



# WELCOME TO BIBLE HOUSE OF GRACE

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## Ephesians 1

(2019)

Bible House of Grace contains an easy to read New and Old Testament commentary full of spiritual treasures and pearls, complete with an insightful resource guide illuminating God's love and grace.



Although I believe my aim is pure and God's will perfect this document is still the product of a human man, as to such I neither claim perfect knowledge or perfect understanding.

# Ephesians 1.

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## Topics.

- God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places.
- God chose us in him before the foundation of the world.
- In Christ we have redemption and forgiveness of our trespasses.
- God's plan for the fullness of time.
- Predestined according to the purpose of God.
- Sealed with the promised Holy Spirit.
- A revelation in the knowledge of God.
- The hope to which Christ has called those in his family.
- The riches of Christ's glorious inheritance.
- The immeasurable greatness of God's power toward those who believe.
- The church, which is Christ's body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

**INTRODUCTION:** the apostle Paul wrote Ephesians to the churches around Ephesus (Acts 19) to display the scope of God's eternal plans for all humanity—for Jews and Gentiles alike and to reveal the mystery of God, hidden for ages but now made known in Jesus Christ. The first three chapters focus on what Christians believe, unfolding the glorious riches of God's grace in Jesus Christ, dead sinners are made alive and gain eternal salvation "by grace through faith" (Eph. 2:8). The last three chapters explain the implications of God's grace for the church, for individuals and for families and ends with a warning to stand with the armour of God against all the enemies of the Lord Jesus Christ. Paul probably wrote this letter while in prison in Rome about A.D. 60.

**NOTE:** for information concerning people, places and the meaning of words see Map Locations and People of the Bible, and Bible Dictionary on Website Menu.

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## EPHESIANS 1:1-3

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### God has Blessed Us with Every Spiritual Blessing in the Heavenly Places.

- **Ephesians 1:1-3:** Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by the will of God, To the saints who are in Ephesus, and are faithful in Christ Jesus: <sup>2</sup>Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. <sup>3</sup>Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places,

Though this letter is written to the faithful Ephesian brothers and sisters in Christ meaning they trust in their faith in Christ and God's grace for their righteousness that leads to eternal life and live to honour God and the name of the Lord (howbeit not perfectly) by extension it also applies to every brother and sister in Christ who is faithful to the Lord.

**Heavenly:** means elevated or lifted up, in this context it carries the idea of something being far beyond any good thing the world can give. There are two aspects to the heavenly and spiritual blessings those in Christ are blessed with.

## 1. Firstly, the heavenly and spiritual blessings refer to:

- Forgiveness of sins and favour with God.
- God's grace and mercy and our fellowship with God and with Christ.
- God's free gift of righteousness imputed to us because of our faith in Christ.
- Our freedom from the bondage of the law and self-effort to earn righteousness.
- The promise of eternal life and everlasting glory with Christ and God the Father.

Paul is telling every faithful brother and sister in Christ that by their faith and their relationship to Christ and God's grace these glorious spiritual blessings are theirs, they are God's gift to every faithful brother and sister in Christ. This is the wonder, glory and splendour of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ and why it is called the Good News. Whoever is in Christ has these blessings, not because of their ability to perform religious duties, customs or traditions or because of any form of self-effort or grand Bible Knowledge, but because of their faithful relationship to Lord Jesus Christ.

## 2. Secondly the heavenly and spiritual blessings refer to:

The state of the mind and the well-being of every faithful brother and sister in Christ since the word heavenly means elevated or lifted up the expression in heavenly places carries the idea that the mind is lifted up into high places of joy, happiness, contentment, mental calm, inner peace and love by the Gospel of Christ. It is similar to when the world has an amazing day or great win and shout to their friends in exuberant excitement, "Wow! I'm in heavenly places" it is a spiritual way of saying that the mind is in an elevated place of excitement, joy and well-being. They are called heavenly blessings because they are the exact opposite to being fearful and being constantly filled with worry, stress, anxiety and never being content or satisfied, but instead always left wanting more. This type of mindset is referred to as being earthly since it is in direct contrast to a heavenly mindset. The reason the faithful in Christ are blessed with such a peaceful and contented mind is because the central focus in their life and supreme desire of their heart is the Lord Jesus Christ, in contrast to craving after the things of this world to find happiness.

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### EPHESIANS 1:4-6

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#### God chose us in him before the foundation of the world.

- **Ephesians 1:4-6:** even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him In love <sup>5</sup>he predestined us for adoption through Jesus Christ, according to the purpose of his will, <sup>6</sup>to the praise of his glorious grace, with which he has blessed us in the Beloved.

