

THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

Lesson 02

Chapter 1:1-3, The Study
"The Christian Salutation"

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HOW THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS BREAKS DOWN FOR TONIGHT

- I. The Church As the Body of Christ, 1:1-6:24**
 - A. What You Have, from the Father "In Christ," 1:1-3:21**
 - 1. "The Father's Glory," Ephesians Chapter 1**
 - a. "The Author and his Addressees," 1:1-3**
 - 1 - "The Author and His Authorization," 1:1a&b**
 - 2 - "The Addressees & Their Address," 1:1c**
 - 3 - "Their Assets," 1:2a**
 - 4 - "The Givers & their Accreditation," 1:2b**
 - 5 - "Do Not Hinder Blessing God The Father," 1:3a**
 - 6 - "God The Father's Spiritual Gifts," 1:3b**

INTRODUCTION – CHAPTER 1

We will break chapter one down into four sections. First, **the Address**; From Paul to the Ephesians; Second, **the giving to believers every spiritual blessing from* the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit**; Third, **Paul's prayers for the Ephesians to have Wisdom and Knowledge of the Father**; and finally, **the exalted position that Jesus Christ has been placed into by the Father.**

We should not miss, during this study, the emphasis that Paul has placed upon the **workings of The Father**. Chapter one is constantly reminding us that it is **The Father** who has done all of these wonderful things for us **in** Christ Jesus.

The Father's **glory** is the focus of this chapter, not the Ephesians to whom all these things have been done, but to **The Father** who has done them. The Spiritual gifts that are given are given by **The Father**. The prayers that Paul prays for the Ephesians are that they would know **The Father**. It is **The Father** who has raised Jesus from the dead, Seated Jesus at His right hand in the heavenlies and put **all things** under Christ's **oversight** and Put all things of the "**set-apart ones**" (believers) under the **headship** of the **Father's** Son, Jesus the Christ.

Looking back at this list should give us the clue that the Ephesian believers were not well taught in these issues, otherwise, "Why bring these things up?" Paul puts his blessings upon this group of believers for their faithfulness in the Lord Jesus Christ and their love that they have for all the saints. Paul gives his public thankfulness for such a group as this - but still, like every group of believers everywhere, they need reminders of their spiritual shortcomings. These reminders are not in the form of chastisement, but in loving encouragement to continue to mature in Christ Jesus and to remind them that it is **The Father** who is the driving force behind all things.

Chapter one sets the stage for the first half of the book. **The first three chapters** tell us "What we have in Christ Jesus" and

"Where we got it from." **The second three chapters** tell us "Now that we have it, here's what to do in response."

Chapter one builds us up. It tells us of our spiritual blessings and spiritual position **"In Christ."** It also gets us ready to be introduced to **"The Mystery"** of the Church (Gk - ekklesia), the "Assembly," the "set-apart ones", and the "called-out ones."

While studying Ephesians it would be good to not use the word "Church," but instead substitute "the set-apart ones." Today when we hear that word "Church" we think of programs, buildings, worship services, and a host of other cultural ideas. Instead try to limit your understanding of the word translated in the Ephesian studies as "Church" to the principles of a special people who have been **"set-apart" by God the Father, "set-apart" to God the Father, and "set-apart" In Christ Jesus.**

COMMENT

First, a comment about our second and focused translation. Dr. Douglas MacCorkle, in his book, "God's Special Secret," has provided his very accurate translation, with a view towards **exegesis** – exposing God's Word according to its immediate context – what Paul meant to convey to the believers in Ephesus. We will be using this and the New American Standard Bible translations throughout these lessons.

THE STUDY

Ephesians 1:1-2, The Christian Salutation

The Author and His Authorization, 1:1a & b

1:1a & b [NASB]

*"Paul,
An apostle
of Christ Jesus
by the will of God,"*

1:1a & b [MAC]

*I,
Paul,
one of Christ Jesus Apostles,
through the direct act
of God's [The Father's] will,*

We'll look at both translations of this first part of our study so I can point out some of the reasons to be using Dr. MacCorkle's translation.

Here again is the New American Standard Bible's version of this first part of the verse:

NASB 1:1a & b

"Paul, and apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God...."

We can see that this translation is quite clear about Paul's calling as an apostle and that it was not of **his own** choosing. He fully recognizes the fact that he has become an apostle of Christ according to **the will of God**.

MAC 1:1a & b

"I, Paul, one of Christ Jesus apostles, through the direct act of God's will...."

Here in MacCorkle's exegetical translation he has put his emphasis, first on recognizing that Paul wants us to know that it

was **he, Paul**, who is declaring that his apostleship of Christ Jesus was **"through the direct act of God's will,"** reinforcing the fact that he, Paul, is taking no credit for what God has **directly willed** in his case.

The context is Paul's writing from a Roman prison to promote the message of Christ Jesus to the people of Ephesus – using the facts and information he has used to argue the validity of the **"Christian Church"** before Caesar's Court of Rome. MacCorkle is using **exegetical** language that **"EXPOSES"** Paul's meanings in his choice of words.

The author introduces himself on a first name basis and he identifies himself as an apostle, one of a handful of named apostles.

Paul writes in Galatians 2:7-8

*"I had been entrusted with the **gospel** to the uncircumcised [Gentiles], just as Peter had been to the circumcised [Jews]."*

And later in Ephesians 6:20

*"The mystery of the **gospel** [i.e., **the Church**], for which I [Paul] am an ambassador in chains."*

God created and authorized (by His omnipotent and direct will) the various "roles" that Paul would fill. Both internal and external evidence for Paul's authorship is unwaveringly strong. One should be careful to stay away from "Higher Criticism" authors who try to downcast Paul's authorship for their own vain reasons.

According to 1 Corinthians 4:9, **apostleship** is God ordered, *"For I think that God set forth us, the apostles, last as it were, appointed to death: for we are made a spectacle unto the world, and to angels, and to men."*

The **authorization** of his apostleship does not come from the religious establishment, i.e., Israel, or even the newly established church. God personally made the appointment. God is moving in

action toward Gentile lives and directly willing to send them the Gospel message, to the Ephesians, and the wider Church, through His apostle, Paul.

