

The Epistle of Saint Paul the Apostle to the Ephesians

[Ephesus, a city in modern Turkey, was then the capital of the Roman province of Asia.

This is one of the prison epistles, written by Paul some time between 60-62 AD while he was imprisoned at Rome]

Chapter 1

The everlasting ordinance and election of God in saving all races through Christ Jesus his Son. We are to be saints and without blame. The dominion of Christ.

PAUL, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God. To the saints who are at Ephesus, and to those who believe on Jesus Christ.

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

³Blessed be God the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with all manner of spiritual blessings in heavenly things by Christ, ⁴accordingly as he had chosen us in him before the foundation of the world was laid, to be holy and without blame before him through love. ⁵And he predestined us through Jesus Christ to be his heirs, in accordance with his pleasure and will, ⁶to the praise of the glory of the grace with which he has made us accepted in the Beloved, ⁷by whom we have redemption through his blood; that is, the forgiveness of sins, consonant with the riches of his grace, ⁸which grace he shed on us abundantly in all wisdom and understanding.

1Pe 1:2
2Co 1:3

Redemption is the forgiveness of sins.

***Mystery** is secret counsel.

⁹And as it pleased him, he has made known to us the mystery* of his will, ¹⁰and purposed in himself to have it declared when the time was full come – namely that all things, both the things that are in heaven and also the things that are in earth, will be gathered together in Christ; ¹¹that is to say, in him in whom we are made heirs. To this we were predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things after the counsel of his own will, ¹²so that we who before believed* in Christ will be to the praise of his glory. ¹³In him also you (after you heard the word of truth, I mean the gospel of your salvation, in which you believed) were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, ¹⁴which is the earnest of our inheritance to redeem the purchased possession, and that to the laud of his glory.

[**Before believed**: before the consummation of all things described in v10]

[**Earnest**: part payment given in advance, esp to confirm a promise]

*Where there is faith in Christ, there is love for all who are sanctified in his blood.

¹⁵Therefore I (after I heard of the faith that you have in the Lord Jesus and love to all the saints),* ¹⁶cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers. ¹⁷I ask the God of our Lord Jesus Christ and the Father of glory to give to you the spirit of wisdom, and to open to you the knowledge of himself, ¹⁸and to enlighten the eyes of your minds, so that you may know what that hope is to which he has called you, and what the riches of his glorious inheritance is upon the saints, ¹⁹and what is the exceeding greatness of his power in us who believe pursuant to the working of that his mighty power, ²⁰which he wrought in Christ when he raised him from the dead and set him on his right hand in heavenly things, ²¹above all rule, power, and might, and dominion, and above all names that are named, not in this world only, but also in the world to come. ²²And he has put all things under his feet, and has made him above all

Faith is the work of God alone, fully as the raising up of Christ was. Col 2:12.

Col 2:12

things, the head of the congregation, ²³which is his body, and the fullness of him who fills all in all things. Col 1:17,18; 2:9.

Chapter 2

Paul shows them what manner of people they were before their conversion, and what they are now in Christ. We are ordained for good works.

And you he has quickened to life also, who were dead in trespass and sin, ²in which you walked in time past according to the course of this world, and followed the prince that rules in the air – the spirit that now works in the children of unbelief, ³among whom we also had our living in time past, in the lusts of our flesh, and fulfilled the will of the flesh and of the mind, and were naturally the children of wrath fully as well as others. Col 1:21; 2:13.

We are all by nature the children of wrath and heirs of damnation.

