

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE Ephesians

an apostle of Jē'sūs Christ by the
of God, to the saints which are at
us, and to the faithful in Christ Jē's.
be to you, and peace, from God our
and from the Lord Jē'sūs Christ,
be the God and Father of our
s Christ, who hath blessed us with
blessings in heavenly places in
as he hath chosen us in him
undation of the world, that we
oly and without blame before
destinated us unto the adop-
n by Jē'sūs Christ to himself,
e good pleasure of his will,
ise of the glory of his
e hath made us accepted in
have redemption through
iveness of sins, according
grace;
n abounding toward us in
dence;
own unto us the mystery
g to his good pleasure
ed in himself:
isation of the fulness of
r together in one all
which are in heaven,
; even in him;
ave obtained an in-
nated according to
worketh all
vn will.

raised him from the dead, and set him at his
own right hand in the heavenly places,
21 Far above all principality, and power,
and might, and dominion, and every name
that is named, not only in this world, but also
in that which is to come:
22 And hath put all things under his feet,
and gave him to be the head over all things to
the church,
23 Which is his body, the fulness of him
that filleth all in all.

2 AND you hath he quickened, who were
dead in trespasses and sins;
2 Wherein in time past ye walked according
to the course of this world, according to the
prince of the power of the air, the spirit that
now worketh in the children of disobedi-
ence:
3 Among whom also we all had our con-
versation in times past in the lusts of our
flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of
the mind; and were by nature the children
of wrath, even as others.

4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his
great love wherewith he loved us,
5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath
quickened us together with Christ, (by grace
ye are saved;)
6 And hath raised us up together
7 That in the

ephesians

THE GRACE OF GOD AND THE WALK OF THE CHRISTIAN

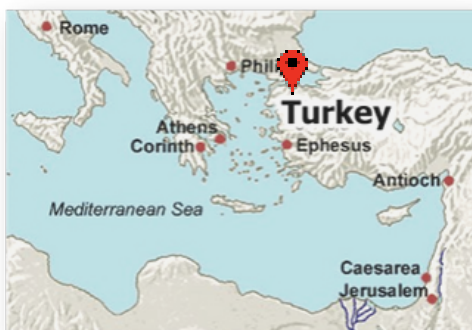
A STUDY ON PAUL'S EPISTLE TO THE EPHESIANS
(adapted from the Preacher's Outline and Sermon Bible)



SERMON

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- 02 THE BLESSINGS OF GOD (I) - ELECTION (EPH. 1:3-4)
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THE CALL OF GOD (EPHESIANS 1:1-2)



INTRODUCTION

A. THE CITY OF EPHESUS

In the early days, the city of Ephesus was one of the most important city along the coast of Asia Minor. The city was at the crossroads of one of the main highways of Asia Minor. Ephesus was known for its natural harbor as well as the rich, fertile land that covered the inland area.

Endowed with a natural harbour, Ephesus became a very successful commercial city. However, in the middle of the first century, the harbor had silted up so badly that trade had declined.

Ephesus was also infamous for the temple of Diana, or Artemis, which was there.

The religion of Diana was promoted by a host of priestesses, and the worship of Diana was marked by gross immorality. The cult of Diana also led a flourishing idol-producing industry. This accounts for the guild of silversmiths (Acts 19:24).

The neglect of its harbour and the immoral indulgence of the cult of Diana resulted in the collapse of Ephesus. The city of Ephesus, stricken with the cancer of sin, slowly wasted away. The disease of Ephesus proved mortal. The “lampstand” of Ephesus crumbled, and the light of Ephesus died out (see Rev. 2:1-7, esp. Rev. 2:5).

B. THE CHURCH AT EPHESUS

The church in Ephesus had a small beginning. When Paul visited Ephesus, he found only twelve believers in the city (Acts 19:7). Paul stayed at Ephesus for three months, but the Jews were hardened and refused to believe the Gospel. They also vehemently opposed the preaching of the Gospel, and Paul was forced to move the church into the school of a philosopher, Tyrannus. There he preached Christ for two whole years.

During this time, it is said that the church became a Gospel centre “so that all they which dwelt in Asia heard the word of the Lord Jesus, both Jews and Greeks” (Acts 19:10).

The Lord worked miracles through Paul in Ephesus and the church witnessed some amazing things. From these, Paul was able to reach the Ephesians. As Paul preached and God worked miracles, many believed, and the church grew mightily. The genuineness of the faith of believers was evidenced by the public burning of the religious paraphernalia of the cult of Diana.

THE CALL OF GOD (EPH. 1:1)

- **Paul was called by the will of God.**

There is no greater privilege in all the world than the privilege of being chosen to serve our Lord Jesus Christ.



