuse to believe the lies and propaganda of Satan! Turn away from all those things contrary to the greatness of God, and prophesy those things which God has spoken concerning you. The Holy Ghost will fill you with Spirit-knowledge, and cause you to see what your eyes could not see before. Your relationship and walk with God will result in the life of Christ being revealed in all His fullness: both to you and through you (Ephesians 4:13, John 14:12, Hebrews 11:5-6). Realize today that God is in you – that you are the darling of His heart (Jeremiah 31:20), the jewel in His crown (Zechariah 9:16), the apple of His eye (Zechariah 2:8), his precious treasure (Exodus 19:5, Deuteronomy 7:6), and His inheritance (Ephesians 1:18). You are the temple of the Lord, with rivers of living water flowing from your belly – and having been given the authority of sonship: as an heir of God and joint-heir with Christ (1 Corinthians 3:16-17, 6:19, 2 Corinthians 6:16, John 7:38, John 1:12, Romans 8:17). The fellowship that he demands is that you will believe that whatever you ask, He will do (John 15:16, Mark 11:22-24). The image is of a ship with no rudder, and thus no governor. Hebrews 13:9 also warns the believer not to be "carried away with diverse and strange doctrines." James 1:6 describes the unstable spiritual condition more specifically as "... a wave of the sea driven with the wind and tossed."

Commentary · Ephesians 4:14 · Note 115

The Greek word 'kubeia' is from the root word 'kubos,' which refers to dice-playing. In the game of dice playing there are many tricks used to deceive the simple and inexperienced, thus this word may apply to trickery, craft, or deceit.

Commentary · Ephesians 4:14 · Note 116

The Greek word 'methodeia' is derived from the word 'methodeuo,' which means "to follow," or "to track," as a wild animal tracks its prey.

Ephesians 4:15

But speaking the truth in love[117], we may grow up into Christ in all things who is Himself the Head,

Commentary · Ephesians 4:15 · Note 117

Our individual growth in the things pertaining to the spiritual life demands that we speak the truth. There is only one source of truth, and that is the Word of God. Our confession of the truth is directly related to the results that we get. Our willingness to agree with the truth and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord resulted in our salvation, and so it is with everything else in God. It was by the confession of our mouth that the miracle of salvation worked in our lives, and it is by the confession of our mouth that all the rest of God's miracles will be worked (Romans 10:10, Proverbs 18:21, Matthew 12:37). Words are important to God – He used them to create the heavens and the Earth and everything that is in them (Psalm 33:6, 9, Hebrews 11:3). Now if we are going to have the things that God has purposed for us to have, then we must believe what He has said (John 1:12, 3:16, Mark 5:36, 9:23, 11:24, Luke 8:50). Whatever it is that we believe is ultimately what we are going to speak. Too often do God's people speak out of fear and distrust instead of love and confidence. The things that we see and hear have such an impact on us that we too easily forget what God said. God placed a condition on what He would do for us by requiring us to believe. If we believe that God loves us, then we know that He is going to take excellent care of us. God has promised, and all we must do is count Him faithful. In the midst of the crisis and the circumstances, we can rise above it all and speak what God has spoken, even if all the things around us oppose the good report. If we agree with Him and confess what His Word has declared, then our faith will flow out with divine authority through the acknowledgement of every good thing that is in us (Philemon 1:6). If we hold fast the confession of our faith, we will have God's divine provision, because He is faithful to His Word and He loves us so much (Hebrews 10:23, 4:14, Philippians 4:19, Romans 8:32). I have heard many people say, "life is difficult." Life is not difficult – circumstances are difficult. Life is wonderful! The natural life that we have is so important to each one of us that we will desperately struggle to hold onto it. The abundant life of the Spirit that we have received in Christ Jesus should be even more important. The abundant life is the life of Christ, a life that exists by the Word of God. This life that we live by the Word of God is a quality of life that affords us all of the blessings and provisions of God's kingdom (Ephesians 1:2, Romans 5:17, 21, 8:2, Galatians 3:21, 2 Corinthians 8:9, Psalm 84:11). Through Christ Jesus, we have been richly supplied with everything that pertains to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3, Philippians 4:19, Ephesians 3:16). However, we all have a choice to make each day: will we allow circumstances to rule our lives, or will the Word of God rule us? Whatever we are most convinced of, whether it be the circumstances or the promises of God, that is what we will ultimately speak out. We have heard how God will supply our every need and how that He will cause all grace to abound to us so that we will have all sufficiency in all things, but when the difficult situations arise do we speak

according to God's Word? If we are willing to be doers of the Word and not hearers only, then the circumstances will have to conform to the Word of God and we will accept nothing else (Matthew 7:24-26). If the life of God is going to dominate our lives, then we must allow God's Word to have the final say in everything that we believe. It is impossible to please God without faith, and if we hold to the Word of God, the faith that changes things will work through us (Hebrews 11:6). Therefore, let the love relationship that has been established between you and the Lord Jesus produce a confession of truth. Our defense against that which is false is the Word of truth. Do not be carried about with every wind of doctrine and troubling situation, but rather be firmly established in the Word of His truth (1 Thessalonians 2:13, 2 Corinthians 6:7, Ephesians 1:13, Colossians 1:5, John 17:17). If you will hold fast to the truth and speak the truth, then you will mature and have all those good things that have been promised us in Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 4:16

from whom the whole body[118] is joined and knitted together by every ligament that supplies support, so that each individual part energetically contributing its measure of supply for the growth of the body as it builds itself up in love.[119].

Commentary · Ephesians 4:16 · Note 118

The whole body is under the control of the head unless there is some disconnection such as a broken or dislocated bone or cut tissue. If there is a broken or cut part, then that must be fixed immediately – otherwise the whole body will suffer prolonged trauma until it is fixed. Within the framework of the church, we must recognize who the Head is and be under His control. The head is Christ Jesus, and those special gifts that He appointed as leadership to represent Him. If the head is not in control, then the body will not grow and the results will be completely dysfunctional. Of course the growth is not a measure of numbers but of spiritual maturity. Staying with the allegory of a body that Paul uses to describe how the church is to function and operate, we know that the body is held together by: bones, ligaments, tendons, and muscles. It is by this anatomical analysis that Paul expresses the interdependence that each individual within a local church must have with respect to each other. If we are unwilling to have such a loving connectivity and interdependency, then it is not possible to be submitted to Christ Jesus. This is a picture of submission and dependency that can only come from the love of God being poured into our hearts. Along with such grace, there must also be a devoted consecration to functioning toward a common goal, heavenly vision, and divine purpose. Those individuals unwilling to connect in such a way will be handicapped, being unable to respond to the commands of the Head, and the body will be crippled. Then the Head has to direct in the repair of whatever is wrong. If each individual submits themself to the love of Christ and is willing to allow the Holy Spirit to set them in their proper place within the body, then each body part will be properly connected. It is through this love and cooperation that the church will grow into the fullness of the measure of the maturity of Christ both individually and collectively (Ephesians 4:13, 1 Corinthians 12:18, Ephesians 5:30, Galatians 3:16, 1 Corinthians 12:13, Romans 12:4-5, 1 Corinthians 10:17, Colossians 3:15). Using the same analogy, when an individual attempts to

establish their own place and purpose within the body it is like a cancer that produces dysfunctional tissue and makes the entire body sick (2 Timothy 2:17). To isolate oneself from the local church is to entirely disconnect from the body of Christ. To believe that such a one is in submission to Christ in such a state is wrong. Rebellion and divisions are a Satanic ploy against the unity that belongs to the Spirit of God. There are so many good people that think that they can just "go it alone," but such a concept is foreign to the gospel of Christ and the Kingdom of God. In fact, the whole revelation of God is centered upon the order and community of family. If the church is unwilling to function as the family of God and as members of that family there will be no representation of the love of God or the Kingdom of God. If the individual saint lacks a consecration to the love of God and the unity, servitude, and submission that it produces, then they fail to understand the most fundamental concepts of the doctrine of Christ. With all the wounded, hurt, suspicious, and critical people, how is the love and goodness of God going to be seen when it is His church that represents who He is? We must exercise great compassion to bring them back into the proper function of family. There is not one person who can change anyone's heart, but we can make sure that each one of us individually dedicates ourself to not be a part of the problem. At the same time, we all must be patient as the Spirit of God deals with those who are living under the spirit of rejection, hurt, and even rebellion. We must all cease to be so important in our own eyes, and instead become servants clothed with humility and walking in love (1 Peter 5:5, Ephesians 5:2). Reaching those that believe is as important as reaching those who do not yet believe.

Commentary · Ephesians 4:16 · Note 119

One of the main themes of Ephesians is the "love of Christ." The most important subject in the Bible is God's love. To dwell in love is to dwell in God and dwelling in this love will result in our maturity and the maturity of the local church. The love of God produces a oneness between ourselves that is the most beautiful thing on Earth. The love of God that the Holy Spirit will cause to flow through us comes by our willingness to be in submission to the authority of Christ. It is by this kind of relationship that all men will know that we are His disciples (John 13:35, 1 Corinthians 12:13). It is only through this kind of unity that the world will realize that God sent Jesus to be their Savior (John 17:23). Paul opens the Epistle to the Ephesians by drawing their attention to the love of God that we were all created to live in (Ephesians 1:4). By being established in this love, we are able to comprehend with all saints the breadth, length, depth, and height of every dimension of God's plan and purpose for our lives (Ephesians 3:17). Through knowing the love of Christ, we find the place of surrender and obedience to God that allows us to be filled with all His fullness (Ephesians 3:19). Paul then brings us to the point of Ephesians 4:16, where he reveals how the church functions. Each of the individuals gather together in the church, baptized into one body by the Spirit, to function as one man. The Holy Spirit supplies to each one the things necessary to reveal the person of Jesus in our midst. By the Holy Ghost, the church begins to function in the full range of motion and abilities of Christ. In the midst of this love and unity, the power of God and the glory of Heaven are manifested in the midst of the Church. This is the revival that the church must have if Jesus is to be revealed to a world that has never seen Him. There is a responsibility that each person must take up if the purposes of God are to be fulfilled through His church. It is each one's responsibility to lay their

lives down for the church and submit to the unity of the Spirit (Ephesians 4:1-3, 5:25). All Hell fights against this divine order, so we must understand how to submit to God and resist this demonic attempt to stop the church (James 4:7). The local church possesses an unlimited potential to reveal the glory of God – all we have to do is be obedient to the Holy Spirit. The church is to be the very revelation of the person of Jesus Christ – what loftier purpose could we have? The church ought to so reveal the person of Jesus that it would be as though He never left! This glorious revelation of who the church is depends upon each individual's willingness to participate. If we give Jesus His proper position and yield ourselves to His nature, then He will supply all those things necessary for the fullness of His glory to be revealed in our meetings (Matthew 11:28-29, Colossians 2:19, Ephesians 2:21, 1 Corinthians 14:25).

Ephesians 4:17

This I say then, and testify in the Lord: you shall no longer walk as also the Gentiles walk in the vanity of their mind[120],

Commentary · Ephesians 4:17 · Note 120

Once we have been born of God, everything is supposed to change. Instead of living in the vanity of our minds, we are to live by the Word of God and walk in the mind of Christ (Ephesians 4:17, Deuteronomy 8:3, 1 Corinthians 2:16, Philippians 2:5). Living by the Spirit calls for a whole new realm of thinking. However, if the person who is born again fails to realize the blessed grace of living in the direction and gifting of the Spirit, they may turn back to living their lives and behaving themselves according to a natural, carnal mind. The whole concept of vanity is defined in the book of Ecclesiastes. Although vanity may correlate to a person who is devoid of knowledge, there are many intelligent people who walk in the vanity of their minds. It is a mind devoid of *spiritual* knowledge. Their reason and purpose for existence is entirely selfish, earthly, and sensual. Their motivation and processing of such thinking is all about temporal and earthly cares. Although a classical meaning of vanity may be excessive pride and conceit, it really speaks more of the futility outlined by the preacher in Ecclesiastes. If we live our lives in such a way, we shut out the voice of the Spirit and learn to give little regard to the mind of Christ. The person given to depending upon the natural mind cannot receive the things that the Holy Spirit would teach them (1 Corinthians 2:14). Unless we will allow the Spirit of the Lord to teach us, we will discover ourselves in a ditch walking as babes and mere men, thinking and reasoning after the nature of men, defending our own causes, and consumed by our own self-interest (1 Corinthians 3:1-4). If we walk in the vanity of our own mind, we walk as those whose understanding is darkened, separated from the life of God, calloused of heart, and insensitive to God (Ephesians 4:17-18). The place that we are to begin if we are going to walk in the mind of Christ is the commitment to take no thought for our own interest and needs, but instead to seek the things that exist in the unseen realm of the Kingdom of God (Matthew 6:31-33).

Ephesians 4:18

having their thoughts darkened, strangers from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them because of the callousness[121] of their heart –

Commentary · Ephesians 4:18 · Note 121

The Greek word is 'porosis,' which literally refers to a covering with a callous, and figuratively means blindness. It may also be translated as "dullness," "insensibility," or "obstinacy." Additionally, Hebrews 3:13 warns us that one will become hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. The miracle of salvation removes the stony callous heart and supplies a heart of flesh – one that is tender to the will and ways of God (Ezekiel 36:26).

Ephesians 4:19

who themselves have lost all sensitivity are given over[122] to sexual immorality[123], to every kind of uncleanness[124], with a desire for more[125].

Commentary · Ephesians 4:19 · Note 122

The Greek word 'paradidomi' is the same word that is used when Judas handed over Jesus, betraying Him to the Jews. The first time that it occurs in the New Testament is in Matthew 4:12 in reference to John being "cast into prison." The first time it is used in reference to Judas' betrayal of Jesus is in Matthew 10:4. This same word is used three times in Romans 1:24-28 to describe those who have been given over to a reprobate mind. It is also used in twice in 2 Peter 2 (verses 4 and 21), which speaks of those who are ensnared by the perdition of false prophets and false teachers. Paul uses this same word when he gave the command to hand those over to Satan for the destruction of the flesh that their spirit might be saved (1 Corinthians 5:5). These were Gentiles who either rejected the counsel of the Lord and conviction of the Holy Spirit, coming to a place of being beyond any sensitivity toward God or a sense of right and wrong, or who were once themselves Christians that were stuck as children (Ephesians 4:14) – therefore they were handed over or cast into the prison of the Satanic realm.

Commentary · Ephesians 4:19 · Note 123

The Greek word 'aselgeia' refers to sexual immorality or licentious behavior. It is usually translated as "lasciviousness" by the Authorized Version. "In some languages, the equivalent of "licentious behavior" would be "to live like a dog," "to act like a goat," or "to be a rooster" – in each instance pertaining to promiscuous sexual behavior" (From the "Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains").

Commentary · Ephesians 4:19 · Note 124

The Greek word 'akatharsia' is found 63 times in the Septuagint (the Old Testament in Greek). It is fundamentally the opposite of holiness (1 Thessalonians 4:7). It is a word that is commonly used in Leviticus and Ezekiel to describe those things that make a person unclean, such as: 1 – An issue from a man (Leviticus 15:3) 2 – An issue from a woman, especially a menstrating woman (Leviticus 15:21, 18:19, Ezekiel 36:17) 3 – Taking your brother's wife (Leviticus 20:21, Ezekiel 22:10-11) 4 – Eating unclean creatures (Leviticus 22:5, Ezekiel 4:13) 5 – Touching the dead in any way (Leviticus 22:4, Numbers 19:13) However, most relevant to its use here are the filthy practices of sin and iniquity (Ezra

9:11, Ezekiel 7:20, 36:18). Although this Greek word is commonly translated as “uncleanness” or “refuse,” as in Matthew 23:27, figuratively it refers to sexual immorality as in Romans 1:24, “God has given them over to uncleanness, to do the immoral things their hearts desire...”

Commentary · Ephesians 4:19 · Note 125

The Greek word ‘pleonexia’ translates the Hebrew word ‘betza,’ which means “gain,” “plunder,” “greed,” or “ill-gotten gain.” It is primarily translated as “covetousness” or “greediness” in the New Testament. In Romans 1:29, 2 Peter 2:14, and here, it is one of the practices of those who are perpetual backsliders and have been handed over to a reprobate mind. In Colossians 3:5 and Mark 7:22, it is listed with the practices of an evil and unregenerate nature. The choice was made to further define covetousness and greediness in the translation for the sake of clarity as “a desire for more.” In the life of a child of God, the act of sin would result in conviction and sincere sorrow, but to the one handed over to uncleanness, there is only a desire for more of the same iniquity.

Ephesians 4:20

But you have not learned this from Christ[126],

Commentary · Ephesians 4:20 · Note 126

If we have been taught by Christ, instructed by the Holy Spirit, and mentored by the anointing, then we will abide in Christ Jesus the Son (1 John 2:27). Anyone who practices sin is not right with God (Ephesians 5:3-9, 1 John 3:10). You cannot live in darkness and have a relationship with Jesus (1 John 1:6, Ephesians 5:8, 11, Colossians 1:13). Even if you are a backslider, you may have once known Him, but you walked away from the relationship and allowed sin to separate you from Christ Jesus. The contrast between the redeemed and the unregenerated could not be greater. Those who have received a new nature, and have not turned back to the former ways, loathe sin and its iniquity. If they were to stumble into some kind of disobedience they would not be insensitive to the conviction of the Holy Spirit and continue to partake in its evil. Instead, they would turn back with godly sorrow and repent (2 Corinthians 7:10). There is indeed a stark contrast between those who are taught of God and those who are of this world. There is no excuse for anyone to be confused on this issue, for the fruits of the Spirit bear unmistakable evidence to those who are taught of God (Ephesians 5:9, Romans 6:22, Galatians 5:22-23). Anyone can say that he is a Christian, but it’s the fruits of our lives that tell the true story (Matthew 7:16-20). Being taught of God is fundamental to the New Covenant, and spiritual fruit is the paramount evidence that a person is being taught of God. It is Christ that we have learned. We have not just learned about Him, but have received Him into our lives by the miracle of salvation. Due to having a changed nature, we now hunger for the things of the Spirit and walk in His righteousness and true holiness (Ephesians 4:24). For just as we have received Christ Jesus the Lord, so we also walk in Him and He in us (Romans 6:4, Colossians 2:6, 1 John 2:6, Galatians 5:16, 25). The life and nature of Jesus that the born-again person has received is the absolute opposite of the nature of those who live in sin and disobedience (Ephesians 2:1-3, 4:17-19).