⁴But God, who is rich in mercy, through his great love that he loved us with ⁵even when we were dead by sin, has quickened us to life together in Christ (for by grace you are saved), ⁶and has raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly things through Christ Jesus, ⁷in order to show in times to come the exceeding riches of his grace, in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus. ⁸For by grace you are saved, through faith – and that not of yourselves. For it is the gift of God, ⁹and does not come by works, lest any man should boast. ¹⁰For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, to which God ordained us before, that we should walk in them.^a Eph 4:18

¹¹And so remember that you (being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, and called uncircumcision by those who are called the circumcision in the flesh, which circumcision is made by hands) – ¹²remember, I say, that you were at that time without Christ, and were reputed aliens from the community of Israel, and were strangers to the testaments of promise, and had no hope,^b and were without God in this world. ¹³But now, in Christ Jesus, you who a while ago were afar off, are made near by the blood of Christ. Col 1:13,14, Rev 20:4

Reconciliation between Jew and non-Jew.

¹⁴For he is our peace, who has made of both one, and has broken down the wall that was a partition between us,^c ¹⁵and has also put away through his flesh the cause of hatred (that is to say, the law of observances contained in the written law^d), to make of the two one new man in himself, so making peace, ¹⁶and to reconcile both to God in one body through his cross. And he slew hatred thereby, ¹⁷and came and preached peace to you who were afar off and to those that were near. ¹⁸For through him we both have an open way in, in one Spirit, to the Father. Isa 19:25

Reconciliation between man and God.

¹⁹Now therefore you are no longer strangers and foreigners, but citizens with the saints, and of the household of God. ²⁰And you are built upon the foundation^e of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ being the head cornerstone, ²¹in whom every structure coupled together grows into a holy temple^f in the Lord – ²²in whom you also are built together, and made a habitation for God in the Spirit.

The Notes

- Created for good works (2:10) a) The promises of mercy in Christ's blood are made to us on the condition that we keep the law and love one another as Christ loved us. [Ed: Tyndale means that we are bound to keep God's moral, or natural law. He divided Moses' law in 3 parts. One was the ceremonial laws or observances of the Old Testament, which were signs of spiritual things (Col 2:16,17), and have been fulfilled in and put away by the cross. Second was the civil and criminal law, which was binding upon the Jews only. Third was the moral, or what Tyndale called the natural law, which is summarized in the Ten Commandments and elaborated in Moses' writings, and which is and always has been binding upon all men (*Practice*). This is the orthodox view: see Article VII of the Articles of Religion in the Book of Common Prayer. Therefore when the scriptures speak of the law, one must consider from the context what is meant.]
- Had no hope (2:12) b) Until Christ came, the Gentiles were not under the covenant of mercy, but the Jews only.
- Wall of partition (2:14) c) Moses' law, which was the wall and cause of hate between the Jews and the Gentiles, is taken away. In its stead love has come, for us to love one another as Christ loved us.
- Cause of hatred (2:15) d) The cause of hatred between the heathen and the Jews: by the law [that is, the ceremonial observances of the Mosaic law] the Jews would be better than the heathen. But now that both have one Spirit through Christ without the law, the hatred has an end, and one is equally as the other in Christ.
- Foundation (2:20) e) You are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets: *Foundation* is the word of God.
- A holy temple (2:21) f) *Temple* in the epistles of the apostles signifies the congregation of faithful, holy, and virtuous believers. Sometimes it signifies the heart of every Christian, as in 1 Corinthians 3:16 and 6:19, and 2 Corinthians 6:16.

Chapter 3

He explains the cause of his imprisonment, and more of the revelation of the mystery of Christ. He desires them not to faint because of his trouble, and prays God to make them steadfast in his Spirit.

Paul was an apostle to the heathen and learned his gospel by revelation.

[Paul's understanding: see above, Eph 1:9-12]

For this then I, Paul, am in the bonds of Jesus Christ, for the sake of you who are heathen – ²if you have heard of the ministration of the grace of God that is given to me for you. ³For by revelation he showed this mystery to me, as I wrote above in a few words, ⁴from which, when you read, you may know my understanding in the mystery of Christ. * ⁵This mystery was not in times past opened to the sons of men as it is now revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit: ⁶that the Gentiles should be inheritors also, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise that is in Christ by the means of the gospel – ⁷of which gospel I am made a minister by the gift of the grace of God given to me through the working of his power. ⁸To me, the least of all saints, is this grace given, to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ, ⁹and to make all men see what the fellowship of the mystery is.

