

Spiritual Blessings

Ephesians 1:1-14

(Verses 3-14 are one sentence)

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all **spiritual blessings** in heavenly *places* in Christ:

Introduction

- Material Blessings – temporal – most often mentioned and desired (Food, clothing, shelter, money, possessions, assets)
- Spiritual Blessings – eternal – most likely to be forgotten – most important
- Don't have to wait for spiritual blessings – we have them now

Opening Remarks of the Epistle

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

- This letter was from the Apostle Paul
- This letter was to the church at Ephesus although it was probably shared with many other churches at the time
- Paul's statement of desiring that this church would have grace and peace from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ

I. The Recipients of these Spiritual Blessings?

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

A. To the saints

1. The saints are those who are holy, sacred, consecrated, sanctified or set apart, purified

1 Corinthians 1:2 Unto the **church** of God which is at Corinth, to them that are **sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints**, with all that in every place call upon the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours:

2. The believers who are the church of God

B. To the faithful

Colossians 1:2 To the **saints** and **faithful** brethren in Christ which are at Colosse: Grace *be* unto you, and peace, from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. Full of faith – trust in God
2. Those who had received salvation and were continuing to be followers of Christ – Christians

II. The Source of these Spiritual Blessings

Ephesians 1:3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with **all spiritual blessings in** heavenly *places* in Christ:

A. From God our Father

1. Blessed – adjective
2. Blessed – verb
3. Blessings – noun
4. Greek root word – eulogy
5. Definition – to speak well of, to thank, to praise, a blessing, a benefit, to celebrate with praise

B. Through the Lord Jesus Christ – the blessing of salvation

Ephesians 1:20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set *him* at his own right hand in the **heavenly places**,

1. He was raised from the dead
2. He is sitting at the right hand of God in Heaven
3. The saints have been raised with Christ

Ephesians 2:5-6 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in **heavenly places** in Christ Jesus:

C. By the Holy Spirit of God – spiritual

III. The Specific Spiritual Blessings that Have Been Given to Us

A. Chosen by God

Ephesians 1:4 According as he hath **chosen** us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

1. You were not an accident – there might be an unexpected pregnancy, but there is no accidental births

2. You were chosen before the foundation of the world was laid
3. This reminds us that God has a sovereign plan for us
4. God's salvation is to all who will believe in Him
5. Chosen to be holy and perfect – set apart for sacred use

B. Adopted into God's Family

Ephesians 1:5 Having predestinated us unto the **adoption** of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will,

1. Predestinated – determined beforehand
2. Believers are born again into God's family
3. Adoption has the idea of sonship – we have all the privileges of being a son
4. Entering heaven as a family member and not as a guest

C. Accepted in the Beloved

Ephesians 1:6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us **accepted** in the beloved.

1. Given special honor and favor
2. Part of those who are loved
3. We have not been rejected

D. Redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb

Ephesians 1:7 In whom we have **redemption** through his blood, the **forgiveness** of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

1. Redemption means the price has been paid
2. Purchased by Jesus' shed blood on the cross

E. Forgiven

Ephesians 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the **forgiveness** of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

1. We are have sinned
2. We all can find God's forgiveness

F. Rich in Grace

Ephesians 1:7-8 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the **riches of his grace**; Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;

1. Riches – abundant wealth, plenty
2. Grace – God's kindness
3. Abounded – over and above – overflowing

G. Mystery of His Will Revealed to Us

Ephesians 1:9-10 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

1. God has revealed to the believer part of His sovereign plan
2. In time to come things on earth will be settled when Christ reigns her on this earth

H. An inheritance – heirs

Ephesians 1:11 In whom also we have obtained an **inheritance**, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:

1. All of these spiritual blessings
2. Eternal life
3. An eternal home in Heaven

I. The Word of Truth

Ephesians 1:13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of **truth**, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise,

1. God's Words to us – the Bible
2. The Gospel – the good news of salvation

J. Sealed with the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 1:13-14 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were **sealed** with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the **earnest** of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory.

1. After you believed
2. You were sealed – the stamp, secure, authentic, genuine (notary)
3. The promise of the Holy Spirit and His presence in our lives – this indicates ownership
4. Earnest money is the down payment (engagement ring)

Conclusion

- God is the Source of These Spiritual Blessings – From God, Through Christ, by the Spirit
- We are the Recipients
- Much Greater than any Material, Temporal Blessing

Paul's Prayer for the Ephesians

Ephesians 1:15-23

Introduction – Prayer

- How great the feeling to know that someone is praying for you – how did the Ephesians feel to have Paul praying for them?
- This is one of two prayers by the Apostle Paul in the book of Ephesians – the other one is in Chapter 3:14-21
- We reflect back on Paul's conversion in Acts 9 – his prayers started out as questions

Acts 9:3-6 And as he journeyed, he came near Damascus: and suddenly there shined round about him a light from heaven: And he fell to the earth, and heard a voice saying unto him, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me? And he said, **Who art thou, Lord?** And the Lord said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest: *it is hard for thee to kick against the pricks.* And he trembling and astonished said, Lord, **what wilt thou have me to do?** And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the city, and it shall be told thee what thou must do.

- For three days Paul had lost his sight – during this time, he was praying
Acts 9:11 And the Lord *said* unto him, Arise, and go into the street which is called Straight, and enquire in the house of Judas for *one* called Saul, of Tarsus: for, behold, **he prayeth,**
- One of the first things that happens after you are saved is a desire to pray – a desire to talk to God and to know Him better – there is a trust in Him that He hears our prayers and will answer them according to His will
- Paul endeavored to help these believers in Ephesus in three ways
 - His Pen – writing this letter or epistle to them
 - His Preaching
 - His Prayers

I. What Paul Had Heard

Ephesians 1:15 Wherefore I also, after I heard of your **faith** in the Lord Jesus, and **love** unto all the saints,

A. Faith – the fact that they had trusted in Jesus as their Savior

- 1.** Their faith was not a secret
- 2.** Their faith was active

James 2:26 For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

B. Love – the way that they treated the saints

- 1.** They demonstrated unconditional love toward others – God’s love
 - 2.** They displayed a universal love toward everyone – not just a few
- James 2:1** My brethren, have not the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Lord of glory, with respect of persons.

II. What Paul Didn’t Pray for

Ephesians 1:16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

- A.** He didn’t pray for their physical needs – He prayed for their spiritual needs
- B.** He didn’t pray for their physical health – He prayed that they would have the Spirit of wisdom
- C.** He didn’t pray for God to give them things – He prayed for them to recognize the things that God had already given them

III. How Paul Prayed for Them

Ephesians 1:16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;

- A.** He prayed continually
- B.** He prayed thankfully
- C.** He prayed specifically

IV. The Specifics of Paul’s Prayer

A. Prayer for them to Know God

Ephesians 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him:

- 1.** How Paul referred to God
 - a)** God of our Lord Jesus Christ – God who sent His Son Jesus to redeem us from our sins
John 20:17 Jesus saith unto her, Touch me not; for I am not yet ascended to my Father: but go to my brethren, and say unto them, I ascend unto my Father, and your Father; and to my God, and your God.
 - b)** Father of glory – the Father who is worthy to be praised and honored

2. How they could come to know Him
 - a) The knowledge of God must come from God
 - b) This wisdom comes from God's Word through the Holy Spirit
 - c) Through reasoning you can learn about another person, but to really know someone, they must reveal themselves to you
 - d) We really get to know someone when they share their words, actions, thoughts, feelings, hopes, ambitions, likes, dislikes, frustrations, fears, wants and wishes
 - e) Paul prayed that God would reveal much about Himself to the saints – there is so much more for us to learn
3. Know God as:
 - a) Father
 - b) Savior
 - c) Friend
 - d) Guide

B. Prayer for them to Know God's Calling

Ephesians 1:18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may **know** what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

1. Their Understanding
 - a) Paul wanted them to understand all that they had received in Jesus
 - b) The eyes of your understanding is not just a head knowledge but it is a heart knowledge

Romans 10:10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation
2. Their Enlightening – to be illuminated
3. Their Hope – absolute confidence in Him
4. Their Calling – the invitation to live with Christ for eternity

1 Timothy 6:12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses.

C. Prayer for them to Know God's Riches

Ephesians 1:18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may **know** what is the hope of his calling, and what the **riches** of the glory of his inheritance in the saints,

1. Riches of His grace – what we enjoy now

Ephesians 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;

2. Riches of His glory – what we will enjoy

Galatians 4:7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ.

a) We are His inheritance – He purchased us

b) What we get is Him

c) What He gets is us

d) We will rule with Him

1 Corinthians 6:2-3 Do ye not know that the saints shall judge the world? and if the world shall be judged by you, are ye unworthy to judge the smallest matters? Know ye not that we shall judge angels? how much more things that pertain to this life?

D. Prayer for them to Know God's Power

Ephesians 1:19-21 And [**know**] what is the exceeding **greatness** of his **power** to us-ward who believe, according to the **working** of his mighty **power**, Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 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:

1. The Greatness of His Power

a) Very great strength

b) Demonstrated to believers (us-ward)

2. The Working of His Power – raising Jesus from the dead

3. The Place of His Power – set Him in heavenly places

Hebrews 12:2 Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of *our* faith; who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God.