Ephesians 4:21

if you have heard Him and been taught by Him as the truth is in Jesus.

Ephesians 4:22

You shall lay aside[127], concerning[128] the former behavior, the old man,[129] which is corrupt according to deceitful desires,

Commentary · Ephesians 4:22 · Note 127

This Greek word is first found in Exodus 16:33, "lay it up before the Lord." The Authorized Version translated this word as "lay aside" in Hebrew 12:1. We are constantly being presented with evil, and every time that it is presented to us, we are to lay it aside and not accept it. The will of God is that we should possess our vessels (bodies) in consecration and honor – we are to resist the Devil and he will flee from us (1 Thessalonians 4:4, James 4:7). We are to cleanse ourselves from all of the former ways of darkness so that they do not have any place in our lives (2 Corinthians 7:1).

Commentary · Ephesians 4:22 · Note 128

Of the 480 times that the Greek word 'kata' occurs, it is translated as "against" 58 times in the Authorized Version. The most common ways that 'kata' is translated are as "according to" (107 times) and "after" (61 times). The fact that these works of darkness, the old man, are to be resisted and stood against underscores the way that 'kata' should be translated.

Commentary · Ephesians 4:22 · Note 129

The former behavior of the old man has no place in the life of the person that has been born again. The old man and his affections were crucified with Christ, and the body of sin that belongs to that nature was destroyed (Romans 6:6, Colossians 2:11). When we were made a new creation, we stepped out of the old and into the new to learn a whole new way of living (2 Corinthians 5:17). Therefore, now being in Christ Jesus, everything old has passed away and we should have no desire to turn back. Each day we grow and mature in the ways of God and discover the wonderful life that was instantaneously given to us. The Greek word 'palaion' refers to the ancient state of things, or the original condition. In this case, it was the original condition of sinful man and his desires – thus this is the spiritual paleontology of the unredeemed man, from the shame and sin of Adam to the glory and splendor of Christ. The old man has been crucified with Christ Jesus and the new man now lives (Ephesians 4:24, Colossians 3:10). The old man was destroyed so that the body (or dominion) of sin could also be destroyed (Romans 5:14, 21, 6:12, 14). As a result, the redeemed individual who was made a new creation may now walk in the divine nature and newness of life, having been made new and free from sin (Romans 6:4-7, 2 Peter 1:4). This is a miracle life that is worth living and it is dependent upon walking in the Spirit (John 3:3-6, Romans 8:14). Referring to the life before redemption as "old" leaves no doubt of the view of scripture concerning the nature of sin. By the free gift of salvation and the miracle of the new birth, it has been entirely removed from the redeemed man. It was washed away with the waters of regeneration (Titus 3:5). Although sin

has no right to execute dominion over a child of God, the fact remains that every child of God must resist the temptations of the former behavior (Ephesians 2:2, Colossians 3:9, Romans 6:13, 1 Peter 1:14). Just because our Savior Jesus Christ came and delivered us from the nature of sin and the power of the Devil does not mean that we cannot return into captivity and be imprisoned once again. Every person that received the miracle of salvation was set free and, similarly to Adam, was given the right to choose if they will serve God or turn to sin. We have put on the beautiful garments of salvation, being clothed with Christ – let's never take them off (Isaiah 52:1, Romans 13:14, Galatians 3:27).

Ephesians 4:23

and let your mind be renewed by the Spirit.[130].

Commentary · Ephesians 4:23 · Note 130

God desires that we think differently about ourselves. To be renewed by the Spirit in our mind, we must be willing to believe what God has said and then think of ourselves and the things around us accordingly. We must not be conformed to the image and concepts of this world, but instead transfigured by believing what God has said (Romans 12:2). We have been given a new knowledge of ourselves and it is the knowledge of sonship (Colossians 3:10, Romans 8:15, Galatians 4:7). If we continue to think of ourselves as anything less than those who are born again, alive from the dead, and co-inheritors with Christ, then we are thinking wrongly (1 Peter 1:23, Colossians 2:13, Romans 8:17). We have been changed by the power of God and created anew. We have been made holy and acceptable, the saints of the Most High with all authority in Christ Jesus (Romans 12:1, 1 Peter 2:5, Colossians 1:22, Ephesians 4:24). After having received Christ Jesus and being taught by Him, we must hold fast the identity and position that He has given to us. The god of this world would corrupt us with the lies that he propagates against God. He fights against the anointing and Word of God, attempting to make God's Word and the miracle of salvation ineffective. If we will simply believe God, the lies of Satan will fall powerless at our feet. Through the strength of the Lord and the power of His might, we take up the weapons of our warfare and bring every thought into captivity unto the obedience of Christ (Ephesians 6:10, 2 Corinthians 10:4). We must refuse to hear the voice of the spirit of disobedience or be persuaded to conform to all his lust (Ephesians 2:2-3, 1 John 2:16). This is why Paul taught the saints that they had to have a radical and complete redefining of their lives, in which nothing that belonged to the former life would be allowed to exist (Ephesians 2:2-3, 4:17-19, 5:8,14, Colossians 1:21, 2:11-13, 3:7). There can be no wavering or middle ground in this war (Matthew 12:30)! If we are to succeed, then we must not lean on our own understanding but believe the report of the Lord (Proverbs 3:5, Romans 10:16). We must hold fast to the Word of God and, taking the whole armor of God, be unwavering in our confession of faith (Philippians 2:16, Ephesians 6:11, Hebrews 10:23). If we will stand fast, then we will see everything that God has said revealed in our lives (1 Corinthians 16:13, Galatians 5:1). By the authority that we have been given as the sons of God and by the divine power of the new man, the former behavior and all its lust may be cast down. There is no power that can stop us from walking in union with God and being conformed to the image of the Son (John 17:21-23, Romans 8:29). We must be willing to accept the image of

righteousness and true holiness and be renewed by the Holy Spirit as we behold the glory of God (Colossians 3:10, 2 Corinthians 3:18). To view ourselves as weak, carnal, and unable to please God is the wrong way to think. If we listen to such lies, then we are giving place to the Devil and allowing sin to have dominion over us (Romans 6:14, Ephesians 4:27). We are to move in faith and believe the good news! God has worked an unimaginable miracle of salvation for us, so let us say, as Mary did, "Be it unto me according to your Word." If we are unwilling to believe God and think of ourselves as new creatures who are called to the fullness of the maturity of Christ, then we will never realize the maturity that He has planned for us. If we refuse to believe what God has said about His great salvation, then we will live our lives as babes and ultimately find ourselves tricked and mislead by deceivers (Ephesians 4:14). It is God the Holy Spirit that gives us the ability to see and understand (Ephesians 1:17-18). The Holy Spirit supplies us with the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:16, Philippians 2:5, 4:7). He has brought to us the renewal that we need and He is the One who strengthens us in our inner being to live this life of Jesus (Titus 3:5, Ephesians 3:16). God the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of truth, has come to teach us and show us how to walk in all those things that pertain to life and godliness (2 Peter 1:3)!

Ephesians 4:24

And be endued[131] with the new man[132] which is created after God in righteousness and true holiness[133].

Commentary · Ephesians 4:24 · Note 131

This is the same word used to describe the coming of the Holy Spirit, the promise of the Father, upon them that believe in Luke 24:49. It is also used in a similar context in Colossians 3:10 and Romans 13:14. The Greek word is 'enduo,' which conveys the sense of sinking into a garment. It is a compound word that is derived from 'en' ("in," "with," "by") and 'duno' ("enter," "plunge into"). It is translated as "to be clothed," "to put on," or "endued." Be filled with the Spirit, and be endued with Christ so that you can accomplish those things that you were created in Christ Jesus to be. Plunge into Christ – plunge into His power from on High and be filled with the Spirit that you may live this heavenly life! We received the life of Jesus when we were born again, and we receive His mantle of the Spirit when we are clothed with the Holy Ghost.

Commentary · Ephesians 4:24 · Note 132

What an honor and privilege God has given to us that we may be clothed with the same majesty, splendor, and authority of His only begotten Son. We have been entrusted by God to be endued with Christ that we might live His life. It is the life of Christ Jesus that is the light unto the world. Let the world see the glory of the only begotten Son alive and living in you (Colossians 1:27, 2 Corinthians 4:6, Philippians 1:21, Ephesians 3:18-19, Galatians 3:27, Romans 13:14). If these things of the Spirit are to be accomplished in our lives then we must be willing to believe the report of the Lord and the record that He has given of His Son. If we fail to believe, then it is impossible for us to receive and be equipped with the identity of Christ. We must be willing to think differently about ourselves and believe that we have

been transfigured and renewed, washed and regenerated by the renewing of the Holy Spirit (Isaiah 53:1, John 12:38, Romans 10:16, 1 John 5:10-11, Titus 3:5, Romans 12:1-2). Our heavenly Father wants us to be convinced that we are His children: begotten of Him, having been born of the Spirit. We have been born of the Spirit (John 3:5), born of the Word (1 Peter 1:23), and born of the resurrection (1 Peter 1:3). We find ourselves yielded to the Holy Spirit by believing what God has said, and by being confident in Him and who He has made us to be. It is through the Holy Spirit that we are endued, and will continue to be endued with the glory and authority of Christ Jesus. Through the gift of salvation, we are empowered with a new identity. By the Spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Jesus, we are empowered to live the life of Christ (Colossians 3:10, Ephesians 1:17). The new man, which is Christ Jesus living in us, has the nature of Jesus, the glory of Jesus, and the power and authority of Jesus (2 Peter 1:3-4, John 17:21-23, John 16:12-14, Luke 24:49, Acts 1:8, John 7:38-39). Having newness of life and the image of Christ, we are empowered to walk as the sons of God (Romans 6:4, John 1:12, Romans 8:16, Colossians 3:10). However, it is absolutely essential that we believe in our hearts and confess with our mouths these great things that God has done for us (Romans 10:10)! God created us anew in Christ Jesus and gave to us a new and pure heart, a new spirit, a purified soul and body, and made us His dwelling place – the temple of the Lord! There is no religious activity or belief that pleases God. All that is important to Him and accepted by Him are those who have been made a new creature and who are willing to grow and mature in the life of a new man (Galatians 6:15, John 3:3-6, Colossians 2:6). Those who have been created anew in Christ Jesus have been made holy and acceptable to God by the same gift. His own hands has built for Himself a pure and holy dwelling place where His glory and majesty may be seen in the earthen vessels of those redeemed and created anew by One, Christ Jesus (Ephesians 2:10, Ezekiel 36:26-27, 1 Peter 1:22-23, 1 Thessalonians 5:23, 1 Corinthians 3:9, 16, 6:19, 2 Corinthians 3:18, 4:7, 6:16, Matthew 5:8, 1 Timothy 1:5, 2 Timothy 2:22, Hebrews 10:22).

Commentary · Ephesians 4:24 · Note 133

The new man is in the likeness and nature of Jesus Christ, as established in Romans 13:4, “Be endued with the Lord Jesus Christ and make no provision for the flesh to do its desires.” The epistle to the Ephesians repeatedly speaks of our life “in Christ Jesus,” which is referred to thirteen times in chapter one alone. A corollary verse is found in Colossians 3:10, which says we are “renewed in knowledge after the image of Him that created [us].” God created all things by Christ Jesus, and has also made this new creation by Him. This is compatible with the the call of God for the saint to mature into all the fullness Christ and to grow up into Him in all things (4:13, 15).

Ephesians 4:25

For this reason, lay aside lying, speak the truth[134] everyone with his neighbor, for we are members one of another.

Commentary · Ephesians 4:25 · Note 134

There is no question as to God's expectation of those who have been created in God's likeness. We are to always tell the truth, and there can be no cheating or stealing in any form. Those things that we have agreed to do must be done without allowing any short cuts, which would include an honest day's work for those who hired us. We must not give any place to the Devil by committing any acts of sin. God's people are characterized by truth, righteousness, and holiness now and in the New Jerusalem (Zechariah 8:1-15). To utilize this passage of scripture as proof that men continue to possess an evil nature after being born again is not only a violation of the context, but also a violation of faith. Every person that has been born again can choose to agree with unholy things. Even as Adam chose to disobey God, so can we. The worst things are wrong models and examples from leaders that would by conduct, and even word, make wrong behavior acceptable. The Word of God ought to provide faith and power to the hearer. If we hear wrongly or believe things that are not true, then we are robbed of the divine power and ability that comes by the Word of God. It is the Word of God that produces faith in the hearers so that supernatural results may be realized in our lives. Whether it is healing for the body or authority over all of sin and the power of darkness, it is by believing and acting on the Word of God that divine results are produced.

Ephesians 4:26

Be angry and sin not – let not the sun go down on your anger,

Ephesians 4:27

and give no place to the devil[135].

Commentary · Ephesians 4:27 · Note 135

God wants us to have great boldness in the faith and authority in the Spirit. If we give Satan any advantage, it will impact our confidence towards God, and affect our boldness and authority in Christ (1 John 2:28, 3:19-21). If Satan is given the slightest opportunity, He will take advantage of us in every way that he can (2 Corinthians 2:11). To help clarify the point, one accurate way to translate this verse is: "Do not give the accuser any standing room." Satan can gain an advantage to condemn us if we give place to sin. Whether it is relationship issues, anger, corrupt communication, bitterness, wrath, rage, arguments, slander, or malice – Satan will use whatever open door we give him to attempt to kill, steal, and destroy (Ephesians 4:25-31, John 10:10). All these things are opportunities for Satan to condemn us and bring reproach to our relationship with the Lord Jesus. Furthermore, *all* sin grieves the Holy Spirit, and the last thing that we want to do is to offend our Teacher, Mentor, and the Lover of our souls. There is immeasurable forgiveness with God if we sin, but something bigger is at stake – our effectiveness in the Kingdom. We must recognize that we have been given a divine opportunity to be trained in the conduct and authority of Christ – we cannot allow Satan to interfere. We are of the household of God and His representatives on the Earth. We are called to greatness as those who represent the King, Christ Jesus. The Holy Spirit empowers us to do the works of Jesus, and in every way invade the territory of Satan: to destroy his strongholds and render his works powerless. We have been called by God to cast out devils

and run Satan and his demonic powers off wherever we find them. Let us walk in the authority that we have been given so that all the wonderful things of Heaven may be displayed through our lives. Satan looks for ways to neutralize the impact that God has ordained for us to have, so we cannot afford to be ignorant of his devices.

Ephesians 4:28

The thief[136] must no longer steal, but rather labor, doing good work with his own hands so that he may have something to share with the needy.

Commentary · Ephesians 4:28 · Note 136

Although, the person who once stole for a living has been transformed and made a new man, he must guard against the temptations of the Devil, which would tempt him to return to his former lifestyle. There are many things that can be regarded as stealing that men might justify, such as not giving the boss an honest day's work, among other things. When our constant desire and pursuit is to grow up into Jesus in all things, the temptations of Satan are easily laid aside. The new nature that has been given in Christ Jesus both inspires and enables the former thief to labor and provide for others rather than steal from them.

Ephesians 4:29

Do not allow a bad word to come out of your mouth, but instead that which is good to serve, to edify the hearer that grace may be supplied[137].

Commentary · Ephesians 4:29 · Note 137

There are two kinds of communication: that which is corrupt or worthless, and that which is good. The kind of words that God commands us to speak are good words that build others up and minister the grace that we have been given. The 'logos sapros' ("worthless word") would be any communication less than that which is pure and holy. All kinds of ungodly communication flows when people are involved in worldly things and wrong thinking, and when they become offended and give place to strife (Colossians 3:8, Ephesians 5:4). Smutty talk and foolish jesting can never be allowed, but even more perilous to those who are born again are the snares of fault-finding and the judgmental attitudes that produce slander. Such evil things can never be justified. It is always wrong to speak evil of anyone in any way (Psalm 34:13, Proverbs 8:13, 10:18, 11:11, 17:4, Romans 1:28-30, 12:14, 1 Corinthians 5:11, 6:9-10, 2 Corinthians 12:20, Galatians 5:15, Colossians 3:8, Titus 3:2, James 1:26, 3:10, 4:11, 1 Peter 2:1, 3:9, 2 Peter 2:9-12, Jude 1:8-10). All such behavior harms all those who participate with it, both the speaker and the hearers. If we are going to walk in the law of the Spirit of life and learn to live the good life filled with the blessings of God then we will keep our tongue from evil and our lips from speaking guile (1 Peter 3:10, Psalms 34:13). We are called to bless and not curse (Romans 12:14, 1 Peter 3:9). The rivers of the Spirit that flow from our lives are always sweet and never bitter. We cannot allow ourselves to turn back and come under unholy influences that would produce the bitter waters of the former life (James 3:10-12).

The Lord Jesus took all justifiable reasons for speaking evil against another person away when He commanded us to bless those who curse us, and to love those who hate us (Matthew 5:44, Luke 6:28). We are living epistles, and our speech should always be as an offering to the Lord and facilitating the ministry of the Spirit (Romans 12:1, 2 Corinthians 3:3, Colossians 4:6). Our job is to get people to Heaven and to help them step into all of the blessings of living in the Spirit. We are called to lay down our lives for all those around us and to show every man the abundant life of the Spirit both in word and deed (Matthew 16:24, Romans 12:21, Colossians 3:17).