You may notice that Paul in the above statements refers to God, and not as "God the Father." It is good at this point to consider that Jesus has returned to heaven, seated at His Father's right hand, and has been given all authority over heaven and earth. He is now returned to the heavenlies and resumes His full powers as the second person of the Trinity – God.

Paul's Apostleship (more):

Paul says his authority was from Christ Jesus. Whenever you see the **office** and **name** of Jesus, please note the word order. Here the order is **Christ Jesus**, the emphasis on His office as the Christ. Paul stated, by use of word order, that his calling was upon the authority of "**The Christ.**" At other times the order may be "**Jesus Christ,**" with the emphasis upon **His humanity.**

Paul was hand picked, in person, by Jesus Christ to be His messenger (Acts 9:1-19). He was not just some teacher or preacher that wrote to churches. He was an Apostle of Jesus Christ, a specific and very special calling and office.

Still, Paul did not fit the traditional definition of an apostle (Acts 1:21-22). He was not a follower of John the Baptist. He did not know Jesus while He was physically alive. He was not present at the resurrection, and he was not one of the chosen twelve, or even chosen by lot according to the will of God (Acts 1:26). Paul was converted to Christianity from Judaism by the immediate intervention of Jesus Christ Himself **after** His resurrection. All this after Paul had led a life persecuting Christians!

Now he referred to himself as a "called Apostle." He defended his apostleship...

"Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord? If to others I am

not an apostle, at least I am to you; for you are the seal of my apostleship in the Lord." (1 Corinthians 9:1-2).
 (For further study on Paul's Calling read Galatians Chapter 1)

Paul made reference to this divinely appointed office in every letter he wrote. He most often called himself, "An Apostle called by the will of God."

"The authenticity of his divine calling is testified to by both the Scriptures and by the very success of his endeavors for the Lord Jesus Christ in the establishment and maturity of the early church." (D.E. Heibert) ¹

Paul and the Will of God:

Paul responded to the will of God in a wonderful way. He gave his entire post conversion life to the service of this new "Body of Christ." He ministered, pastored, visited, and traveled. He mostly relied upon his own ability to finance himself so that he wouldn't be a burden to local churches. He acted with the authority of Jesus Christ, and the church was established and grew because of it. In the midst of this personal ministry Paul wrote letters and they have become the backbone of Christian doctrine. Most of his letters were, of course, lost. We shouldn't think for a minute that we have all the writings ever written by any inspired writer. We have only those that the Holy Spirit has preserved for incorporation into the Canon of Scripture. Heibert says, "We have what God has directly superintended, that which is sufficient for our faith and practice." (D.E. Heibert) ²

¹ Dr. D. Edmond Heibert, An Introduction to the Pauline Epistles, seventh printing, 1972, p.18.

² Ibid.

Ephesians 1:1 c “The Addressees and Their Address”

1:1c [NASB]

To the saints

who are at Ephesus and

who are faithful

in Christ Jesus.

1:1c [MAC]

those set apart people [the Saints]

in *Ephesus,*

who are believers *[the faithful]*

in Christ Jesus:

Believers are **centered in Christ**, not themselves. They are thus **set apart** to receive special divine oversight and spiritual provisions, including deeper instruction and discipline through which comes God’s enabling grace. **You are set apart** – living for God’s Goals. **You are** [Gr. *hagiois*] **Holy**, and **You are** [Gr. *pistos*] **Faithful**, as far as God is concerned, **in Christ** – allowing all of us to “Walk with the Lord.” Paul addresses the believers in Ephesus – as a **“set apart people.”**

Paul’s efforts in teaching and leading in Asia Minor (the larger area around Ephesus), by the year AD 96 (30 years after Paul’s death), resulted in at least **450 local churches** being established.

It is important for you to know and understand what Jesus said about **His** believers, speaking about the time after His death and resurrection, **“In that day you will know that I am in My Father, and you in Me, and I in you.”**

This book is to be read **“personally”** by each one of us!

Ephesians 1:2 a "Their Assets"

1:2 a [NASB]

*Grace to you and
peace [to you]...*

1:2 a [MAC]

*grace and peace
be to **all** of you...*

This is Paul's Introduction to the Church at Ephesus. During his later years of service Paul wrote to those whom he had met and established **in-the-faith** in the Roman province of Asia. It had been some time since he last visited the Ephesian Church, but letters were probably exchanged on a regular basis. It was Paul's method to keep in touch with the early church through these letters and occasional visits. It was his responsibility to see that the Gentile churches were not only started but **maintained** in the faith. As an Apostle it was **his job** to see that this new Christian faith, faith in Jesus Christ, became robust in the lives of those who believed.

Paul's blessing upon the Ephesians - Assets: Grace & Peace

It was one of Paul's conventions to introduce himself in his letters and then place a blessing upon the readers. Here, in the second verse, his blessing is his favorite one: "Grace and Peace." In the writings of Paul, the sequences of these two words always follow the same order: grace and peace. Paul adds to this pattern when he writes very personal letters to Timothy and Titus. In these three instances (1 & 2 Timothy and Titus) he inserts the word "Mercy" between Grace and Peace. This is a lovely touch to letters written to two younger pastor friends. It takes more than grace and peace to be a pastor; it indeed takes the mercy of God as well.

Many have used the acronym "**G**od's **R**iches **a**t **C**hrist's **E**xpense" to define **GRACE**. I have long admired the following words by Dr.

Lewis Sperry Chafer, former president at Dallas Theological Seminary.

*"**Grace** is what God may be free to do on behalf of them (the saved). When thus released from His holy demands against the sinner by the sacrificial death of Christ, and that sacrifice is accepted intelligently, **the love of God will never be satisfied until He has done all He can do for such a one.** The greatest thing God can do, reverently speaking, is to make someone **like His Son.** Such then, will be the destiny of everyone who believes" ³*

God's peace is equally difficult to define because of its complexity. First there is **Peace with God**. That is what you find when you believe and put your faith in Jesus Christ. Then, and only then, does the believer find peace with God. That peace is based upon your justification and that is found in the efficiency of the finished work of Christ. This "Peace with God," is not an experience, it is not a feeling, it is instead **totally positional**. Positional truth is truth that is proclaimed truth. Whether you feel it or experience it is never the issue. God has proclaimed this kind of peace based on the finished work of Jesus Christ, and that alone makes it true. If you are "in Christ," then it is the position God has proclaimed you to be in, that of being at peace with Him, based upon the finished work of Christ.