4. The Scope of His power

- a)** Above all principalities, powers, might and dominion (Satanic or demonic powers)

Ephesians 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

- b)** Above any name and any future name (kings and kingdoms)

E. Prayer for them to Know Their Position in Christ

Ephesians 1:22-23 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church, Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all.

1. All things under His Feet

Psalms 8:6 Thou madest him to have dominion over the works of thy hands; thou hast put all things under his feet:

2. Head over all things – Lord and Master

3. Body is His church – body of Christ

1 Corinthians 12:27 Now ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular.

Conclusion – Paul's Prayer

- Know God
- Know God's Calling
- Know God's Riches
- Know God's Power
- Know Their Position in Christ
 - God Raised Him from the Dead – He is our Redeemer
 - God Seated Him in Heavenly Places – He is Powerful
 - God Placed All Things Under His Feet – He has Dominion Over All
 - God Placed Him as Head of the Church – He is the Head and We are the Body of Christ

Saved by Grace

Ephesians 2:1-10

Review

- Spiritual Blessings – Ephesians 1:1-14
 - Chosen by God
 - Adopted as Sons
 - Accepted in the Beloved
 - Redeemed by the Blood of the Lamb
 - Forgiven
 - Rich in Grace
 - God's Will revealed
 - We are His inheritance
 - The Word of truth
 - Sealed with the Holy Spirit
- Paul's Prayers for them – Ephesians 1:15-23
 - Know God
 - Know their calling – the confidence of eternal life
 - Know God's riches
 - Know God's Power
 - Know Their Position in Christ

Introduction – walking – making progress

- Walking in darkness or light
- Walking alone or with a companion
- Walking carelessly or carefully
- Walking aimlessly or purposefully
- Walking by faith or by sight

Paul's Emphasis of the word “walk” in Ephesians

Ephesians 2:2 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 disobedience:

Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them.

Ephesians 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

Ephesians 4:17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

Ephesians 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Ephesians 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: walk as children of light:

Ephesians 5:15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, not as fools, but as wise,

I. The **Past** Condition of the Unsaved Natural Man

A. He is spiritually dead

Ephesians 2:1 And you hath he **quickened**, who were **dead** in trespasses and sins;

1. Quickened – made **alive** in Christ

2. Before salvation we were spiritually **dead**

a) In trespasses – violation of a law, crossing the line

b) In sins – missing the mark

Romans 3:23 For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;

3. The natural man

a) Unable to understand and appreciate spiritual things

1 Corinthians 2:14 But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know *them*, because they are spiritually discerned.

b) No appetite for spiritual things

B. He is Satanically deceived

Ephesians 2:2 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 disobedience:

1. Age (course) of this world – anti-God

1 John 2:15-16 Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him. For all that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, is not of the Father, but is of the world.

2. Ruler of this world – Satan is a liar and deceiver

a) He is a liar

John 8:44 Ye are of *your* father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

b) He has blinded the lost

2 Corinthians 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them.

c) He is an adversary – opponent, enemy

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

d) He is a deceiver

Revelation 12:9 And the great dragon was cast out, that old serpent, called the Devil, and Satan, which deceiveth the whole world: he was cast out into the earth, and his angels were cast out with him.

C. He is a son of disobedience

Ephesians 2:2 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 **disobedience**:

1. No one teaches you how to be disobedient

2. It is part of the natural man

D. He has natural sinful desires

Ephesians 2:3 Among whom also we all had our **conversation** 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.

1. Conversation – behavior and manner of living

2. Lusts – desires of the flesh

3. Desires – choices of the flesh

4. Mind – thoughts

E. He is spiritually doomed

Ephesians 2:3 Among whom also we all had our conversation 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.

1. By nature – born of sinful parents into a sinful world
Romans 5:12 Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:
2. Subject to God's wrath
Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.
3. In need of God's grace

II. The Present Work of God to Bring Salvation to Sinful Man

A. He loved us

Ephesians 2:4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

1. But God – God knows of our sinful state and has a solution
2. God doesn't just pity us because of our condition, He loves us and cares for us
3. God is rich (abundant) in mercy and extends that mercy to us
4. God has great (much) love – love that moves to action

John 3:16 For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.

B. He quickened us

Ephesians 2:5-6 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:

1. Our past condition – spiritually dead
2. The present work of Christ
 - a) Quickened us – made us alive
 - b) Raised us up– picture of the Resurrection – when Christ rose – we could rise as well

Romans 6:4-5 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life. For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death, we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection:

C. He seated us

Ephesians 2:6-7 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

1. Sitting together with Christ
2. In heavenly places – our citizenship is in heaven, this world is temporary
3. In the future – ages to come
 - a) The riches of his grace
 - b) His kindness

III. The Path of Salvation for Sinful Man to Come to Christ

Ephesians 2:8-9 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast.

A. Salvation comes by the grace of God

1. It is not based on whether you are a good person or not
2. It is not based on how much good you have done or not done

B. Salvation comes through faith

1. Faith is the human response to God's grace

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith *it is* impossible to please *him*: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and *that* he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him

2. Faith comes from hearing God's Word

Romans 10:17 So then faith *cometh* by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

C. Salvation is made possible because of Jesus – not because of anything that we have done

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

D. Salvation is a gift – it is not earned

Romans 6:23 For the wages of sin *is* death; but the gift of God *is* eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.

E. Salvation is not of good works – the work of God has already been done

1. Being saved is a settled thing – you are not trying to be good now in order to be saved later on
2. How much good would we have to do to earn salvation?

3. No one can boast that they have earned salvation – all glory and praise goes to God who has given salvation to all

IV. The Primary Goal for the Spiritual Man

Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto **good works**, which God hath before ordained that we should **walk** in them.

A. We are His Creation (workmanship) (we don't work to get to Him)

B. We are a new Creation in Christ

2 Corinthians 5:17 Therefore if any man *be* in Christ, *he is* a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new.

C. We are to produce good works – not in order to be saved, but because we are saved

James 2:17-18 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works.

D. We are to walk in newness of life as a believer

Romans 6:4 Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should **walk in newness of life**.

Ephesians 2:2 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 disobedience:

The Broken Wall – One in Christ

Ephesians 2:11-22

Review

- Spiritual Blessings we have in Christ – Ephesians 1:1-14
- Paul's Prayer for them to Know God's Power and their Position in Christ – Ephesians 1:15-23
- Saved by Grace and Not of Works – Ephesians 2:1-10
- Made alive in Christ to walk not as we did in the past, but to walk as a new creation unto good works

Introduction

- Separated by a wall

I. Separation – What the Gentiles Were in the Past

A. Remember the past

Ephesians 2:11 Wherefore remember, that ye *being* in time **past** Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands;

1. Gentiles in the flesh

- a) The sign of the covenant for the Jews was circumcision – beginning with Abraham
- b) The Jews referred to the Gentiles as the uncircumcision
- c) The early church struggled with this matter
 - (1) Should the Gospel be preached to the Gentiles?
 - (2) Would the Gentiles need to be circumcised in order to be saved?
- d) Circumcision was a sign of the covenant with Israel
- e) The church had the seal of the Holy Spirit

2. Jews in the flesh – the circumcision

- a) Circumcision is a cutting away – **with hands**
- b) Christ put away our sins by His sacrifice on the cross – **without hands**

Colossians 2:11 In whom also ye are circumcised with the circumcision made without hands, in putting off the body of the sins of the flesh by the circumcision of Christ:

B. At that time you were:

- 1.** Without Christ – there is no salvation with Christ
Ephesians 2:12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:
- 2.** Without citizenship – Gentiles were not born into Jewish families
Ephesians 2:12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:
- 3.** Without covenants – covenants were given to the Jews
Ephesians 2:12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:
- 4.** Without hope
Ephesians 2:12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:
- 5.** Without God – they had plenty of false gods, but not the true God
Ephesians 2:12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world:

II. Reconciliation – What God did for the Gentiles

A. God's Solution – But now

Ephesians 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ.

Ephesians 2:4 But God, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us,

- 1.** God knew their situation and didn't just pity them but provided a solution
- 2.** God brought them near when they were far away

B. Enmity between the Jews and Gentiles (hatred and opposition)

- 1.** The Law made quite a distinction between the Jews and Gentiles
 - a)** Diet – clean and unclean animals

- b) Worship of God and sacrifices made
 - c) Behavior and conduct
 - d) Observance of the Sabbath
2. God put a difference between the Jew and Gentile so that His plans for salvation could be accomplished – now that Christ had come, there was no more need for division

Romans 10:12-13 For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.

3. Jesus sacrifice on the cross and fulfillment of the law

- a) His shed blood for sins

Ephesians 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the **blood** of Christ.

