

EPHESIANS

Main Theme: Built up in Christ

Primary Reference Source: The McArthur Study Bible

Background: Paul's letter to the Ephesian church was written during his first Roman imprisonment between A.D. 60 and A.D. 62. This epistle is referred to as a prison epistle along with Philippians, Colossians, and Philemon. Paul's letter to the Ephesians may have been composed at the same time as his letter to the Colossians. The Ephesian epistle (letter) was sent to its destination through Tychicus, who was also delivering two other epistles; Colossians and Philemon.

It is likely that the gospel was first brought to Ephesus by Priscilla and Aquila, a married couple who were partners with Paul on his second missionary journey. Priscilla and Aquila were left by Paul in Ephesus while he went to the Synagogue to speak with the Jews who had not as yet heard the gospel (Acts 18:18-19). "Located at the mouth of the Cayster River, on the east side of the Aegean Sea, the city of Ephesus was perhaps best known for its magnificent temple of Artemis, or Diana, one of the seven wonders of the ancient world." The city of Ephesus was the capital of the Roman province of Asia (Asia Minor) modern Turkey. It was also an important political, educational, and commercial center, ranking with Alexandria in Egypt, and Antioch of Pisidia, in southern Asia Minor.

"The fledgling church begun by Priscilla and Aquila was later firmly established by Paul on his third missionary journey (Acts 19) and was pastored by him for some 3 years. After Paul left, Timothy pastored the congregation for perhaps a year and a half, primarily to counter the false teaching of a few influential men (such as Hymenaeus and Alexander), who were probably elders in the congregation there (1 Timothy 1:3, 20)." "Because of those men, the church at Ephesus was plagued by fables and endless genealogies (1 Timothy 1:4) and by such ascetic and unscriptural ideas as the forbidding of marriage and abstaining from certain foods (1 Timothy 4:3)." "Although those false teachers did not rightly understand Scripture, they propounded their ungodly interpretations with confidence (1 Timothy 1:7), which produced in the church harmful disputes rather than godly edification which is in faith (1 Timothy 1:4)." Approximately thirty years later, Christ gave the Apostle John the Revelation, which described the Ephesian church as having left their first love (Christ) (Revelation 1:1-7).

Overview of the Text: Consistent with Pauline writing, Paul's epistle to the Ephesians consists of two parts. The first part (first three chapters) addresses doctrine. The second part (last three chapters) addresses the practical application of doctrinal teaching.

SCRIPTURE VERSES AND SCRIPTURE TEXT FROM THE NEW KING JAMES VERSION BIBLE IN BOLD

Ephesians Chapter 1

1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God,

To the saints who are in Ephesus, and faithful in Christ Jesus:

Ephesians 1:1 Paul carried the official title of apostle just like the twelve, including Matthias, who were all eyewitnesses of the resurrected Lord Jesus, chosen by God to lay the foundation for the church by preaching, teaching, writing Scripture, and performing miracles. The “Saints” and “faithful” are those whom God has set apart from sin and made holy through their faith in Jesus Christ.

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

Ephesians 1:2 This is Paul’s common greeting used in all his letters. God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ are the source of authority for Paul’s teaching and proclamation and they are the source of all blessing and grace. The conjunctive “and” indicates equivalence, that is the Lord Jesus Christ is equally divine with the Father.

3. Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ,

Ephesians 1:3 The term blessed refers to the God to whom all praise and commendation is due. Blessed is derived from the same Greek word as eulogy. God is the source of all blessings, both material and immaterial.

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

Ephesians 1:4 “God chose us for salvation before the world was created.” Through God’s sovereign will before the creation of the world and, therefore, obviously independent of human influence and apart from any human merit, those who are saved have become eternally united with Christ Jesus.

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

Ephesians 1:5 “Human parents can bestow their love, resources, and inheritance on an adopted child, but not their own distinct characteristics.” “But God miraculously gives His own nature to those whom He has elected and who have trusted in Christ.” God makes His children into the image of Jesus Christ.

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

Ephesians 1:6 The purpose of man's existence is to glorify God. This is made possible by divine election. This election can only be forthcoming through salvation. Sinners can only be saved by God's grace. God's grace was manifested by the substitutionary death of Jesus Christ (The Beloved).

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

Ephesians 1:7 The shed blood of Jesus Christ was the means by which God accomplished our salvation. Christ's sacrifice on the cross paid the price of salvation for every person who would believe in Jesus Christ. The price of redemption is death. The wages of sin is death (Romans 6:23). (See also Romans 3:24-25, Leviticus 17:11, Hebrews 9:22, 1 Peter 1:18-19)

8. which He made to abound toward us in all wisdom and prudence,

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

Ephesians 1:8-9 God's manifestation of salvation through Jesus Christ reveals the mystery of God's will according to His good pleasure which He purposed in Himself in eternity past. God's will and command is eternal life through saving faith in Jesus Christ and His finished redemptive work at the cross.

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

Ephesians 1:10 "At the end of this world's history, God will gather believers together in the millennial kingdom, called here the dispensation of the fullness of the times, meaning the completion of history (Revelation 20:1-6). After that, God will gather everything to Himself in eternity future, and the new heaven and new earth will be created (Revelation 21:1). The new universe will be totally unified under Christ."

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

Ephesians 1:11 Christ is the believers' inheritance from whom comes all good things. Paul speaks of this inheritance in the past tense, since we receive the inheritance through the act of saving faith. Saving faith in Jesus Christ does not come by man's will, but by God's will. God draws men and women to Himself to believe in Him, and energizes them through His Spirit to accomplish what He has purposed or planned for their lives. All of this was done before the foundation of the world.

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

Ephesians 1:12 Our redemption through Jesus Christ is a reflection of God's glory.

13. In Him you also trusted, after you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation; in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, 14. who is the guarantee of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, to the praise of His glory.