Then there is the **Peace of God**. This kind of truth is experienced. It is the work of the Holy Spirit who brings you the peace of God.

*"But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, **peace**, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control." (Galatians 5:22-23a)*

Jesus said,

*"**Peace** I leave with you, **My peace** I give to you" (John 14:27)*

³ Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, Systematic Theology, Vol. vii, eleventh printing, 1973, p. 178

In that group of verses, Jesus tells the disciples of His eventual ascension, and He relates the importance of the relationship of the Holy Spirit and the administration of **His peace**, that very special **peace** which surpasses understanding.

*"And the **peace of God**, which surpasses all comprehension, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus."*
(Philippians 4:7)

There is also a very **special peace** that is coming during the Millennial Kingdom. There God will directly superintend the affairs of humanity through His Son, Jesus Christ. There the peoples of the world will know a **living peace**, even though temporary. True life peace will only be available in the eternal state, in the presence of the Trinity.

It should be remembered that there cannot be any **true peace** in this world of ours that is deeply saturated with sin, a world apart from Jesus Christ and His salvation. The Christian will always be at odds with such a world, and **peace must then be an inner knowledge of position, and an inner experience with our Lord. There is no peace until you experience God's grace and peace.**

The Body of Christ, at Ephesus, needed to be reminded that they needed to now place their attentions upon **their relationship to the Body of Christ** (those who are called out), now in their maturity, as eagerly as they had placed their attentions upon their relationship **to Christ** in their immaturity. It was his [Paul's] responsibility to see that these assemblies (later to be called "churches") remained pure, educated, and evangelical. MacCorkle states, quite convincingly, that Paul was in a Roman prison arguing the case for the legality of this "Church" body to operate within the world government of that day. He writes that this letter is the documentation of that case brought before Caesar. ⁴ His

⁴ MacCorkle, Douglas B., *God's Special Secret*, 1993, MBM Books, Cocoa Beach, FL., p. 14)).

success is obvious... as the church has thrived in the following nearly two-thousand years.

The Saints in Ephesus:

There is much information in the Introduction of the book concerning the Ephesian church. If you weren't here last week, please read that introductory material. It is included that you may have a more complete vision of the place and times of the Ephesians.

It will be helpful in your studies to picture the Ephesian Church as a local church in a city. The city of Ephesus was similar to our modern medium sized cities like Boston, Santa Fe, Philadelphia, or Vero Beach. They were real people in a real city, experiencing real life. Paul wrote from his heart about his love for them and their love for the Lord Jesus Christ. His purpose was to enlighten the Body of Christ in Ephesus, and other Asian cities, so they might know Christ and grow in Christ.

"At least 450 local churches were established in that Asia Minor area by A.D. 96. Humanly speaking, much of this great result came from Paul's Ephesian professorship and preaching." ⁵

The Ephesian letter does not contain any directed efforts to correct some wayward philosophy or doctrine. It does not try to correct some gross immorality or cultic expression. It seeks instead to **educate** the Ephesians in the concept of "**being under authority.**"

⁵ Dr. D. Edmond Heibert, An Introduction to the Pauline Epistles, seventh printing, 1972, p. 26

The Faithful, who are at Ephesus:

High in the mind of Paul is "The Faithful." Textual scholars indicate that the words "at Ephesus," are not in all of the copies of the most ancient manuscripts. However, this has never been a matter of contention. The importance and canonicity of the letter has never been questioned because of this anomaly. This letter is clearly "to the Faithful," no matter whether that copy was addressed locally, to the Ephesian Church, or as a cyclical letter to the churches of the Roman province of Asia, where Ephesus was the "mother" church.

The key element to remember is "**The Faithful.**" This term was mostly used during New Testament times to denote those who had undergone the ritual of baptism, in the name of Jesus Christ. When we describe **God as faithful**, we speak of His character as being worthy of the love and confidence of men and women, and the assurance of His fulfilled promises. If we turn that description around to describe **the faithfulness of men and women**, then God would **find faithful** those who are **worthy** of His love and confidence based upon their simple saving **faith** in His beloved Son, Jesus Christ. Also involved would be the complicated elements of the perseverance of the saints and the performance of God's commandments.

God declares Himself to be faithful. With men and women, it is quite a different story. God proclaims the believer as "faithful," based on the finished work of His Son, Jesus. We see faithfulness as a matter of performance because we are temporal and not infinite, earthly not heavenly. We are creatures whose definition of faithfulness seems to be caught up in action, but we need to learn balance. We need to learn that God proclaims the believer "faithful" based upon their relationship to His Son, and that the performance of the Will of God in our daily lives is **our direct responsibility.** The word of God teaches both, so we must believe both. It is hard to understand how it can be both, but unless we find that very special balance we will veer off into **some cultic expression of faith. We would become either legalistic; a salvation and life based upon works, or**

liberalistic; a salvation and life based on our feelings, or anything but the revealed Son of God.