- b) He is our peace – made both one

Ephesians 2:14 For he is our **peace**, who hath **made both one**, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;

- c) He hath broken down the dividing wall (there was an actual wall in the Temple separating the Jews from the court of the Gentiles)

Ephesians 2:14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath **broken down the middle wall of partition** between us;

Matthew 27:51 And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent;

- d) He hath abolished the enmity – making peace

Ephesians 2:15 Having **abolished** in his flesh the **enmity**, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so **making peace**;

C. Enmity between sinners and God

1. Both Jews and Gentiles need to be reconciled to God – both are sinners and both need to have faith in Jesus

Ephesians 2:16 And that he might **reconcile both unto God** in one body by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby:

2. Jesus reconciliation

a) Death on the cross brought all men to God

Romans 5:10 For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, much more, being reconciled, we shall be saved by his life.

b) Preached to the those who were afar off (Gentiles) and to those who were near (Jews)

Ephesians 2:17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh.

c) Provided access to the Father through the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 2:18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father.

Hebrews 10:19-20 Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the blood of Jesus, By a new and living way, which he hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, his flesh;

3. Jesus' Peace

Romans 5:1 Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:

a) He is our Peace

b) He Made Peace

c) He Preached Peace

III. Unification – What Jews and Gentiles Are in Christ

A. Fellowcitizens – one nation

Ephesians 2:19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

1. No more Strangers

2. No more Foreigners

B. Family

Ephesians 2:19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellowcitizens with the saints, and of the household of God;

1. Household of God

2. Brothers and sisters no matter our race or nationality

C. Body of Christ

1. Foundation

Ephesians 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner *stone*;

- a) Apostles
- b) Prophets
- c) Jesus, the chief corner stone

2. Building

Ephesians 2:21-22 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit.

- a) Framed together – grows into a holy temple
- b) Filled with the Holy Spirit together – the body of Christ is the **dwelling place** of God through the Spirit – no longer an earthly Tabernacle or Temple

1 Corinthians 3:16 Know ye not that ye are the temple of God, and *that* the Spirit of God dwelleth in you?

1 Corinthians 6:19-20 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God's.

Adam Clarke – follower of John Wesley and Theologian in the early 1800's most well-known for writing a commentary on the whole Bible which took him 40 years to complete

The Church of God is often referred to as a magnificent and incredible creation, deserving of God's own worth. One might say that

- There is nothing as grand as this Church, for it is the temple of God
- There is nothing is more worthy of respect, since God dwells in it
- There is nothing as old, since the apostles and prophets worked to lay the foundation of it
- There is nothing so solid as Jesus Christ is its foundation
- There is nothing so high as it reaches to heavenly places
- There is nothing so perfect and proportionate, with the Holy Spirit serving as the architect

- There is nothing more beautiful, adorned with a diverse array of members from every age, place and people; from the highest kings to the poorest of all; from the wisest of all to those who are simple
- There is nothing more spacious since it is spread over the whole earth
- There is nothing so Divine, since it is a living building inhabited by the Holy Spirit
- There is nothing so charitable, providing shelter to the poor, distressed, and oppressed of every nation and language
- This Church, even though it may be scattered and divided throughout the world, remains as one building, founded on the strong foundation of the World of God

Conclusion

- The only way to get near to God is through Jesus Christ
- Sin is the wall between us and God
- Jesus is our Peace and has brought down that wall and paid the price for our sins

The Mystery of the Gospel Revealed

Ephesians 3:1-13

Review

- Spiritual Blessings we have in Christ – Ephesians 1:1-14
- Paul's Prayer for them to Know God's Power and their Position in Christ – Ephesians 1:15-23
- Saved by Grace and Not of Works – Ephesians 2:1-10
- Made alive in Christ to walk not as we did in the past, but to walk as a new creation unto good works
- The wall has been torn down between Jews and Gentiles – both are reconciled to God through Christ – Ephesians 2:11-22
- We are being framed and fitted together as one body of Christ, the church

Introduction

- Mystery
- Mystery Revealed

I. Paul as a Prisoner for the Truth

Ephesians 3:1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles,

Ephesians 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

Ephesians 6:20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

A. Paul was a born a Jew, raised a Jew, a student of the Law, a Pharisee, and a persecutor of those who rejected the Law

Philippians 3:5-6 Circumcised the eighth day, of the stock of Israel, of the tribe of Benjamin, an Hebrew of the Hebrews; as touching the law, a Pharisee; Concerning zeal, persecuting the church; touching the righteousness which is in the law, blameless.

B. Paul's first preaching ministry was in a church with Jewish and Gentile believers

Acts 11:25-26 Then departed Barnabas to Tarsus, for to seek Saul: And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch.

- C. Paul was invited to the Jerusalem council that determined whether the Gentile believers needed to follow Jewish laws especially circumcision
Acts 15:1-2 And certain men which came down from Judaea taught the brethren, and said, Except ye be circumcised after the manner of Moses, ye cannot be saved. When therefore Paul and Barnabas had no small dissension and disputation with them
- D. Paul was the apostle to the Gentiles
Acts 9:15 But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel:
Romans 11:13 For I speak to you Gentiles, inasmuch as I am the apostle of the Gentiles, I magnify mine office:
Romans 15:16 That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles, ministering the gospel of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be acceptable, being sanctified by the Holy Ghost.
1 Timothy 2:7 Whereunto I am ordained a preacher, and an apostle, (I speak the truth in Christ, *and* lie not;) a teacher of the Gentiles in faith and verity.
- E. Paul was arrested in Jerusalem because of his beliefs – that is why he was a prisoner – because the Jews were offended that he was preaching to the Gentiles
Acts 21:28 Crying out, Men of Israel, help: This is the man, that teacheth all *men* every where against the people, and the law, and this place: and further brought Greeks also into the temple, and hath polluted this holy place.
- F. Paul saw himself not as a house arrest prisoner in Rome, but as a prisoner for the cause of Jesus Christ

II. Paul as a Pioneer of the Truth

Ephesians 3:2-4 If ye have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: How that by revelation he made known unto me the **mystery**; (as I wrote afore in few words, Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the **mystery** of Christ)

- A. A new dispensation – God’s different ways of managing His program from age to age – God’s strategy
 1. Age of Law for the Jews
 2. Age of Grace – the Church age
 3. Age of Judgment – Tribulation after the Rapture of the Church

B. The revelation to Paul

1. Paul was instructed and given the truth about this mystery – he didn't just make this up himself

Galatians 1:12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught *it*, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ.

Galatians 1:17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus.

2. The mystery was once hidden, but now would be revealed – something that was dark, obscure, secret, puzzling
3. Paul the messenger was to teach the Gentiles about this new dispensation

III. Paul as a Partner in the Truth

Ephesians 3:5-6 Which **in other ages was not made known** unto the sons of men, as it is **now revealed** unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:

A. The mystery had been kept secret

B. The mystery was now being revealed

1. Starting with Jesus who taught his disciples

Matthew 16:18 And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it.

John 10:16 And other sheep I have, which are not of this fold: them also I must bring, and they shall hear my voice; and there shall be one fold, and one shepherd.

2. Continuing with the Paul, the apostle to the Gentiles
3. Continuing with the Holy Spirit in the hearts of these believers

C. The mystery

1. The Gentiles were fellowheirs with the Jews – they had all inherited salvation through Christ
2. The Gentiles and Jews are part of the same body of Christ (the Gentiles weren't added to the Jewish body, a whole new body was formed)
3. The Gentiles and Jews were partakers of the promises in Christ (the Jews would understand the promises given to them by God through the Abrahamic covenant)
4. The Gentiles and Jews were no longer separated

5. The mystery is the gospel of Christ came to all men

IV. Paul as a Promoter of this Truth

Ephesians 3:7-8 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the effectual working of his power. Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;

- A. Paul was given the gift of being a minister, a servant of Christ
- B. Paul was given Spirit power to accomplish this task
- C. Paul thought of himself as the last person to be chosen for this task (a persecutor of Christians)

1 Corinthians 15:9 For I am the least of the apostles, that am not meet to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.

- D. Paul reminds us of God's grace to choose him (the chief of sinners)

1 Timothy 1:15 This is a faithful saying, and worthy of all acceptation, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners; of whom I am chief.

- E. Paul was chosen to be a preacher to the Gentiles (announce the good news)
- F. Paul reminds us of the unsearchable riches of Christ – so rich that you cannot count them, measure them or know them all completely (Riches – Ephesians 1:7; 1:18; 2:7; 3:8; 3:16)

V. Paul as a Preacher of this Truth

- A. The mystery hidden by God

Ephesians 3:9 And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the **mystery**, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:

- 1. The mystery of Jews and Gentiles being one in the body of Christ was kept a mystery
- 2. It was hidden up until this time since the beginning of the world
- 3. It was now being preached by Paul to all men

- B. The wisdom of God revealed to angels

Ephesians 3:10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places **might be known by the church** the manifold wisdom of God,

- 1. Principalities and powers – spiritual beings in heavenly places – good and evil angels

2. This mystery has been kept from the angels and now they are seeing the wisdom of God as revealed by His work in the church
1 Peter 1:11-12 Searching what, or what manner of time the Spirit of Christ which was in them did signify, when it testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow. Unto whom it was revealed, that not unto themselves, but unto us they did minister the things, which are now reported unto you by them that have preached the gospel unto you with the Holy Ghost sent down from heaven; which things the **angels desire to look into.**

C. The Purpose of God

Ephesians 3:11-13 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory.