Ephesians 1:13-14 In order to bring salvation to a person, the gospel must be both heard (Romans 10:17) and believed (John 1:12). When a person receives the gospel message, the Holy Spirit indwells the believer permanently. Paul refers to believers as temples of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 3:16, 1 Corinthians 6:19). Unlike the temporary empowering of the Old Testament where the Holy Spirit did not permanently indwell believers, under the New Testament economy believers are permanently sealed in the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit is given by God as His pledge of the believers' future inheritance to eternal life. Sealing refers to an official mark or identification placed on a letter, contract, or other document. The stamp on the seal officially identifies the person or official sending a package or instruction. Scripture associates four characteristics with sealing:

1. Security (Daniel 6:17, Matthew 27:62-66)
2. Authenticity (1 Kings 21:6-16)
3. Ownership (Jeremiah 32:10)
4. Authority (Esther 8:8-12)

15. Therefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, 16. do not cease to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers:

Ephesians 1:15-16 The central theme and overriding principle of salvation is love. Paul rejoices in the fact that the Ephesians have true saving faith as evidenced by their love for one another. Paul is thankful for these people, and he thanks the Lord for them in his prayers.

17. that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him, 18. the eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,

Ephesians 1:17-18 Paul was praying that the believers in the Ephesian church would pursue the godly knowledge and insight, which God has provided to develop a sanctified mind, for comprehending the fullness of the hope and their inheritance in Christ. "A spiritually enlightened mind is the only means of truly understanding and appreciating the hope and inheritance in Christ and of living obediently for Him"

- 19. and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power**
- 20. which he worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at his right hand in the heavenly places,**

Ephesians 1:19-20 “God’s great power, that very power which raised Jesus from the dead and lifted Him by ascension back to glory to take His seat at God’s right hand, is given to every believer at the time of salvation and is always available. Paul therefore did not pray that God’s power be given to believers but that they be made aware of the power they already possessed in Christ and use it.”

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

Ephesians 1:21 “Paul wanted believers to comprehend the greatness of God compared to other heavenly beings. ‘Principality, power, might, and dominion were traditional Jewish terms to designate angelic beings having a high rank among God’s hosts. God is above them all.’”

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

Ephesians 1:22 “Christ is clearly the authoritative head because all things have been put under His feet.” The most highly exalted Jesus Christ has been given to those who believe in Him (the church).

- 23. which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.**

Ephesians 1:23 His (Christ’s) body refers to the redeemed people who trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation. God’s redeemed people are identified as His church.

Ephesians Chapter 2

- 1. And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,**

Ephesians 2:1 Before a person comes to Christ, he is not spiritually crippled in trespasses and sins, but he is spiritually dead in trespasses and sins. The realm of trespasses and sins is where all unregenerate sinners exist. Unbelievers are not spiritually dead because of sinful acts they have committed, but because they are sinners by nature.

- 2. in which you once walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience,**
- 3. among whom also we all once conducted ourselves in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, just as the others.**

Ephesians 2:2-3 “The prince of the power of the air” and “the spirit who now works in the sons of disobedience” identifies the spirit being called the Devil or Satan. This evil spirit and his demonic host influence the minds and hearts of fallen humanity in this world. Unregenerate sinners will blindly follow the culture around them. This culture is evil because it rejects God, it rejects God’s Son, it rejects God’s laws and standards, it loves its sin, and it follows after Satan.

- 4. But God, who is rich in mercy, because of His great love with which He loved us,**
- 5. even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),**
- 6. and raised us up together, and made us sit together in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,**

Ephesians 2:4-6 But God, through his mercy and great love (Through the sacrifice of His Son Jesus Christ), resurrected us from spiritual death to spiritual life through saving faith in Jesus Christ. The tense of “raised” indicates that these are the immediate and direct results of salvation. “Not only is the believer dead to sin and alive to righteousness through Christ’s resurrection, but he also enjoys his Lord’s exaltation and shares in His pre-eminent glory.”

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

Ephesians 2:7 Where Christ is, is where the believer’s inheritance is (1 Peter 1:4), and where the believer’s affections should be. Where Christ is, is where we will glorify God forever for bestowing on us His endless and limitless grace and kindness.

- 8. For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God,**
- 9. not of works, lest anyone should boast.**

Ephesians 2:8-9 No one is saved through their good works, but by grace through faith. Grace was extended by God to humanity in that Jesus Christ died for the sins of the world, taking upon Himself our condemnation. Faith is the vehicle by which one receives this gift of salvation from God. Saving faith is trusting in Jesus Christ alone for salvation. “Although men are to believe for salvation, even that faith is part of the gift of God which saves and cannot be exercised by one’s own power.” “God’s grace is preeminent in every aspect of salvation.”

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

Ephesians 2:10 Good works cannot come from an unregenerate person because he or she is spiritually dead (Cut off from God who is the source of all that is good). Good works do not earn salvation, but good works are the resulting God empowered evidences of salvation. “Like his salvation, believers’ sanctification and good works were ordained before time began.” (Romans 8:29-30)

- 11. Therefore remember that you, once Gentiles in the flesh – who are called Uncircumcision by what is called the Circumcision made in the flesh by hands --**
- 12. that at that time you were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the world.**
- 13. But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.**

Ephesians 2:11-13 Gentiles have historically been cut off from God's promises and covenants made specifically with the nation of Israel. Through Christ, salvation and redemption has been made available to the Gentiles through the shed blood of Jesus Christ. The fulfillment of all Old Testament covenants and promises has been made accessible to the Gentiles.

- 14. For He Himself is our peace, who has made both one, and has broken down the middle wall of separation,**

Ephesians 2:14 Jesus Christ alone is the believers' source of peace. The middle wall alludes to the wall in the temple that partitioned off the Court of the Gentiles from the Temple areas accessible only to Jews. Under the New Covenant, there is no longer this wall of separation.

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

Ephesians 2:15 Under the New Covenant, sealed in the blood of Christ, Old Testament ceremonial laws, feasts, and sacrifices were abolished. The Ten Commandments (moral law) were not abolished, but uniquely fulfilled through Christ's perfect life and once and for all perfect sacrifice on the cross. Christ showed the broadness of this moral law, which reflects God's own holy nature, through His teaching and exposition on these moral commandments (Matthew 5:17-29). Those who are redeemed are a new creature in Christ. There is no longer Jew nor Gentile, slave nor free.

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

Ephesians 2:16 The enmity between Jews and Gentiles was concluded with Christ's saving work on the cross. Both are brought together by the cross.

- 17. And He came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those who were near.**

Ephesians 2:17 The Greek word for preach means to bring or announce good news. The peace that is preached is peace with God through Christ's sacrificial death on the cross.