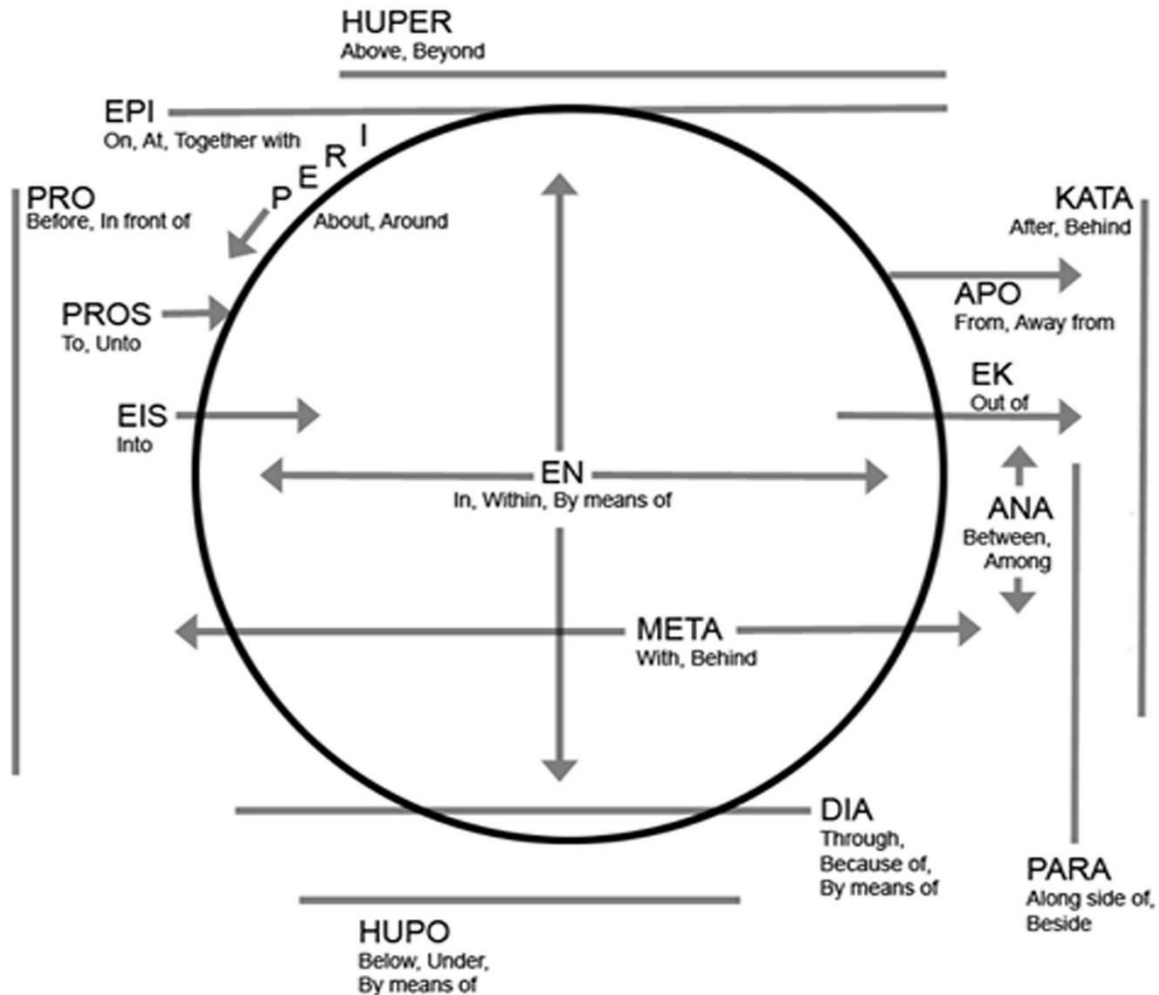
God proclaims us faithful **if** we are in His Son Jesus. In response to this proclamation, we **must walk in faith** responding to His love with faithful actions.

A QUICK STUDY ON PREPOSITIONS

One of Paul's major thrusts in the book concerns **being "in" something**. He refers to being **"in Christ," "in the saints," or "in all power and wisdom."** One technique that will help us to understand these concepts is to try to make language **three dimensional** in our minds. Take a moment and look at the diagram about prepositions on the following graphic. This diagram tries to visualize the relative placement of situations that prepositions describe.

PREPOSITIONAL DIAGRAM

The Actions of the Greek Preposition



Think about the Words on the Chart – [all caps GREEK]

[WORD – meanings – example]

HUPER – above, beyond – **hyper**active

EPI – on, at, together with – **epi**dermis

PRO – before, in front of – **pro**fessional

PROS – to, unto, submit – **pro**strate

EIS – into – **eis**egesis (putting a meaning into a word)

HUPU – below, under, by means of – **hypo**dermic

EN – in, within, by means of – **en**trapment

META – with, behind – **meta**physical

KATA – after, behind – **cata**pult

APO – from, away from – **apocalyptic**

EK – out of – **exegesis** – (pulling out the meaning of a word)

ANA – between, among – **analogy**

DIA – through, because of, by means of – **diagnosis**

PARA – along side of, beside - **Parallel**

When someone says, "Take him away from here," **visualize** the distance involved between "here" and "away from here." When someone says, "Stand beside me," **visualize** "beside me," etc. With these two examples under your belt, now try to **visualize** **"I was in the car."** Can you picture yourself **"in"** a car?

Now think about all the **ramifications** of being **"in"** a car - The space within - the features inside - the accessories (heaters, radio, lights - the controls (steering, shifting, pedals, signals), etc.

Now, take it a step further and think about the **laws of physics** that are effective on a car, that is, acceleration, deceleration, friction, and gravity. Then, consider the **laws of the state** that are in effect, that is, speed laws, courtesy laws, safety laws, etc. And, of course, the other divers and vehicles around you. Now being in a car is becoming **a complicated affair**, much more than just our original thought of sitting in a car.

So is the biblical concept of being **"in"** something. Paul introduced the Ephesians to the concept of being **"in Christ."** This concept may seem simple, but in reality, is quite elaborate and complex. **Being "in Christ," entails all the rights, laws, benefits, responsibilities, and inheritances of Jesus Christ. When we are "in Him," we share in every aspect of Him.**

It also should be noted that Paul took this idea of being "in Christ" to an even greater level of understanding. It was so very important to Paul that the Jewish Ephesians understand that their position was to be **in Christ**, and not to return to a position that was **"in"** the nation of Israel. And that the Gentile Ephesians understand that their position was to be in Christ, and not to take

on the position of being "in" the nation of Israel or a position that was "in" the Gentile world around them.

Back to the Prepositional Chart

Later, when you have the opportunity to take some time and try and visualize the prepositions on the above chart and consider possible meanings and ramifications of these words in a relationship to Jesus Christ (i.e., "in Him," "through Him," "to Him," "before Him," etc.). This could be one of the most important concepts to know in understanding the book of Ephesians. The preposition "**in**" is used more than **120 times** in Ephesians alone. "In" is the most used word in this book, and thus, it becomes one of the most important words to study.