Ephesians 4:30

And do not grieve[138] the Holy Spirit[139] of God, by whom you are sealed unto the day of redemption.

Commentary · Ephesians 4:30 · Note 138

The Holy Spirit is grieved by anything that is not holy. Therefore, we must be careful not to give any place to the Devil in our conduct and attitudes. Anything contrary to unity and purity is a violation against the nature of the Holy Spirit and causes Him grief, which we should also feel – because we have been born of the Spirit and united with His person. Whenever the believer pollutes his purified soul with the acts of deceitfulness, vengefulness, covetousness, or filthy thoughts, it is grievous to the Holy Spirit. All of those things named in Ephesians 4:26-29 qualify as things that grieve the Holy Spirit, and they must not be allowed. The most precious thing that we have is the seal of the Holy Spirit. Each one of us should resolve to have the highest order of consecration to walk with God the Holy Ghost. We were purified by the blood of Jesus to give ourselves to being pure even as Christ Jesus is pure (1 John 3:2-3). We must come to understand that God demands that we perfect holiness in the fear of God, for that is what our Teacher has come to instruct us to do (2 Corinthians 7:1, John 14:16-17, 16:13-15). The Holy Spirit was with Israel in the desert. He was afflicted with all of their afflictions, but they rebelled and grieved Him, and He became their enemy (Isaiah 63:10). God was grieved with the nation of Israel because they refused to learn His ways (Hebrews 3:10, 1 Corinthians 10:5-11). Israel continued on in their murmuring and complaint no matter what God did for them. We must be careful lest our hearts become hardened through the deceitfulness of sin (Hebrews 3:13). Through the hardness of heart caused by sin we will lose all sensitivity to the instruction and leadership of the Holy Spirit. We need not pray, “Holy Spirit lead us,” for He is dedicated to this purpose – we need only pray that we be made sensitive and yielded to His guidance and His will. If we would set our hearts on perfect obedience, then we would give far more attention and care toward His precious presence. Unwholesome speech is coupled with grieving the Holy Spirit. Saying bad things against another brother or sister is one of the ways to violate the nature of God and grieve the Holy Spirit. One of the primary focuses of the Holy Spirit is to bring divine unity and oneness to the church. Satan, the divider and accuser of the brethren, does everything he can to stop such love – and we must be careful not to participate with his evil. If we would only be devoted to walking in love and learning the love that the Holy Spirit desires to teach us, we would find ourselves living in the fullness of God. The fullness of God’s glory and power would be accessed and revealed through our lives if we would be devoted to these good things (Ephesians 3:19, 1 John 4:16). God put the Holy Spirit in

charge of leading the people of Israel, that He might make unto Himself a glorious name, and He has sent the Holy Spirit to both live and dwell in us as His people (Isaiah 63:14, John 14:16-17, 16:13-15). There is nothing like living in the overwhelming spirit, soul, and body-shaking glory of the Holy Spirit!

Commentary · Ephesians 4:30 · Note 139

We have been sealed by the Holy Ghost, marked by His presence, and placed under His leadership. By the Holy Spirit, we have been stamped with the character of God, and called to be conformed to His image (Romans 8:29). The seal is the mark that we have been purchased by God and are under His protection (1 Corinthians 6:20, 1 Peter 1:5). We are taught the ways of God by the Holy Spirit, and it is imperative that we learn to be sensitive to His leadership. If we are hard-hearted and self-reliant, then we will grieve Him. Even worse, if we continue to rebel against His conviction and resist Him, we will eventually lose all possibility of hearing His voice (Matthew 13:15, Acts 28:27, Hebrews 3:8, 15, 4:7).

Ephesians 4:31

Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, yelling, and slander be lifted[140] from you, along with all wickedness.

Commentary · Ephesians 4:31 · Note 140

The Greek word 'airo' is used in Mark 16:18 "...you shall take up serpents." It is also translated "taken away," as in 1 Corinthians 5:2 "...that he that has done this deed might be taken away from you." It is essential to remember that God has not called us merely to a place of self-discipline and legal struggle against sin, but to a realm of walking in the Spirit, where we are both aided and empowered with the *mighty* power of the Holy Spirit to deal with all of the wiles of the Devil (Ephesians 6:10-11). When we yield ourselves to the Holy Spirit, He lifts these oppressive things off of us. When we deal with these types of attitudes and dispositions, God gives to us the love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance of the Holy Spirit that rushes through our passions and emotions as rivers of living water to lift up and carry away every inappropriate and ungodly response. However, we must remember that God does not do this against our will. We must actively yield our members to the Holy Spirit and let the living God fill us with the good things of Heaven. Our lives are to be weapons of righteousness unto God as we yield to all those things that pertain to life and godliness, brotherly love, kindness, gentleness and peace (Romans 6:12-14, 2 Peter 1:3).

Ephesians 4:32

But having kindness to one another, being tenderhearted, forgiving one another even also as God through Christ has forgiven you[141].

Commentary · Ephesians 4:32 · Note 141

Division and strife must not be allowed to exist among us as the household of faith. Our fellowship with one another is supposed to be out of the depths of the Father's love. If we allow bitterness in our lives, then it will spring up and defile everyone who comes in contact with it (Hebrews 12:15). There are many

people who have been hurt and offended and we must be loving and forgiving, but at the same time we must insist that these violations against walking in love are not tolerated. God does not run out of forgiveness and mercy for those who are sorry for their bad behavior, and neither should His saints (Matthew 18:21-22). We patiently and affectionately deal with others to help them realize what is good and what is evil (2 Corinthians 2:7-8, Galatians 6:1). When we consider the topic of wickedness, we are drawn to the conclusion that these are desperate and grievous acts against others. Anger, yelling, and slander may seem less than wicked by some people, but God views them differently. We are called to honor and love one another. If we carry hurt or offense we may find ourselves carried away with these wrong behaviors. There are also those who are so insecure that the only way that they think they can gain acceptance is to assassinate others through gossip. Such a person must not only be instructed against their inappropriate behavior, but strengthened and loved in such a way that their insecurity becomes a thing of the past. What may start off as a selfish and self-centered issue quickly comes under the influence of an evil spirit unless it is recognized and repented of. Both learning and teaching others how to walk in the tender-hearted love and forgiveness of God is central to the gospel and the development of the local church. Each of us must walk in this love so that we don't allow hurt to turn into bitterness. Teaching and ministering the things of the Spirit are also done by our behavior. The most important things that we must minister as we are teaching others to observe all that Christ Jesus has commanded us, is the love of Christ (Matthew 28:20, John 13:34-35). If we walk in the Spirit, then we will walk in the love of Jesus. If we will do those things that God has commanded us to do, then we will forgive even as God has forgiven us (Colossians 3:13). Therefore we must realize that all of us must continue to both love and forgive those who are causing any kind of problem. As long as someone is willing to repent and they desire to learn the ways of God, we are instructed to forgive them 490 times per day (Matthew 18:22). Let love and mercy reign!

EPHESIANS

Chapter 5

Ephesians 5:1

Be then imitators[142] of God as loving children,

Commentary · Ephesians 5:1 · Note 142

God's nature is divine in every way. Everything about Him is good, lovely, and wonderful, and we are graced with the privilege of being taught to be like Him (Matthew 5:48, James 1:17, John 16:13-15, 1 Timothy 4:8, 2 Timothy 3:12, Hebrews 8:10-11, 2 Peter 1:3, 6-7). We are commanded to imitate God, walk in the Spirit, and follow Jesus (Ephesians 5:1, Galatians 5:25, Matthew 10:38). The concept of 'mimetai' (to mimic or imitate) goes beyond the idea of being God's friend or follower – it calls for us to act exactly like God. If we are going to act like God, we must be trained to function in His nature and ways. God made all of this possible: He changed our hearts and spirits to be like His, and He sent the Holy Spirit to teach us and train us (John 6:45, 1 Thessalonians 4:9, Jeremiah 31:34). We should be eager to learn and mature! The anointing that we have received reveals the things of God's divine nature to us, and our response should be a hunger and thirst for more (1 John 2:27, Matthew 5:6). As we listen to the Holy Spirit and respond to Him, we become increasingly sensitive to His voice and instruction. Along with sensitivity comes humility and meekness, and these make us even more pliable and cooperative (Matthew 11:29, Philippians 2:5-7). God the Holy Spirit will not do anything outside of love and humility and if we are going to connect with Him then we must learn to only give place to His divine disposition. Being self-willed must have no place in our life. Jesus taught us to deny ourselves and instead do only those things that the Father shows us to do (John 5:19, 5:30, 8:28, 54, 12:49, 15:5, Mark 8:34). Recognizing yourself is a challenging thing, but the Holy Spirit instructs us using both the contrast of our lives to Jesus and the beauty of what He reveals to us about the nature of God. If we are going to flow in the rivers of His Spirit, then we must not flow with the things of ourself. When it is our delight to do His will as the servants of the Lord, being self-willed becomes that much more apparent to us. Living for ourselves and after the strong impulses of what we think and perceive opposes our growth and blessings in God. We can cry out all day long for more anointing and more of this or that, but nothing will change until we are willing to do things God's way. God is faithfully committed to our spiritual maturity, but we must cooperate. If we walk in the love and humility of the Holy Spirit, we will be thrilled with the glory and goodness of God's divine order. We will gladly imitate God and all of His divine behavior, and follow those who follow Jesus and flow in the Holy Ghost (1 Corinthians 4:16, 11:1, Philippians 3:17, 1 Thessalonians 1:6, 2 Thessalonians 3:7, 9, Hebrews 13:7, 17, 1 Peter 5:5). As we walk with God, we will develop an insatiable appetite for more of Heaven! Our adversary, Satan, lays the snares of pride and self-exaltation in our way and we must learn to recognize them. The pride of life must be cast down, for it would pull us away from living like little children following an admired and trusted leader. Many look down on someone who acts like another person, but that is naïve – everybody acts like those who have influenced them, beginning with their parents. In fact, it was as little children that we developed much of our behavior. We learn more as little children than at any other time in our life. It is also during those early developmental years that we were more dependent upon leadership. It is a good thing to be converted and become like a little child who is dependent on God for everything – for out of the mouths

of babes and sucklings, those that must be totally dependent upon God, that strength has been ordained (Psalm 8:2, Matthew 18:3, Luke 18:17). We were converted and became like little children when we were born again. We became as newborn babes so that we might be taught of God and grow up into all His ways (Romans 8:15-16, 1 Peter 2:2). There is a great reward in spiritual maturity and we must not allow anything to draw us away from the prize that is set before us (Philippians 3:14). An independent, rebellious, and stubborn attitude that demands our own way should have no place in our lives – it must be seen as a thief and a robber. We should rise up with a holy indignation and violence against it, because it will indeed destroy everything. There is no way that we can be a co-laborer with Christ Jesus if we are not His devoted followers. If we will walk in the love and humility of the Holy Ghost, we will learn to be ferociously loyal to God and to those who belong to His kingdom. We have been anointed and established together with Christ Jesus. We are called to come into the fullness of His maturity (2 Corinthians 1:21, Ephesians 4:13). We have been given an unspeakable and amazing opportunity to be taught by the Holy Ghost and live in all of God's glory. There could be no greater opportunity afforded men than to have this call. Being empowered to be imitators of God is greater than riches, fame, and all other achievements that men so diligently give themselves to obtain. Why is it that we remain so unbelieving and refuse to forsake everything else – and pursue this heavenly call? Can we truly believe that all God has is ours and yet remain lukewarm, slothful, and negligent? Would we not stand up with ferocious loyalty and face all the great challenges that would attempt to stop us and cast them down like thieves? If we could see that our God is the one who lives in humility, would we not want to be just like Him? The world makes pride and arrogance look strong, but the most high, God almighty, has chosen the way of the lowly (Isaiah 57:15, 66:1-2, 1 Peter 5:5). We have this amazing opportunity to mature into all the fullness of Jesus, but somehow we fail to see much advancement in the ranks (Ephesians 4:12-13, John 14:12, Hebrews 5:12). The Lord is dedicated to building us up and strengthening us so that we can function in all the riches of this inheritance, but we must be willing to forsake our own way and fully entrust our lives to Him (Acts 20:32, Ephesians 3:16, 20, Luke 12:32, Matthew 16:25). We cannot fight our own battles anymore, defend our own causes, or seek our own interests. We must recognize that it is not necessarily faith that we need more of, but simple obedience. With a hunger and thirst for more of the things of the kingdom, all these things in God are ours! Don't make the mistake of making your calling in God anything less than what it is – you are predestined to walk in the fullness of Jesus (Romans 8:29). Commit yourself today to imitate God and behave just like the Holy Ghost.

Ephesians 5:2

and walk in love, even as also Christ loved us[143] and gave himself over for us, an offering and sacrifice to God as a sweet-smelling fragrance.

Commentary · Ephesians 5:2 · Note 143

There is no greater definition and witness to the presence of God in our lives than the manifestation of His love (John 13:34, 1 John 3:16). The love that we are to walk in can only be defined by how Jesus loved us, and we are to love one another even as we have been loved by Him (1 John 4:11). In knowing

the love of Christ that passes knowledge, we are filled with all the fullness of God (Ephesians 3:19). As each individual in the church walks in the love of God, the church increases and is built up to be the full manifestation of the glorious church that Jesus purchased with His own blood (Ephesians 3:19, 4:15-16). As we dwell in love, we dwell in God, and the glory of His presence is manifested to a world that is held in darkness (John 15:4, 1 John 4:9, 16). Walking in the unity of His love reveals to all men that Jesus is the Savior of the world, and that we are His disciples (John 13:35, 17:23, 1 John 4:16). If we imitate God and walk in His love as Jesus did, then our lives will be a sweet-smelling offering unto the Lord (Romans 12:1, 2 Corinthians 2:15, Ephesians 5:2). The offerings that were acceptable to the Lord in the Old Testament brought great pleasure to our heavenly Father. He regarded them as a sweet smell and a beautiful fragrance. Offerings that were offered with a blemished heart, or if the offering itself was blemished, had the opposite effect. In Christ Jesus, we are to present our bodies as an offering that is a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God (Romans 12:1). Every dimension of our service to God in Christ Jesus is as a sweet smelling sacrifice to our heavenly Father. As we participate in ministry, it is regarded as a sweet smelling offering (2 Corinthians 2:15). When we give our money and resources to the work of the ministry it is an offering that is a sweet smell to the Lord (Philippians 4:18). However, above all these things, it is our consecration to walking in the love of Jesus that fully describes what it means to live our lives as an offering that is pleasing to the Lord (Ephesians 5:2).

Ephesians 5:3

But fornication and impurity[144] of any kind, or covetousness[145], shall not be named once among you as true holy ones.

Commentary · Ephesians 5:3 · Note 144

Here are named three acts of iniquity that are particularly offensive to the love of God and the nature of Christ: fornication (‘pornea’), impurity (‘akatharsia’), and the insatiable drive to have more things (‘pleonexia’). Once again, God has defined acts of sin so that we may be careful not to participate with things that belong to the demonic and cursed realm (2 Peter 2:14, Ephesians 2:2-3, Romans 1:18-32, 1 Corinthians 5:9-11, 6:9-10, Galatians 5:19-21, Colossians 3:5-9, 1 Thessalonians 4:3-7, 1 Timothy 1:9-10, 2 Timothy 3:2-5, Titus 3:3). While fornication and sexual immorality may have obvious meanings, impurity may not. Like fornication, the acts of impurity of any kind cover a broad category of sins. This Greek word was first used in the New Testament by Jesus to compare the spiritual condition of the religious leaders to the decaying remains of a dead person inside of a tomb (Matthew 23:27). This Greek word is derived from ‘akathartos,’ which means “unclean” in a ceremonial sense and also in a moral sense. There is a corruption and decay that is found in spiritual impurity. It is a disease that will ultimately destroy everything that is good and that pertains to life. The acts of impurity refer to every immoral act that man can commit. Paul used this word to refer to the acts that God gave men over to – to defile their bodies through practices of homosexuality and every type of destructive lust (Romans 1:24-27). Paul also used it as a means to communicate the kind of deeds committed by those who are alienated from the life of God (Ephesians 4:18-19). Through the power of the new birth, we received the

divine nature, which is no longer under the rule of a satanic desire, but has "escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust" (2 Peter 1:4). These fleshly lust still war against us, but we have all authority to stand against them (2 Corinthians 10:3-4, 1 Peter 2:11, 1 John 2:16, Ephesians 6:10-11). Being filled with the Spirit and the fruits of righteousness leaves no room for the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eye, or the pride of life to enter (Galatians 5:16, 1 John 2:16). When the abundant life of Jesus is a wellspring within us, and the fire of God is the glory that surrounds us, everything that pertains to life and godliness is what we crave (2 Peter 1:3). As God's saints, we have been honored with the ability to imitate God and walk in the nature of our Savior, Jesus Christ.

Commentary · Ephesians 5:3 · Note 145

The Greek word 'pleonexia' may be translated as "greediness," "insatiety," "avarice," or "covetousness." However, it simply conveys a "desire to have more." It is derived from a compound word 'pleon-ektes', which literally means "have more." Jesus commanded us to guard against 'pleonexia' (covetousness) (Luke 12:15). In this verse, it is placed right alongside of sexual depravity and impurity, and is equated to idolatry.

Ephesians 5:4

Also, obscenity[146] and foolish talking or joking, which is entirely out of place, but instead thanksgiving[147].

Commentary · Ephesians 5:4 · Note 146

The Greek word is 'aischrotes,' and it is found only here in the Bible. It is derived from the word 'aischros,' which means "base." The definition given by the "Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains" is "to act in defiance of social and moral standards, with resulting disgrace, embarrassment, and shame." It refers to to shameful acts and deeds, and indecent behaviors.