Believers must do God's will (Matt. 12:50; Rom. 12:2; Eph. 6:6; James 4:15; 1 John 2:17; Ps. 40:8).

- **Paul was called to be an apostle.**

The word "apostle" [Gk: **apostolos**] refers to one called and sent forth on a very special mission. Paul's mission was to proclaim the glorious message of salvation to the world.



Christ needs messengers. Are you willing to be one? (John 15:16; Acts 26:16; 2 Cor. 5:18-21; 1 Tim. 1:12).

- **Paul was possessed by Jesus Christ.**

Christ came to earth so that we can know Him personally and savingly. This thought so captured Paul's heart that he surrendered his life completely to Christ.



All to Christ, we surrender (Matt. 16:24; Mark 10:28; Luke 14:33; 18:29-30; Rom. 6:13; 12:1-2; 1 Cor. 6:19-20; Phil. 3:7-8; Prov. 23:26).

THE CHURCH OF GOD (EPH.1:2)

- **God calls believers to be saints.**

The word "saint" [Gk: **hagiois**] means set apart, consecrated, sacred, and holy.



Believers are saints in the sense that we have been given a new heart by God (Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10; 2 Cor. 5:17).



Believers are saints in the sense that we are set apart to live consecrated lives in this world (Rom. 12:1-2; 1 Pet. 1:14-15).

- **God calls believers to be faithful.**

The word "faithful" [Gk: **pistois**] means a person who has placed his faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.



Believers must be faithful (John 3:14-16, 36; 5:24; 11:25; 12:46; 20:31; Rom. 10:9).

- **God calls believers by His grace.**

Grace [Gk: **charis**] means all the favours and gifts of God.



God bestows upon believers spiritual grace (Eph. 1:7; 2:7; Phil. 4:19; 1 Tim. 1:14).

Grace also means the favour of God showered upon undeserving sinners.



Grace is a free gift (Eph. 2:8-9; Tit. 3:4-5; Rom. 3:24; Eph. 2:4-5; Tit. 2:11-14).



Grace is the only way that sinners can be saved (Rom. 5:15; 1 Cor. 1:4; 2 Cor. 8:9; Tit. 3:6-7).

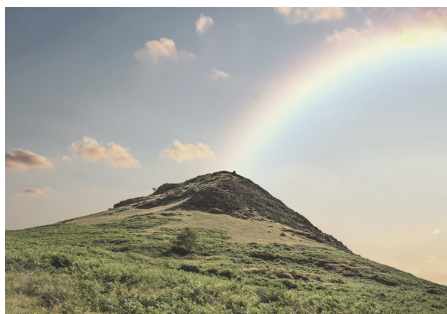
THE BLESSINGS OF GOD (PART 1)

(EPHESIANS 1:3-4)

THE BLESSINGS OF GOD (EPH. 1:3)

God is to be blessed because He has showered His people with manifold blessings.

- God's blessings are spiritual rather than material.
- God's blessings are eternal rather than temporal.
- God's blessings are found only in Christ. When a person believes in Christ, he is in Christ. To be in Christ is to believe in God's Son so much that God counts the person to be just like Christ: acceptable and worthy to be blessed with all the blessings of heaven.



THE BLESSING OF BEING CHOSEN (EPH. 1:4)

God has chosen us to be holy and blameless. Before the foundation of the world, God determined that He would have a people ...

- who would be “in Him”, that is, in His Son, Jesus Christ;
- who would be “holy and without blame”;
- who would live “before Him in love” – forever and ever.

A. GOD HAS CHOSEN US TO BE HOLY

The word “holy” means to be set apart and consecrated to God. It is the same word that is used for “saint” in Ephesians 1:1.



What does it mean to be holy? (2 Cor. 7:1; Eph. 4:24; Heb. 12:14; 1 Pet. 15-16; 2 Pet. 3:11)

B. GOD HAS CHOSEN US TO BE BLAMELESS

The word “blameless” means to be free from sin; to be above reproach and without blemish; to be without fault and defilement.



What must we do, so that we can be blameless? (Phil. 2:15; Col. 1:21-22; 1 Thess. 3:13; 5:23; 2 Pet. 3:14)

Note that no believer can live a perfect and sinless life. The Christian's perfection is in Christ and in Christ alone. Our only hope of ever living with God is to believe in Jesus Christ—believe so much that God will take our faith and count it as the righteousness of Christ.

THE BLESSINGS OF GOD (PART 2)

(EPHESIANS 1:5-7)

THE BLESSING OF ADOPTION (EPH. 1:5-6)

God has adopted us as His children. Considering the nature of who we are, this is an amazing privilege!