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

Ephesians 2:18 “No sinner has any right or worthiness in himself for access to God, but believers have been granted that right through faith in Christ’s sacrificial death” “The resources of the Trinity belong to believers the moment they receive Christ, and the Holy Spirit presents them before the heavenly throne of God the Father, where they are welcome to come with boldness anytime”

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

Ephesians 2:19 All believers become members of God’s own family. There are no second class citizens. All believers are bestowed by the Father the same infinite love He gives His Son.

20. having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the chief cornerstone,

Ephesians 2:20 By divine revelation the apostles and prophets taught authoritatively the word of God. Christ is the chief cornerstone which set the foundation and squared the building. Christ is the cornerstone to the spiritual building which contains not only the authoritative teaching of Christ (Word of God), but also His miracles, His resurrection, His perfect life and substitutionary death imputed to believers by faith, and His presence through the Holy Spirit.

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

Ephesians 2:21 This building, where Christ is the cornerstone, grows as new believers are added to the church. This building will not be complete until every person who will believe in Him has done so.

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

Ephesians 2:22 God the Holy Spirit takes up permanent residence in individual believers in the church. (1 Corinthians 6:19-20 & 2 Corinthians 6:16)

Ephesians Chapter 3

1. For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for you Gentiles --

Ephesians 3:1 “Although Paul had been a prisoner for about two years in Caesarea and two years in Rome, he did not consider himself to be a prisoner of any government or person.” “Rather, he knew that he was under Christ’s control, and every aspect of his life was in the Lord’s hands.” “He suffered imprisonment for preaching to the Gentiles.”

- 2. if indeed you have heard of the dispensation of the grace of God which was given to me for you,**
- 3. how that by revelation He made known to me the mystery (as I have briefly written already,**

Ephesians 3:2-3 Dispensation means stewardship or management. Paul was sent by God to steward God's grace, through the preaching of the gospel, to the Gentiles. God's grace and the gospel were manifested to Paul by divine revelation. (Galatians 1:11-24)

- 4. by which, when you read, you may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ),**

Ephesians 3:4 Paul intended to share the fullness of the gospel message to all men. The gospel was one of many truths hidden in mystery during Old Testament times and revealed in the New Testament.

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

Ephesians 3:5 "Paul disclosed a truth that not even the greatest prophets understood – that within the church, composed of all the saved since Pentecost in one united body, there would be no racial, social, or spiritual distinctions. Though God had promised universal blessing through Abraham (Genesis 12:3), the full meaning of that message was revealed through the New Covenant. The New Covenant is forgiveness of sins by believing in Jesus Christ and His sacrificial death at the cross.

- 6. that the Gentiles should be fellow heirs, of the same body, and partakers of His promise in Christ through the gospel,**
- 7. of which I became a minister according to the gift of the grace of God given to me by the effective working of His power.**

Ephesians 3:6-7 Paul concludes this section by stating that salvation through Jesus Christ is not only for Jews but also for Gentiles. Isaiah 49:6 predicted God's purpose and plan to provide salvation to all races. Paul identifies himself as a minister to the Gentiles. This ministry accompanied by the power to fulfill it was given to him by God.

- 8. To me, who am less than the least of all the saints, this grace was given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,**
- 9. and to make all see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the ages has been hidden in God who created all things through Jesus Christ;**

Ephesians 3:8-9 Paul knew very well his own unworthiness to be called an apostle of Jesus Christ (See 1 Timothy 1:12-13). Yet committed to him was the revelation of Jesus Christ, hidden since the beginning of time, and he is commissioned to share this message with the Gentile world.

10. to the intent that now the manifold wisdom of God might be made known by the church to the principalities and powers in the heavenly places,

Ephesians 3:10 God Himself, the Lord Jesus Christ, manifested God's holiness, mercy, grace, forgiveness, and justice contained in salvation to all heavenly beings. This includes the holy angels who rejoice, and the fallen angels, who have no capacity to praise God, to witness the glory of God. It is now the church which makes known the gospel message and the full council of God's word. This is also witnessed by all heavenly beings.

11. according to the eternal purpose which He accomplished in Christ Jesus our Lord,

Ephesians 3:11 The work of Jesus Christ and of the church is according to God's eternal purpose which was determined in the eternal past.

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

Ephesians 3:12 Every person who comes to Christ through saving faith can come to God in prayer at any time because Christ has reconciled us to Himself (God).

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

Ephesians 3:13 Since this is true, Paul encourages fellow believers to not lose heart because of tribulations he must endure. God is Paul's source of power that enables him to overcome all things, and, thereby show the glory of God.

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

Ephesians 3:14 Paul always approaches God in an attitude of submission, reverence, and intense passion.

15. from whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named,

Ephesians 3:15 The whole family in heaven refers to the angels and the redeemed who are with God. The whole family on earth are those who are redeemed by the blood of the Lamb, namely Jesus Christ (1 John 5:11-13).

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

Ephesians 3:16 God's riches and glory are limitless and available to every believer. "Spiritual power is a mark of every Christian who submits to God's Word and Spirit. It is not reserved for some special class of Christian, but for all those who discipline their minds and spirits to study the Word, understand it, and live by it. Although the outer, physical person becomes weaker with age, the inner, spiritual person should grow stronger through the Holy Spirit, who will energize, revitalize, and empower the obedient, committed Christian."

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

Ephesians 3:17 Every believer is indwelt by Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit through saving faith. This faith is grounded and rooted in self-giving and serving love for God and His people. (1 John 4:9-12, 19-21)

18. may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height --

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

Ephesians 3:18-19 Through the Spirit of God indwelling a believer, a person can know the love of Christ in all its vastness (Length, height, width, depth). Love is given to individual believers (Romans 5:5) and commanded of individual believers (John 13:34-35). “Human comprehension of the fullness of God is impossible, because even the most spiritual and wise believer cannot completely grasp the full extent of God’s attributes and characteristics – His power, majesty, wisdom, love, mercy, patience, kindness, and everything He is and does.” But the Spirit Himself knows all the deep things of God, He has the very mind of God, and He (The Holy Spirit) indwells the believer. (Romans 8:26-27 & 1 Corinthians 2:9-11)

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

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

Ephesians 3:20-21 God’s power of working through His church is unlimited and far beyond comprehension. Paul prays that God would be glorified in the church through the Lord Jesus Christ who is Himself God.