1. God's eternal purposes are to bring thing in heaven and things on earth together

Ephesians 1:9-10 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might **gather together in one** all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

2. We can have boldness to come to God by faith in what Jesus did for our salvation – we are sons (family not guests)
3. God's purpose was for Paul to be in prison – the church should not worry about this, as it was part of God's will – Paul wrote many church letters from prison during this time – Ephesians, Colossians, Philippians, and Philemon

2 Corinthians 12:9-10 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. Therefore I take pleasure in infirmities, in reproaches, in necessities, in persecutions, in distresses for Christ's sake: for when I am weak, then am I strong.

Conclusion

- There is no mystery today about the Gospel – it has been made known unto us
- Jesus came and died for all men and women

Paul's Second Prayer for the Ephesians

Ephesians 3:14-21

Review

- Spiritual Blessings we have in Christ – Ephesians 1:1-14
- Paul's Prayer for them to Know God's Power and their Position in Christ – Ephesians 1:15-23
- Saved by Grace and Not of Works – Ephesians 2:1-10
- The wall has been torn down between Jews and Gentiles – both are reconciled to God through Christ – Ephesians 2:11-22
- The Mystery revealed by Paul – one gospel, one body of Christ, all partakers of the promise – Ephesians 3:1-13

Reflect on Paul's first prayer (Ephesians 1:15-23)

- Paul prayed for them to know God – wisdom
- Paul prayed for them to know God's calling – hope of eternal life
- Paul prayed for them to know God's riches – earthly and heavenly
- Paul prayed for them to know God's power
- Paul prayed for them to know their position in Christ – part of the body

Introduction

- Prayers for physical needs vs. spiritual needs
- Prayers for the heart
- When the heart is right, then the outward behavior will most likely be right

I. The Posture for Paul's Prayer

A. Our physical position

Ephesians 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

1. In Paul's day, one would bow the knee when approaching a king
2. There are many examples of various postures in prayer
 - a) Abraham **standing** before the Lord praying for Lot (Genesis 18:22)
 - b) Moses **bowed** his head as he prayed (Exodus 34:8)
 - c) David **sat** as he prayed for his household to be blessed (1 Chronicles 17:16)
 - d) Elijah sat with his **face between his knees** (1 Kings 18:42)
 - e) David prayed while in **bed** (Psalm 63:6)

- f) Daniel **kneeled** toward Jerusalem when he prayed (Daniel 6:10)
 - g) Ezekiel prayed with his **face** on the ground (Ezekiel 9:8)
 - h) The publican prayed with his **hands** on his **chest** (Luke 18:13)
 - i) Jesus prayed with his **eyes** looking toward heaven (John 17:1)
 - j) Paul encouraged Timothy to pray with **hands lifted** (1 Timothy 2:8)
3. Today, we often bow our head and close our eyes while praying – a reminder to who we are praying to
 4. Bowing our head and closing our eyes reminds us of:
 - a) Focus – keeping our mind focused and minimizing distractions
 - b) Humility – seeing ourselves as inferior to God
 - c) Submission – recognizing God’s authority over us
 - d) Respect and honor to a Holy God
 - e) Worship – bowing down to show respect and honor

B. Our verbal direction

Ephesians 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,

1. Paul’s prayer was directed to the Father
Ephesians 1:3 Blessed *be* the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly *places* in Christ:
2. We pray to the Father, through the Son and empowered by the Holy Spirit
Ephesians 2:18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father
Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

C. Our family connection

Ephesians 3:15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

1. God as Creator is the Father of all
Luke 3:38 Which was *the son* of Enos, which was *the son* of Seth, which was *the son* of Adam, which was *the son* of God.
2. Believers are born again and become the sons of God
John 1:12 But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, *even* to them that believe on his name:

3. The family includes Jews and Gentiles and those in Heaven and on earth
4. All fatherhood is derived from God the Father. He is the Father of fathers, the ultimate Father, the one whose fatherhood is patterned for all fatherhood because He is the perfect Father – John Phillips

II. The Petitions of Paul's Prayers – one tends to lead to the next one

A. To be **Strengthened** by the Spirit in the inner man – spiritual strength
Ephesians 3:16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be **strengthened** with might by his Spirit in the inner man;

1. All believers are indwelt by the Holy Spirit
1 Corinthians 6:19 What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost *which is* in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?
2. Whether or not we yield ourselves to the Spirit determines whether or not we are doing things in our own strength or in the strength of the Holy Spirit
 - a) Be filled with the Spirit
Ephesians 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;
 - b) The Spirit will produce fruit in us
Galatians 5:22-23 But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, Meekness, temperance: against such there is no law.
 - c) Quench not the Spirit
1 Thessalonians 5:19 Quench not the Spirit.
 - d) Walk in the Spirit
Romans 8:1 *There is* therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.
 - e) Grieve not the Spirit
Ephesians 4:30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.
 - f) Praying in the Spirit
Ephesians 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

3. Strength comes from God's riches in glory

Ephesians 1:7 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the **riches of his grace**;

Ephesians 1:18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the **riches of the glory** of his inheritance in the saints,

Ephesians 2:7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding **riches of his grace** in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.

Ephesians 3:8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the **unsearchable riches** of Christ;

4. How marvellous that God does not give the Spirit's power to us "out of His riches" but "according to"—which is a far greater thing. If I am a billionaire and I give you ten dollars, I have given you out of my riches; but if I give you a million dollars, I have given to you according to my riches. The first is a portion; the second is a proportion. God has not given us a portion of strength, but in proportion of his unlimited strength. – Warren Wiersbe

B. To welcome the **Presence** of Christ in our hearts by faith

Ephesians 3:17 That Christ may **dwell** in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,

1. To dwell means to settle, to be present
2. The idea is that believers would have a deeper connection and relationship with Christ – they were already believers and had Christ
3. Does Christ feel at home in our lives or as just a guest? Are we making Him feel welcome? Do we want Him to stay long?
John 14:23 Jesus answered and said unto him, If a man love me, he will keep my words: and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him.
4. Jesus will be at home in us when we have put our faith and trust in Him – faith is personal – you have to believe yourself

C. To comprehend the **Love** of Christ – for your individual self

Ephesians 3:17-19 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, May be able to **comprehend** with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; And to **know** the **love** of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.

1. Rooted

- a) Deep roots provide stability
- b) Nourishment comes from the roots

Psalm 1:3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper.

2. Grounded

- a) An established foundation
- b) Settled – ability to withstand the storms of life

Matthew 7:24-25 Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock: And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.

3. Immeasurable – if you have to ask how much it costs, then you can't afford it

- a) Breadth – His love is wide enough to cover any and all sins
- b) Length – His love has always been and will continue for eternity
- c) Depth – extent of His love was to die and pay the price for our sins
- d) Height – height of His love to seat us in Heavenly places forever

D. To be **Filled** with all fulness

Ephesians 3:19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be **filled with all the fulness** of God.

1. What is the measurement of our filling?

- a) Filled up to the capacity of the cup?
- b) Filled more than others?

2. Filled to God's fullness – what is full to God?

III. The Power in Paul's Prayer

Ephesians 3:20 Now unto him that is able to do **exceeding abundantly above** all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,

- A. God can do what we **ask** – no matter what, He can do it
- B. God can do what we **think** – even those secret desires of the heart
- C. God can do **all** of what we ask or think – no limits on the amount of requests or the extent of the request
- D. God can do **above** what we ask or think – beyond what we can imagine

- E.** God can do **abundantly above** all that we ask or think – He takes what we ask or think and improves it significantly
- F.** God can do **exceedingly above** what we ask or think – we fit perfectly into God's eternal plan

IV. The Purpose in Paul's Prayer

Ephesians 2:21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen.