A. ADOPTION IS PREDESTINATED.

The word “predestinated” is also translated as “determined before” (Acts 4:28) and “ordained before” (1 Cor. 2:7).

Predestination means that nothing can stop God's purpose for the believer. A believer may struggle through the sin and shame of this world; he may even stumble and fall, but in Christ, he will “neither totally nor finally fall away from the state of grace” (WCF, Chap. 17.1).



Predestination does not mean that the offer of the Gospel is therefore not genuine (John 3:16; Rom. 10:13; 1 Tim. 2:3-4; 2 Pet. 3:9; 1 John 2:2).



The believer can rest in this blessed assurance (Eph. 1:4-5; 3:11-12; Phil. 1:6).

B. ADOPTION IS BY CHRIST ALONE.

“Adoption” means “to be placed as a child”. God accepts us because we believe and trust His Son Jesus Christ (Rom. 8:29-30). God “hath made us accepted in the beloved” (Eph. 1:6).

C. ADOPTION IS AT GOD'S PLEASURE AND FOR HIS GLORY.

Adoption is a divine initiative.



The believer therefore has nothing to boast (Deut. 7:6-8; Rom. 9:15-16).

THE BLESSING OF REDEMPTION (EPH. 1:7)

"Redemption" has the idea of deliverance or setting a man free by paying a ransom. The sinner is powerless to redeem himself.



A. THE CAUSES FOR BONDAGE

Sinners are under bondage of the following:



Sin (Rom. 3:23; 7:14)



Corruption of this world and death (Rom. 8:21; 1 Cor. 15:42; Gal. 6:8; 2 Pet. 1:4; 2 Pet. 2:12, 19).



Satan (2 Cor. 4:4; Eph. 2:2; 1 John 5:19)

B. THE MEANS OF DELIVERANCE

Sinners need to be delivered from the power and the penalty of sin, but we are unable to deliver ourselves. God alone can deliver sinners.



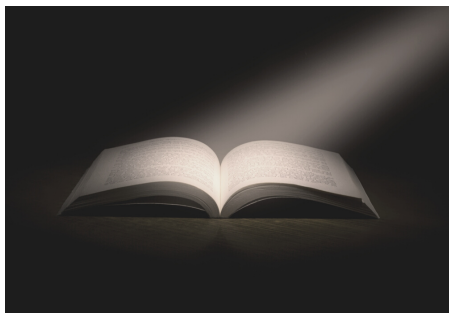
We are redeemed by the blood of Christ (Lev. 17:11; Matt. 20:28; Rom. 3:24; 1 Cor. 6:20; 7:23; Col. 1:14; 1 Tim. 2:5-6; Heb. 9:15; 1 Pet. 1:18; 2 Pet. 2:1; Rev. 5:9; 14:3-4).

THE BLESSINGS OF GOD (PART 3)

(EPHESIANS 1:8-10)

THE BLESSING OF DIVINE WISDOM (EPH. 1:8)

With deliverance from sin, God also gives the blessing of divine wisdom.



A. WISDOM

"Wisdom" means seeing, knowing and living out the truth. It is to see the problems of life, know the answers, and apply to life.



The wisdom of God is found only in Christ Jesus (Rom. 11:33; 1 Cor. 1:24, 30; 2:9-16; Eph. 1:8; Phil. 2:5; Col. 2:3; James 1:5).

B. PRUDENCE

"Prudence" means understanding, insight, the ability to solve day to day problems. It is a down-to-earth practical understanding of things.



Prudence is having a renewed mind to think biblically (Eph. 1:17-18; Col. 1:9; 2:2; 2 Tim. 2:7; 1 John 5:20; Prov. 2:6; 8:14).

THE BLESSING OF KNOWING GOD'S WILL (EPH. 1:9-10)

God has revealed the mystery of His will to us. The word “mystery” as used in the Bible is not truth that is concealed and available only to a select few. The “mystery” in the Bible means that it is truth that can only be known by divine revelation.

A. GOD'S WILL FOR THE WORLD

God has an eternal purpose and plan for the world, and it is to gather all things in heaven and earth (Eph. 1:10). This implies a separation at the present moment, a separation that is due to sin.



B. GOD'S TIMING FOR THE WORLD

The “fulness of times” (Eph. 1:10) denotes that there is to be a consummation, a climax of history in which all things will be brought to a peaceful state under the authority of Jesus Christ.



At His appointed times, God will unfold His will that eventually leads to the redemption of the world (Gal. 4:4-6; Eph. 1:4; 3:9-11; Phil. 2:9-11).