This mystery has from the beginning of the world been hid in God, who made all things through Jesus Christ, ¹⁰to the intent that now, through the congregation, the manifold wisdom of God may be made known to the rulers and powers in heaven, ¹¹according to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²by whom we are bold to draw near in

the confidence that we have by faith on him.

¹³Therefore I desire that you faint not because of my tribulations for your sakes, which are worthy to be glorified by you. ¹⁴For this I bow my knees to the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, ¹⁵who is Father over all that is called father in heaven and in earth. ¹⁶I pray that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power by his Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷and that Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith, so that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸may be able to comprehend with all the saints what is that breadth and length, depth and height, ¹⁹and to know what is the love of Christ, which love passes knowledge; that you might be filled with every kind of fullness that comes of God.

*Where true faith in Christ is, there is love to the neighbour. And faith and love make us understand all things. Faith understands the secrets of God, and the mercy that is given her in Christ. And love knows her duty to her neighbour, and can interpret all laws and ordinances, and knows how far forth they are to be kept, and when to be dispensed with.

²⁰Now to him who is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think by the power that works in us, ²¹be praise in the congregation by Jesus Christ throughout all generations, world without end.

Amen.

Chapter 4

He exhorts them to meekness and longsuffering, to love and peace. Everyone is to serve and edify the other with the gift that God has given him, to beware of strange doctrine, to lay aside the old life of greedy desires, and to walk in a new life.

I, therefore, who am in bonds for the Lord's sake, exhort you to walk worthy of the calling wherein you are called, ²in all humbleness of mind, and meekness and long-suffering, forbearing one another through love; ³and to be diligent to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace, ⁴being one body and one spirit, even as you are called in one hope of your calling. ⁵Let there be but one Lord, one faith, one baptism: ⁶one God and Father of all, who is above all, through all, and in you all.

Ro 12:10,16.

One God.
One Lord.
One faith.
One baptism.

⁷To every one of us grace is given according to the nature and scope of the gift of Christ. ⁸Therefore he says: He ascended up on high, and has led captivity captive, and has given gifts to men. ⁹That he ascended, what does it mean but that he also descended first, into the lowest parts of the earth? ¹⁰He who descended is the same also who ascended up, even above all heavens, to fulfil all things. ¹¹And the very same made some apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, some shepherds, and some teachers, ¹²so that the saints may have all things necessary to work and minister for the edifying of the body of Christ, ¹³until we every one (in the unity of faith and the knowledge of the Son of God) grow up to be perfect in the maturity of the fullness of Christ; ¹⁴so that we henceforth would no longer be children, wavering and carried with every wind of doctrine by the wiliness of men, and craftiness whereby they lay in wait for us, to deceive us.

Ps 68:18
Ro 12:1-8
1Co c12
2Co 12:13

*It is to this end and purpose that the true ministers of the congregation serve: to make us perfect in the full knowledge of Christ.

¹⁵But let us follow the truth in love, and in all things grow in him who is the head; that is to say, Christ. ¹⁶In him all the body is coupled and knit together in every joint, and one ministers to another (according to the divine working, as every part has its role), and advances the body for the

Col 2:19

edifying of itself in love.

¹⁷I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that henceforth you must not walk like other Gentiles walk, in vanity of their mind, ¹⁸blinded in their understanding, being alienated from the life that is in God, through the ignorance that is in them because of the blindness of their hearts; ¹⁹who, being past repentance, have given themselves over to wantonness, to work all manner of uncleanness, even with greediness. ²⁰But you have not so learned Christ – ²¹if it so be that you have heard him, and are taught in him, inasmuch as the truth is in Jesus. ²²So then, as concerning the former lifestyle, lay away from you that old man, which is corrupt through deceptive desires and affections, ²³and be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴and put on that new man, which is shapen in the image of God in righteousness and true holiness.