Ephesians Chapter 4

1. I, therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you to walk worthy of the calling with which you were called,

Ephesians 4:1 In chapter 4, Paul shifts from doctrine to practical application of the Christian walk. Paul begins by reminding the Ephesian believers that the Christian walk can be costly. Paul’s being in prison was a considerable personal price because of his obedience to the Lord.

2. with all lowliness and gentleness, with longsuffering, bearing with one another in love,

Ephesians 4:2 In this passage, Paul lists the attributes of Christian character:

“Lowliness” – Also known as humility, is not found in Roman or Greek vocabularies of Paul’s day. Lowliness means to function as a servant and make no reputation for yourself. It is the

quality of character commanded in the first beatitude (Matthew 5:3), and describes the noble grace of Christ (Philippians 2:7-8)

“Gentleness” – Also known as meekness means mild spirited and self-controlled.

“Longsuffering” – Not short tempered but having a long resolved patience.

“bearing with one another” – Having a forbearing love for others that is continuous and unconditional.

3. endeavoring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

Ephesians 4:3 The Spirit-bestowed oneness of all true believers creates the bond of peace and love that binds God’s people together.

4. There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called in one hope of your calling;

5. one Lord, one faith, one baptism;

6. one God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all.

Ephesians 4:4-6 In this passage, Paul lists the particular areas of oneness or unity:

“One body” – The body of Christ, the church, composed of believers brought to saving faith by the work of the one Holy Spirit.

“one hope” – The promise of an eternal inheritance given and sealed to each believer by the Holy Spirit.

“one Lord” – Only Jesus Christ is Lord. (Philippians 2:9-11)

“one faith” – The body of doctrine revealed in Scripture.

“one baptism” – This probably refers to the one form of water baptism in which a believer makes a public confession of faith in Jesus Christ. There is also only one spiritual baptism in which believers are placed into the body of Christ by the Lord Himself (1 Corinthians 12:13).

“one God” – There is only one God who is sovereign over everything. (Deuteronomy 32:39, Isaiah 46:9, 1 Corinthians 8:6)

7. But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ’s gift.

Ephesians 4:7 Moving from the oneness of all believers, Paul focuses on the singularity of each believer in that each believer has been given grace according to the measure of Christ’s gift. Grace is another word for gospel which is the good news that God offers salvation to sinful and unworthy mankind. God’s grace imparts people differently in terms of what God equips them to do or be. Each believer is given a unique spiritual gift that God individually portions out according to His sovereign will and design. Romans 12:6-8 provides a listing of spiritual gifts.

8. Therefore He says:

**“When He ascended on high,
He led captivity captive,
And gave gifts to men.”**

Ephesians 4:8 Paul quotes Psalm 68:18. “Psalm 68 is a victory hymn composed by David to celebrate God’s conquest of the Jebusite city of Jerusalem and the triumphant ascent of God up to Mount Zion.” “After such a triumph, the king would bring home the spoils and the prisoners.” “Here Paul depicts Christ returning from His battle on earth back into the glory of the heavenly city with the trophies of His victory at Calvary.”

“led captivity captive” – “Through His crucifixion and resurrection, Christ conquered Satan and death, and in triumph returned to God those who were once sinners and prisoners of Satan.”

“gave gifts to men” – “After His ascension came all the spiritual gifts empowered by the Spirit, who was then sent.”

9. (Now this, “He ascended” – what does it mean but that He also first descended into the lower parts of the earth?)

10. He who descended is also the One who ascended far above all the heavens, that He might fill all things.)

Ephesians 4:9-10 Christ’s ascension into heaven where He forever reigns with the Father was preceded by His descension. That is Christ descended from heaven to earth to become man (Incarnation) beginning life as a little baby. After His crucifixion and death, Christ descended into the pit of demons, “the spirits in prison.” (Colossians 2:14-15, 1 Peter 3:18-20)

“that He might fill all things” – “After the Lord ascended, having fulfilled all prophecies and all His divinely-ordained redemptive tasks, He gained the right to rule the church and to give gifts, as He was then filling the entire universe with His divine presence, power, sovereignty, and blessing (Philippians 2:9-11).”

11. And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers,

Ephesians 4:11

Apostles – “A term used particularly of the 12 disciples who had seen the risen Christ, including Matthias (Acts 1:20-22), who replaced Judas. Paul was uniquely set apart as the apostle to the Gentiles (Galatians 1:11-17) and was numbered with the other apostles. He, too, miraculously encountered Jesus at his conversion on the Damascus Road (Acts 9:1-9). Those apostles were chosen directly by Christ, so as to be called apostles of Christ (Galatians 1:1, 1 Peter 1:1). They were given three basic responsibilities:

1. to lay the foundation for the church (Ephesians 2:20),

- 2 to receive, declare and unite God's Word (Ephesians 3:5, Acts 11:28, Acts 21:10-11),
3. to give confirmation of that Word through signs, wonders, and miracles (2 Corinthians 12:12, Acts 8:6-7, Hebrews 2:3-4)."

"The term apostle is used in more general ways of other men in the early church, such as Barnabas (Acts 14:4), Silas, Timothy, (Thessalonians 2:6), and others (Romans 16:7, Philippians 2:25). They are called apostles of the churches (2 Corinthians 8:23), rather than apostles of Jesus Christ like the 13. They were not self-perpetuating, nor was any apostle who died replaced." Apostles of the church (Barnabas, Silas, etc.) are never addressed as apostles specifically (individually). They are only addressed as apostles in context with those who were with Jesus as apostles. They seem to be apostles by association.

Prophets – "The office of prophet seems to have been exclusively for work within a local congregation. They were not 'sent ones' as were the apostles, their office ceased with the completion of the New Testament. They sometimes spoke practical direct revelation for the church from God (Acts 11:21-28) or expounded revelation already given (Acts 13:1). They were not used for the reception of Scripture. Their messages were to be judged by other prophets for validity (1 Corinthians 14:32) and had to conform to the teaching of the apostles (1 Corinthians 14:37)." The offices of apostle and prophet were replaced by evangelists and teaching pastors.