Commentary · Ephesians 5:4 · Note 147

The way of God's people will be blessed if they find themselves constantly giving thanks. This would safeguard them against speaking evil of anyone and would have the most positive effect on every confession of their mouth. The Greek word is 'eucharistia' from which we derived the word eucharist, which is at the very heart of our communion with God. It is believed by some that the use of 'eucharistia' is the same as the usage of Hebrew blessing 'barak,' which means "be blessed." However, in both classical and Koine Greek it means "to give thanks." Jesus gave thanks when He multiplied the loaves and fishes in John 8, and afterward the great miracle of the multiplication of bread took place. The giving of prayer and praise, which may be classified as a eulogia, is also viewed as giving thanks by Paul in 1 Corinthians 14:17. The Hebrew word for giving thanks is 'todah.' There is a 'todah' offering, which is part of the peace offering. It is through the offering of thanksgiving and peace that we have fellowship and communion with God (Leviticus 7:12-15).

Ephesians 5:5

Indeed you recognize[148] and know[149] this: that all fornicators, or impure, or a covetous one, who is an idolater, have no inheritance[150] in the Kingdom of Christ and God.

Commentary · Ephesians 5:5 · Note 148

Both of the Greek words for "know" are used side-by-side in this verse. The first is 'oida,' which may also be translated as "perceive," "recognize," "understand," or "to comprehend the meaning of." 'Oida' is the perfect form of the verb 'eido,' which is not used. This verb occurs here in the second person, plural, perfect, active, imperative form 'iste'. It has three other synonyms in the New Testament: 'ginosko,' 'epistamai,' and 'suniemi,' but the two most common words used for "know" are 'ginosko' and 'oida,' which at times are used interchangeably. An example of these two verbs being used interchangeably is found in the statement in John 8:19, "If you knew me you would know my Father also." Here, 'oida' is used for both "knew" and "know." In John 14:7, 'ginosko' is used for both words. Raymond E. Brown concludes with respect to a sharp distinction between these two verbs: "The evangelist (John) is not so precise as his commentators would make him, ("The Gospel According to John – The Anchor Bible" page 514).

Commentary · Ephesians 5:5 · Note 149

The two verbs that are most commonly translated as "know" are found here in the phrase "iste ginoskontes.' As previously stated, 'iste' and 'ginosko' may be used interchangeably, although some make an argument that 'ginosko' refers to knowledge that comes as a result of experience ("to come to know"), whereas 'iste' refers to what a person "knows" without effort – instinctively or by seeing. The Greek verb 'ginosko' is found 223 times in the Majority Text, and the Authorized Version translated it as "know" 196 times, whereas 'oida' is found 666 times and is translated as "know" 282 times.

Commentary · Ephesians 5:5 · Note 150

There are far too many people who believe that they can live wrongly and still be right with God. However, nothing could be further from the truth. Jesus came and rescued us from the power of sin. He died at Calvary so that we could be liberated to live in His kingdom (Colossians 1:13). Yet there are those that believe another gospel. They still have a love for sin and iniquity, and they preach a gospel that declares that sin is now okay. Paul said that those who practice such things have no inheritance in God's kingdom. They twist the scriptures and say that because there is no law, there is no sin – tell that to Noah's generation (Romans 5:13, Genesis 6:5-7)! Those who do such things cannot call themselves the sons of God, and they cannot say that they are walking in, and being led by, the Holy Spirit (Galatians 5:19-23). Those who do such things cannot say that they are doing the will of the Father, for we know what both the Father and Christ Jesus will say: "Depart from me you workers of iniquity – I never knew you" (Matthew 7:23, Luke 13:27). If men are willing to continue sinning and justifying a lifestyle that remains under the control of demon power, then they are not born of God (John 1:12, Galatians 4:7, Romans 8:29, 1 John 2:4, 3:9-10, 5:18). Our inheritance in the Kingdom of God and Christ does not

begin after we die. Our inheritance has already been made available to us. We received the down payment of our inheritance when we were given the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 1:13-14, 2 Corinthians 5:5, Luke 11:13). We were born of the Spirit so that we could enter into this glorious realm of the Kingdom of God and of Christ (John 3:3, 5, Colossians 1:13). The kingdom authority was supplied to us, as the sons of God, to advance the cause of Christ to every creature on the face of the Earth. Jesus Christ, our Lord and Savior, was manifested to destroy the works of the Devil. That is why everywhere He went devils were cast out, sicknesses were cured, and diseases were healed. The message of the Kingdom of God is a good news message: testifying in word and deed that we have been delivered from the authority of darkness, and that Christ Jesus now reigns supreme (Ephesians 1:21, 1 Peter 3:22, Philippians 2:9-10, Colossians 2:10, 15)! As part of our inheritance, Jesus gave us the power and authority to fully represent Him (Ephesians 2:6, 1:19, Romans 6:4, John 20:21, 17:21-23). We are those who stand in His place on the Earth, to advance the Kingdom of God by driving out every evil spirit and all those things that are opposed to the rule of Christ Jesus (2 Corinthians 5:20, 3:6, Acts 26:17-18). However, if we do not live out the consecrated lives described in verses 1-2 and 8-9, then we will not walk in the inheritance that God has given. We will say to devils "Go," but they will not listen. We will attempt to exercise divine authority, but will have none. Yet on the other hand, if we will walk in obedience to God and be endued with the life and obedience of Christ, we will find ourselves growing and maturing in all of the glorious power of the sons of God – so that the will of the Father will be done now on Earth as it is in Heaven.

Ephesians 5:6

Let none deceive you[151] with vain words, because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

Commentary · Ephesians 5:6 · Note 151

We live in perilous times. As we approach the end of Satan's reign of terror, sin and iniquity abound more and more. The voice of the one who deceives the whole world grows louder, and his war against the souls of men intensifies (2 Timothy 3:13). The primary enemy of Satan on Earth is the church. If he can't stop the church, he will do everything he can to neutralize its power. One of Satan's great deceptive works is to slither into the gospel of grace, and propagate that the wages of sin is not death (opposite of Romans 6:23). From the beginning, his lie has been "you shall not die" (Genesis 3:4). The apostle John also said, "Let no one deceive you" (1 John 3:7). There were many seducers in the early days of the church, teaching that a person did not have to live in holiness and righteousness (opposite of 1 John 2:26-29). They so twisted the gospel of life that they taught that the grace of God was magnified by God's redeemed people continuing to be sinners once they were saved (Romans 6:1-2). Today they twist Paul's words and say "there is none righteous," even though they have the plain testimony that the unrighteous will not inherit the Kingdom of God (1 Corinthians 6:9-10, Ephesians 5:5, Galatians 5:21). These liars, under demonic influence, attempt to convince the unlearned that John taught that we are deceivers if we say that we have been made righteous to walk in righteousness, but John made it very clear that those who walk in sin have no fellowship with Christ (1 John 1:6, 3:9-10, 5:18). John's message

and the message of the entire Bible is: he that sins is of the Devil, and the one who does righteousness is of God. Everyone has the right to choose – either sin that produces death, or the gift of God that produces life. What we must watch out for is the lie that a person can continue in sin and be right with God. While it is true that the Lord will forgive us of our sins and will teach us to walk in righteousness, it is a great deception to believe that it is okay with God for us to live the life of sinners. God makes our heart feel convicted over sin and hatred over evil. The god of this world (who is the spirit of disobedience) would deceive us and try to make us believe that disobedience can be acceptable to God. There are many who have lied against the truth and allowed sin to callous their hearts (Hebrews 3:13). They call conviction condemnation, and steal godly sorrow from the hearts of those who would repent. They make no distinction between being led by the Spirit of holiness or being led by the spirit of disobedience. They would mix light with darkness, good with evil, and the Holy Spirit with devils (2 Corinthians 6:14-16). We all must choose whose side we are on. If we will put our trust in the Lord, we will walk as children of the light instead of sons of disobedience (Ephesians 5:8, 1 John 1:7). God's wrath is revealed against all who have pleasure in unrighteousness (2 Thessalonians 2:12, 2 Peter 2:13, Romans 1:18).

Ephesians 5:7

Become not then their co –inheritors[152].

Commentary · Ephesians 5:7 · Note 152

There is an inheritance for those who continue to walk in sin – the wrath of God. The Greek word 'summetochos' is found two times in Ephesians, with the other being in Ephesians 3:6 – we can either be partakers with Christ or partakers with the wicked. The warning is clear: if the saints commit the same sins as the ungodly (sons of disobedience), then they will be partakers of the wrath of God (Ephesians 5:6). If we are partakers with the children of disobedience in the acts of disobedience, then we will be coinheritors or partakers with them in their everlasting punishment also. How much of a partnership are God's people allowed to have with those who practice sin? Paul demands that there be no partnership, but a rebuke (Ephesians 5:11). Furthermore, if a person refers to themself as a Christian and yet continues to practice sin, or even worse, condone it, they are not to be allowed in the company of the saints (1 Corinthians 5:11, 6:9, 2 Corinthians 6:14, Galatians 6:7, Ephesians 5:6, 1 John 3:7-8, 2 John 1:10-11).

Ephesians 5:8

Indeed you were once darkness, but now light[153] in the Lord – walk as children of light[154] –

Commentary · Ephesians 5:8 · Note 153

What does it look like to walk as children of light? It would be the exact opposite of our life and conduct before being redeemed. To walk in the light of the Lord is to live in the presence of the Lord (Psalms 4:6, 36:9, 44:3, 89:15, Isaiah 2:5). To walk in darkness is to be alienated from God (Ephesians 4:18). Through the salvation that is in Christ Jesus, we have been turned from darkness to light and from Satan unto God

(Acts 26:18). Satan personifies darkness as Christ Jesus personifies light. Christ Jesus showed us the lifestyle of walking in the light, and He said that if we followed Him, then we would walk in that light also (John 8:12). John's instruction to us was to walk in the light as He (Christ Jesus) is in the light, and as a result, we would have fellowship with one another. Walking in the light is evidence that we have been cleansed from all of our sins through the blood of Jesus (1 John 1:7). We are compelled to walk in purity and holiness, not because of the coming judgement, but because of the radical change of nature that took place when we were born again. God is light, and because we were born of Him, we are now children of the light. We once belonged to the domain of darkness, but now we belong to the kingdom of Christ Jesus (Colossians 1:13). How can those who have escaped such corruption live any longer in it? Darkness is not just a spiritual domain, but a state of existence – thus we were once darkness. Only through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus are we liberated from that darkness of sin and death, so that we may now say that we are light. Our behavior must now conform to our new identity. Our light has come and the glory of the Lord is upon us – let us walk in His glory (Isaiah 60:1, John 17:22-23)!

Commentary · Ephesians 5:8 · Note 154

Jesus Christ is first and foremost the true Light that has come into the world (John 1:7-9, 8:12, 9:5). Jesus came to give this light to every man that is in the world (Luke 1:79, 2:32, John 1:9, Matthew 4:16). Those who believe are empowered to walk in the light as He is in the light (1 John 1:7, Ephesians 5:8, John 8:12). It is God's desire that His redeemed saints be the light of the world, a city set upon a hill so that all men might see Jesus (Matthew 5:14-16, John 12:36, Acts 13:47, 1 Thessalonians 5:5). Light is used figuratively of truth, life, vision, redemption, purity, and righteousness (John 1:4, 11:9, 12:35, 46, Luke 11:34-36, Acts 26:18, 2 Corinthians 4:6, 1 Peter 2:9, 1 John 1:5). Light is a metaphor for righteousness and is set in contrast to darkness and evil (Matthew 6:23, Luke 11:34, John 3:19, Romans 13:12, 2 Corinthians 6:14, 1 John 2:9). The unrighteous are unwilling to come to the light, because it reveals the truth and reproves unrighteous deeds (John 3:20). In the light, all of God's children are secure, being instructed of the Lord, and the world has a testimony of God's love and judgment. To understand the true meaning of light, we look to the fact that it represents who God is in His moral perfection and holiness.

Ephesians 5:9

for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, and righteousness[155], and truth,

Commentary · Ephesians 5:9 · Note 155

If we are the children of God, then the fruits of our lives will demonstrate that we are led by the Spirit (Romans 8:14). The fruits, or evidence, of the Spirit are the proofs of who we are – they bear witness that we have been born again (John 3:3-6). The fruits of the Spirit that reveal that our nature has been changed, and that we have made Christ Jesus our Master, are in all goodness, righteousness, and truth. There is nothing more wonderful than living in God's goodness. We are empowered by the Holy Spirit in an atmosphere of His grace with every good and perfect gift (James 1:17). Now, in the blessings of God's goodness, we live our lives in righteousness and truth. As much as the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of truth,

He is also the Spirit of righteousness. Those whose hearts have been changed want nothing other than those good and right things that belong to the One who has called us to glory and virtue (2 Peter 1:3). The goodness, righteousness, and truth that is supplied to us by the Holy Spirit finds its paragon and full expression in Jesus. If anyone would want to find a reason or an excuse not to have these things reigning in their life, it is evidence that their nature has not changed. These heavenly things are the greatest blessing that Father could bestow upon our lives. He has empowered us with His abiding presence. By the excellence of the power of God in us, His goodness, truth, and righteousness flow out like rivers. A life governed by the laws of the Spirit of life is the abundant and everlasting life found only in Christ Jesus (Romans 8:4, 2 Corinthians 4:7, 5:21). Righteousness is the chief characteristic of the Kingdom of God, and should receive the foremost attention of those consecrated to the life of Christ (Matthew 6:33, Romans 14:17). Righteousness is to be the focus of our faith and the desire of our hearts (Romans 10:6, 10, Galatians 3:11, Philippians 3:9). In His lovingkindness, God blessed us with the gift of life and righteousness. He has raised us from the dead and awakened us from our sleep to live in righteousness and sin no more (1 Corinthians 15:34, Psalms 4:3-4, Luke 1:73-75, Ephesians 4:24, 5:14). Should we call the gift of life legalism? Can we be born again and scorn what God calls good? We have been given the grace to live under the administration of righteousness and be taught by God Himself. Surrounded by His glory, and protected by His love, He gave us His own armor of righteousness that we might have a defense from all those evil things that would otherwise destroy us, on our right hand and on our left (2 Corinthians 3:9, 6:7, 1 Timothy 6:11). Living in righteousness is living the life of God. That is the light that the world so desperately needs to see (1 John 2:29, 3:7, Matthew 5:14-16).

Ephesians 5:10

proving what is pleasing to the Lord.

Ephesians 5:11

And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove it[156].

Commentary · Ephesians 5:11 · Note 156

You cannot mix the world with the things of God and get Biblical results. The Lord uses the most basic explanations possible so that everyone can perfectly understand. As certain as there is light and darkness in the natural earthly realm, there is also light and darkness in the spiritual realm. God is light, and in Him is no darkness at all (1 John 1:5). Jesus came as the light of the world to demonstrate to every person what walking in the light really is. The call of God to all of us is to come and walk in the light as He is in the light (1 John 1:7). As surely as there are fruits of righteousness, which testify that we are in the light, there are also fruits that reveal that a person is walking in darkness. Darkness has no more fellowship with light than the night has with the day or than the Spirit of God has with demon spirits (2 Corinthians 6:14-15). These two have their own separate realms and never occupy the same place at any time, physically or spiritually. To say that we know the Lord who dwells in the light, yet continue to walk in darkness, is to believe a lie and ultimately be damned (1 John 1:6, 2 Thessalonians 2:11, Romans 1:18,

6:21-23). All those things that are empty and desolate belong to the chaos of darkness. In this unfruitful realm, men are subjugated by the prince of darkness by participating with sin and iniquity. It is in darkness that the spirit of disobedience reigns. Obedience to God and the ability to live the life of Jesus cannot be found in the realm of darkness. In darkness, sin is the way of life, and it has dominion over the souls of those that are imprisoned there. The fruits of darkness are the works of the flesh: fornication, uncleanness, covetousness and all other sin and rebellion, which testify of an unredeemed life. Everyone wants to claim that God knows their heart, and indeed He does, but the fruits of a person's life also testifies to the conditions of their heart (Matthew 7:16, James 3:11-12). If you want to be right with God, then have no fellowship with the works of darkness. Instead, arise and shine with the fruits of goodness, righteousness, and truth. Your Light has come, therefore walk in the Light, Christ Jesus, and find yourself living the abundant life of divine health and all spiritual blessings that God promised!

Ephesians 5:12

For it is shameful to speak of the things they do in secret.

Ephesians 5:13

And all things being exposed by the light are made manifest.

Ephesians 5:14

For everything that reveals is light, therefore say, "wake up, oh sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you[157]."