Ignorance is the root cause of bad living.

²⁵Therefore put away lying, and let every person speak truth to his neighbour, seeing as we are members of one another. ²⁶Be angry, but sin not.^a Let not the sun go down upon your wrath; ²⁷neither give place to the backbiter. ²⁸Let him who stole steal no more, but let him rather do good work with his hands, so that he may have something to give to him who has need.

Avenge not.

²⁹Let no unwholesome talk proceed out of your mouths, but that which is good to edify when needful, so that it may find favour with the hearers. ³⁰And grieve not the Holy Spirit of God, by whom you are sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹Let all bitterness, fierceness, and wrath, shouting and cursing, be put away from you, with all maliciousness. ³²Be kind to one another, and merciful, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake forgave you.

Those who have the Spirit of God are grieved to hear such things.

Ro c6
Col 3:7-11
Heb c12
1Pe 2:1
Ps 4:4

The Notes

Be angry, but sin not (4:26)

a) Christ was angry at the blindness of the Jews (M't 23). And so was Moses at the idolatry of the Israelites (Ex 32:19), and at the sedition of Korah, Dathan, and Abiram (Nu 16:15). Nevertheless, this anger or wrath was but a very zeal for the law of God, as you may see by Phinehas (Nu 25:1-11) and by Mattathias (I Maccabees c2). As for malice, or unlawful wrath, it is forbidden, as it follows here in this chapter.

Chapter 5

He exhorts them to love. He warns them to beware of uncleanness, covetousness, foolish talking, and false counsel; to be circumspect, to avoid drunkenness, to rejoice and to be thankful to God, and to submit themselves one to another. He teaches how women should obey their husbands, and how lovingly men ought to treat their wives.

Be followers of God as dear children, ²and walk in love, even as Christ loved us and gave himself for us, an offering and a sacrifice of a sweet savour to God.

[Fornication in scripture may include any manner of sexual licence or immorality]

³As for fornication* and all uncleanness or covetousness, let them not be once named among you, as it becomes saints. ⁴Nor should there be

Ungodly talk strengthens the flesh against the Spirit.

These have no part with Christ.

coarseness, or foolish talking, or jestings which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. ⁵For this you know, that no whoremonger or unclean person, or covetous person (who is an idolater), has any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God.

⁶Let no person deceive you with vain words. For through such things comes the wrath of God upon the children of unbelief. ⁷Therefore do not be companions with them. ⁸You were once darkness, but are now light in the Lord. Walk as children of light. ⁹For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness, righteousness, and truth. ¹⁰Accept that which is pleasing to the Lord, ¹¹and have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather rebuke them. ¹²For it is shameful even to name those things that are done by them in secret. ¹³But all things, when they are rebuked by the light, are manifest. For whatsoever is manifest, that same is light. ¹⁴Therefore he says, Awake, you who sleep, and stand up from death, and Christ will give you light.

M't 24:11
Mk 13:22
Lu 21:8
2Th 2:3-12

Redeeming the time: that is, spending the time well.

¹⁵Take heed therefore that you walk circumspectly – not as fools, but as wise, ¹⁶redeeming the time.* For the days are evil. ¹⁷Therefore be not unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess, but be fulfilled with the Spirit, ¹⁹speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody to the Lord in your hearts, ²⁰giving thanks always for all things to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, ²¹and submitting yourselves to one another in the fear of God.

Isa 26:19,
60:1-3.

²²Women, submit yourselves to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the congregation, and he is the saviour of the body. ²⁴Therefore, as the congregation is subject to Christ, so also let the wives be subject to their husbands in all things.