Evangelists – "Men who proclaim the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ to unbelievers."

Pastors & Teachers – "This phrase is best understood in context as a single office of leadership in the church." "The normal meaning of pastor is shepherd, so the two functions together define the teaching shepherd. He is identified as one who is under the 'great Pastor' Jesus (Hebrews 13:20-21, 1 Peter 2:25). One who holds this office is also called an 'elder' and 'bishop'." 1 Timothy 3:1-7, Acts 20:28, and 1 Peter 5:1-2 bring all three terms together.

12. for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ,

Ephesians 4:12 The work of the ministry is the spiritual service required by every Christian, not just the church leaders. Church leaders must nurture and develop the church (edify the church) through teaching the truths of Scripture to equip the saints (believers) for ministry.

13. till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ;

Ephesians 4:13 "Faith here refers to the body of revealed truth that constitutes Christian teaching, particularly featuring the complete content of the gospel. Oneness and harmony among believers is possible only when it is built on the foundation of sound doctrine" Through prayer, faithful study of Scripture, and obedience to God's commands, one will develop a deep knowledge of Christ. As we grow in the unity of true Biblical faith, we are conformed more and more into the image of Christ, being perfected.

14. that we should no longer be children, tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, in the cunning craftiness of deceitful plotting,

Ephesians 4:14 “Spiritually immature believers who are not grounded in the knowledge of Christ through God’s Word are inclined to uncritically accept every sort of beguiling doctrinal error and fallacious interpretation of Scripture promulgated by deceitful, false teachers in the church. They must learn discernment. The New Testament is replete with warnings of such danger.” (2 Timothy 2:15-18, 2 Peter 2:1-3)

15. but, speaking the truth in love, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head – Christ --

Ephesians 4:15 The gospel message and Scripture teaching must be proclaimed in love. This promotes growing up together in Christ who is the authoritative leader (head of the church). The Christian’s growth in Christ results in his being completely obedient to the Lord and Christ like in all areas of his life.

16. from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the edifying of itself in love.

Ephesians 4:16 Christ is the focal point from whom all believers are drawn together. Our unity and growth in the faith comes from Jesus Christ and the Word of God. “Godly, biblical church growth results from every member of the body fully using his spiritual gift, in submission to the Holy Spirit and in cooperation with other believers.”

17. This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the futility of their mind,

Ephesians 4:17 The term “walk” refers to daily conduct. Christians are not to conduct themselves like unregenerate and ungodly unbelievers. Unbelievers have a futile mind because they cannot attain to a godly understanding or engage in moral living.

18. having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart;

Ephesians 4:18 Unbelievers are spiritually separated from God and, therefore, ignorant of God’s truth, this results in willing spiritual darkness and moral blindness.

19. who, being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness.

Ephesians 4:19 As unbelievers continue to sin and turn away from God, they become apathetic about spiritual and moral things. This is especially true in the area of sexual sins (lewdness). As unbelievers succumb to sensuality and licentiousness, they increasingly lose moral restraint. It is interesting that Paul associates sexual sinning with greed. Prostitutes charge a lot of money.

Maintaining a mistress is even more expensive. Due to the fallen condition of man sex sells, and it is a money maker. Unbelievers are often greedy for money in order to buy sex.

20. But you have not so learned Christ,

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

Ephesians 4:20-21 By contrast, the teachings and truths associated with Jesus Christ proclaim exactly the opposite of the philosophy of unbelievers.

22. that you put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts,

23. and be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

24. and that you put on the new man which was created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness.

Ephesians 4:22-24 The “old man” is the sinful (old) nature which brings about corruption energized by deceitful lusts. Paul instructs believers to put off this old nature, but instead grow in Christ. Spiritual growth and sanctification in this life is a process. When a person becomes a Christian, God gives him a completely new spiritual and moral capability that a mind apart from Christ could never achieve. This is part of what makes a person a new creature in Christ (created according to God). This becoming a new creature in Christ at the point of salvation, is what Paul calls the new man. Central to this new creation is that the believer is justified in the sight of God due to the finished work of Christ at the cross and His perfect and sinless life. Since we as believers have been justified freely by Christ, we ought to live that way.

25. Therefore, putting away lying, “Let each one of you speak truth with his neighbor,” for we are members of one another.

Ephesians 4:25 One of the easiest sins to commit is lying. Lying can take the form of cheating, making false promises, betraying a confidence, exaggeration, and making false excuses. God’s work in the world is based on truth; therefore, for individuals and churches to be fit instruments of the Lord, they must be truthful.

26. “Be angry, and do not sin”: do not let the sun go down on your wrath,

27. nor give place to the devil.

Ephesians 4:26-27 In this passage, Paul seems to be sanctioning righteous anger at evil. This type of anger hates injustice, immorality, ungodliness, and every other sin. Righteous anger must be set aside by the end of each day because it can turn to bitterness.

28. Let him who stole steal no longer, but rather let him labor, working with his hands what is good, that he may have something to give him who has need.

Ephesians 4:28 “Stealing in any form is a sin and has no part in the life of a Christian” Christians should be industrious producing what is beneficial. Not only should Christians be productive and not steal, but they should endeavor to help those who are in need.

29. Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth, but what is good for necessary edification, that it may impart grace to the hearers.

Ephesians 4:29 “Foul language of any sort should never pass a Christian’s lips, because it is totally out of character with his new life in Christ.” “Because believers have been saved by grace and kept by grace, they should live and speak with grace.”

30. And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.

Ephesians 4:30 “God is grieved when His children refuse to change the old ways of sin for those righteous ways of the new life.” The Holy Spirit indwells individual believers and He is grieved when their conduct is not proper. When the Holy Spirit comes into the heart and life of a believer, He seals us for the day of redemption. “The Holy Spirit is the guarantor of eternal redemption in Christ for those who believe in Him.”

31. Let all bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, and evil speaking be put away from you, with all malice.

Ephesians 4:31 Paul lists some key sinful traits that should be put away by all believers:

1. Bitterness – Continual resentment.
2. Wrath – Rage, anger of the moment.
3. Anger – Hostility toward someone who has wronged you.
4. Clamor – Confused shouting of strife out of control.
5. Evil Speaking – Slander
6. Malice – The root of all vices. It is the intent to act to do bodily harm.