Commentary · Ephesians 5:14 · Note 157

If we are walking as the children of the light, then it is our responsibility to awaken people out of their sleep. The one who is asleep is dead, and it is only by the proclamation of the gospel that they can be made alive. It was not out of the ordinary to refer to someone who was dead as being asleep (Job 14:10-12, Psalm 13:3, Isaiah 14:18-20, Jeremiah 51:39-40, Daniel 12:2, Matthew 9:24, 27:52, Mark 5:39, Luke 8:52, John 11:11-13, Acts 7:60, 13:36, 1 Corinthians 11:30, 15:18-20, 51, Ephesians 5:14, 1 Thessalonians 4:13-15, 2 Peter 3:4). Sleep, death, and darkness describe those that have not encountered the glorious light of the gospel of Jesus Christ that changes the heart of men. Yet at the same time, Paul refers to those Christians who had been entangled with sin in the same way. He writes to the Thessalonians saying, "you are all the children of the light and children of the day: we are not of the night or of the darkness. Therefore, let us not sleep as others do, but let us watch and be sober" (1 Thessalonians 5:5-6). God's people must not allow themselves to be lulled back into a state of being asleep but must cast off the works of darkness that would come to overthrow them by putting on the armor of light (Romans 13:12-14). Those who are in the world are in a different realm from those who are in the kingdom of Jesus Christ (Colossians 1:13, Ephesians 2:6). Those who are in the world are in darkness, whereas those who are in Christ Jesus are in the light. Those in the world are dead, while those in Christ are alive. If you are awake, then you are walking in the Spirit and walking in the light even as

He is in the light. There can be no mixture of darkness with light or of death with life. These things are not some deep hidden wisdom, but of the most fundamental insights belonging to even the most simple minded. Yet, this fundamental wisdom has been forsaken by many, and the distinction between that which pleases God and that which His wrath abides on, is distorted. Jesus is the Light of the world, and men walk in darkness without Him. The light of His presence brings conviction and reveals sin (John 3:19-20, John 16:8, Ephesians 5:13). It is only by the anointed preaching of the cross that men may be awakened by the Holy Ghost (Romans 10:13-15). Anyone who hears the gospel and is willing to call upon the name of Jesus will encounter the transforming light of His glory (2 Corinthians 3:18, 2 Corinthians 4:7). The grace of God that brings salvation appears to anyone who in an honest and sincere heart calls on the name of Jesus (Titus 2:11). The miracle of His manifest presence brings the miracle of the new birth, in which we are raised from spiritual death unto life (Colossians 3:1, Romans 6:4). Now we are light in the Lord and are to go everywhere announcing to all who are asleep saying, wake up (Ephesians 5:8, 14)! Those who respond to the preaching of the gospel will encounter the light of the presence of Jesus who is the light of life (John 1:4, 8:12, 1 John 1:5, 7).

Ephesians 5:15

Therefore, watch by what means[158] you walk accurately[159], not as unwise but as wise,

Commentary · Ephesians 5:15 · Note 158

The word ‘pos’ may be translated as “how,” “somehow,” “in some way,” or “by what means.” It is an interrogative reference that means: “How? By what means?” (“Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains”). Clearly, Paul is directing the attention of the saint to the fact that they will only be able to imitate God by walking in the Spirit, as this is one of Paul’s chief themes in every epistle.

Commentary · Ephesians 5:15 · Note 159

The Greek word ‘akribos’ means “to conform to a strict or exact standard.” It is the call to “walk accurately.” God wants us to walk exactly as He has purposed. “The Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament: Based on Semantic Domains” (New York: United Bible Societies 1988, 1989) defines this word as “pertaining to strict conformity to a norm or standard, involving both detail and completeness.” It can also be translated as “accurate,” “accurately,” “strict,” or “strictly.” It is used both ways in the Bible: Apollos taught *accurately* the facts about Jesus (Acts 18:25), and Paul lived as a member of the *strictest* party of his religion (Acts 26:5).

Ephesians 5:16

redeeming the time, for the day is evil.

Ephesians 5:17

For this reason, do not be foolish, but understand the will of the Lord.

Ephesians 5:18

And be not intoxicated with wine[160], as one unsaved[161], but be continually[162] filled with the Spirit[163],

Commentary · Ephesians 5:18 · Note 160

People in the church today are caught more in the controversy over drinking alcohol than ever before. Yet, what could more plainly reveal the will of God than this, "be not drunk"? Then question then follows, what is the definition of drunk? If you define "drunk" according to the United States law regarding blood alcohol content, then it is little more than one glass of wine or one twelve-ounce beer. However, this is convoluted by many additional factors such as age, nationality, gender, hydration, and many other physiological and psychological variables. Drunk, by definition, means to "be intoxicated." In the days of Paul, wine was diluted with water to ensure that the consumer would not become intoxicated. This was not only a strict practice of "orthodox Jews," being a violation of the Talmud and the standards of the rabbis, but was even practiced by the ancient Greeks – diluting the wine up to 1:20 with water (Shabbath 77a; 2 Maccabees 15:39; Homer, "The Odyssey," Book IX, 208f; Pliny, "Natural History," Book XIV, Chapter iv, 44; Plutarch, "Symposiacs" Book III, Question ix).

Commentary · Ephesians 5:18 · Note 161

The Greek word used here is 'asotia.' It is a compound word of 'a' and 'sozo.' This word literally means "not saved" or "unsaved." The Greek word 'sozo' is the primary New Testament word used to describe the salvation that comes through the name of Jesus Christ. The Greek letter '**α**' is used just as "a" is in the English language as a negative prefix to emphasize the complete absence of something. The context of 'asotia' in 1 Peter 4:3-4 leaves no doubt concerning the meaning of this word: it means "unsaved," referring to those who have not been made a new creation. This word is found one time in the Septuagint Old Testament, and it translates the Hebrew word 'zala', which means "worthless," or "vile." It is found three times in the New Testament: Ephesians 5:18, Titus 1:6, and 1 Peter 4:4, where it is translated as "riot" by the Authorized Version. The idea of drinking alcohol is condemned in the Old Testament, as exemplified by these scriptures: "Do not look at the wine when it is red, when it gives its color in the cup, when it goes down smoothly; at its last it bites like a snake, and it stings like a basilisk. Your eyes shall look on strange women, and your heart shall speak perverse things" (Proverbs 23:31-33, Green's Literal Translation). Also, "But they also have gone astray by wine, and have erred through fermented drink; priest and prophet have erred through fermented drink; they have been swallowed by wine; they strayed from fermented drink; they err in seeing; they stumble in judgment;" (Isaiah 28:7, Green's Literal Translation). Furthermore, no one could come into the presence of the Lord if they had partaken of wine or strong (fermented) drink, under penalty of death by the Lord (Leviticus 10:9, Ezekiel 44:21). During Old Testament times, the strongest alcoholic drink that they could possibly make would be equivalent to our modern day beer. The word drunkenness, which is condemned as one of the seventeen works of the flesh, may literally be translated as "intoxication." Paul announced twice in scripture that those who practice getting intoxicated have no inheritance in the Kingdom of God (Galatians 5:21, 1 Corinthians

6:10). Paul tells the church to not even eat with someone who practices intoxication (1 Corinthians 5:11). Intoxication is marked as a practice of the children of disobedience a total of 10 times in the New Testament (Romans 13:13, 1 Peter 4:3, 1 Corinthians 6:10, 1 Corinthians 5:11, Luke 21:34, Ephesians 5:18, 1 Thessalonians 5:7, Matthew 24:49, Luke 12:45).

Commentary · Ephesians 5:18 · Note 162

There is only one way to enjoy the abundant life that has been provided for us through Christ Jesus, and that is to be continually filled with the Spirit. We have to deal with so many things in the fast-paced life of keeping up with our jobs and the issues related to our houses and families. If we are not careful, we will find ourselves constantly overwhelmed with the cares of this life that choke the Word of God and prevent it from bringing forth the fruits of the Spirit in our lives. However, if we are willing to cry out to God throughout the day and yield to the Holy Spirit through prayer and praise, the Holy Spirit will fill every dimension of our lives with His glory. In this fellowship, we will not only be so much more happy and pleasant, but we will be filled with the divine ability to move in wisdom and faith instead of human frustration. If you will be willing to give yourself to this lifestyle of constantly being filled with the Spirit, then you will step right into the pages of the Bible as you move into the realm of the unseen where God dwells (2 Corinthians 4:18, Romans 8:5-6). All we have to do is to be willing to take a drink of the water of the Spirit, and God will provide for us rivers of inspiration and goodness of the Spirit flowing forth through our emotions and passions (John 7:37-39). At some point, God's people are going to have to make a shift from living in the natural realm to living by the Spirit (Romans 8:9, Galatians 5:25). There are so many wonderful things that God has for us to experience and do, but if we will not let the Holy Spirit take control of our lives, then we will never really know what they are nor enjoy the glorious life that is like days of Heaven on Earth (1 Corinthians 2:12, Deuteronomy 11:21). Will you commit your life to the Spirit of God today and begin to worship Him through psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, and be what God has created you to be? If you are willing you will find a realm of glory that will continually overwhelm your soul with the goodness of God.

Commentary · Ephesians 5:18 · Note 163

The meaning of being "filled with the Spirit" was established in the first two chapters of Acts. On the day of Pentecost, when the disciples were baptized in the Holy Spirit, the scripture says they were "filled with the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2:4). Because that the exact same thing happened at the house of Cornelius, we also know that we can equate being "filled with the Holy Spirit" to the "gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 11:15, 10:45). The sign of "being filled with the Spirit," or the "gift of God," was tongues. Being "filled with the Spirit" is not a one-time event, as indicated by both this passage of scripture and other facts presented by the experiences of the Apostles. When the Apostles were in need of boldness because of the threats of the elders, they prayed and were filled with the Holy Spirit again (Acts 4:31). Also, if being filled with the Spirit is the means by which tongues are uttered, then the life of Paul exemplified a continual filling – Paul was someone who evidently spoke in tongues continually, as he said to the Corinthian church, "I speak with tongues more than you all" (1 Corinthians 14:18). The expression of

being filled with the Spirit was active in Paul, both in prayer and singing (1 Corinthians 14:15). Tongues are established as the utterance of the Spirit in Acts 2:4. Also, tongues can only be spoken as the Holy Spirit gives utterance. As a supernatural gift, it must be given the same status as miracles or signs and wonders. The only possible way to turn water into wine, or to walk on water, is by the miracle power of the Holy Spirit. Though these are gifts given to the believer, it is only by the will and power of the Spirit of God that they operate. The Bible does not teach us to walk in our own will and desire, but instead to be totally surrendered to the will and mind of the Spirit. God has truly given us gifts, but only the Holy Spirit knows how to operate them. When Jesus described being filled with the Spirit, He did so with an allegory. He used rivers of living water flowing out as an allegory to describe the expressions of the Spirit in the believer. He also compared our desire for these rivers with thirst. When the believer drinks of the water (which is the gift of God – John 4:10), the rivers flow out of them. The rivers that Jesus referred to could not be revealed until He was glorified (John 7:39, Acts 2:33). These rivers were observed as tongues, for this was the sign of Pentecost. The allegory of thirst expresses to us a constant and ongoing need. If we believe that being filled with the Spirit is a one-time event that initiates the believer into Christianity, then the allegory that Jesus used does not make sense. Salvation certainly is the one-time event that results in a person becoming a new creation, and the allegory that Jesus used for that was being born – truly a one-time event (John 3:3-6). However, drinking is something that we do regularly for the need of our physical body. In keeping with the allegory then, we must also drink regularly in the Spirit for the need of our spiritual life, and when we drink, a river will begin to flow. Thus Paul commanded those at Ephesus who were already baptized in the Holy Spirit to be filled with the Spirit continually.

Ephesians 5:19

speaking to yourselves in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs[164], singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,

Commentary · Ephesians 5:19 · Note 164

Being filled with the Holy Spirit leads to divinely-inspired expressions of joy and thanksgiving – one of which is singing spiritual songs. There is no other definition for singing spiritual songs than the one that Paul gave to the Corinthians: it is singing in the Spirit, which is singing in the heavenly language – in contrast to singing with the understanding (1 Corinthians 14:15). To attempt to understand spiritual songs outside the context of the utterance of the Holy Spirit is to willingly step away from the foundation that Paul laid out regarding the spiritual in 1 Corinthians 14:1. Paul describes two ways to pray, sing, and speak in church by the Holy Spirit: one with prophetic utterance that can be understood by all (1 Corinthians 14:3-6, 9-12, 15, 19, 22, 24-26, 29-31, 39), and the other with the language of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 14:2, 4-6, 13-14, 16-18, 22, 27, 39). Psalms, which are by definition classified as prophetic utterances, must not be only understood as singing the psalms given in the Old Testament. Paul certainly groups psalms in the category of prophetic utterances, which take place in the church by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 14:26). This does not eliminate the possibility of singing the psalms of the Old Testament, but we should not exclusively place it in this category either, especially

when we recognize the emphasis that Paul places on prophetic utterances in the church (1 Corinthians 12:10, 14:3-6, 22-32, 39, Colossians 3:16). Somehow we fail to realize the relevance of the utterance of the Holy Spirit that was poured out upon all flesh (Acts 2:4, 16-18, 33). The activity of the Holy Spirit in our lives is to be like rivers of living water rushing through the depths of our being (John 7:38-39). We have been given the ability to worship God by the Holy Spirit, not out of a religious and liturgical tradition. We put the songs written by a man before our eyes, read aloud the lyrics, and call it the spiritual sacrifice that God desires. Such a position makes no sense at all in a church baptized in the fire of the Holy Ghost and filled with divine glory. To believe that anything can be defined as spiritual and somehow function without the direct inspiration of the Holy Spirit is a serious misunderstanding of scripture. Certainly the psalms of the Old Testament, the hymns of the scripture, and those songs given by the Holy Spirit to someone in the church can by used in worship, but to fail to make room for the inspiration of the Holy Spirit to sing a new song is to miss out on another dimension of the wellsprings of life that Christ Jesus desires to be express through His church (1 Corinthians 14:15, Psalm 33:3, 40:3, 96:1, 98:1, 144:9, 149:1, Isaiah 42:10, Revelation 5:9, 14:3).

Ephesians 5:20

giving thanks[165] at all times for all things to God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,

Commentary · Ephesians 5:20 · Note 165

The giving of thanks is not only recognizing that God is leading, protecting, and providing for you, but it also accesses the realm of the Spirit where miracles take place. The first time this word ‘eucharisteo,’ (“giving thanks”) is used in the New Testament is in Matthew 15:36. It was by this giving of thanks that the miraculous event of the multiplication of the seven loaves and a few fish took place. The very next time that this is used is when Jesus took the cup on Passover: He gave thanks and declared, “this is my blood of the New Testament” (Matthew 26:26-28). The blood and body of Christ Jesus represent our communion and fellowship with God (1 Corinthians 10:16, John 6:53-58). It is this eucharist, or communion, that should give us confidence that the Holy Spirit is leading and guiding us into all truth. Therefore, whatever situation we find ourselves in, all things are working together for our good (Romans 8:28). There were many adverse situations that Israel found themselves in during the first few months of their travel from Egypt to the promise land. Unfortunately, they were unwilling to recognize that God was leading them and protecting them, and as a result they were unthankful and murmured against the situation and their leadership, which ultimately was directed at God Himself. There is a warning in the book of Hebrews that we should not fall into the same state of unbelief, lest we end up like those unthankful Israelites (Hebrew 3:7-19). Romans 1:21 drives home the same point, emphasizing that a lack of thankfulness is a chief characteristic of the unbeliever. A passage of scripture in Colossians that is almost a perfect match to this passage here in Ephesians says, “whatsoever you do in word or deed, do it all in the name of Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him” (Colossians 3:17). If we will allow the Holy Spirit to fill us with the heavenly realm, then the Word of Christ will dwell in us, and we will

view things from a perspective of faith and realize that all things are working together for our good. Be certain of this, that whatever situation you find yourself in, God is establishing and building confidence, persistence, faithfulness, and trust through it.

Ephesians 5:21

being submitted one to another in fear of God[166].

Commentary · Ephesians 5:21 · Note 166

The lives of those who are filled with the Spirit are marked by submission. One of the chief attributes of the loving nature of God is servitude. Through the servitude of Christ Jesus we learn how to walk in oneness with each other. A feature of this unity is a willingness to be submitted or subjected to each other. God demands that we walk in submission to one another. The emphasis is placed on us being in submission in the fear of God, because there is a judgment against those who hold the truth in unrighteousness. Submission has its proper order and rank. For example, we can be certain that parents are not to be in submission to their children. The Greek word itself means to "be arranged under." There is a divine order, and we should be both in awe of it as well as participate with it. Within the framework of the Kingdom of God, no one should desire to be lord or ruler over another – such behavior is inordinate – but instead we reach for the unity of the Spirit that reveals the glorious nature of Jesus, who laid down His life for us. What we must recognize is that God is the absolute authority, and He has placed those whom He has chosen in authority, and He demands that we submit to them. It is God who has established authorities (Daniel 4:17, Romans 13:1). Those whom God has placed in authority must be committed to leading others as they are lead by the Holy Ghost. They cannot be subject to everyone's opinions and "good ideas." We are commanded to be led by the Spirit and to follow Jesus! It is the Holy Spirit who places each member in the body according to His will. It is Christ who has given the authorities of ministry who He then demands should both do their job and command others to do theirs (1 Timothy 4:12, 2 Timothy 4:2, 1 Peter 5:2, Acts 20:28). Through the love and generosity of the Spirit of God in us, we do nothing out of strife or vainglory, but in humility we esteem everyone better than ourselves (Philippians 2:3). Even as Jesus laid His life down for us, we lay our lives down for one another – this is the proper order of submission. The father and husband is the leader of the house, and everyone in the household is called of God to follow him in a godly manner. At the same time, the head of the household would without hesitation esteem his wife and children better than himself and lay down his life for them. Submission also speaks to our responsibility to cooperate with everyone who is engaged in the work of the Kingdom of God (Hebrews 13:17, Ephesians 4:11-12, 1 Corinthians 16:15-16). We are required to function as one body, with all of the parts in perfect harmony with each other – something that is only possible through a collective submission to our Head, Christ Jesus (1 Corinthians 12:12-27, Ephesians 4:16, Colossians 2:19). It is only through our union with Christ Jesus, and our submission to the Holy Spirit, that we can function in such a holy relationship with each other. Oh what a light that would shine if we would walk in such love! With such a holy love and tender care, all men would know that we are His disciples!