1Co 11:3
Col 3:18
1Pe 3:1

²⁵Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ loved the congregation and gave himself for it, ²⁶to sanctify it, and cleansed it in the fountain of water through the word, ²⁷to make it for himself a glorious congregation, without spot or wrinkle or any such thing, but to be holy and without blame. ²⁸This is how men ought to love their wives: as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself. ²⁹For no man ever yet hated his own flesh, but cares for and cherishes it, even as the Lord does the congregation. ³⁰For we are members of his body, of his flesh and of his bones.

Col 3:19

[**Fears:** Chrysostom> not as a slave, but as a free woman who does not contradict, rebel, or seek preeminence, but loves and honours her husband (Hom/Eph)]

³¹On this account must a man leave father and mother and continue with his wife, and the two will be made one flesh. ³²This is a great mystery, but I speak as between Christ and the congregation. ³³Nevertheless, see to it that every one of you loves his wife truly, even as himself. And let the wife see that she fears her husband.*

Ge 2:24
M't 19:3-7
Mk 10:2-9
1Co 6:16

Chapter 6

How children should behave toward their fathers and mothers; likewise fathers toward their children, servants toward their masters, and masters toward their servants. An exhor-

tation to the spiritual battle, and what weapons Christians should fight with.

Children, obey your fathers and mothers in the Lord, for this is right.
²Honour your father and mother (which is the first commandment that has any promise with it), ³so that you may prosper and live long on the earth.
⁴And ye fathers, do not move your children to wrath, but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord.

Col 3:20,21
Ex 20:12
De 5:16
Ec'c'us 3:3-16.
M't 15:4-6
Mk 7:10-13

[**Eye-service:** the action of an 'eye-servant,' who only works when under the master's eye]

⁵Servants, be obedient to your carnal masters with fear and trembling, in singleness of heart, as to Christ – ⁶not with eye-service,* as men-pleasers, but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart with good will: ⁷serving the Lord, and not men. ⁸And remember, whatever good thing anyone does, that he will receive back again from the Lord, whether he be bond or free.

Col 3:22-25;4:1.
Tit 2:9,10
1Pe 2:18-20

⁹And ye masters, do the same toward your servants, putting away threatenings. And remember that even your master also is in heaven; neither is there any respect of person with him.

¹⁰Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. ¹¹Put on the armour of God so that you are able to stand steadfast against the crafty assaults of the devil. ¹²For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against rule, against power; namely against the rulers of the world, of the darkness of this world; against spiritual wickedness, for heavenly things. ¹³So then, take up the armour of God, so that you are able to resist in the evil day, and to stand perfect in all things.

2Co 10:4

¹⁴Stand therefore, your loins girt about with truth, having on the breastplate of righteousness, ¹⁵and shod with shoes prepared by the gospel of peace. ¹⁶Above all, take up the shield of faith, with which you will be able to quench all the fiery darts of the evil one. ¹⁷And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God. ¹⁸And pray always with every sort of prayer and supplication, and that in the Spirit. And keep vigil also with all perseverance and supplication for all the saints – ¹⁹and for me: that utterance may be given to me; that I may open my mouth boldly to utter the mystery of the gospel, ²⁰for which I am a messenger in bonds; that I may speak freely therein as I ought to speak.

Col 4:2-4

²¹But so that you may also know how I am and what I am doing, Tychicus, my dear brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will tell you everything, ²²whom I sent to you for this same purpose: so that you could know what circumstances I stand in, and so that he could comfort your hearts.

²³Peace be with the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and from the Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴Grace be with all those who love our Lord Jesus Christ in pureness. Amen.

Sent from Rome to the Ephesians
by the hand of
Tychicus.

[Verse 12 is adapted in part from Coverdale 1535. Ed]

The armour of God: truth and truthfulness; the shoes of a steadfast purpose to follow the gospel; faith, by which our conscience is at peace after it has once known Christ; the helmet of salvation, which is hope; the word of God, which is the sword; etc. [This gloss is the combined thought of William Tyndale in 1534 and John Rogers in 1549. Ed]