Ephesians 1:2b

"The Givers, and Their Accreditation"

1:2 b [NASB]

from

*God our Father and
the Lord Jesus Christ*

1:2 b [MAC]

from

*God our Father and
the Lord Jesus Christ*

The new birth is brought about through the Holy Spirit, and it results in a new relationship **between God the Father and the believer**. In that new special relationship God becomes "**Father**" to the believer and the believer becomes "**Son**" to Him.

Here's an example I've used for years because of it's strong meaning to me. In 1965 my closest and dearest friend was killed in an automobile accident, we were both 19. At the wake, after saying my tearful goodbyes to him, his father took me into his

arms and said, "Jim, you loved my son, you are now my son for loving him so." And so it is with God the Father, you become His son, because you are loving His Son who died.

Each individual who is born of God becomes **a son of God** in the most vital and immutable meaning of sonship and has been received into the household and family of God. This position brings the believer into the position of **"heir of God,"** and **"joint heir" of Jesus Christ.**

Please do not become confused by the modern trend of emasculated language. The picture of an **adult "Son," fully grown, and is according to the Old Testament picture of the Law. He is able, legally, to inherit all that is rightfully his based upon the proclamation of his father.** The story of the prodigal son is rich in the meanings of sonship. It makes **no difference** if the believer is male, female or child, the image of the adult son applies to all who have believed in the Name of Jesus Christ. God the Father becomes God **Our Father** through the finished work of His Son, Jesus Christ.

The gifts of grace and peace are bestowed equally from **the Son** as well as from **the Father.** They are administered through the power of **the Holy Spirit.** The ministry of the Son of God has bridged the gap between God and man. **He alone is our mediator.** It was God the Son who willingly endured the cross for the sake of every believer. It was God the Son, who preexisted from eternity past, who became a man in order to endure the cross - on our behalf. The gifts, assets, of **Grace and Peace** are here offered by the Father and the Son at the direction of the Holy Spirit to the Ephesians **because** of their **faithfulness.**

We're going to step into verse 3 for one point in our study. We'll return to Chapter 1:3-6 in the next lesson.

Ephesians 1:3 a **"Do Not Hinder Blessing God The Father"**

Ephesians 1:3a, (NASB)

*"Blessed
 by the Father's Gift
 of Every Spiritual Blessing
 to Every Believer."*

Ephesians 1:3a, (MAC)

3 [You]
***Let** the God and Father
 of **our** Lord Jesus Christ
 be highly acclaimed [blessed] –*

The Blessings (to God, from the Believer)

Blessing is a primary biblical emphasis, as reflected in the 516 uses of this and related words. In the New Testament, the word "bless" (highly acclaimed) often means "blessed, fortunate, or happy." The special characteristic of New Testament uses of "bless" and related words have a close relationship to the religious joy people experience from being certain of salvation and thus of membership in the kingdom of God.

Paul states that blessings are due to the Father as a result of His work of **blessing us in Christ Jesus on our behalf**. This is no small matter. The Father is ultimately responsible for every good gift that has been given to us through His son. We should be continually praising **the Father**, not only for the whole of creation, but for that special work that has been done on our behalf through the Son.

The God and Father of Our Lord Jesus Christ

Here, the Holy Spirit (through Paul) makes a clear statement that the God of Israel is the God and Father of Jesus Christ. How very

important it is that the Ephesians, and us. Understand that Jesus Christ does not represent any other god than the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and thus the God of all Israel.

Paul inserts this phrase into this verse to make sure that they, and we, understand that the blessings which flow from us to "The One, The I am, Elohim," the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ – come forth from God the Father's blessing of us in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Who Has Blessed Us

The plural pronoun "us" written to the many to be read by the individual, remembering that it was written to the group, of which I am, we are, a member. Dr. Douglas B. MacCorkle states that part of the blessing that God gives to man is through the Holy Spirit's gifts. He says,

*"The emphasis appears to be on **gifting the church** and **not** on the **individuals** gifted ... these grace gifts are two-fold: (1) Gifted men as gifts to the church, and (2) Gifts to men with which to properly function in their posts within the corporate structure." ⁶*

He goes on to indicate that these gifts that are a blessing to the church both lay the foundation of the church and the building up of the superstructure, in order that the Body of Christ might grow up in service, grow up in stature, and grow up in spirituality.

⁶ MacCorkle, Douglas B., *God's Special Secret*, 1993, MBM Books, Cocoa Beach, FL., p. 156-160

Ephesians 1:3 b God The Father's Spiritual Gifts

1:3b, (NASB)

"Blessed

*by the Father's Gift **of***

Every** Spiritual Blessing **to

***Every** Believer."*

1:3b, (MAC)

*Whose favor [The Father's] endowed [blessed] **us***

***by** the Spirit*

*with **every** spiritual asset*

***in** the Heavens*

in Christ.

Paul wrote the following important words to the young pastor Timothy:

"For bodily discipline is only of little profit, but Godliness is profitable for all things, since it holds promise for the present life and also for the life to come." (1 Timothy 4:8)

He was not, of course, demeaning the training of the body. He was instead extending the meaning of the previous verse and putting the emphasis on Spiritual discipline rather than on physical. The benefits of physical training help us to become physically strong, help fight off disease, and hopefully give us a better chance at long life. The benefits of Spiritual training are permanent (eternal), extensive, and bring Godliness to us.

But this verse is not about Spiritual blessings that are the result of disciplining ourselves either spiritually or physically. It talks about Spiritual blessings that are **given to us**, free of charge, as a result of **our being in Christ**.

These blessings are superior in every way to any other kind of blessing. They are eternal in nature. They not only include the

Future, but the present and past as well. The blessings in Christ Jesus go to the very depth and fiber of our being for all time and eternity. They are God decreed. You will not feel them or experience them, you will not be able to modify them by your good or bad behavior, you will not be able to change their effects upon your destination through human merit of any kind (or lack of merit), and they come about only through the loving will of God the Father because of His love for you, in Christ. Every one of these spiritual blessings is Centered in Jesus Christ. These blessings make you complete, in Christ.