Ephesians 5:22

Wives be in submission[167] to your own husbands as to the Lord[168],

Commentary · Ephesians 5:22 · Note 167

The definition of submission needs little debate, regardless of language. If the Greek word 'huptassao' is evaluated, it means what its English equivalent means, "to place under." Furthermore, it is more perfectly defined in its context of the way that we are to interact with the Lord. Wives are to submit to their husbands, just as they submit to the Lord, as the church submits to Christ, as a man submits to Christ, and as Christ submits to His Father. Submission defines the relationship of those who have authority to those who are under that authority. This is the authority and order that God, not men, has defined. To rebel against it is the same as disagreeing with God about adultery, murder, or any other form of iniquity. In reality, rebellion could be considered the chief of all sin. However, in a world governed by the spirit of disobedience, submission is despised and regarded as controlling, exploitive, and oppressive. Nothing could be further from the truth when it comes to the Kingdom of God and the rule of Christ Jesus! Unfortunately, people tend to be most influenced by the popular opinion of their culture, and they fail to realize that God knows better. We should want the Lord to tell us what to do, because He is the only One with the right answers. It is only by walking in His wisdom and insight that we will find ourselves blessed and secure. Be certain of this: regardless of how little we are able to understand the ways of God, if we will obey His instructions, we will inherit every good and perfect thing. When you understand that the opposite of submission is rebellion, then you realize that submission is the only right way!

Commentary · Ephesians 5:22 · Note 168

However much a wife is submitted to her husband, that is how much she is really submitted to the Lord (Ephesians 5:22). When a woman follows the leadership that God has provided, then her whole house is blessed. Her children become great men and women of God, and her husband becomes an honorable man (Proverbs 31:23). If she is an argumentative and manipulative woman, she plucks down her house with her own hands (Proverbs 14:1).

Ephesians 5:23

because the man is the head of the woman, even as also Christ is the Head of His church, the savior of the body[169].

Commentary · Ephesians 5:23 · Note 169

Many modern churchgoers are repulsed by the idea that the husband is the head of the wife. They feel insulted and controlled by the very idea of the man being the "head," which of course is a way to say "leader." Thus attempts are made to find a "work around" to dilute its impact in modern times. A common approach to understanding the meaning of ancient words is to reference the time and culture in which the word or concept was applied. However, more important than Graeco-Roman culture (and even Hebrew culture) is biblical culture – a culture defined by God. The Kingdom of God's culture is distinct

from all other cultures, and at the heart of this culture is love and servitude. To understand the beauty of the relationship between a man with his wife, we must look at the relationship of Christ with the Father, and then of man with Christ (1 Corinthians 11:3, Ephesians 5:25). The relationship of the Father with Christ Jesus is the most important relationship to understand if we are to understand the proper relationship between husband and wife. The love between the Father and the Lord Jesus is the model of rulership in the kingdom, which is not dictatorial or legislative, but a relational governorship born out of oneness (John 17:21-23). To be ruled by someone who loves you, and to rule based upon relationship – these are foreign to man. We must be guarded against cold definitions and human models when we attempt to conceptualize this. God's governorship is the most wonderful relationship of oneness imaginable – characterized by servitude and love. There are many things to say, but consider what Paul says with regards to this hierarchy: he says that man is the glory of God, and the woman the is glory of the man (1 Corinthians 11:7). This must cause us all to pause and consider the glory and honor that is conferred upon the subjects of a divine relationship. God created man to walk with Him in a glorious relationship of oneness, and God created woman from the man, ordaining that they should be one in purpose and life. Submission to the leadership of Christ Jesus is essential to having relationship with Him (Colossians 3:18, Ephesians 5:22-24, 1 Peter 3:1, Titus 2:4-5). There is no other kind of relationship like this in the world of men. Christ Jesus leads us with His love and devoted care, gladly giving us all that He has (Romans 8:32). If we refuse to follow His leadership, there is a consequence: broken relationship. Equally, when a woman is unwilling to follow the leadership of her husband because she has her own interests and ideas to pursue, she fails to realize the joy of the relationship that God created when He made the woman for the man. We have wrong ideas about submission, because we have placed it on a human level, and regarded it as a form of competitive superiority. It's not that at all – God has created every dimension of relationship just as He created everything else. God placed within the order of each kind of relationship a blessing that otherwise could not be experienced. Within the proper order of things, a man and his wife experience dimensions of pleasure and splendor that could not have been realized unless the relationship was right. In the context of a marriage relationship, God anointed the man to lead his wife even as he has given an anointing to a pastor to lead the church (Colossians 3:18, Ephesians 5:22, Hebrews 13:17). Just as a pastor is anointed to lead the church, and must do so patiently and lovingly as a servant, even so a husband must rule his own house. As Christ Jesus forgives and patiently instructs us, so each pastor the church, and each husband his household. If the wife refuses the godly instruction and vision of life that God placed in the heart of her husband, then all of the blessings that God intended for that marriage are forfeited. We obey Jesus because we love Him, and so also wives should obey their husbands because they love and reverence them.

Ephesians 5:24

But even as the church is subject to Christ, so also the wives to their own husbands in everything[170].

Commentary · Ephesians 5:24 · Note 170

There is no uncertainty as to exactly how a wife is to submit to her husband, because the model of Christ and His church is plain enough. This is God's divine order – there is nothing ugly or oppressive about His order, but it is simply the way of His life and love. In a modern age, in which the ideas of men are more in line with the mind of Satan than the mind of Christ, the things of God are not readily agreed to. How does the church submit to Christ? God has anointed Jesus with the authority and ability to lead the church, and out of that empowerment, all that we need is supplied to us. God has placed everything under the authority of Christ Jesus, and if the church willing submits to His leadership, then every good and perfect thing is realized. He is the one who perfects, protects, and provides everything we need, and the church through complete submission to Christ Jesus receives all that He has given. The church is not forced to submit to Him, but without His leadership, none of the promises and blessings of God could ever be realized. Likewise God has anointed the man to lead the house, and if God's divine order is observed, then all that He has given will flow through the man of the house to his entire family. We must all ask ourselves: to what limit would we desire to confine the scope of Christ's authority over the church? There certainly is an outcry to limit and confine the scope of authority of the husband over the wife. However, the Lord says that the wife is to be submitted to her husband in everything, and if we are going to obey God, then we are going to have to leave the realm of what men think, and recognize that everything that God has commanded is for our own good. Every part of a wife's life should be within the scope of complete union with her husband, for God joined them together to be one. A man and His wife are one flesh and they should function under one head. Just as submission to Christ leads the church into blessings, growth in every good thing, and unity, even so the submission of a wife to the leadership of her godly husband (who is also under the authority of Christ) will lead the home and the family into the unlimited blessing of God that are only found in living life the way that He designed it.

Ephesians 5:25

Husbands love your wives, even as also Christ loves the church and delivered himself over for her[171],

Commentary · Ephesians 5:25 · Note 171

Just as Christ Jesus continues to love the church, so a man should love his wife. God made the man to be responsible for far more than just natural needs – He also made him responsible for the spiritual needs. The proper relationship has to be established between the husband and wife for things to result in the abundant life and blessings that Father has desired. When the husband loves his wife as Christ loves the church, and the wife honors and submits herself to his leadership, God will abundantly bless and do more than can be thought or asked. If both the husband and wife are devoted to doing the will of the Father, then this kind of relationship will be what they will have. The spiritual foundation must be in place before the proper relationship can be built. Christ Jesus went to extremes to bring the church into union with Himself. It cost Him everything to purchase the church with His own blood (Acts 20:28). It is now through the ministry of His leadership that the church finds its perfect place in the plan of God. By the

miracle of His mercy, He brought forth this perfect union of love between Himself and those who are brought into relationship with Him. In this union of love, everything that we need to be right is ministered to us by Him. God anoints the man as He does any other minister to lead and to establish His perfect will. Now, Christ Jesus will not tolerate wrongdoing and remain passive about the condition of the church in His love for us, neither should the man his household. We must command our household to do what is right even as Abraham did (Genesis 18:19). Christ Jesus laid down His life for the church and continually intercedes on our behalf, so rebellion and sin will not be tolerated in this perfect love that He has for the family of God (Revelation 2:1-3:22, Ephesians 2:19). There is abundant grace and mercy for everyone to get things right, but God demands things to be right! Jesus died and continues to work so that every aspect of our lives might be according to Father's perfect will. Christ Jesus did not lay down His life so that we might remain wrong – He has worked, and continues to work, that we might in every way be right. The home is where new life is brought forth to be raised up in the ways of God. The home cannot be a breeding ground of iniquity through wrong relationship of a man with Christ Jesus, or of the wife with her husband. The home is to be a sanctuary where the ways of God are modeled by the parents and taught by the Word. Just as Jesus is the great High Priest of the church, even so the husband must be the priest over his house. The priest brings the people before the throne of God so that things may be healed in their lives. The priest who stands before the living God can then represent God to the people. It is in this manner that a husband must love his wife and minister to the needs of his household.

Ephesians 5:26

so that it may be sanctified and cleansed with the washing of the water by the word[172].

Commentary · Ephesians 5:26 · Note 172

We have purified our hearts through obedience to the truth (1 Peter 1:22). Now, being subject to Christ Jesus through the new birth, we are taught and instructed in everything that pleases God, remaining submitted and obedient to His leadership. The washing of the water of the Word is not only the spiritual cleansing that takes place at the moment of the new birth for each individual, but it also refers to the birth of the church (Titus 3:5). Further, the washing of the Word may also be regarded as a continual ongoing obedience to the Word of God and rulership of Jesus Christ. We have been born again by the Word of God (1 Peter 1:23). We were purified by the living Word, Christ Jesus, when He, through His own death, provided the blood that cleanses us from all sin. Through the great love of God, each person is a part of the "church that Jesus purchased with His own blood." Being created in Christ Jesus and having been made one with Him, we are to be the living expression of His person (Acts 20:28, Ephesians 5:30). Through the blood of Jesus, we were sanctified, called to be saints, and brought into the church of Jesus Christ (1 Peter 1:2, 1 Corinthians 1:2, 6:11). Paul emphasizes the relationship of Christ Jesus to His church more than to the individual – especially in Ephesians. The church is to be the expression of everything that Jesus is. The church should be in every way the expression of the glory of Christ Jesus and the heavenly realm. The church, as the body of Christ, is the revelation of the fullness of God, but this can only be realized if the church is fully submitted to Him (Ephesians 1:23, Hebrews 12:22-23).

God the Father has a jealous love for the church and for His Son. Even as the nation of Israel once stood as God's sole representative in the Earth, now the church has that place. The church was commissioned to be the assembly of God to convey all the glory of the kingdom of the dear Son. However, if the individuals that make up the body of Christ are unwilling to be submitted to the governorship of the Holy Spirit, then the name of the Lord is profaned. The good news is that Christ Jesus is devoted to bringing forth all that the Father has willed for the church. All we must do is to be committed to the same, and His wonder-working power will be revealed in our midst!

Ephesians 5:27

So that he might present to Himself a glorious church[173], not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing, but that it should be holy and without blemish.

Commentary · Ephesians 5:27 · Note 173

The Lord is dedicated to adorning His church with His splendor. The most important attributes of the church are the glory of Jesus and the fire of the Holy Ghost, which make it glorious. The glory of God is revealed in His presence and in His mighty acts, and it is for this glory that the church was formed. The glory that the Father gave to Jesus was poured out on the church. This is the glory that Jesus manifested when He turned the water into wine and brought the display of Heaven to Earth. Through the display of the Spirit and power, all of His works came to be known as glorious (John 2:11, Luke 13:17). The church is not to be something different than Christ Jesus, for it is His body with the same ministry and purpose. The same works of Jesus are to be manifested in the members of His body now (1 Corinthians 12:7-11, 28, Acts 10:38, John 14:12). The church has been clothed in the glorious apparel of Christ Jesus to shine with the beauty of His power and authority – this is a glorious church (Ezekiel 16:10-14, Romans 13:14, Galatians 3:27, 1 Corinthians 1:5). The church is the building of the Lord where the fullness of God now dwells (1 Corinthians 3:9, Ephesians 1:22-23, 2:21-22, 1 Peter 2:4-5). When the glory of the Lord filled the temple in the Old Testament, the temple was glorious, and the power of God was manifested in Israel (1 Kings 8:11, 2 Chronicles 5:14, 7:1-3, Exodus 24:16, 40:34-35, Numbers 16:42). The temple in the Old Testament was designed and built to be the place where God's glory would be manifested for all the world to see. Although there were times where the glory of the Lord shone bright with radiant beams of Heaven, the rebellion and stubbornness of the leaders of Israel had turned the house of God into a place of empty ritual and religious merchandising (Isaiah 1:10-15). When Jesus came to the temple, He was overwhelmed by its ruined state. In the zeal for His Father's house, He made a whip and drove out the moneychangers (John 2:15). Today, that same zeal is in the ministers of Christ that have been anointed with the Holy Ghost. Christ loves the church so much that He laid down His life for it, but the local church must be submitted to Christ if the glory of Jesus is going to be revealed. All His glory is found in us through our oneness and union with Him (John 17:21-23). If He is going to be revealed, we must hold the Head of the church in His proper place, and allow His leadership to govern what takes place in our lives and assemblies (Colossians 1:18, Ephesians 4:15). The body is dead without the spirit, and the church is dead without the moving of the Holy Spirit (James 2:26). It is the moving of the Spirit that is

the first sign of life – both in creation and in the church of Jesus Christ (Genesis 1:2, 2:7, Acts 2:3-4). If the leaders are insistent on doing things after the dictates of men instead of the Spirit of God, then Christ Jesus will not be seen, and His presence will not be revealed by the demonstration of the Spirit and power (Romans 15:19, 1 Corinthians 2:4, 1 Thessalonians 1:5). If the church is lacking in the manifest presence of Jesus and the acts of His power, then there has to be a revival that results in the church becoming submitted to the Word of God and the Spirit of God.

Ephesians 5:28

So also the men owe it to love their wives as their own body – he who loves his wife loves himself[174].

Commentary · Ephesians 5:28 · Note 174

When a man and a woman are married, they become one flesh (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:5-6, Mark 10:8, Ephesians 5:28-31). Therefore, the husband should love his wife even as he loves himself, because she is now part of his being. The husband should no more reject his wife than his own heart. She should be no less important, valued, and honored as any other part of his body. As we are members of Christ's body, the woman is a member of her husbands body, which not only speaks of the oneness of the relationship, but also of the subjection of the wife to her husband as the body of Christ is subject to the Lord Jesus (1 Corinthians 12:27, Ephesians 1:22-23, 5:30, Colossians 2:19).

Ephesians 5:29

For no one ever hated his flesh, but nourished and cherished her[175], even as also the Lord the church.

Commentary · Ephesians 5:29 · Note 175

The feminine pronoun 'auten' is used, because the Greek word 'sarx,' ("flesh") is a feminine noun, without respect to the gender of the person, much in the same way that the Hebrew word 'nephesh' ("soul") is a feminine noun, and the associated pronouns are always feminine regardless of the gender of the person. The same may be said of the church, as 'ekklesia' is a feminine noun, and thus its associated pronouns are feminine as in verses 25 and 26.

Ephesians 5:30

For we are members of His body,

Ephesians 5:31

of his flesh and of his bones, "For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother, and shall cleave to his wife, and the two shall become one"[176].

Commentary · Ephesians 5:31 · Note 176

Just as God made the woman from the body of Adam, God has also made the church from the body of Christ (Genesis 2:24). God opened the side of Adam and built the woman from the man so that when Adam first met Eve, he said, "bone of my bones and flesh of my flesh" (Genesis 2:23). Because Eve was made from Adam, they are considered to be one flesh – a concept that has ultimately extended to every husband and wife (Genesis 2:24, Matthew 19:5-6, Mark 10:8, Ephesians 5:28-31). In similar fashion, God made the church when He opened the side of Jesus and produced a river of blood that purchased the church (Acts 20:28). This mystery of Christ and His church helps us to understand a little more about how the church is the body of Christ. These two allegories of being both the spouse and the body of Christ emphasize the oneness in relationship and purpose between Christ and His church. Even though the individual has also been made one with Jesus, the Church extends beyond the individual and is given a unique relationship that is both distinct and superior to the individual's relationship with Christ (Ephesians 1:23, 1 Corinthians 12: 12-27, John 17:22, 1 Corinthians 6:17). At the same time, each individual has an opportunity to be a direct beneficiary of the relationship that Christ has with His church so long as they submit to the Spirit of God.

Ephesians 5:32

This is a great mystery, but I speak as to Christ and to the church[177].

Commentary · Ephesians 5:32 · Note 177

Paul described the kind of relationship that should exist between a man and a woman based on the relationship that exists between Christ and the church. If married couples would be willing to realize how sacred their relationship is with each other, perhaps more attention would be given to proper behavior and interaction. Considering that the marriage relationship actually testifies of Christ and His church, we should understand that we are preaching the gospel by the way that we interact with our spouse (2 Corinthians 3:2-3, 1 Peter 3:1).

Ephesians 5:33

Yet still also, everyone should love his wife as himself, and the wife should reverence her husband.

EPHESIANS

Chapter 6

Ephesians 6:1

Children, obey your parents[178] in the Lord, for this is righteous[179].

Commentary · Ephesians 6:1 · Note 178

Divine order is absolutely necessary with God! His order has submission and obedience in it that comes out of honor and love. The Lord hates rebellion on every level and will not tolerate it in any way. There is mercy and forgiveness with God, but there must be conformity to what is right. Rebellion against one's parents in the Old Testament was not tolerated, and in the New Testament it is a sign of apostasy (Deuteronomy 21:18-21, Romans 1:30, 2 Timothy 3:2). Paul carefully describes the foundation upon which a house must be built. Before children are going to obey and honor their parents, the wife must obey her husband, and the husband must love and honor his wife. If the wife does not reverence her husband, then neither will the children (Ephesians 5:22-6:2). God has invited us into a new society, but unless we walk in His divine order, we will only breed more rebellion. Many "Christian homes" bring children into a spiritual climate that assimilates them into the world rather than into the kingdom.