- A.** God does everything for His glory
- B.** We are to glorify God personally
- C.** The church is to glorify God

Conclusion

- Remember that when we pray, we are praying to a Holy Heavenly Father
- We pray that we will be strengthened in the inner man by the Holy Spirit
- We pray that Christ will dwell in us – He will feel at home
- We pray that our relationship with Christ will be deeply rooted and nourished
- We pray that we will be filled up to what God thinks is full
- We are reminded that God can answer any prayer – His power is limitless
- We acknowledge that all requests are to be for the eternal purposes and glory of God

Walk in Unity

Ephesians 4:1-16

Review

- Spiritual Blessings we have in Christ – Ephesians 1:1-14
- Paul's Prayer for them to Know God's Power and their Position in Christ – Ephesians 1:15-23
- Saved by Grace and Not of Works – Ephesians 2:1-10
- The wall has been torn down between Jews and Gentiles – both are reconciled to God through Christ – Ephesians 2:11-22
- The Mystery revealed by Paul – one gospel, one body of Christ, all partakers of the promise – Ephesians 3:1-13
- Paul's Prayer for them to be strengthened by the Spirit, that Christ will dwell with them and feel at home, a deeply rooted and nourished relationship with Christ, filled with the fullness of God – Ephesians 3:14-21

Introduction

- The letter changes from very doctrinal in nature to very practical
- There is an emphasis on the word "walk"
Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should **walk** in them.
Ephesians 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye **walk** worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,
Ephesians 4:17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth **walk** not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,
Ephesians 5:2 And **walk** in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.
Ephesians 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: **walk** as children of light:
▪ Twice in this section he speaks of "unity"
Ephesians 4:3 Endeavouring to keep the **unity** of the Spirit in the bond of peace.
Ephesians 4:13 Till we all come in the **unity** of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

I. Our Personal Responsibilities to Walk in Unity

Ephesians 4:1-2 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love;

A. Close look at the words used

1. Therefore – because of what I have just said to you – mostly doctrine
2. Beseech – I come alongside to speak to you and teach you – he was still a prisoner and couldn't be with them personally, but he was writing to them with passion
3. Walk – way you live and conduct yourself – let's live out this doctrine that I have taught you – here are the practical ways in which we should walk
4. Worthy – suitably
5. Vocation – calling and invitation – if we are Christians, then we need to live like followers of Christ

B. How should we walk

1. Lowliness – humility – an honest opinion of yourself
Romans 12:3 For I say, through the grace given unto me, to every man that is among you, not to think of himself more highly than he ought to think; but to think soberly, according as God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith.
2. Meekness
1 Corinthians 4:21 What will ye? shall I come unto you with a rod, or in love, and *in* the spirit of meekness?
 - a) It has much to do with gentleness and one's disposition
 - b) It is the opposite of someone who is angry, arrogant or aggressive
 - c) It is self-control of your emotions and desires especially when faced with difficulty or criticism
 - d) Having restraint and wisdom in difficult situations
3. Longsuffering
1 Corinthians 13:4 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up,
 - a) Patience
 - b) To endure discomfort without fighting back

- 4. Forbearing
 - a) To put up with
 - b) Endurance
- 5. Love
 - a) It is making a choice to show love even when you don't feel like it
 - b) It is a selfless and unconditional love

II. The Reasons for Walking Together in Unity

A. Close look at the words used

Ephesians 4:3 Endeavouring to **keep the unity** of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

- 1. Endeavouring – **make an effort** – labor, to study
- 2. Unity – oneness
- 3. Bond – tied together
- 4. Peace – harmony and accord

B. Basis of unity is oneness

Ephesians 4:4-6 There is **one** body, and **one** Spirit, even as ye are called in **one** hope of your calling; **One** Lord, **one** faith, **one** baptism, **One** God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

- 1. One body of Christ

1 Corinthians 12:12 For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ.

 - a) Many members of the same body – no matter age, race, gender, language or era – believers are part of the body of Christ
 - b) Each member is to be part of a local church body for encouragement, oversight, fellowship, teaching and exercising of their spiritual gift
- 2. One Spirit the Holy Spirit
 - a) All believers are indwelled by the Spirit
 - b) Each believer must yield himself to the Spirit
- 3. One hope
 - a) The hope of eternal life
 - b) Looking toward the coming of Christ
- 4. One Lord
 - a) One Master
 - b) One and only way to Heaven is through the Lord Jesus Christ

5. One faith
 - a) Many say they have faith
 - b) The object of true faith must be in Jesus and nothing else
6. One baptism
 - a) Baptism shows others our faith – it is a public profession
 - b) It identifies us with Christ in the likeness of His death, burial and resurrection of Jesus Christ
7. One God and Father
 - a) God is the Father **of** all races and nations
 - b) God is the Father **above** all – the most powerful
 - c) God is the Father **through** all – all things are under His sovereign power for all time – no beginning or ending
 - d) God is the Father **in** you all – Holy Spirit of God indwells the believer

III. The Gifts Given to Support Unity

A. **Spiritual gifts** given to all believers by grace

Ephesians 4:7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the **gift** of Christ.

1. Every believer has been given a spiritual gift of grace
1 Corinthians 12:4-7 Now there are diversities of **gifts**, but the same Spirit. And there are differences of **administrations**, but the same Lord. And there are diversities of **operations**, but it is the same God which worketh all in all. But the manifestation of the Spirit is given to every man to profit withal.
2. They are not earned or deserved; they are given to us to use in the body of Christ
3. The book of Romans seems to give a list of gifts for the believer
Romans 12:6-8 Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, let us prophesy according to the proportion of faith; Or ministry, let us wait on our ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, let him do it with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness.

B. The Source of these gifts – given by Jesus Christ to the body
Ephesians 4:8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men.

Psalms 68:18 Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men; yea, for the rebellious also, that the LORD God might dwell among them.

1. Quote from John Phillips

"When Paul wrote Ephesians 4:8, he had in mind a picture of a victorious king who has overthrown his foes. He is ascending the mountains, entering triumphantly into his city. He is laden with the spoils of war and bestows lavish gifts on his cheering people. He has freed the hostages held by the enemy and has ravished the enemy's domains. The freed captives are special recipients of his princely gifts. We can see the parallel. Jesus triumphed in battle over sin and Satan. He carried the war into the enemy's domains and led for from the lower regions a multitude of captives. Then Jesus took His place on high and gave gifts unto men."

2. Paul's Commentary in Parentheses

Ephesians 4:9-10 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.)

a) Jesus descended from Heaven at His earthly birth

b) At His death He descended into the lower parts of the earth and paradise

c) Jesus ascended and rose to the right hand of the Father after the Resurrection

C. Ministry Gifts given for the Local Church Body

Ephesians 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers;

Those gifted to deal with specific situations

Those gifted to deal with sinners

Those gifted to deal with saints

1. Apostles

Luke 6:13 And when it was day, he called unto him his disciples: and of them he chose twelve, whom also he named apostles;

Ephesians 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus:

- a) Divinely appointed representative
- b) Those who laid the foundation for the church
- c) The original 12 disciples minus Judas, Paul is called an apostle as well as others who were associated with these men (Barnabas, James, Matthias, etc.)
- d) No longer needed today

2. Prophets

Ephesians 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone;

Ephesians 3:5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;

- a) They spoke by direct illumination from the Holy Spirit revealing God's will
- b) They gave New Testament truth before the canon was completed
- c) Today, we have the Word of God to reveal God's will to us
- d) No longer needed today

3. Evangelists – bearers of good news

- a) Traveled from place to place to win the lost
- b) Philip was called an evangelist

Acts 21:8 And the next day we that were of Paul's company departed, and came unto Caesarea: and we entered into the house of Philip the evangelist, which was one of the seven; and abode with him.

- c) Especially concerned with the salvation of others

4. Pastors

- a) Pastor/teacher may be the idea here
- b) Pastor means shepherd – caring for sheep

5. Teachers

- a) Expounding the Word of God
- b) Helping to illuminate the Scriptures

D. The purposes of these ministry gifts

Ephesians 4:12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ:

- 1. Perfecting of the saints – complete furnishing
- 2. Undertaking and work of the ministry
- 3. Edifying of the body of Christ – building up

IV. The Evidences of Unity in the Local Body

A. Perfection – the process to full maturity

Ephesians 4:13 Till we all come in the **unity of the faith**, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ:

1. Perfection has the idea of completeness
2. Increase in knowledge of God
3. It has a sense of growth that leads to maturity
4. Fully prepared and ready

B. Stability

Ephesians 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;

1. Tossed to and fro – no stability
2. Carried about here and there – no doctrine
3. Deceived by the teaching and craftiness of men

C. Truth

Ephesians 4:15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ:

1. Speaking the truth without love – ignored by most
2. Speaking in love without truth – failure to mature
3. Truth spoken in love helps us to grow up and mature in Christ

D. Cooperation

Ephesians 4:16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love.

1. The Head of the Body is Christ – we must all submit to Him
2. Each member is a part of that body – we are joined together, not individuals
3. Each part of the body complements others parts of the body
4. As each of us matures, the whole body matures
5. Each member of the body must love one another – we choose to care for each other for their profit and not our own

1 Corinthians 13:4-8 Charity suffereth long, and is kind; charity envieth not; charity vaunteth not itself, is not puffed up, Doth not behave itself unseemly, seeketh not her own, is not easily provoked, thinketh no evil; Rejoiceth not in iniquity, but rejoiceth

in the truth; Beareth all things, believeth all things, hopeth all things, endureth all things. Charity never faileth:

Conclusion

- We each have a personal responsibility to walk in humility, self-control, patience, endurance and love
- The body of Christ is one in faith, one in Spirit, one in doctrine and one in Lord
- Each member of the body of Christ has been given a spiritual gift that they should use in the body
- God has given the gifts of evangelist and pastor/teacher to equip and care for the local body of Christ
- Each member of the body must endeavor to grow and mature in Christ, when we grow, the whole body becomes more mature
- We need to hear the truth spoken in love rather than being deceived by teachers whose doctrine changes with the wind
- True Christians need to talk and walk like followers of Christ

New Clothes

Ephesians 4:17-32

Review

- Spiritual Blessings we have in Christ – Ephesians 1:1-14
- Paul's Prayer for them to Know God's Power and their Position in Christ – Ephesians 1:15-23
- Saved by Grace and Not of Works – Ephesians 2:1-10
- The wall has been torn down between Jews and Gentiles – both are reconciled to God through Christ – Ephesians 2:11-22
- The Mystery revealed by Paul – one gospel, one body of Christ, all partakers of the promise – Ephesians 3:1-13
- Paul's Prayer for them to be strengthened by the Spirit, that Christ will dwell with them and feel at home, a deeply rooted and nourished relationship with Christ, filled with the fullness of God – Ephesians 3:14-21
- Walk in unity – one faith, one Lord, one baptism; striving for maturity, stability, truth and cooperation in the body of Christ – Ephesians 4:1-16

Introduction

- Styles of clothing
- Suitable clothing – appropriate
- Suit of clothing – uniform

1 Peter 5:5 Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be **clothed** with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.