**Chose** (Chosen in KJV) means to select and choose out or to make a choice.

Paul in these verses is not saying that God has predestined some to be saved and some to destruction since that would violate man's free will and any need to proclaim the gospel. It is certainly true that God desires that all would be saved, but He will never violate another person's will to achieve this. The entire concept of man's free-will would be pointless if God before the foundation of the world predestined that some would be blessed with eternal life and everlasting glory and others were predestined to destruction. If this was the way things were, we would all be totally

powerless to make a choice that would change our fate since God according to this idea has pre-determined our end, but the Good News is that this is not how God saves sinners to eternal life. To save the lost God invites mankind through the Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ to come to him through faith in his Son. Paul in these verses is stating two things:

1. God the Father predestined before the foundation of the world that those who are saved in Christ should be holy and blameless in love.
2. To achieve this goal God predestined that whoever responds to the Gospel with a yes would be adopted into God's family by their faith in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ, which means that verse four could read:
  - Before the foundation of the world God the Father *predestined* that those who choose to believe in Christ will be made holy and blameless in Christ.

God the Father before the foundations of the world predestined in His foreknowledge that Christ would be the central figure of salvation, then predestined that those who from their own free will chose to accept and believe in Christ as their Saviour God Himself would not only choose and accept them, but also shower them with spiritual and heavenly blessings (as listed above). God has predestined it this way so that those who seek to know God can be counted righteous and blameless not because of their righteousness, but because of Christ's righteousness. It is by Christ's righteousness a repentant sinner is counted blameless and enters into Christ's family and not by their-own righteousness. This pure and free gift of righteousness that God imputes to every faithful brother and sister in Christ will be manifested in its perfect glory when Christ returns and when:

- The image of the man of dust that we have been borne with is clothed with the image of the man of heaven and we are all changed in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye, at the last trumpet when the dead in Christ are raised imperishable and we are changed so that our perishable body puts on the imperishable, and this mortal body puts on immortality (1 Cor. 15:49-54)

The reason God predestined that while living in this body of dust our righteousness would be by faith and God's grace is because while we are alive in this world we live in a fallen and corrupted body with all kinds of sinful aberrations and dysfunctions, i.e. selfishness, ego, pride, lustful thoughts, jealousies and anger etc., and therefore if God had based salvation upon us attaining to every demand of the law and to attaining to the perfect standard of His holiness not one of us could be saved since no-one can stand before God free of sin, if anyone of us could achieve the glorious state of sinlessness Christ died for no reason. It was the purpose and will of God the Father before the foundation of the world that He would adopt those who belong to Christ into His eternal family and therefore predestined and promised that He would put His love on those who freely from their own will choose to believe in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ and faithfully follow him.

**NOTE:** we must always keep in mind when we are speaking of God's sovereignty, God's timeless mind, predestination and God's foreknowledge that it is with a fallen and finite mind that is limited to time (as we understand it) that we are attempting to understand God's eternal wisdom and God's eternal knowledge which is far higher than our limited fallen mortal mind can comprehend therefore we should never be dogmatic and absolute in our understandings and explanations concerning God's eternal sovereignty, but always allow for certain amount of mystery. For further information on predestination see the title:

- Predestination (ON WEBSITE MENU).

## **In Christ we have Redemption and Forgiveness of our Trespasses.**

- **Ephesians 1:7-10:** In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, <sup>8</sup>which he lavished upon us, in all wisdom and insight <sup>9</sup>making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ <sup>10</sup>as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth.

According to the riches of his grace means, according to the eternal plan of God's grace lavished on those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ.

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### **EPHESIANS 1:10**

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#### **Gather together all things in Christ which are in Heaven and on Earth.**

- **Ephesians 1:10:** That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he (God) might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in *heaven* and which are on earth; even in him (KJV).

The things that are in heaven refer to God, the Lord Jesus Christ and the angels, while the things that are on earth are the faithful in Christ and those that are sleeping in Christ, those whose name are written in the Lambs Book of Life and those who are counted worthy at the 'Great White Throne judgment.' Paul is saying in the fullness of time all will be brought together in and by Christ. At the fullness of time the things in heaven are going to descend and dwell with those on earth that belong to the family of the Lord Jesus Christ. John in the Book of Revelation had a vision in which he saw the Holy City, New Jerusalem coming down out of heaven from God and heard a loud voice from the throne of God saying:

- Behold, the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God. He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away (Rev. 21:2-4).

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Once again we see that what God predestined is not referring to some fortunate people being predestined to be saved to eternal life while others are predestined to be condemned to eternal death if this theory was true it would totally violate God's laws of justice i.e., giving everyone a fair go and an equal opportunity. What God predestined in these verses before the foundation of the world is that those who chose from their own free will to believe in the Lord Jesus Christ would be redeemed through his blood (referring to his death and resurrection) and have their sins forgiven according to God's abundant grace. We all have the opportunity to accept or reject Christ, if we chose to accept Christ God has predestined that we will be redeemed, our sins will be forgiven and we will receive eternal life and everlasting glory not because of any self-effort in keeping religious laws, customs and traditions, but because of our faith in Christ and God's abundant grace.