Paul uses the word “dispensation” [Gk: *oikonomia*] which means “household arrangement”.

C. GOD'S INSTRUMENTS OF RECONCILIATION FOR THE WORLD

Jesus Christ is God's appointed Head over the new creation and new order.



Christ is the head of the church and the new creation (Eph. 1:22-23; 4:15; 5:23; Col. 1:18; 2:19). Christ is also the instrument of reconciliation (2 Cor. 5:19).



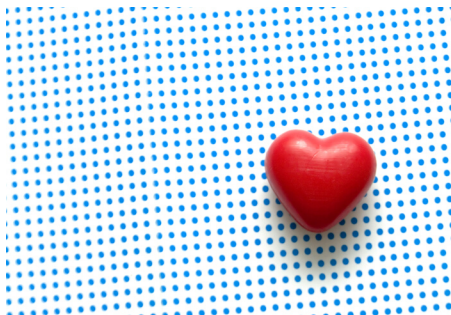
The church is also God's instrument of reconciliation. The church is to take Christ and His Gospel to the world (2 Cor. 5:19-21; Eph. 4:11-12).

THE BLESSINGS OF GOD (PART 4)

(EPHESIANS 1:11-14)

THE BLESSING OF INHERITANCE (EPH. 1:11-12)

God has given us an inheritance, meaning that we are made the heritage of God Himself.



A. PREDESTINED

God works all things out after the counsel of His own will. God's will is perfect.

B. PROMISED

"We should be ..." (Eph. 1:12). God takes the believer and makes him His own heritage and possession.



Regardless of the circumstances, we are God's cherished possession (Deut. 9:29; 32:9; Exod. 19:5; Ps. 135:4; Mal. 3:17; 1 Pet. 2:9).

C. PURPOSE

The purpose God makes us His inheritance is so that we should exist "to the praise of His glory" (Eph 1:12).



The glory of God's eternal grace and love shown to the world in His Son, Jesus Christ (Heb. 13:14-15; 1 Pet. 2:9).



God's love will be seen and glorified in His redeemed forever and ever. "Man's chief end is to glorify God, and to enjoy him forever" (WSC, Question 1).

RECEIVING THE INHERITANCE (EPH. 1:13)

Paul states there are two requisites to receiving the inheritance.



A. HEARING THE WORD OF GOD

A person has to hear the Word of God before he can ever know the truth, the glorious gospel of salvation.



Without hearing the Gospel, no sinner can be saved (Rom. 10:17; 1 Pet. 1:23).

B. TRUSTING IN THE SON OF GOD

Christ is the Living Word. A person has to believe in Christ in order to be saved.



Without faith in Christ, no sinner can be saved (John 5:24; Rom. 10:9-10).

THE BLESSING OF THE SPIRIT (EPH. 1:14)

God has sealed us with the Holy Spirit. The word “sealing” of the Holy Spirit guarantees the inheritance. The “earnest of our inheritance” is the guarantee of our inheritance.



We know that we are redeemed by the Holy Spirit who lives within us (Rom. 8:16; 2 Cor. 1:22; Gal. 4:6).

Testimony of Faith & Knowledge of God (Ephesians 1:15-18)

TESTIMONY OF THE EPHESIAN CHURCH (EPH. 1:15-16)



A. PAUL'S COMMENDATION FOR THE EPHESIANS

The Christian's testimony of faith in God is inextricably linked to his knowledge of God.

- Paul had heard about their faith in God's love.
- Paul had heard their great love for God's people.



Faith in God is demonstrated by telling others about the Gospel – the message of God's love and saving grace of Christ.



Love for saints is demonstrated by meeting the needs of other believers (Gal. 6:10).

B. PAUL'S DESIRE FOR THE EPHESIANS

The Christian life is never static. The Christian must continue to progress spiritually. Having heard of the testimony of faith and love of the believers, Paul desires and prays that they would continue to grow in the knowledge of God.

KNOWLEDGE OF GOD (EPH. 1:17-18)

Every believer must grow in knowledge and grace of God.

A. WHO IS THIS GOD?

The God we worship is not a figment of our imagination.

- The God we worship is the God whom our Lord Jesus Christ worshipped and prayed to while He was on earth.
- The God we worship is the Father of glory.

B. HOW DO WE KNOW THIS GOD?

Three things are essential if believers are to grow in the knowledge of God.

1. To grow in the knowledge of God, a believer must have the spirit of wisdom.

Wisdom is more than just knowledge. Wisdom can best be understood by the words **what** and **how**. Wisdom means knowing what something is, what is behind something, and what can be done. It is knowing how to use or relate to something.