32. And be kind to one another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God in Christ forgave you.

Ephesians 4:32 Since we as Christians have been forgiven of so much by God, we of all people, should forgive the relatively small offenses others commit against us.

Ephesians Chapter 5

- 1. Therefore be imitators of God as dear children.**
- 2. And walk in love, as Christ also has loved us and given Himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweet-smelling aroma.**

Ephesians 5:1-2 The Christian life, as defined in Scripture, has love at its core. By following Christ's example and being obedient to God's commands, we live a life characterized by love and we grow in the likeness of the Lord by serving Him on earth. "The Lord is the supreme example in His self-sacrificing love for lost sinners. He took sin upon Himself and gave up His very life that men might be redeemed from their sin, receive a new and holy nature, and inherit eternal life." "Christ's offering of Himself for fallen man pleased and glorified His heavenly Father because it demonstrated in the most complete and perfect way God's sovereign, perfect, unconditional, and divine kind of love." Christ is our example in how we are to conduct ourselves.

3. But fornication and all uncleanness or covetousness, let it not even be named among you, as is fitting for saints;

Ephesians 5:3 On the contrary, sin is not even to be discussed. The focus of the believer is the Lord, His sacrificial death to redeem mankind from their sin, and the perfect life that He led. This verse, as do other scripture verses, highlights the fact that sexual sin has a close connection to sins of impurity and greed.

4. neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor coarse jesting, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks.

Ephesians 5:4 Filthiness, foolish talking, and coarse jesting are sins of speech which includes everything that is immoral, degrading, foolish, suggestive, or of immoral wit. This type of speech is destructive to holy living and a godly testimony. Such activity must be confessed and forsaken. Speech should only be utilized for constructive purposes, especially giving praise and thanks to God for all that He has done for us.

5. For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Ephesians 5:5 No person whose habitual life pattern involves impurity (uncleanness) fornication (illicit sexual relations), and greed (covetousness) has any part in Christ's Kingdom. The root cause of these sins is idolatry. For some people their god is greed, for others their god is illicit sexual relations. Such people are not saved.

6. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

7. Therefore do not be partakers with them.

Ephesians 5:6-7 Paul instructs believers that they are not to be misled or told that sin no longer matters, it does matter. Those who willfully practice sin are headed for destruction.

8. For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Walk as children of light

Ephesians 5:8 Darkness is a summary term which describes one whose life is characterized by sin. Such people live this way because they are unconverted and have no knowledge of the truth. “The realm of darkness is presided over by the power of darkness (Luke 22:53, Colossians 1:13), who rules those headed for eternal darkness (Matthew 8:12, 2 Peter 2:17).” “Tragically, sinners love the darkness (John 3:19-21). It is that very darkness of sin that sinners are delivered from through salvation in Christ. (John 8:12, Colossians 1:13, 1 Peter 2:9, Psalm 27:1).”

9. (for the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth),

Ephesians 5:9 The fruit of the Spirit speaks of that which is produced by walking in the light. This includes moral excellence of heart, righteous behavior, and truthfulness.

10. finding out what is acceptable to the Lord.

Ephesians 5:10 “‘Finding out’ carries the idea of testing or proving to learn by clear and convincing evidence what is truly honoring to God. The point is that, as believers walk in the light of the truth, the knowledge of the Lord’s will becomes clear.”

11. And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them.

Ephesians 5:11 Christians are to live righteously and have nothing to do with the works of Satan or the world. Believers must expose and oppose darkness wherever it is found, especially when it is found in the church.

12. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.

Ephesians 5:12 Some sins are so despicable that even talking about them can be morally and spiritually corruptive. Such sins should not even be mentioned except to oppose them.

13. But all things that are exposed are made manifest by the light, for whatever makes manifest is light.

Ephesians 5:13 The pure and illuminating light of God’s Word exposes all the secrets of sin. Proclamation of the Word of God exposes all evil (Proverbs 6:23, 2 Timothy 3:16).

14. Therefore He says:

**“Awake, you who sleep,
Arise from the dead,
And Christ will give you light.”**

Ephesians 5:14 Using Isaiah 60:1, Paul extends an invitation to the unsaved to be transformed from children of darkness to become children of light.

15. See then that you walk circumspectly, not as fools but as wise,

Ephesians 5:15 The term circumspectly means watchful on all sides, cautious or prudent (Psalm 1:1). The term is used within the context of moral correctness. A fool is a person who lives in unbelief and lives immorally. He lives apart from God and violates God's law (Proverbs 1:7), and cannot comprehend the truth or his true condition (1 Corinthians 2:14).

16. redeeming the time, because the days are evil.

Ephesians 5:16 The Greek word for time denotes a fixed or measured period which refers to one's lifetime as a believer. "We are to make the most of our time on this evil earth in fulfilling God's purposes, lining up every opportunity for useful worship and service." Scripture clearly teaches that we are to be aware of the brevity of life. (Psalm 39:4-5, Psalm 89:46-48, James 4:14-17)

17. Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is.

Ephesians 5:17 "Knowing God through His Word is spiritual wisdom." God's will includes:

1. That all men should be saved (1 Timothy 2:3-4)
2. That men should be Spirit-filled and sanctified (2 Thessalonians 2:13, 1 Thessalonians 4:3)
3. That men should be submissive (1 Peter 2:13-15)
4. That men should be willing to suffer for righteousness (1 Peter 2:20)
5. That men should be thankful (1 Thessalonians 5:18)

18. And do not be drunk with wine, in which is dissipation; but be filled with the Spirit,

Ephesians 5:18 "Although Scripture consistently condemns all drunkenness (1 Corinthians 5:11, 1 Peter 4:3, and Galatians 5:21), the context suggests that Paul is here speaking especially about the drunken orgies commonly associated with many pagan worship ceremonies of that day. They were supposed to induce some ecstatic communion with the deities. Paul refers to such as the 'cup of demons.'" True communion with God is through the Holy Spirit. This begins with a believer's baptism into the Holy Spirit through saving faith in Jesus Christ (Luke 3:16, 1 Corinthians 12:13), and continues through believers allowing the Holy Spirit to develop and lead them through study of the Word of God (Colossians 3:16). Baptism of the Holy Spirit by saving faith is the first deposit which saves the individual and provides the guarantee for eternal life. Growing in the Spirit, through study of Scripture allows the spirit to work in every facet of your life. This is what Paul means when he says that we are to be filled with the Spirit. Being filled with the Spirit includes pursuing a pure life, confessing all known sin, dying to self, surrendering to God's will, and depending on His power in all things. Being filled with the Spirit is the same as walking in the Spirit (Galatians 5:16-23).