Commentary · Ephesians 6:1 · Note 179

The Greek word is 'dikaios,' which is the primary word for "righteous." Using the word "right" for the translation is fine, but its impact is not as strong. Of course, doing what is right is righteousness. The Greek word translates the Hebrew word 'tsaddik,' which first occurs in Genesis 6:9, "These are the generations of Noah: Noah was a *righteous* man, perfect in his generations..."

Ephesians 6:2–3

Honor your father and your mother[180] – this is the first commandment with promise[181]: 3 – "So that it will be well for you, and you shall exist a long time upon the land."

Commentary · Ephesians 6:2–3 · Note 180

This verse that Paul quotes is exactly as it appears in the Greek Septuagint in Exodus 20:12. The promise that is associated with this command in Exodus 20:12 is, "that your days may be long upon the land which the Lord your God gives you." Paul expanded the promise of the reward beyond both the nation of Israel and the land that they had been given. What is vitally important to recognize, is that Paul included the commands of God in the Old Testament that were not part of the sacrificial laws or the laws associated with ritual cleanness, such as various kinds of washings, feasts, and kosher foods. Paul became angry with Peter over any association with the purity rituals of the Old Testament, because redemption through the blood of Jesus abolished all of that. However, when it comes to those things that God expressed in the Old Testament with regards to our conduct in righteousness and holiness, we know that now, just as then, God still demands that we "be holy even as He is holy" (1 Peter 1:16, Leviticus 19:2). Jesus came to fulfill the Law, not to destroy it (Matthew 5:17). When we are made a new creation, the holiness and the righteousness of the Law of God is written upon our hearts and minds (Hebrews 8:10, 10:16, 2 Corinthians 3:3, Ephesians 4:24). We now fulfill the righteousness of the Law, not out of some

sense of duty and self-discipline that results in us standing with God, but by nature, because we have been born of God (Romans 8:4, Galatians 5:14, Romans 13:8). It is the new creation (the divine nature) that produces by nature the works of righteousness, not the works of righteousness that produce a new creation.

Commentary · Ephesians 6:2–3 · Note 181

Paul taught obedience to the commandments of God, regardless of the testament they were from. However, he was absolutely opposed to trusting in the Law of Moses for righteousness. Obeying the commands of God is different from trusting in the Law of Moses for righteousness – a very important distinction. The sacrificial means of being cleansed from sin has been completely done away with through Christ. Christ Jesus is our righteousness by faith, not by the observance of the Law.

Ephesians 6:4

And fathers, provoke not your children, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction[182] of the Lord.

Commentary · Ephesians 6:4 · Note 182

The Greek word 'nouthesia' is a compound word of 'nous' ("mind") and 'tithemi' ("appoint"), which literally would mean "to direct or set the mind." It is the command of the Lord in both testaments that the parents teach their children the commandments of the Lord, "And these words which I command you this day, shall be in your heart. And you shall teach them diligently to your children..." (Deuteronomy 6:6-7). This same command and responsibility is given to the parents in connection with the promise to remain in the land (their inheritance), "You shall teach them to your children to speak by them, while you sit in your home, walk on the way, when you retire, and when you arise. In order to prolong your days and the days of your children upon the land that YHWH has sworn to your forefathers to give them, like the days of the heavens upon the Earth" (Deuteronomy 11:19, 21).

Ephesians 6:5

Servants, obey your masters[183] according to the flesh with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart as to Christ.

Commentary · Ephesians 6:5 · Note 183

This type of servitude that God allowed is not to be confused with the abusive kind of slavery that was observed in early American history. This is a slavery that results from the reconciliation of debts and an agreement to long-term employment. God commanded that the slaves be released after seven years and that they be amply rewarded for their service. If the servant was unwilling to leave, desiring to remain as a servant, then that servant became a servant for the remainder of their life (Deuteronomy 15:12-17).

Ephesians 6:6

Not just with a show[184] as a man pleaser, but as servants of Christ doing the will of God from the soul.

Commentary · Ephesians 6:6 · Note 184

The Greek word is 'ophthalmodouleia,' it literally means "eye service." It pertains to hypocritical individuals that only appear to be diligent when the master's eye is watching.

Ephesians 6:7

Serve with good will as to the Lord and not men,

Ephesians 6:8

knowing that everyone who shall do good, the same shall receive of the Lord, whether servant or free.

Ephesians 6:9

Also, masters, do the same to them – restrain from threatening, knowing also that your Master is in Heaven, and He is no respector of persons.

Ephesians 6:10

Finally, be powerful[185] in the Lord, and in the strength of His manifest power[186].

Commentary · Ephesians 6:10 · Note 185

The Greek word is 'endunamoo,' which is a compound word of 'en' and 'dunamoo.' The Greek word 'dunamoo' is a verb derived from the noun 'dunamis,' which is defined by its New Testament usage as the power or divine ability that is given to the saints through baptism in the Holy Spirit (Luke 24:49). There is no reason for the child of God to ever suffer defeat. God, who is faithful and cannot lie, has given us his power and strength. In fact, this is a command directly from the Holy Spirit. God demands that we be strong or powerful. It is His spoken word that produces faith in those who hear. If we agree with God, we will find that the omnipotent One has given us His power by the Holy Spirit.

Commentary · Ephesians 6:10 · Note 186

The Greek word 'kratos' may be understood as "manifest power." It is primarily used to describe God's power or strength in the New Testament associated with a deed manifesting great power (Luke 1:51, Acts 2:22). It may also be understood as the power to rule or control.

Ephesians 6:11

Be endued[187] with the whole armor of God[188] so that you can stand against the craft of the Devil[189],

Commentary · Ephesians 6:11 · Note 187

The Greek word 'enduo' means "to be clothed with." It is a word which denotes the power of God coming on the saints, so that they may receive power and divine ability from God (Luke 24:49, "You shall be endued with power from on high"). If we are going to walk in the authority of Jesus Christ and be His representatives, then we must understand how to allow the Holy Spirit to rush upon us and empower us with His ability to function as the holy ones of God – which is supplied to us as we are endued with power (Romans 13:12, 14, Galatians 3:27, Ephesians 4:24, Colossians 3:10, 12, 1 Thessalonians 5:8). The Greek word 'enduo' translates the Hebrew word 'lavash,' and is first found in Genesis 3:21, "Unto Adam also and his wife did YHWH God make coats of skins, and clothed ('enduo') them." In the very first instance in which this word occurs, it is in reference to that which God personally does for man in His own goodness and grace. The word "endue" is far more appropriate than "put on," because it directs the attention of the reader to a supernatural provision of God, rather than something that a person may do through their own efforts or religious discipline. Even as Samson was equipped with the supernatural power to pick up the jawbone of a male donkey and kill thousands of the enemies of God, even so the Holy Spirit will rush upon us and provide us with the armor of God to stand against all the forces of darkness.

Commentary · Ephesians 6:11 · Note 188

The whole armor of God is more than a metaphor – it is the supernatural ability given to the saint to deal with every deceitful trick and enticement that Satan can bring against God's people. The armor of God is the identity of Christ, the armor of light, and the armor of righteousness on the right and left hand (Romans 13:12, 14, 2 Corinthians 6:7). We are endued with the armor of God as we yield to the Holy Spirit. Through the act of submitting ourselves to God, the Holy Spirit becomes our shield and strength (James 4:7, Psalm 3:3, Psalm 18:35, Psalm 28:7, Psalm 33:20, Psalm 84:11). Jesus has conquered all the power of Satan, and as we walk in Him, we too have authority over all the forces of Hell. The Holy Spirit, who has come to lead and guide us, stands ready to protect and defend us against everything that Satan attempts to oppose us with. The Holy Spirit empowers us with the shield of faith that quenches every fiery dart of the wicked one. He gives to us gospel shoes to tread over all the power of the enemy so that nothing can hurt us (Luke 10:19). If we are willing to yield ourselves completely to the Holy Spirit and walk in obedience to Him, then we will find the provision and strength for everything that we need to stand against the Devil. The weapons of our warfare are so mighty that it is impossible for a child of God to be defeated (James 4:7, 2 Corinthians 10:4, Psalm 60:12, Psalm 108:13). Though Satan wars against us and attempts to both hinder and afflict the people of God, the anointing breaks the yoke (Isaiah 10:27).

Commentary · Ephesians 6:11 · Note 189

Demons will launch every kind of attack imaginable against the church and against God's people. The primary focus of the demonic attack is to destroy the impact of the anointing. Demonic powers will focus on the one that is anointed of God in their efforts to stop the advancement of the Kingdom of God. It is the anointing (the manifest presence of God and divine ability given to the believer) that overthrows their

power and influence – so it is the focus of their attack (Isaiah 10:27, Matthew 12:24-28). Their only hope then is to lie against the truth, and to discredit those who function in the anointing. They will not only adversely affect the minds of people, but also work to blind their hearts and minds so that the light of the gospel cannot penetrate. All the darkness in the world cannot put out the smallest light, but demon powers try to create a world of darkness and deception around men so that they cannot see (2 Corinthians 4:4, Ephesians 4:18, 1 John 2:11). Criticism, strife, and division are some of the primary weapons that they use to stop the flow of the anointing. They launch propaganda campaigns against the truth, the church, and the ones that God has anointed. They are the powers behind doubt and unbelief that will shut down the operation of the Kingdom of God. When people are affected by doubt and unbelief, the mighty works of Jesus are hindered from operating (Mark 6:2-5). Demon spirits seek to lead people into sin, and to separate them from God. If they cannot completely separate a person from the knowledge of the truth, then they will do whatever they can to prevent maturity and the blessings of God from being realized. The only defense against their deception is the Word of God. Even as Jesus gave Himself to only living by the Word and standing fast in the truth, we must do the same (Luke 4:4, 1 John 2:13-14). We must resist Satan steadfast in the faith, for the faith has made us more than conquerors over all the works of the Devil (1 Peter 5:8, 1 John 5:4, Romans 8:37). We are to clothe ourselves with the new man, the Lord Jesus Christ, the armor of light, and the fire of the Holy Ghost (Ephesians 4:24, Romans 13:14). God has given to us His authority and personal armor, including the breastplate of righteousness, and the helmet of salvation (Isaiah 59:17). We must hold fast to the identity of Christ and the character of the Holy Spirit, and walk in the nature of God. If we will remain in union with God, there is no devil in Hell that can touch us, and no power of darkness that can stop us (1 John 5:18). In this place of fellowship with Jesus, we will drive out Satan, having authority over all of his works, and there will be no power of Hell that can resist us (Mark 16:17-18, Luke 10:19, Acts 26:18, Matthew 28:18, Ephesians 1:19-23).

Ephesians 6:12

because we are not wrestling[190] against flesh and blood, but against the principalities[191], against the authorities, against the ruler of this world, the darkness of this age[192], against the spiritual iniquity in the heavens.

Commentary · Ephesians 6:12 · Note 190

There are two levels on which we must contend with the Devil: on a personal level, and also for all those that we are called to preach the gospel to. We are engaged in this battle against fleshly lusts that war against our soul (1 Peter 2:11, 2 Corinthians 10:4). We are in an up-close and personal conflict with the enemy of God and man, as we wrestle against the powers of darkness that seek to stop our influence. In Greek wrestling matches, the loser would have his eyes gouged out. We are in a desperate conflict for our sight and must have Spirit-knowledge to be successful. It is Satan's desire to overthrow our effectiveness as the saints of God, so he continually wars against us. We have been empowered to set free all those who Satan holds as prisoners to sin, sickness, and disease through the spiritual blindness that he has imposed upon them (Luke 10:19, Acts 26:18, Luke 4:18, 2 Corinthians 4:3-4). Satan fights ruthlessly to stop us,

but if we walk in the light as Christ Jesus is in the light, and depend upon the Spirit of the Lord, then every power of darkness that opposes the people around us will have to flee – for darkness cannot resist light. To be successful in our conflict, it helps to know as much as possible about our enemy. This is why the intelligence division of the army plays such a vital role. The Bible gives us all the insight that we need to understand how Satan will try to stop us. The first information about him that we need to fully appreciate is that his very name, "Devil," means "accuser." He is the source of all accusation, slander, and criticism – no matter what form it comes in. It is vitally important that we recognize that he will attempt to neutralize us with this attack. Another one of his names is "Satan," which means "adversary." He is the source of the pride of life, rebellion, and arrogance. He is a liar, a murderer, and the one who creates divisions. We must understand that every dimension of his nature comes as an attack designed to destroy us (or at at the very least to neutralize us). Jesus has defeated all the powers of darkness and assured us absolute victory in this conflict, but we must walk in the Spirit. God has ordained that the light of His glory shine through us, and that every demon power be cast out and rendered ineffective by the anointing that He has given to us (Mark 16:17, Matthew 5:14, Philippians 2:15, 2 Corinthians 1:21).

Commentary · Ephesians 6:12 · Note 191

We are engaged in a very real battle with angelic principalities. The Greek word 'arche' is translated as "principalities," but is usually translated as "origin" or "beginning." This word is the very first noun found in the Septuagint, "In the beginning..." (Genesis 1:1). However, it may be used to refer to principalities and rulers for which the proper Greek word is 'archon,' an unrelated word to 'arche.' 'Arche' should be translated as 'the origin,' in context to the origins of evil. These evil powers find their origin in Satan, and those mighty angels that he was able to deceive and lead in opposition against God (Isaiah 14:12-15, Ezekiel 28:12-19, Luke 10:18, John 8:44, Revelation 12:4-9). Their deceit and rage against God is no less now than when they began. It is their chief aim to lead all men in rebellion against God, or to at least prevent men from knowing God. Although their judgment is fixed, being finalized at the cross, they exercise their power to control as much of mankind as they can. Each individual person determines if they are going to live for God, or be controlled and manipulated by these angels of darkness. Those who have been redeemed have been translated out of the realm of darkness into the Kingdom of Christ (Colossians 1:13, Ephesians 5:8). We have been given all authority in Jesus over every power of the Satanic to tread down and destroy their works (Ephesians 6:10, Luke 10:19, Matthew 28:18, 1 John 3:8). We are seated with Christ in a heavenly dominion over all the powers of darkness, and gifted with heavenly abilities and every spiritual blessing to overcome and destroy the works of this fallen host (Ephesians 1:3, 1:19, 2:6, 1 John 3:8, John 14:12).

Commentary · Ephesians 6:12 · Note 192

Darkness is a place of judgment. When Satan rebelled against God, he was cast out of the presence of God. It is in this realm of darkness and chaos that Satan rules. The judgment of darkness also came upon men when Adam and Eve listened to the voice of Satan and died (Genesis 2:17, Romans 5:12, Ephesians 2:1, 5, Colossians 2:13). The death that came upon Adam and Eve separated them from the life and light

that was in God, and they found themselves confined to a realm where iniquity supremely ruled. The darkness hides the glory of God, and blinds the eyes and minds of men from seeing and knowing God (2 Corinthians 4:4, John 12:35, 1 John 2:11). In this darkness, God is absent and His goodness is unseen. Mankind has grown so accustomed to the darkness that when the light, Christ Jesus, came into the world, men loved the darkness rather than the light because they loved evil (John 3:19). Jesus came to deliver mankind from the death and darkness, inviting everyone to come and follow Him into the light of life (John 8:12). Through Christ Jesus, we are given power over the darkness and the ruler of the darkness so that mankind's eyes can be opened, and they can be turned from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God (Acts 26:18). We must recognize that darkness is a realm of the demonic, a holding place for those whose judgment is eternal death. With joy and resolve, we should cast off the works of darkness and put on the armor of light (Romans 13:12). There should be nothing more precious to us than knowing and exercising our freedom to walk in the light of life. Fellowship with the darkness of death should be the last thing that any liberated child of God would want to return to (2 Corinthians 6:14). Those of us who were once in darkness, but are now light, must be willing to walk in the light (Ephesians 5:8, 1 John 1:7, 1 Thessalonians 5:5, Matthew 5:14). We must decide whose side we are on, and what realm we live in. God has translated us from the power of darkness into the kingdom of the dear Son, but if we say that we know Him and have fellowship with Him and walk in darkness, we lie (Colossians 1:13, 1 John 1:6). We should rejoice in our liberation from death and darkness, and have no desire to return to the prison of condemnation (1 Peter 2:9, Jude 1:13).

Ephesians 6:13

Now take up the whole armor of God, that you may have the ability to stand in the time of evil, and having conquered[193] all, stand.

Commentary · Ephesians 6:13 · Note 193

An invincible unstoppable soldier is pictured in this verse, clothed with glorious apparel. Having put on this glorious mantle and armor of God, we must go into action by the Spirit. We have been freely given the authority of sonship and the power of God – now we must appropriate what is ours (John 1:12, Galatians 4:7, Romans 8:17, Ephesians 6:10). We cannot bow our knee to sin, sickness, and disease. We cannot run in fear because of the storms of life and circumstances that are around us. We must lift up our voice with the faith that changes things, and hold fast our confession (Romans 10:10, Hebrews 10:23, Matthew 21:21). When Satan would come against us like a flood, there is a standard that must be lifted up: the name of Jesus and the word of our testimony (Revelation 12:11)! There is healing in your hands, and songs of deliverance are in your mouth – lift up your voice and shout! This divine power is the authority of the believer, belonging not to just a few, but to all that will believe: the whole company of God's saints! God has made us more than conquerors. Through the conquest of the cross, our victory is certain (John 12:31, 16:11, Colossians 2:15). We have the faith that conquers the world, and are seated together with Jesus in heavenly places, far above all spiritual wickedness, and above all rulers of darkness (Ephesians 1:21, 2:2, 6:12). The Greek word 'katergazomai' has a more aggressive and colorful meaning

than just "withstand" – it means "to overpower and conquer." With each attack of Satan, we will find ourselves the winner if we rely on the strength of the Lord and the power of His might. We will prove ourselves victorious over everything through Christ Jesus. We will not only stand our ground in this high place of faith and authority, but we will also subdue and conquer – not by might nor by power, but by the Spirit of the Lord (Zechariah 4:6)! It is God who has girded us with strength and will make our way perfect – all we need to do is to be strong and courageous.