I. Your Old Clothes

A. The walk of the unbelieving Gentile – inward and outward walk
Ephesians 4:17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth **walk** not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind,

1. Therefore – because of what I have already stated

2. Their old walk

Ephesians 2:1-3 And you hath he **quickened**, who were dead in trespasses and sins; 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 disobedience: Among whom also we all had our conversation 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.

3. Walk in good works

Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto **good works**, which God hath before ordained that we should **walk in them**.

4. Walk suitably

Ephesians 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called,

B. The old walk described

1. Faulty thinking – missing the truth, aimless, futile

Ephesians 4:17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the **vanity of their mind**,

2. Darkened understanding – void of light

Ephesians 4:18 Having the **understanding darkened**, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

3. Ignorant life – no knowledge of God

Ephesians 4:18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the **ignorance** that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:

4. Blind heart – hardened and calloused

Ephesians 4:18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the **blindness** of their heart:

5. No painful feeling or sensitivity regarding sin

Ephesians 4:19 Who being **past feeling** have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

a) Lasciviousness – uncontrolled lusts

b) Uncleanness – impurity

c) Greediness – covetousness

II. Your New Clothes

A. New teaching

Ephesians 4:20-21 But ye have **not so learned** Christ; If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus:

1. Heard and been taught the truth
2. Jesus is the difference
3. You can't love the Father and love the world

1 John 2:15 Love not the world, neither the things *that are* in the world. If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.

B. Old clothes

Ephesians 4:22 That ye **put off** concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts;

1. Take off the old
2. Old man – man before being saved
3. The old way of life is corrupt – it is not holy

C. New thinking

Ephesians 4:23 And be **renewed** in the spirit of your **mind**;

1. They have been given the Holy Spirit
2. A new mind – a new way of thinking

D. New clothes

Ephesians 4:24 And that ye **put on** the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness.

1. You don't put old clothes on top of the new
2. With Christ we can live righteous and holy lives

III. Hazards Along the Walk

A. Partake not in lying; Preserve the truth

Ephesians 4:25 Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another.

1. Not lying
2. Not giving false impressions
3. Not misleading someone
4. Not giving untruthful statements
5. No withholding the truth

B. Pause when we become angry; Prolong your relationship

Ephesians 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath:

1. There may be anger without sin
2. There is much danger of anger while there is sin
3. If you want to be angry and sin not, then only be angry at sin

C. Permit no place to the devil; Purpose to stand

Ephesians 4:27 Neither give place to the devil.

1. Place is a marked portion
2. Progression that can take place
 - a) Place in line
 - b) Place at the table
 - c) Place to stay

3. Give no advantage to the devil

2 Corinthians 2:11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

D. Prohibit Stealing; Pursue work; Prefer others

Ephesians 4:28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth.

1. Idleness causes stealing
2. Work a good job
3. Give to those who are in need

E. Prevent Corrupt Communication; Praise others for their good

Ephesians 4:29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

1. Be careful what comes out of your mouth
2. Make every conversation a positive one
3. Use your words to be an encouragement

F. Please the Spirit; Our Soul has been Preserved

Ephesians 4:30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption.

1. Grieve – make sorrowful, to offend
2. We are sealed – deemed as authentic

G. Put off wicked passions

Ephesians 4:31 Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice:

1. Bitterness – unresolved anger in the heart
2. Wrath – commencement of heat and passion
3. Anger – passions and words become actions – temper
4. Clamor – loud talk
5. Evil speakings – hurtful words, slander
6. Malice – revenge

H. Personify loving kindness

Ephesians 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

1. Kind – pleasant and good
2. Tenderhearted – compassion, sympathy

I. Practice forgiveness

Ephesians 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.

1. Forgiveness – pardon
2. We can forgive because God has forgiven us

Conclusion

- The old walk was one of falsehood, darkness, ignorance, blindness and insensitivity
- After Christ, our new walk is characterized by righteousness and holiness
- The suitable walk for the Christian will avoid lying, anger, yielding to the devil, stealing, corrupt communication, bitterness, malice, and unforgiveness

Ephesians 5:1-2 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children; And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Walk in Love

Ephesians 5:1-17

Review – Walking assumes action and movement

- Walk before Christ according to the age of this world
Ephesians 2:2 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 disobedience:
- Walk in good works because we are in Christ
Ephesians 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto **good works**, which God hath before ordained that we should **walk in them**.
- Walk suitably and appropriately as a Christian
Ephesians 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye **walk worthy** of the vocation wherewith ye are called,
- Walk before Christ was futile, in darkness, ignorant of God and blind
Ephesians 4:17-18 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth **walk not** as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:
- Walk in love
Ephesians 5:2 And **walk in love**, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.
- Walk as children of light
Ephesians 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now *are ye* light in the Lord: **walk as children of light**:
- Walk circumspectly
Ephesians 5:15 See then that ye **walk circumspectly**, not as fools, but as wise,

I. Walk in love

A. Who are we to follow?

Ephesians 5:1 Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear **children**;

1. Following God
2. Following – imitating
3. Following the leader
4. Children imitating their parents words and actions

B. How should we walk?

Ephesians 5:2 And **walk in love**, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

1. Walking – how you progress through life
2. Love – not just in word but in action – there must be evidence of love

C. Who is the example?

Ephesians 5:2 And **walk in love**, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

1. Christ's love for us is the example
2. Christ's example was a sacrifice of His life
3. Christ's sacrifice was a sweetsmelling savour to God – it was accepted

II. The Perversion of Love

Ephesians 2:3 Among whom also we all had our conversation 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.

Ephesians 4:22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the **deceitful lusts**;

A. Unbridled lust – desire for that which is forbidden, uncontrolled

B. Unholy deeds

Ephesians 5:3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as **becometh saints**;

1. Fornication – all types of sexual activity outside the bonds of a marriage between a man and a woman
 - a) Porneia – pornography
 - b) Incest
 - c) Adultery
 - d) Homosexuality

- e) Prostitution
 - 2. Uncleaness – impure thoughts, words and actions
 - 3. Covetousness – the desire to have more, greediness
- C. Unsuitable label for saints – holy ones
- D. Unholy Speech
 - 1. Impurity – thoughts that lead to corrupt communication
 - Ephesians 5:4** Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks.
 - a) Filthiness – obscenities (offensive words and gestures)
 - b) Foolish talking – foolish and absurd talking
 - c) Jestings – dirty talk, insinuating double meanings, vulgar humor
- E. Universal thankful speech
- F. Unhealthy labels for citizens of the kingdom

Ephesians 5:5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the **kingdom** of Christ and of God.

 - 1. Whoremonger – fornicator, prostitute
 - 2. Unclean – impure
 - 3. Covetous idolater – desires become your idol
- G. Unintentional deception

Ephesians 5:6 Let no man deceive you with vain words: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the **children** of disobedience.

 - 1. Lied to, manipulated, easily persuaded
 - 2. Wrath of God upon the children of disobedience
- H. Unacceptable companions

Ephesians 5:7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them.

 - 1. No participation in these activities
 - 2. No partnership with the children of disobedience

III. Walk as children of light

- A. Walk in the light – Word of God

Ephesians 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: **walk as children of light**:
- B. Walk with the Holy Spirit

Ephesians 5:9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;)

 - 1. Goodness – relationship with others
 - 2. Righteousness – relationship with God

- 3. Truth – personal integrity in our own lives
- C. Walk well pleasing unto the Lord

Ephesians 5:10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord.

 - 1. Does the Lord approve?
 - 2. Not your personal preference
 - 3. Not what is generally accepted by others
- D. Walk with the right companions

Ephesians 5:11-12 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret.

 - 1. No participation or cooperation – speak out against them, correct them
 - 2. No conversation about such things – talking about sins
- E. Walk shining the light on sin

Ephesians 5:13-14 But all things that are reproved are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.