To grow in the knowledge of God, you must hunger and thirst for the wisdom of God (Matt. 7:24; Col. 2:3; 2 Tim. 3:15; James 1:5; 3:17).

2. To grow in the knowledge of God, a believer must have the spirit of revelation.

The word “revelation” means “to manifest” or “to reveal”. Our knowledge of God is based on divine revelation, and it is the Holy Spirit who reveals God to us (John 14:26; John 16:12-15).



We must seek to have the truth of God revealed to us. This requires diligent study of the Word of God.



Worldly philosophies tell us to seek to know ourselves. Scriptures, on the other hand, calls on us to know “the only true God, and Jesus Christ” (John 17:3).

3. To grow in knowledge of God, a believer must have the eyes of his understanding enlightened.

The word “understanding” means “mind”. The Chinese translation renders it as “heart”. It means that a man’s mind/heart must be opened so that God’s truth can be seen and understood.



An open heart is the responsibility of both the believer and the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit opens the heart of the person who seeks God (Acts 16:14; Ps. 18:28; 119:30).

C. WHAT ARE THE RESULTS OF KNOWING GOD?

1. A believer who knows God also knows the hope of God’s calling.

The believer’s hope is that one day we shall be like our Lord Jesus Christ, righteous and perfect, enabled to live in God’s presence, worshipping and serving Him forever and ever.



We are not perfect as yet, but one day when we see Christ, we shall be. Are you looking for and living in that hope? (Matt. 13:41; Rom. 8:16-17, 29-30; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 3:4; 1 John 3:2)

2. A believer who knows God also knows God’s inheritance.

Believers are promised the inheritance of God. And we are the inheritance of God. When we come to know God, we learn who we are—the glorious position God has given us.



Our inheritance is in heaven for us, and we are also kept by the power of God to enjoy that inheritance (1 Pet. 1:3-5).

Power of God (Ephesians 1:19-23)

POWER OF GOD

The power of God is exceeding great, and that power is to us-ward, meaning that God takes His power and avails it to the believer.



POWER OF GOD SEEN IN THE RESURRECTION OF CHRIST

The resurrection of Christ shows that God has the power to give man a new life and the power to live a new life before Him (Acts 2:23-24; 3:14-15; 10:39-41; Rom. 1:4). When God raised Christ from the dead, it shows three important truths.

A. VICTORY OVER SIN AND DEATH

Christ's resurrection shows that God has the power to conquer all the trials and temptations of life.



Sin has no dominion over the believer (Rom. 6:14; 1 Cor. 10:13; 2 Cor. 12:9).

B. NEW LIFE IN CHRIST

Christ's resurrection shows believers can walk before God in newness of life.



Are you a new creature in Christ? Are you walking before God in newness of life? (Rom. 6:4; Eph. 4:24; Col. 2:6; 3:10; 1 John 2:6)

C. HOPE OF RESURRECTION

Christ's resurrection means that we will also be raised from the dead.



Because He lives, we shall live also (John 5:28-29; Acts 24:15; 2 Cor. 4:14; 1 Thess. 4:16-18).

POWER OF GOD SEEN IN THE EXALTATION OF CHRIST

Believers will be exalted as Christ is exalted. Christ has been exalted above "all principality, and power, and might, and dominion" (Mark 16:19; Luke 22:69; Acts 5:30-31).

A. CHRIST'S EXALTATION - HE SHALL RULE OVER ALL.

God gave Jesus Christ the authority to rule and reign over all.



In Christ, we will be exalted as well (John 14:2-3; Acts 7:55-56; Phil. 3:20-21; Col. 3:4; Rev. 22:14).

B. CHRISTIAN'S EXALTATION - WE SHALL RULE WITH HIM.

Christ's exaltation is seen in His reign over all creation. Our exaltation in Christ also means that we shall rule with Him.



In Christ, we shall reign with Him (Matt. 25:23, 34; Luke 19:17; 1 Cor. 6:2-3; Heb. 6:5; James 2:5; Rev. 5:10; 20:4; 22:5).

C. CHRIST'S EXALTATION - HE IS THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH.

The church is called the body of Christ. Christ is the Head and the church being His body. The head cannot function without the body. The body cannot function without the head.



God has the power to make the body function and work for Christ (Acts 1:8; Rom. 12:5; 1 Cor. 12:27-28; Eph. 4:11-12; Col. 1:24; 2:19; 2 Tim. 1:7).



The church is the instrument of God for bringing His will about on earth. Are you doing God's will? (Matt. 28:19-20; Col. 1:16-20; 2:8-10; 2 Pet. 3:9-13)