"and in Him you have been made complete, and He is the head over all rule and authority;" (Colossians 2:10)

The Blessings (from God, to the Believer)

We have been blessed with "**every spiritual blessing.**" That would be quite a list of things. We are not lacking in any one spiritual blessing.

Dr. Lewis Sperry Chafer, former president of Dallas Theological Seminary, compiled a list of thirty-three blessings that are unique to our position In Christ. Use your phone camera to scan and the follow the link to see this document. If you want... you can download this document at the top of the online article.



Or from your PC:

https://ancientpath.net/bible/resources/res_blessings.htm

Quick List of the Blessings In-Christ of Chapter 1

Dr. Douglas B. MacCorkle, offers us his list of 11 direct blessings listed in the following Ephesians Chapter 1 verses 4-13.

- 1 - Chosen - v4
- 2 - Surety - (He chose us for Himself) - v4
- 3 - Predestined destiny - v5a
- 4 - Fully adopted - v5b
- 5 - Totally accepted - v6
- 6 - Completely redeemed - v7a
- 7 - Absolutely forgiven - v7b
- 8 - Informed (wisdom & Knowledge) - v8-9
- 9 - Christ as the Number One Head - v10
- 10 - Made Heirs - v11
- 11 - Position Sealed (by the Holy Spirit)- v13

We will cover each of these blessings in the weeks to come. One of the very special items of praise to the Father should concern the fact that, if you are now or ever will be a believer in Christ Jesus, you have been chosen by The Father. Chosen in a very special way that is not fully revealed to us. It is however revealed that the believer has been chosen before the foundations of the world to be a very special part of His kingdom and plan.

Another special item of praise would be that the Father has predestined you as well. Over the years there has been a tremendous amount of "flap" over this doctrine. We will pursue deeper meaning in the study of the next verse, but for now be content with knowing that God the Father has predestined you to a very special position in His kingdom, that of being conformed to the image of His son Jesus.

Redemption, forgiveness, knowledge of His will, your inheritance In Christ, and the sealing of the Holy Spirit upon your life are also great spiritual blessings that you should be praising Him for everyday.

Why are these items of blessing referenced here, and expanded in the following verses? Paul evidently was deeply concerned that this new body of believers at Ephesus should keep their confidence about their **calling of God**. Nothing fights off doubt and depression in the face of challenges than a dose of the truth concerning God's great love for us. The early church was not without the danger of being led astray or being lulled into apostasy. Paul's ministry was to the young Gentile churches. He writes to encourage and strengthen them to keep them from discouragement and weakness, especially in matters of doctrine. We are no different than the Ephesians in this respect. We need the assurances and reassurances of the Word of God to keep our spiritual lives in working order. Thus, Paul's words to the Ephesians become very important words to us.

We should not be confused about our blessings. Dr. John DeBrine says, ***"Spiritual happiness is not dependent upon circumstance."***⁷

How very true that is. Our spiritual happiness is dependent upon what Christ has done for us at the cross. It is dependent upon the efficiency of that work. That means that since Jesus Christ is God then what He has accomplished for us is all that needs to be done. It is efficient. If all that needs to be done has been done, then why should I lose confidence or lose my spiritual well being. When I worry or become depressed then I should consider the words of Paul:

"For I am persuaded that neither death nor life, nor angels nor principalities, nor powers nor things present, nor things to come, nor height nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord." (Romans 8:38)

"and being fully assured that what He had promised, He was able also to perform." (Romans 4:21)

⁷ Dr. John DeBrine, The Songtime Radio Ministry, Boston, MA

Yet another set of verses from Romans 8 that deals with these spiritual blessings.

And in the same way the Spirit also helps our weakness; for we do not know how to pray as we should, but the Spirit Himself intercedes for us with groaning too deep for words; and He who searches the hearts knows what the mind of the Spirit is, because He intercedes for the saints according to the will of God. And we know that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to His purpose. For whom He foreknew, He also predestined to become conformed to the image of His Son, that He might be the first-born among many brethren; and whom He predestined, these He also called; and whom He called, these He also justified; and whom He justified, these He also glorified. What then shall we say to these things? If God is for us, who is against us? He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things? (Romans 8:26-32)

In The Heavenlies

There are two specific areas involved in understanding God's Kingdom(s).

First is the Kingdom of God. This kingdom grouping would include all who are willingly subject to God, in Heaven or on Earth.

Second is the Kingdom of Heaven. This kingdom grouping would include the empires that God may have ordained on earth at any particular time. The Kingdom of Heaven can again be broken into three groupings.

1. There was the Theocratic Kingdom. That was the time when earthly rule was exercised by divinely appointed leaders, judges, and patriarchs.

2. There is the predicted Kingdom of Israel on the Earth. That kingdom is predicted in the Old Testament, announced by John the Baptist, Jesus Christ, and the Apostles. That kingdom was rejected by the leaders and elders of Israel (Matthew 16:21; 27:22-25) and was put on hold being replaced for a time with The Mystery of the Church.

3. The final realization of this Kingdom, when Christ will sit on the king's throne and rule, will not happen until the millennium. So, in this verse we would be missing the point of the text if we tried to see these blessings as having taken place in one of these kingdoms. Instead, these blessings take place in the Heavenly (places).

Heaven can also be broken down into three revealed heavens. The first and second heavens are not spoken of in the Scriptures, but the third is and thus makes place for the first and second.

1. It is thought that the First Heaven must be a reference to those places in the atmosphere of Earth. There are references in the Scriptures of the "fowls of heaven (Hosea 2:18)" and the "clouds of heaven (Daniel 7:13)."

2. The Second Heaven is thought to be the stellar heavens, the abode of the planets and the stars (Genesis 1:14-18).

3. The Third Heaven then is the abode of God. One purpose of the Church Age (the Mystery) is to populate the third heaven with individuals who choose to love God with their own will, through the Grace that is bestowed through belief in Jesus Christ.