- 19. speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord,**
- 20. giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ,**
- 21. submitting to one another in the fear of God.**

Ephesians 5:19-21 The result of being filled with the Spirit is giving praise to God, giving thanks to God, and submitting to one another. Praise to God can manifest in psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs.

Psalms – The Old Testament psalms were put to music. The term was also used for vocal music in general.

Hymns – “Perhaps songs of praise distinguished from the Psalms which exalted God, in that they focused on the Lord Jesus Christ.”

Spiritual Songs – “Probably songs of personal testimony expressing truths of the grace of salvation.”

Making melody – “Means to pluck a stringed instrument, so it could refer primarily to instrumental music, while including vocal also.”

“Submission to God leads to believers being humble and submissive with one another (Proverbs 9:10). No believer is inherently superior to any other believer. In their standing before God, they are equal in every way (Galatians 3:28).”

22. Wives, submit to your own husbands, as to the Lord.

Ephesians 5:22 Having established the foundational principle for salvation, Paul gives application to the wife. The command that a wife is to submit to her husband applies to every Christian wife no matter what her abilities, education, knowledge of Scripture, spiritual maturity, or any other abilities or qualifications relative to her husband. The submission is not for the husband to command, but for the wife to lovingly and willingly offer regardless of her husband’s personal worthiness or spiritual condition. Since God created man to be the head, a wife’s recognition of this shows she is not just submissive to her husband but also to her Lord.

23. For the husband is head of the wife, as also Christ is head of the church; and He is the Savior of the body.

24. Therefore, just as the church is subject to Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything.

Ephesians 5:23-24 “The Spirit-filled wife recognizes that her husband’s role in giving leadership is not only God-ordained, but is a reflection of Christ’s own loving, authoritative leadership of the church.” “As the Lord delivered His church from the dangers of sin, death, and hell, so the

husband provides for, protects, preserves, and loves his wife, leading her to blessing as she submits.”

25. Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the church and gave Himself for her,

Ephesians 5:25 “Christ gave everything He had, including His own life, for the sake of His church, and that is the standard of sacrifice for a husband’s love of his wife (Colossians 3:19).” Husbands are to love their wives with the same unreserved, selfless, and sacrificial love that Christ has for His church.

**26. that He might sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word,
27. that He might present her to Himself a glorious church, not having spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but that she should be holy and without blemish.**

Ephesians 5:26-27 “This speaks of the love of Christ for His church. Saving grace makes believers holy by the agency of the Word of God (Titus 2:1-9: 3:5) so that they may be a pure bride. For husbands to love their wives as Christ does His church, demands a purifying love.”

28. So husbands ought to love their own wives as their own bodies; he who loves his wife loves himself.

Ephesians 5:28 A Christian husband puts his wife first, and cares for her with the same devotion that he naturally manifests when he cares for himself.

29. For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as the Lord does the church.

Ephesians 5:29 The husband is to provide for his wife’s needs and help her to grow and mature in Christ through warm and tender affection in comfort and security.

30. For we are members of His body, of His flesh and of His bones.

Ephesians 5:30 “The Lord provides for His church because it is intimately and inseparably connected to Him. If He did not care for His church, He would be diminishing His own glory which the church brings to Him by praise and obedience. So, in marriage, the husband’s life is so intimately joined to the wife’s, that they are one. When he cares for her, he cares for himself.”

31. “For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.”

Ephesians 5:31 This verse is quoted from Genesis 2:24. “Paul reinforces the divine plan for marriage which God instituted at creation, emphasizing its permanence and unity. The union of marriage is intimate and unbreakable. ‘Joined’ is a word used to express having been glued or cemented together, emphasizing the permanence of the union”

32. This is a great mystery, but I speak concerning Christ and the church.

Ephesians 5:32 In the New Testament the term mystery refers to the undisclosed past truth or reality now revealed in the New Testament age and written in the Scripture. “Marriage is a sacred reflection of union between the Messiah and His church, completely unknown until the New Testament.”

33. Nevertheless let each one of you in particular so love his own wife as himself, and let the wife see that she respects her husband.

Ephesians 5:33 “The intimacy and sacredness of the love relationship between believing marriage partners is to be a visual expression of the love between Christ and His church.”

Ephesians Chapter 6

1. Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right.

Ephesians 6:1 Since parents are the authority that God places over children, children are to obey their parents as if obeying the Lord Himself.

2. “Honor your father and mother,” which is the first commandment with promise:

Ephesians 6:2 When God gave His Ten Commandments, the first law governing human relationships was this one (Exodus 20:12, Deuteronomy 5:16). The idea of honoring one’s parents speaks of attitude which is the motive behind the action.

3. “that it may be well with you and you may live long on the earth.”

Ephesians 6:3 God has graciously added the promise of special blessing for those who obey this command.

4. And you, fathers, do not provoke your children to wrath, but bring them up in the training and admonition of the Lord.

Ephesians 6:4 “In the pagan world of Paul’s day, and even in many Jewish households, most fathers ruled their families with rigid domineering authority. The desires and welfare of wives and children were seldom considered. The apostle makes clear that a Christian father’s authority over his children does not allow for unreasonable demands or statutes that might drive his children to anger, despair, and resentment.” Instead the apostle calls fathers to bring up their children in the training and admonition of the Lord. “This calls for systematic discipline and instruction, which brings children to respect the commands of the Lord as the foundation of all of life, godliness, and blessing.”

5. Bondservants, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in sincerity of heart, as to Christ;

Ephesians 6:5 “The term obedient refers to continuous, uninterrupted submission to one’s earthly master or employer, the only exception being in regard to a command that involves clear disobedience of God’s Word as illustrated in Acts 4:19-20.” It should be noted that in Greek and Roman culture there was much abuse and seldom good treatment of slaves. When Paul is addressing bondservants in this passage, he is addressing slaves. In today’s vernacular, it is the relationship of employee to employer. The authority of masters (employers) must be respected. People are in authority because the Lord set it up that way. Therefore, to serve one’s employer is to serve Christ as well.