Ephesians 6:14

Stand then, having your loins girded with truth, and endued with the breastplate[194] of righteousness.

Commentary · Ephesians 6:14 · Note 194

We can stand victorious in any situation that we face, as long as we stand in the truth and righteousness that are not our own, but that belong to God! Peter told us to "gird up the loins of our mind," and Isaiah described righteousness and truth as the belt of the loins (1 Peter 1:13, Isaiah 11:5). What we believe about ourselves, and our willingness to conform to the image of Christ, are fundamental to our success (Romans 8:29, 2 Corinthians 3:18, 1 Corinthians 15:48-49). God described who we are in His Word, and we must be fully persuaded of these things. All that we are has been purchased for us by Jesus, and is supplied to us by the Holy Spirit. The Spirit of the Lord is all around us and the presence of the Lord is our shield. We are immersed in the glory of the Holy Spirit, who supplies us with the truth and righteousness of God (Ephesians 5:9). We must receive these gifts of truth and righteousness, and continue in them (Romans 6:13). It is here that we stand and refuse to be moved, like a tree planted by the water (Psalm 1:3, Jeremiah 17:7-8). In this submission to God and obedience to the truth, we find all the supernatural works of faith! The righteousness of God that we have been given by Christ must be our whole identity (Ephesians 4:24, 2 Corinthians 5:21, Romans 10:3, 10). Satan uses the weapons of condemnation and lies to disarm the saints and strip them of their faith and boldness. If we will stand strong in the certainty of God's righteousness and truth, all the demonic lies will be ineffective. Righteousness is a breastplate of faith and love, and with it we can execute the judgments of God against all sin, sickness, and disease (1 Thessalonians 5:8). With His righteousness and truth, we can stand boldly in the face of every earthly and demonic thing, and speak the words of faith and power. It is in this place of divine confidence and assurance that the winds and the waves must obey, mountains must move, and the course of nature is altered at our command (Joshua 10:12-13, Hebrews 11:33-34, Isaiah 43:2, Daniel 3:23-25, Matthew 21:21). We must forsake our own identity, lay aside the weapons of own understanding, and take up that which God has supplied: His truth and righteousness!

Ephesians 6:15

And bind your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace[195].

Commentary · Ephesians 6:15 · Note 195

We should not think of the army of God and the individual soldiers in His army as maintaining a defensive posture. We are not holding down the fort, but advancing the message of the kingdom throughout the Earth. It is important to realize that each one of us have the commission and the responsibility to announce the gospel of peace to every person on Earth (Mark 16:15, Matthew 28:18-19). One of the most effective weapons to stop the attack of Satan against us individually is the word of our testimony (Revelation 12:11, Romans 10:6, 9-10, 15, Luke 10:19). The announcement of peace calms the raging storm, and breaks the stronghold of death. Although Satan would blind the hearts and the minds of men so that the gospel would be hid, we are given the authority to speak these words of life that will break every yoke and render Satan's devices ineffective. The glorious light of the gospel of peace will demolish strongholds, set the captives free, turn those in darkness to light and from the power of Satan unto God (Luke 1:79, Acts 26:18, 2 Corinthians 10:4, Isaiah 60:1). The feet that are prepared with the gospel of peace are called beautiful feet (Isaiah 52:7). The prophet Isaiah gives the imagery of the swift deer upon the mountaintops when speaking of those who bring the announcement of the gospel. We run throughout the Earth declaring to all mankind that salvation is made available to everyone. Liberty has come! Men no longer need to set in darkness and remain slaves to sin! Those who have their feet shod with the gospel of peace will not slip in the treacherous places, their feet will be like hinds' feet, having the ability to walk upon the high places in God with absolute authority over every power of darkness (Psalms 17:5, 18:33, 36, 37:31, Habakkuk 3:19). It is the God of peace that crushes Satan under our feet (Romans 16:20).

Ephesians 6:16

In everything taking up the shield of faith[196], with which you will be able to quench the fiery darts of the wicked.

Commentary · Ephesians 6:16 · Note 196

Faith is a shield that will protect you from every kind of assault that could be launched against you. Almighty God Himself is a shield about us, and He is our faith (Psalm 3:3, 5:12, 18:35, 28:7, 33:20, 84:11). This is not like the shield of any earthly army – this is a shield that surrounds us from head to toe, front and back – for it is the glory of the Lord and the shield of His presence. If God is going to be our shield, then we must put our trust in Him (Proverbs 30:5). The faith of God is found in His Word, and in His Word we must trust. We must remain confident in the things that God has spoken and the promises that He has made. If the armor of God is going to be effective for us, then we must believe that His glory is both in us and around us (John 14:17, Isaiah 4:5, Matthew 3:11).

The whole message of the armor of God is one of possessing the identity of Christ, putting on the new man, and being clothed with the Lord Jesus – who is to us an armor of light and an armor of righteousness (Ephesians 4:24, Romans 13:12, 14, 2 Corinthians 6:7). This is the faith that puts out the fiery darts of every satanic assault. Because of the strength of the Lord and the power of His might, we

are able to resist the attacks of the enemy steadfast in the faith and execute divine authority and judgment over all of the powers of darkness – to cast them out, throw them down, and stop their works wherever we encounter them (1 Peter 5:8-9, Luke 10:19, 1 John 3:8, Mark 16:17, Romans 16:20).

The conquering power that conquers everything that is in the world is our faith (1 John 2:16, 5:4). Our faith has been granted to us by God. Through His Word, and by His Spirit, He has given to us His knowledge, understanding, and wisdom so that we can stand in the truth and insight of reality – and reject the lies and deception that would destroy our souls. All we have to do is believe the truth and put our trust in God, and no power of darkness can touch us. Every weapon formed against us will fall powerless at our feet, for the Lord encamps around us! We dwell in His pavilion, and we have made Him our habitation (Psalm 27:5, 31:20, 71:3, 91:9-10, John 15:4). His presence, anointing, glory, and the new creation that He made is our shield of faith!

Ephesians 6:17

And receive the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the proclamation of God's Word[198].

Commentary · Ephesians 6:17 · Note 198

The proclamation of the Word of God is the Word of faith, and it is the sword of the Spirit in our mouths. In Romans 10:8 we read of the 'rhema pisteos' ("word of faith"), and then in Ephesians 6:17, 'rhema Theou' ("Word of God"). The related verse in Deuteronomy serves to emphasize the connection between the Word of God and the word of faith (God's spoken word in our mouth). The Lord told Israel that the Word that He had spoken to them was to be continually in their mouth so that they would do it (Deuteronomy 30:10-14). God said that He would give us His Spirit and put His Word in our mouths so that His Word would not depart out of our mouths (Isaiah 59:21). Those who are committed to doing all that God has commanded must not let the Word depart out of their mouth, but instead continually speak it (Joshua 1:8, Psalms 119:11, Colossians 3:16, Ephesians 5:18-19). The words that the Lord has put in our mouth are the words that have proceeded from the mouth of God (Deuteronomy 8:3). God has written His words in our minds and on the tables of our heart so that we might speak them and do them (Hebrews 8:10, 10:16, 2 Corinthians 3:3, Jeremiah 31:33, Luke 6:45). It is by the Word of God and the Spirit of God that faith comes to us. When we speak the Word of God by the Spirit of God, it is the word of faith! Faith is activated by speaking the Word of God – by acknowledging every good thing that is in us and then following through with obedience (Philemon 1:6). When we believe in our heart those things that God has spoken, we speak with our mouth, and with the confession of our mouth we are saved (Romans 10:10, Matthew 12:37). We must hold fast to the confession of our faith if we are going to realize all of the blessings that God has for us (Hebrews 10:23). When the spies returned from spying out the land, only Joshua and Caleb had the word of faith that did not speak according to the logical conclusions of a natural man. Caleb boldly proclaimed the word of faith because he believed what God had promised, saying, "let us go up at once and possess it, for we are well-able to overcome it" (Numbers

13:30). Circumstances and opposition will pose threats against the promises of God, but if we hold fast to what God has promised, and encourage ourselves with His words, we will see an ever-increasing manifestation of all that God has promised. If we speak to the mountain by the Word of the Lord, it will obey us (Mark 11:23)! We have been given an even greater authority than Joshua had when he spoke to the sun and the moon, and the natural laws conformed to the word of faith (Joshua 10:12-13). When David was facing impossible odds, he boldly proclaimed to the giant, "I come to you in the name of the Lord of hosts" (1 Samuel 17:45). When Abraham was going to sacrifice Isaac, he confidently confessed, "we will come again unto you" (Genesis 22:5). God's people must come to realize that if they will trust God and hold fast unto His Word, they will find the same abundance of divine provision and relationship that Abraham discovered when He held nothing back (Genesis 22:12, 16-18). Do not murmur, complain, or be unthankful, for all of these things are expressions of doubt and unbelief. Do not defy the Word of God by speaking things contrary to His Word. These things will only serve to keep you from the blessings of the Lord and the walk of faith even as they did Israel in the days that they wandered in the wilderness because of their unbelief. Instead, be confident in the Lord, who has promised you every good and perfect thing. God is on your side, and watches over His Word to perform it. Christ Jesus will go with you, confirming His Word with signs and wonders, but you must believe. Be strong and very courageous, for the Spirit of the Lord will strengthen you with the strength of the Lord and the power for His might so that you may do, and be, all that God has commanded. Additional Notes: The Greek phrase 'rhema Theo' ("Word of God") is found 4 times in the New Testament. We may regard 'rhema' as the spoken word of the Word of God, which was spoken in the past, and which we now speak by the Spirit of the Lord. The 'rhema,' in this sense, would still be no different from the Word of God, as it is contained in the Bible. One may regard the word of faith as: speaking by the Spirit things of faith that are taught to us by the 'logos' of God, but inspired by the Holy Spirit for a specific application. Speaking faith is what Joshua did to the sun and the moon, and what Jesus described with respect to moving mountains (Joshua 10:12-13, Mark 11:23-24). The first time it is found is in Luke 3:2, "the rhema of God came upon John." In John 8:47, Jesus said, "he that is of God hears God's rhema." Paul uses this phrase in Romans 10:17, "Faith is from hearing, and hearing through the rhema of God." Its final usage is in Hebrews 11:3, "We understand faith framed the ages by the rhema of God" (keeping in mind that in Psalm 33:6, 'logos' is used, "by the logos of YHWH, the heavens were made"). The first time that 'rhema' is found in the Old Testament is in Genesis 15:1, "After these things the rhema of YHWH came to Abram in a vision." The Greek word 'rhema' is derived from the word 'rheo,' which means "to speak" or "to utter." However, the primary Greek word for "word" in both the Old and New Testaments is 'logos.' In the New Testament, 'logos' occurs 330 times, whereas 'rhema' occurs 70 times. In the Septuagint, 'logos' is found 1239 times, and 'rhema' is found 546 times. The Greek words 'logos' and rhema' are translated by the same Hebrew words. However, 90% of the time, 'logos' translated the Hebrew word 'dabar,' which is the exclusive word for the "written Word" or Mosaic Law in biblical Hebrew. At the same time, 'rhema' dominates the translation for 'dabar' in the Pentateuch, whereas 'logos' is dominant among the prophets. 'Logos' is used to identify the Lord Jesus Christ as the Word of God (John 1:1), but 'rhema' is never is used in this way. Although 'logos' is primarily used to identify the written Word of God, 'rhema' is also used for the

written Word of God in Matthew 4:4. The phrase 'logos tou Theo' ("the Word of God") is found a total of 12 times in the New Testament (Luke 8:11, John 10:35, Acts 6:7, 12:24, 17:13, Romans 9:6, 1 Corinthians 14:36, 2 Timothy 2:9, Titus 2:5, Hebrews 4:12, 1 John 2:14, Revelation 19:13.

Ephesians 6:18

Pray in the Spirit at all times in every prayer[199] and petition, and through it stay alert with all persistence and intercession for all the saints,

Commentary · Ephesians 6:18 · Note 199

Paul insisted that we pray in the Spirit. He made it clear to the church at Corinth that praying in the Spirit was a special kind of prayer: where the Holy Spirit was engaged in prayer through us (1 Corinthians 14:14-15). The prayer of the Spirit that produces the language of the Spirit participates in a communication directly with God (1 Corinthians 14:2, Romans 8:26). The only way that we can understand the true meaning of what Paul was saying regarding the prayer of the Spirit is to recognize that when the church was filled with the Spirit, a divine utterance was given to them (Acts 2:4). It must be recognized by all that if we are to pray in the Spirit, then some event has to happen where we are filled by the Holy Spirit – and the prayer that we engage in is not our own, but His. It is through such prayer and intercession that the saints of God will remain totally alert. We have an adversary, the Devil, who goes about as a roaring lion, whose craft and power we have been given power over. The strength of the Lord and the power of His might are given to us by the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 6:10). However, we must recognize that prayer is one of the primary ways in which we yield ourselves to what He desires to supply. We should also recognize that God wants us to be alert and attentive to the instruction of the Holy Spirit, so that the life and ministry of Jesus might be revealed through us as individuals, and through the congregation of the church as a whole. We are to pray for one another and for all men, but especially for the effectiveness of the church (Acts 12:5, Philippians 4:6, Colossians 1:9, 4:3, 1 Thessalonians 5:25, 2 Thessalonians 1:11, 3:1, 1 Timothy 2:1, Hebrews 13:18). Paul viewed his own effectiveness in ministry, in part, as a result of the saints praying for him. He desired that the church would pray for him: that he would be given the word to speak, that he would speak the Word of God with boldness, and that it would advance rapidly (Ephesians 6:19, 2 Thessalonians 3:1). If we can grasp the importance of prayer, and the power of prayer, we would realize that more things would change on our knees than could ever be accomplished through human effort. Unfortunately, if we are not careful, we will pray after our own human concern and understanding, and be completely ineffective. It is only the prayer of the Spirit that is the effectual and effective prayer (1 John 5:14, Romans 8:5, 27, 1 Corinthians 2:16). When we pray in the Spirit, we will also receive the utterance of specific things that we are to pray for, but it will be directed by knowledge and understanding that the Holy Spirit gives – not after our own human understanding. We can always expect the utterance of the unknown tongue that the Holy Spirit gives to excel to a point that the understanding can also be fruitful, through interpretation. Prayer with the understanding should also be by revelation, knowledge, prophecy, or interpretation of tongues – this way, we receive instruction and edification by it (1 Corinthians 14:6, 1 Corinthians 14:12-13, 1 Corinthians

14:15-16). Many times we make the mistake of praying in the Spirit just short of the prayer that can be understood (1 Corinthians 14:6, 13).

Ephesians 6:19

and on my behalf that a word[200] may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, by boldly making known the mystery of the gospel –

Commentary · Ephesians 6:19 · Note 200

Paul's petition for prayer underscores its power and effectiveness, no matter who you are. Jesus also asked the disciples to pray with Him (Matthew 26:38, Mark 14:34, 37). The power of prayer will make a difference in the process and the outcome. Paul petitioned the church in Rome to "strive together" with him in prayer so that he would be delivered from the unbelieving Judeans (Romans 15:30). Paul also exhorted the Philippians that their prayers would make the difference in the opposition and trouble that he faced (Philippians 1:19). Likewise, Paul encouraged those at Ephesus to pray so that a word ('logos') may be given to him to make known the mystery of the gospel in a way that people might be able to more fully understand (Ephesians 6:19). Understanding the value of prayer is necessary if we are going to be motivated to participate with it, as well as to have the ability to move in faith as we petition the Father in the name of Jesus. Mobilizing the saints to begin to pray for the work of the gospel will make the difference in the effectiveness of the local church and the work of the ministry everywhere. If the saints of God would pray for their pastors to preach with an ever-increasing anointing, and for an increase in the manifest work of the Holy Spirit, surely there would be a greater result in every church. It's high time that everyone become involved in the most essential work of prayer and supplication in the Spirit so that the great things that Father desires to do will take place with greater power through our lives and ministries. Unfortunately, many unwise saints continue to participate with the opposition through accusation and strife. If we would take up the ministry of Jesus, who forever lives to make intercession for the saints, surely the work of the ministry would experience greater results (Hebrews 7:25).

Ephesians 6:20

on behalf of which I am an ambassador in bonds, that in it I may speak boldly even as I ought to speak.

Ephesians 6:21

But that you may also know what I do, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful servant in the Lord, shall make known everything to you,

Ephesians 6:22

whom I will send to you so that you may know how we are doing and encourage your heart.

Ephesians 6:23

Peace to the brethren, and love with faith from Father God and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 6:24

Grace[201] to all who sincerely[202] love our Lord Jesus Christ, Amen!

Commentary · Ephesians 6:24 · Note 201

Grace belongs to everyone who is sincere about their relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. There could be no greater blessing for one person to bestow on another than to desire that the grace of God be upon their lives. The Greek phrase 'he charis' is literally translated as "the grace." The grace of God is the means by which all of the blessings and benefits of God's love have been imparted to the saints. The word "grace" is found 12 times in the book of Ephesians, an epistle that stands out as emphasizing us being the recipients of God's goodness (Ephesians 2:5, 8). Paul refers to the ministry that was given to him by God as the "administration of grace" or "the grace of God given him to administer" (Ephesians 3:2). It is God's grace that has endowed us with grace (Ephesians 1:6), and it is by the riches of His grace that we are redeemed (Ephesians 1:7). The gift of God is the gift of grace (Ephesians 2:8, 3:7).

Commentary · Ephesians 6:24 · Note 202

The Greek word used at the end of this verse has been a bit of a puzzle to most translators. While the Greek word 'aphtharsia' is most commonly translated as "incorruption" or "immortality," its root word 'aphthartos' only means "incorruptible." However it may also be translated as "purity," "sincerity," or "without corruption."

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