 - 1. Shine the light on sin – the Word of God will reveal what is sin
 - 2. Wake up, get your head out of the sand, don't be naïve, don't be asleep at the wheel

IV. Walk in wisdom

- A. Wisdom in our ways

Ephesians 5:15 See then that ye **walk circumspectly**, not as fools, but as wise,

 - 1. Circumspectly – carefully, precisely, cautiously
 - 2. Wisely not foolishly
- B. Wisdom in our time

Ephesians 5:16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

 - 1. Redeeming – wise use of our time
 - 2. The days are evil
 - a) Full of hardships
 - b) Wicked conditions
 - 3. The days are limited
- C. Wisdom in our thinking

Ephesians 5:17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is.

 - 1. Pray for wisdom

James 1:5 If any of you lack wisdom, let him ask of God, that giveth to all *men* liberally, and upbraideth not; and it shall be given him.

2. Understanding the will of God requires thinking

Romans 12:1-2 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.

a) Meditating on Scripture

b) Gathering facts, examining them

3. The will of God is not supposed to be a secret nor something you have to search long and hard for

4. The will of God is for us to live holy lives

Conclusion

- Don't walk alone
- Don't walk in the dark
- Don't walk with the wrong companions
- Don't walk in foolishness
- Don't walk carelessly

Submission

Ephesians 5:18-33

Overview

- Being controlled by the desires of the flesh or being yielded to the Holy Spirit
- Three evidences of being filled with the Spirit – singing/music, giving of thanks, submission to one another
- Keys to a happy marriage for wives and husbands – mutual love and submission
- Three parallels of a happy marriage – Christ is head of the church, Christ's sacrificial love for the church, Christ's Bride is the church

V. Spirit filled relationships

Ephesians 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit;

A. Definition of words

1. Drunk – intoxicated (loss of physical and mental control)
2. Wine – context dictates that this is alcoholic wine
3. Excess – willful and deliberate, wasteful, excessive
4. Filled – continuing action – to be controlled by
5. Spirit – Holy Spirit of God

B. Comparison

1. Society today encourages you to deliberately drink alcohol in order to get drunk – it provides temporary satisfaction, joy and a mental release from the reality of problems and issues you are facing
2. I can find no Bible reason whatsoever for a Christian to partake in alcohol of any kind as everything we do must bring glory to God
3. Being under the influence of alcohol causes us to lose self-control – we will do and say things that we would not normally do
4. The temporary joy that alcohol brings must be often repeated in order to find that joy and leads to an addiction that often cannot be controlled without the help of others
5. Just as one's behavior changes when they are drunk, our behavior also changes when we are yielded to the Spirit of God

6. Being filled with the Spirit begins to yield the fruit of the Spirit in our lives that we exhibit (love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, temperance)
7. Believers are all indwelt by the Spirit, but it is a constant continual command to yield ourselves to the Spirit and to be controlled by Him as opposed to the desires of the flesh

VI. Signs of Being Spirit Filled

A. Music

Ephesians 5:19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord;

1. It's interesting how important music is today – imagine watching a movie without music, going to a party without music (typical Friday night in America is going to a bar to hear a band)
2. The Spirit filled believer has a different kind of music
 - a) Sharing music with one another
 - b) Singing together
 - c) Making melody (playing an instrument) to the Lord
3. Spiritual music
 - a) Psalms – words of Scripture
 - b) Hymns – sacred music
 - c) Spiritual Songs
4. Secular music in general
 - a) Lifts up self and not God
 - b) Promotes sin and not holiness
 - c) Is sad and discouraging and not uplifting
5. One of the beauties of the church gathering is the saint singing together to the Lord

B. Gratitude

Ephesians 5:20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ;

1. Giving thanks is expressing that gratitude
2. Giving thanks at all times – not dependent on your circumstances
3. Giving thanks to God

C. Submission

Ephesians 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God.

1. Submitting can be:

- a) Willingly placing yourself under the authority of another – rank
- b) Yielding to another
- c) Willing and ready to obey another
- 2. Submitting yourself – not being forced or coerced
- 3. Submitting to each other – all believers are part of the body of Christ – each body part is important and cooperates with one another
- 4. Each of us should have a respect for God and a respect for each one of His children

VII. Spirit filled marriage

A. Wives are to submit to their own husbands

Ephesians 5:22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord.

- 1. What submission does not mean:
 - a) Submission does not mean that your opinion doesn't matter and that you serve at the pleasure of a dictator – you have a voice, you don't have to be silent
 - b) Submission does not mean that you aren't capable of making decisions because you are too weak – you are capable
 - c) Submission does not mean that you are inferior (less important) and that your husband is superior (more important)
 - d) Submission does not mean that you have an obligation to follow your husband into sin
 - e) Submission does not mean that you have to agree with your husband on everything
 - f) Submission between partners does not look like a master servant relationship
 - g) The command has to do with the marriage relationship and not all women being submissive to any man
- 2. Submitting to your husband as you would submit unto the Lord
 - a) Letting the Lord lead you
 - b) Letting the Lord love you

B. The husband is the head of the wife

Ephesians 5:23-24 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the

body. Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing.

1. Submission has to do with the order of rank and authority
2. Headship has the idea of authority and order
3. Just as the husband is over the wife, so is Christ over the church
4. Christ is the savior of the body – not speaking as the giver of salvation, but of the love and concern for each of us individually
5. Just as the church is to submit to Christ, so ought the wife submit to her own husband

C. Husbands are to love their wives

Ephesians 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it;

1. This love for your wife is not a romantic love
2. This love is a love that acts and not just an emotion
3. It is love that is given regardless of whether it is deserved or even rejected
4. It is a sacrificial love like the love that Christ had for us by giving His life for our sins

Ephesians 5:26-27 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish.

- a) Jesus gave Himself for the church to cleanse us from all sin
- b) The Word of God reveals our sins and the need for cleansing
- c) Jesus sees the church as perfect – not having spot or wrinkle, holy and without blemish
- d) Jesus sees the church as His bride – at the marriage supper of the Lamb we will be that holy and sinless, perfect bride of Christ

D. How husbands are to love their wives

Ephesians 5:28-29 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church:

1. Love their wives just as they love and are concerned for themselves
2. The idea here is that you and your wife are one and as you care for yourself you are caring for your wife

3. Just as Eve was formed from the rib of Adam, the husband and wife are become one – the wife is part of the husband
4. The husband and his wife are not two, but one
5. To love is to care; to nourish is to feed; to cherish is to warm
6. Just as the Lord cares for the church – the husband must care for his wife

E. The husband and wife are not two, but one

Ephesians 5:30-32 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

1. We are members of Jesus' body, flesh and bones just as the wife is part of the husband

Genesis 2:21-24 And the LORD God caused a deep sleep to fall upon Adam, and he slept: and he took one of his ribs, and closed up the flesh instead thereof; And the rib, which the LORD God had taken from man, made he a woman, and brought her unto the man. And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man. Therefore shall a man leave his father and his mother, and shall cleave unto his wife: and they shall be one flesh.

2. Leaving your parents, cleaving to your spouse, weaving your lives together as one
3. The great mystery – just as husband and wife come together and become one (hard for us to understand) so do believers become one with Christ – the church is the Bride of Christ

Revelation 19:7-9 Let us be glad and rejoice, and give honour to him: for the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. And to her was granted that she should be arrayed in fine linen, clean and white: for the fine linen is the righteousness of saints. And he saith unto me, Write, Blessed are they which are called unto the marriage supper of the Lamb. And he saith unto me, These are the true sayings of God.

VIII. Summary

Ephesians 5:33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband.

- A.** Husbands love as Christ loved

- B. Wives show deference and respect recognizing the order of the marriage
- C. Constantly working to make your lives not two, but one

Two Keys

Family and Work Relationships

Ephesians 6:1-4 Children, obey your parents **in the Lord**: for this is right. Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition **of the Lord**.

Introduction #1

- Teaching children to obey
- Too harsh – extreme punishments
- Too lenient – I am going to count to 3 or maybe 5 and probably will start over a few times

Overview

- Family relationships
 - Children
 - Parents
 - Young adults
 - Aging parents
 - Fathers
- Work relationships
 - Employees
 - Employers

I. Family relationships

A. Children

1. Children – those who are still under the care of their parents
2. The command for them is to obey – to hearken to a command
3. Children don't have to learn to disobey
4. Obedience to parents is essential for children to learn to obey other authority figures and ultimately God
5. Obedience to parents is obedience to the Lord
6. Obedience to parents is right

B. Parents

1. Parents have the responsibility to teach their children obedience
2. There are no perfect children and there are no perfect parents
3. Parents are responsible for their children – our family probably has different rules than your family

4. Mom and dad came from two different families and will raise their children in such a way that is a blend of how they were raised

C. Young adults

1. Honor father and mother – referring to children who are no longer under the care of their parents
2. Honor – give value to, respect, to give weight to, to make heavy
3. A command with a promise
Exodus 20:12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee.
4. Live a long life – it will be well with thee

D. Aging parents

1. The time to train children will come to an end
2. Your child will begin to make their own decisions – some good and some bad
3. Your children are responsible to God for their own sins
4. The relationship changes – if they leave and are married, then they have started their own family
5. Being a parent worthy of accepting honor – demanding that your adult children obey probably isn't going to work
6. You can't demand that your children honor you, but you can live and act in a way that is worthy of honor

E. Fathers provoking

Colossians 3:21 Fathers, provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged.