6. not with eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as bondservants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart,

Ephesians 6:6 If one is a slave (employee) who performs only when being watched by the boss or to promote one’s own welfare, such a person is a man pleaser and performing eye service. Work is to be done as a faithful steward to honor the employer and the Lord.

7. with goodwill doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men,

8. knowing that whatever good anyone does, he will receive the same from the Lord, whether he is a slave or free.

Ephesians 6:7-8 “God’s credits and rewards will be appropriate to the attitude and action of our work. No good thing done for His glory will go unrewarded.”

9. And you, masters, do the same things to them, giving up threatening, knowing that your own Master also is in heaven, and there is no partiality with Him.

Ephesians 6:9 A Christian boss should be hospitable and fair with his employees. This is his Christian witness, especially in how he treats Christian employees. A Christian employer realizes that he has a heavenly Master who is impartial.

10. Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord and in the power of His might.

Ephesians 6:10 “Ultimately, Satan’s power over Christians is already broken and the great war is won through Christ’s crucifixion and resurrection which forever conquered sin and death.” (1 Corinthians 15:56-57, Hebrews 2:14, Colossians 2:14-17). Although the war is won, battles of temptation go on through every day life. Victory in these battles comes through the power of the Holy Spirit and the force of biblical truth.

11. Put on the whole armor of God, that you may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

Ephesians 6:11 Paul uses the illustration of armor worn by Roman soldiers to convey the idea that believers are to be prepared for spiritual battle. Verses 14-17 specifically define the

components of this armor. This armor is necessary to stand against the real adversary, the devil. The wiles of the devil mean schemes of the devil in Greek. Schemes carry the idea of cleverness, crafty methods, cunning, and deception. Satan carries out his schemes through his demonic hosts. “Wiles is all inclusive, encompassing every sin, immoral practice, false theology, false religion, and worldly enticement.”

12. For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places.

Ephesians 6:12 Pursuit of a godly Christian life, characterized by goodness and righteousness, is not a passive activity. There are evil spiritual forces that hate this and want to destroy it any way they can. Paul describes the evil spiritual empire as being comprised of principalities, powers, rulers of the darkness of this age, and spiritual hosts of wickedness. “The 4 designations describe the different strata and ranking of those demons in the supernatural empire in which they operate.”

13. Therefore take up the whole armor of God, that you may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand.

Ephesians 6:13 “Since the fall of man, every day has been evil, a condition that will persist until the Lord returns and establishes His righteous kingdom on earth.” Evil and wickedness exists and tends to take over because the heart of man is naturally evil (Jeremiah 17:9). Therefore, we must put on the full spiritual armor of God.

14. Stand therefore, having girded your waist with truth, having put on the breastplate of righteousness,

Ephesians 6:14 The belt of truth refers to the belt worn by early soldiers of Paul’s day to keep loose clothing from being a hindrance or a danger. In the same way the spiritual belt of truth tightens down our spiritual lives and prevents loose, fleshly, hypocritical, and evil living. The breastplate, made of leather or metal, covers the soldier’s full torso protecting his heart and other vital organs.” “As believers faithfully live in obedience to and communion with Jesus Christ, his own righteousness produces in them the practical, daily righteousness that becomes their spiritual breastplate.” (Isaiah 59:17)

15. and having shod your feet with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

Ephesians 6:15 “Roman soldiers wore boots with nails in them to grip the ground in combat. The gospel of peace pertains to the good news that, through Christ, believers are at peace with God and He is on our side.” It is that confidence of divine support which allows the believer to stand firm because he knows he is at peace with God and God is his strength. Paul sets forth an interesting parallel; just as feet carry a soldier into battle, feet also carry the Christian into the spiritual battle through preaching and sharing the gospel of peace. (Romans 10:15)

16. above all, taking the shield of faith with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked one.

Ephesians 6:16 “This Greek word usually refers to the large shield that protected the entire body.” Saving faith is trusting in Jesus Christ alone for your salvation. This continual trust in God’s Word and promise forms the spiritual shield to protect the believer from every sort of sin. Temptations, likened to flaming arrows, are stopped by the shield.

17. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

Ephesians 6:17 In battle soldiers wear helmets to protect their head. The helmet of salvation means that we need to be keeping Jesus Christ and His salvation in our thought life. “Satan seeks to destroy a believer’s assurance of salvation with his weapons of doubt and discouragement.” “...The Christian can be strong in God’s promises of eternal salvation in Scripture.” Security of eternal salvation in Jesus Christ is a fact. Assurance of eternal salvation in Jesus Christ is the feeling that comes to the obedient Christian. The Word of God is the Christian’s sword to defensively fend off Satan’s attacks, and offensively help destroy the enemy’s strategies.

18. praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, being watchful to this end with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints --

Ephesians 6:18 Paul states that believers are to be continuously in prayer with all persistence and all manner of supplications for the saints. Prayer in the Spirit focuses on submission, as believers line themselves up with the will of God.

19. and for me, that utterance may be given to me, that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the mystery of the gospel,

20. for which I am an ambassador in chains; that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Ephesians 6:19-20 “Paul does not ask for prayer for his personal well-being or physical comfort in the imprisonment from which he wrote, but for boldness and faithfulness to continue proclaiming the gospel to the unsaved no matter what the cost”

21. But that you also may know my affairs and how I am doing, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make all things known to you;

22. whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know our affairs, and that he may comfort your hearts.

Ephesians 6:21-22 Tychicus, a convert from Asia Minor (modern Turkey), was with Paul during his first imprisonment in Rome. This epistle (Ephesians) was written by Paul in Rome while he was in prison. “He accompanied Paul in taking an offering to the church in Jerusalem (Acts 20:4-6) and was sent by him on several missions (2 Timothy 4:12, Titus 3:12).”

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

24. Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen.

Ephesians 6:23-24 Paul concludes Ephesians with a benediction commending readers to the peace, love, and grace that comes from God and Jesus Christ.