

Saint Pauls Cathedral, Melbourne
Bible Study, Sunday 1st November 2020
THE EPISTLE OF EPHESIANS

A Quick Recap (Ephesians 1)

Ephesians 1 is a beautiful introduction to how we have received every spiritual blessing in Christ Jesus. We have been adopted to sonship, we have been chosen, forgiven and redeemed. We have been marked with a seal and given the Holy Spirit as a down payment of our inheritance. Then Paul prays that we will have the revelation of Christ so we can know the hope and power we have been called to as His body, the Church of whom He is the head.

[see the end for a longer summary]

Ephesians 2:1-10

NKJV

By Grace Through Faith

² And you *He made alive*, who were dead in trespasses and sins, 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.

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, ⁷ that in the ages to come He might show the exceeding riches of His grace in *His* kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. 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. ¹⁰ For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

YLT (Young's Literal Translation)

Also you -- being dead in the trespasses and the sins,² in which once you did walk according to the age of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience,³ among whom also we all did walk once in the desires of our flesh, doing the wishes of the flesh and of the thoughts, and were by nature children of wrath -- as also the others,

⁴ and God, being rich in kindness, because of His great love with which He loved us, ⁵ even being dead in the trespasses, did make us to live together with the Christ, (by grace ye are having been saved,)⁶ and did raise [us] up together, and did seat [us] together in the heavenly [places] in Christ Jesus,⁷ that He might show, in the ages that are coming, the exceeding riches of His grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus,⁸ for by grace ye are having been saved, through faith, and this not of you -- of God the gift,⁹ not of works, that no one may boast; ¹⁰ for of Him we are workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to good works, which God did before prepare, that in them we may walk.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. Their Past Condition (1-3)

How does Paul describe the Ephesians? What do they mean?

How does Paul describe the spiritual world and beings? What do they mean?

How do you view the spiritual world to us today?

Can you see any of these behaviour in your previous life? How about now?

2. God's Amazing Transformative Grace (4-10)

What was God's motivation for saving us?

What did God do for us?

How are we seated in the heavenly places with Christ?

Explain verses 8-9.

How should we now walk (v.10) [compare with we used to walk in verses 1-4]

SUMMARY OF EPHESIANS CHAPTER ONE

Following a brief salutation (1-2), Paul begins this epistle with an expression of praise to God for the spiritual blessings that are in Christ (3). In this doxology is a list of blessings divided into three sections.

The first section describes those blessings related to the Father, how He has chosen us in Christ, predestined us to adoption as sons to Himself, and made us accepted in the Beloved (4-6).

The second section focuses on those blessings in relation to the Son, e.g., redemption through His blood, forgiveness of sins, the revelation of His will concerning Jesus Christ, and the inheritance we have obtained, as predestined according to God's will (7-12).

The third section describes blessings related to the Holy Spirit, how we are sealed with the Spirit of promise, and how He serves as a "guarantee" (or deposit) of our inheritance (13-14). The key phrase throughout this section is "in Him" (or "in Whom") which stresses the point that all spiritual blessing come through Jesus Christ and enjoyed by those who are "in" Him (cf. 1:1,3).

The last half of the chapter contains Paul's first of two prayers that are in this epistle. The prayer in this chapter is for their "enlightenment", that their knowledge and understanding might increase.

Paul especially desires that they might know God more fully, what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, and what is the great power of God toward those who believe (15-19). Regarding this "power", it is the same power God used to raise Jesus from the dead and seat Him at His right hand. The exalted position now enjoyed by Christ includes authority over all things, especially the church which is described as "His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all." (20-23)