1. Provoke not, stir up, incite to anger, irritate, cause trouble
2. Provoking causes anger and discouragement
3. Being unkind – too harsh, too loud, wrong tone
4. Too much criticism without positive praise
5. Demanding more than they are capable of – unreasonable
6. Harsh words and temperament that is out of control
7. Outrageous punishments
8. Inconsistent rules
9. Unhealthy comparisons
10. Hypocritical example

F. Fathers bringing them up in the Lord

1. Training them up to maturity
2. Nurture – instructive chastening
3. Admonition – warning, call attention to, giving knowledge to the mind, caution, direction, counseling

Ephesians 6:5-9 Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, **as unto Christ**; Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the **servants of Christ, doing the will of God** from the heart; With good will doing service, **as to the Lord**, and not to men: Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he **receive of the Lord**, whether he be bond or free. And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him.

Introduction #2

- Good service (going above and beyond)
- Bad service (service being bad because you don't order alcoholic drinks and the assumption that they won't be tipped/compensated well)

II. Work relationships

A. Employees

- 1.** Servants refers here to one who is bound to render service to another whether voluntary or involuntary (a slave, doulos) (slaves were considered property and not people)
- 2.** The principles described here were applicable to slaves as well as to us today (bond or free)
- 3.** We don't practice slavery today, but we render our skills, time and talents to our employers for a period of time each day – we are bound to them
- 4.** Being a servant implies a level of inferiority – the lesser takes care of the greater
- 5.** Obedience – same command that was given to the children – to listen and obey the command
- 6.** According to the flesh – the earthly master has authority over your flesh when you are at work
- 7.** God has ultimate authority over your body, soul and spirit
- 8.** Fear and trembling – the employer has the power to demote you or fire you – we also must have a fear of displeasing the Lord (being a good employee is pleasing to the Lord)
- 9.** Singleness of heart – sincerity in your service, you can only please one master at a time
- 10.** Eyeservice – working hard while the boss's eyes are on you

11. Menpleasers focuses on serving man, but the greater goal is to serve Christ and do His will

12. Serving from the heart

a) Serving out of discipline – I have to

b) Serving out of duty – I ought to

c) Serving out of devotion – I want to

B. Employers

1. Treat them with respect, value them (do the same things)

2. Give a fair day's pay for a fair day's work

3. The way that you lead and take authority is important (forbearing threatening)

4. You can motivate by fear or force

5. You can lead by example

6. You can provide training and instruction (sets the expectation)

7. Every employer also has a Master, the ultimate Master is the Lord

8. You can demand that your employees obey you and serve you, but in the sight of God, He sees us all as equals – He will reward the master and the servant fairly

9. God may treat you the same way that you treat your employees

10. God sees us all as servants

Conclusion

- The takeaways:
- Obeying your parents is pleasing to the Lord
- Honoring your parents is pleasing to the Lord
- Being a good employee is pleasing to the Lord
- Being a good employer is pleasing to the Lord

The Armor of God

Ephesians 6:10-18 Finally, my brethren, be **strong** in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to **stand** against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to **withstand** in the evil day, and having done all, to **stand**. **Stand** therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

Introduction

- Making preparations to go camping
- Because you never know what you are going to need – be prepared

I. Assessing the Enemy

A. Be strong

Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might.

1. Our strength is not our own, but comes from Christ

Philippians 4:13 I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me.

2. The body must be strong in order to put on the armor
3. We must use our strength to fight the spiritual battles instead of using our strength for foolish or trivial things

B. Put on the armor

Ephesians 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

1. The armor must be put on if it is to be of use
2. The armor is from God
3. Each piece of the armor is important

C. Stand and be ready for battle

Ephesians 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

1. It's hard to fight sitting down

2. Stand and be ready, watchful

D. Recognize the tactics of the devil – his methods, lies and tricks

Ephesians 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

1 Peter 5:8 Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:

2 Corinthians 2:11 Lest Satan should get an advantage of us: for we are not ignorant of his devices.

E. Recognize that this is not a physical battle – but a spiritual battle

Ephesians 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

1. Wrestling – a conflict

2. The conflict is not against man per se, but it is against the wicked one (Satan often uses conflict)

3. The idea is don't be naive about spiritual battles that we will face

F. Don't ignore various ranks and levels of wicked rulers

Ephesians 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

1. Principalities – that which is in first place

2. Powers – those in power or authority

3. Rulers of the darkness of this world

4. Wickedness in high places – that of the heavens

II. Equip Yourself with the Armor

A. The Belt of Truth – committed to the truth

1. Purpose

a) The belt was used to gather up their loose clothing so as to be able to move with agility

b) The belt was used to hold their weapon – the sword

c) The belt holds everything together

2. Application

a) Satan is a liar and there is no truth in him – his deceitful methods – much deceit and false truth in our world

John 8:44 Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.

- b) We need to have the truth, understand the truth and be committed to the truth

John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.

B. Breastplate of Righteousness – practical, personal holiness

1. Purpose

- a) This piece covered the body from the neck to the waist in the front and in the back
- b) This provided protection for vital organs – the heart

2. Application

- a) Righteous living begins with protecting our heart and what we allow in
- b) We need to practice daily righteousness
1 Peter 1:16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy.
- c) Righteous living and personal holiness protect us from sin

C. Feet Shod with the Gospel of Peace – prepared and confident in battle

1. Purpose

- a) The shoes help you stand
- b) The shoes help you move quickly
- c) The Romans would take nails and pound them through their sandals to give them good traction and standing

2. Application

- a) We are to be equipped and prepared for battle
Romans 10:15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written, How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace, and bring glad tidings of good things!
- b) We have confidence to go to battle because of Christ who is our strength

D. Shield of Faith – protection from the fiery darts of the wicked

1. Purpose

- a) This was a very large piece that the soldier could kneel behind and find total protection – like a small door

- b) Soldiers could stand side by side with their shields and create a wall of protection

2. Application

- a) This faith is a living working faith

Hebrews 11:6 But without faith it is impossible to please him: for he that cometh to God must believe that he is, and that he is a rewarder of them that diligently seek him.

- b) Fiery darts from the devil can come at any time – the devil fires darts of fear, doubt and worry among others

E. Helmet of Salvation – confident hope

1. Purpose

- a) The soldier needed protection of his head
- b) The soldier needs to also guard his mind and his thinking

2. Application

- a) This salvation is speaking eternal salvation that we will experience – our anticipated hope

1 Thessalonians 5:8-10 But let us, who are of the day, be sober, putting on the breastplate of faith and love; and for an helmet, the hope of salvation. For God hath not appointed us to wrath, but to obtain salvation by our Lord Jesus Christ, Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

- b) Satan will try to attack the mind and our thinking

2 Corinthians 10:3-5 For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;) Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;

(1) He will plant seeds of doubt and fear

(2) Satan wants you to think that you can be defeated before you even begin the battle

F. Sword of the Spirit – an offensive and defensive weapon

1. Purpose

- a) A small sword used for close hand to hand battle
- b) A sword they would always have at their side

2. Application

- a) The Word of God is the sword that cuts the heart

Hebrews 4:12 For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart.

b) The Word of God as our defensive weapon

2 Timothy 3:15-16 And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:

c) The Word of God as our offensive guide

Psalms 119:105 Thy word is a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path.

Psalms 119:11 Thy word have I hid in mine heart, that I might not sin against thee.

III. Prayer is Essential

Ephesians 6:18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;

A. Always in prayer

- 1.** Pray about everything
- 2.** Pray about protection from the wicked one
- 3.** Private prayer, group prayer, silent prayer etc.

B. Make requests – supplication

C. Spirit is there to help you

Romans 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered.

D. Watching – keeping awake, alert

E. Perseverance – persistence

F. For all saints – prayer not just for yourself but also for others

G. Paul's request for prayer

Ephesians 6:19-20 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

1. Paul encouraged them to pray for him to be able to speak with boldness the gospel
2. Paul could have asked to be released from his bonds, but he was more concerned with his testimony and his witness

IV. Encouragement and Greetings

Ephesians 6:21-24 But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things: Whom I have sent unto you for the same purpose, that ye might know our affairs, and that he might comfort your hearts. Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen. To the Ephesians written from Rome, by Tychicus.

- A. Paul was sending Tychicus to them so that he could report about Paul's well being
- B. Tychicus would be able to report to Paul about the well being of the Ephesians in return

Conclusion – each piece of the armor points to Jesus

- Jesus is the truth – the belt of truth
John 14:6 Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me.
- Jesus is our righteousness – the breastplate of righteousness
2 Corinthians 5:21 For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.
- Jesus is our peace – feet prepared with the gospel of peace
Ephesians 2:13-14 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us;
- Jesus is the object of our faith – the shield
Galatians 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me.
- Jesus is our salvation – the helmet
Matthew 1:21 And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins.

- Jesus is the Word of God – the sword
John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.