Our text "the Heavenly" does not refer to the first, second, or third heaven physically, but instead, reflects the communion of the God head (Father, Son, and Holy Spirit) that exists in the third heaven, and refers to the association of believers and Jesus Christ. It exists anywhere there is communion between believers

and Christ. We could not really refer to it as a place, but as a sphere of relationship. It extends from the third Heaven to the spirit of the believers. Being "Blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ," becomes a definition of a very special communion that does not exist in any other relationship. These blessings take place as part of a dynamic fellowship between the believer and Jesus Christ. That communion brings with it these very special eternal blessings. This relationship is often spoken of as "The rich association of God, His institutions, and His people." There in the Heavenly Places we find "the Kingdom of God," where all are willing subjects of the Eternal God.

**HOMEWORK:
QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS – 1:1-3**

LOOK AT THE QUESTION AND IGNORE THE ANSWER. THEN STUDY THE ANSWER!

(1:1)

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

1. Who was Paul?

Paul was a Jew from Tarsus, a persecutor of Christians, converted to Christianity by the immediate intervention of the Lord and Called as an Apostle of the Gospel of Jesus Christ by the Lord Jesus Himself (Acts 9:6 ff). (The Life of "the Called Apostle" Paul)

2. What is an Apostle?

The Qualifications of an Apostle: An apostle had to have the spiritual gift of apostleship. The gift was provided by Jesus Christ after His ascension into Heaven, Eph. 4:8-11. The gift was imparted by the Holy Spirit on the Day of Pentecost, 1 Cor. 12:11; Acts 2.

The apostle received his gift and office by the sovereign decision of God the Father, 1 Cor. 1:1; 12:18; Eph. 1:1; Col. 1:1. The apostle had to have been an eyewitness of the resurrected Lord, Acts 1:22; 1 Cor. 9:1. The Credentials of an Apostle. An apostle was endowed with miraculous powers of miracles, Heb. 2:4; 2 Cor. 12:12. An apostle had success in evangelism, 1 Cor. 9:2; 2 Cor. 3:1-3; Gal. 2:7-9. An apostle had the capacity to suffer patiently, 2 Cor. 12:12.

3. What is an Apostleship?

The apostle had authority over all local churches because he was the channel of New Testament revelation. Since the time of the

apostles, no one has been given authority over more than one local church. The apostle Paul was the most Grace-oriented apostle. He realized that he was the least deserving to be an apostle, 1 Cor. 15:9. He was the most productive because of Grace, 1 Cor. 15:10.

4. Whose Apostle is Paul?

"An Apostle of Christ Jesus" (Eph 1:1a)

5. How did Paul become an Apostle?

"Through the will of God," and the confirmation of men - When Paul went up to Jerusalem "by revelation" and communicated to the leaders there "that gospel which I preach among the Gentiles," they recognized his unique apostleship and publicly acknowledged him as the new apostle to the Gentiles (they had originally been sent to "all nations" [Matthew 28:19]), agreeing henceforth to confine their own ministry to Israel.

6. Who was Paul an Apostle to?

Paul's Apostleship ministry was to the Gentiles.

7. Who is Jesus Christ

The Christ, Son of the Living God, Savior. The word order here puts the emphasis on Jesus, God incarnate.

8. Who is Christ Jesus?

The Christ, Son of the Living God, Savior. The word order here puts the emphasis on Christ.

9. To what does "Christ" refer?

The Office of the Christ, the Pre-incarnate Son of God now in the flesh.

10. What is the significance of the order of the words "Jesus Christ," or "Christ Jesus?"

Word order is often significant in the study of the Bible. Word order brings definition to the words being written or spoken. Typically, those things spoken of first have a primary emphasis.

11. What is "The Will of God?"

God's will is often spoken of in terms of "His immediate will," and "His permissive will." That which happens in the universe is part of His "plan" and some of that plan He accomplishes "immediately," according to his immediate purpose, and some is accomplished by His permission, those things which are not according to His Divine character, but which need to be accomplished in order to complete His whole plan.

12. What is meant by "through the Will of God?"

What Paul is saying is that the regular path of Apostleship has not been followed in his case, and that God has directly intervened and "Called" Paul to the office of Apostle.

13. Who are the "Saints?"

Those who belong to the adopted household of God - Believers in the Lord Jesus Christ, those who are a member of the universal Body of Christ.

14. Where is Ephesus?

Western shore of Asia Minor, in a plain at the mouth of the river Cayster, on whose southern bank was the city. 300 miles due east of Corinth, 425 miles west of Tarsus, Paul's hometown. The original Ephesus is now near the city of Izmir, in modern Turkey.

15. What about Ephesus?

There were at least thirteen major churches in Anatolia, the region of the Roman Empire which contains the city of Ephesus. They were Ephesus, Smyrna, Pergamum, Thyatira, Sardis, Philadelphia, Laodicea, Hierapolis, Colossae, Antioch of Pisidia, Iconium, Lystra, and Derbe. They were all on a loop of ancient trade routes. The first seven of these are the Seven Churches of the book of Revelation. Letters from Paul were carried by couriers and circulated around this loop of churches.

16. Who are "The Faithful?"

Members of "The Faith." Those who had turned their lives over to Jesus Christ in belief.

17. Where are these "Faithful?"

According to the greeting of this letter, the "Faithful" were at Ephesus (not intimating that the "Faithful" were not anywhere else except Ephesus).

18. What was their outstanding characteristic, as far as Paul was concerned?

The stated outstanding characteristic of the members of the Body of Christ at Ephesus was their willingness to be "Faithful" in the things of God and to each other.

19. What does it mean to be "faithful?"

faithful - adjective 1. strict or thorough in the performance of duty: a faithful worker. 2. true to one's words, promises, vows, etc. 3. steady in allegiance or affection; loyal; constant: faithful friends. 4. reliable, trusted, or believed. 5. adhering to or true to fact, a standard, or an original; accurate: a faithful account; a faithful copy. 6. Obsolete. full of faith; believing. - noun 7. the faithful, a. the believers, esp. members of a Christian church or adherents of Islam. b. the body of loyal members of any party or group (Origin: 1250-1300; ME Based on the Random House Unabridged Dictionary, © Random House, Inc. 2006).

20. What does it mean to be "faithful in Christ Jesus?"

The above secular definition must now be applied in terms of following the prescripts of the Lord Jesus Christ in their lives and actions in a "Faithful" manner.

21. What does it mean to be "in" something?

The scriptures speak of being In-Christ, In-God, In-the Holy Spirit. The term is very similar to the biblical concept of Baptism, the placing oneself into the position of being responsible to the one you placed into. Often referred to as the "Sphere of Authority"

22. "In Christ Jesus" refers to being "in the Sphere of Authority," what does that mean?

Willingly replacing your will and authority with that of Christ Jesus. And willingly making yourself accountable to His will and commandments.

23. What are some of the ramifications of being "in Christ?"

Please see the following study on this topic - "In Him - A Reference Study on our Inheritance"

(1:2)

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

1. Explain why some refer to Godly Grace as: God's Riches At Christ's Expense.

This simple acrostic refers to the death of Jesus Christ on the Cross of Calvary and the resulting grace that was shed to humanity as He "forgave the world" for its sins. Our grace cost Him the expense of His life.

2. What kind of peace would be defined as Godly Peace

Two kinds of peace come to mind. First there is the Peace **With** God that came about by the satisfaction of the demands of sin for a penalty that was settled at the Cross of Christ. Secondly, there is the Peace Of God that comes as a benefit of the continuing family relationship one acquires with God the Father through a believing relationship with His Son Jesus.

3. What is the significance of the two used together?

Paul uses these two terms in every letter he writes to believers. It was his loving desire that all who know the Lord Jesus would be constantly reminded of God's Grace and Peace in their lives. The two words are always in the same order; Grace and Peace, and only in the really personal letters to Timothy is there any

deviation to the pattern, and then it is only to add the word Mercy.

4. Where else are these terms used?

Grace and peace are only found as a pair in the writings of Paul, however both words are in common use throughout the bible. The first instance of Grace is Ezra 9:8 and Peace would be from the very beginning in Genesis 15:15.

5. Who is the "you" in this verse?

The Believers at the church in Ephesus (and those churches in the loop of western Asia Minor)

6. Does this apply to others, even yourself, if so, who?

The application of these words belongs to the intended recipients of the message of the letter, however, by secondary application we can apply the message to all Christians who came after the letter writing, including ourselves. For what was true for the church then is true for it now.

7. Who are the recipients of this grace and peace?

The Believers at the church in Ephesus (and those churches in the loop of western Asia Minor)

8. Who are the givers of this grace and peace?

The gift of peace is given from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

9. What is their relationship to Paul and to Paul's readers?

The letter is written from the vantage point of believers, therefore the relationship would be that of family members of the family of God, as opposed to the secular world who have no such relationship to God or Jesus Christ.

10. Can you share in this relationship?

The answer is, of course, yes! God has done everything necessary to repair the relationship with Him that was lost through our sin.

What is needed is for each one of us to respond to that by repairing our relationship with Him. That is done by accepting the fact that Jesus has paid the price for the repairing of the relationships with His death on the Cross of Calvary. When we do this, we come to the place of Believing in Him. When we do that, you become a believer. Immediately you become a member of the Family of God.

11. Why does God reveal Himself here, and other places, as "Father?"

God has revealed Himself as having a "Family" relationship to those who willingly give themselves over to Him. It is His nature. He reveals Himself as Father because He is the "Father" figure in the relationship, and we are His children.

12. Where else does this grace and peace come from?

Grace and Peace come from many sources, however the Grace of God, and the Peace of (and with) God comes only through having a personal relationship with Him.

13. What is a "Lord?"

The English word "Lord" has its roots in Old English with the meaning of "bread keeper." That would be the title of the one who provides for others and has in it a connotation of authority over those who come for that bread. The word in the Old Testament that was most translated as "Lord" was the expression "Adoni."

14. Why does the Holy Spirit, through Paul, use the metaphor of a lord to describe Jesus Christ?

He is the one who cares for, the one who gives life, the one who supplies every need. In that role He is also the one who is responsible for us. When you have a relationship with the Son of God He becomes your Lord.

15. What is the significance of the word order here in "Jesus Christ?"

As noted above, word order does color the meaning of the sentence. In this case "Jesus" comes before "Christ" and puts the emphasis of the expression on the humanity of the Christ.

16. Why aren't these blessings from Paul, he's writing the letter?

Paul is very well aware that real blessings do not come from another human source, but only from the hand of God.

(1:3)

"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,"

1. What does it mean to bless or be blessed?

Def.: To honor as Holy.

2. What are "Blessings?"

In this verse it is Paul who praises God for the wonderful "blessings" that He has bestowed upon us. These blessings, or good gifts, reflect the holy character of God and His love toward those who believe.

3. How does one "bless" God?

Blessing God would be the act of proclaiming His holiness through word or deed. Telling Him and telling the world about His character brings Him great glory.

4. What is the significance of the fact that we can bestow blessings upon God?

It is a wonderful thing that we can bless or give blessings to God. His relationship to the believer is a family relationship. God loves to be loved by His children - It bring Him great joy.

5. Why "Praise to the Father?"

He is the One who deserves our praise even if He did nothing to or for us. However, He has chosen to place upon His children ever spiritual blessing and for that Paul praises Him - and so he should.

6. Why is "God, the Father," defined as "The Father and God of our Lord Jesus Christ?"

This is God the Father's official title or name. He is the Father in relationship to the Son; He, through His Holy Spirit, is the Father of His Son Jesus; and He is God - God of all, including His Son.

7. Who has blessed us?

Specifically God the Father.

8. Who are the "us?"

Specifically the believers in Ephesus (or in a larger sense the believers of the Asian church circuit). Generally, we can apply these words to all believers by way of secondary application.

9. How has He blessed us?

According to this verse, believers are blessed by ALL spiritual blessings.

10. How many Spiritual blessings were bestowed upon us?

ALL (Chafer's list includes 33 known spiritual blessings)

11. What are "Spiritual Blessings?"

Blessings that come to us apart from our earthly existence. They are truths granted and proclaimed in the Heavenly sphere and are true whether we acknowledge them or not.

12. Why "in Christ" and not "in Jesus?"

The emphasis on Christ is an eternal emphasis. Pre-incarnate - Deity - God brought blessings rather than the emphasis of Christ's human activities.

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The Writings of Douglas B. MacCorkle

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Jeremiah 18:15

"Don't stumble from the Ancient Path."

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