**The wonder, splendour and glory of the Gospel:** Paul states, "God lavished(hath abounded toward us in KJV) His grace upon us, in all wisdom and insight" (v8) the word lavish and abound carry the idea of something superabounding in excess and excelling in quantity, quality and abundance it carries the thought of overflowing and being far more than enough needed to achieve the task and the words, "God in wisdom and insight" (v8) refers to God's insight into the heart of mankind and the obvious fact that God is fully aware that it is impossible for any human to fulfil the standard of, 'His Holy Law.' Therefore, God in His wisdom from the foundations of the world predestined a plan to save mankind to eternal life that would not be dependent on self-effort, but on faith and His abundant grace. This is the reason God could guarantee His promise to Abraham because it is not subject to us attaining to the, Holy Standard of God but on our faith in Christ and God's lavished and abundant grace.

**The mystery of God's will:** the mystery in the following verse, "Making known to us the mystery of his will, according to his purpose, which he set forth in Christ" (v9) refers to two things:

1. To God uniting Jews and Gentiles, the noble and the lowly, the rich and the poor, those in great authority and those who lack it together in Christ.
2. To God exalting the Lord Jesus Christ above all governments, authorities and powers so that he is the head not only of all nations on earth, but also over all the powers of heaven.

Before the foundations of the world it was God's predestined purpose and eternal plan that His only begotten Son would die for the world and that salvation to eternal life would be by faith in Christ and by God's lavished and abundant grace and not by the works of the law, self-effort or the keeping of religious rites, customs and traditions. God predestined and purposed that He would generously and bountifully lavish His love on Jews and Gentiles alike who from their own free will accept by faith His beloved Son the Lord Jesus Christ. It was Jesus who made known to us this mystery of God's predestined plan of salvation which was veiled to the Jewish fathers of the Old Testament. Though the Jewish faithful of the Old Testament lived by faith in that they looked toward the arrival of Israel's promised Messiah the Christ they did not have the light or clarity of God's predestined and purposed plan of eternal salvation since they did not understand that people from all nations would be united and accepted into God's Kingdom in Christ (their promised Messiah) and not just the people of Israel.

**God's plan for the fullness of time:** the words:

- As a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in him, things in heaven and things on earth (v10)

Refer to the end of this age (as we know it) when the Lord returns as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom of righteousness, justice, joy and peace on earth. This New Age will begin in that glorious moment "When the Lord descends from heaven the dead in Christ will rise and we who are alive, who are left, will be caught up together with them in the clouds to meet the Lord in the air, and so we will always be with the Lord (1 Thess. 4:16-18).

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## EPHESIANS 1:11-12

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### **Predestined According to the Purpose of God.**

- **Ephesians 1:11-12:** In him we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to the purpose of him who works all things according to the counsel of his will,<sup>12</sup>so that we who were the first to hope in Christ might be to the praise of his glory.

In these verses it is not people that are predestined according to the purpose of God, but the inheritance. God according to his will has, predestined an inheritance for those who have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. The inheritance refers to the following oath God made to Abraham saying, 'By myself have I sworn to Abraham' as an everlasting covenant:

- Thy seed will come from his own bowels and be thine heir.
- Thy seed will multiply as the stars of heaven and the sand on the sea-shore.
- Thy seed shall possess the gate of his enemies.
- Thy seed will inherit all the land of Israel for an everlasting possession.
- In thy seed shall all the nations of the earth be blessed.

- God will be the God of thy seed.

This is the promise inheritance and everlasting covenant God made to Abraham. Paul says:

- Now to Abraham and his *seed* were the promises made. He saith not, And to *seeds*, as of many; but as of one, And to thy *seed* which is Christ (Gal 3:16)

Paul in this verse reveals the eternal wonder and majestic glory of the everlasting promise God made to Abraham thousands of years ago which is the glorious truth that the promised seed of Abraham is the Lord Jesus Christ.

(Gen. 12:1-7) (Gen. 13:14-16) (Gen. 15:1-6, 18) (Gen. 17:1-8)  
(Gen. 17: 15-19, 21) (Gen. 21:12) (Gen. 22:11-18).

Some may think the promises made to Abraham was for the Jews only, but Paul magnificently explains in the next chapter (Ephes. 2:11-22) that the promises of God have been extended to all nations by being baptised into the Lord Jesus Christ and clearly shows that the promises made to Abraham and to his seed the Lord Jesus Christ are not limited to the Jews only but embraces whoever will come to God through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. (Rom. 4:13) (Rom. 4:16-18) (Galatians 3:16, 27). For further information on the Promised Seed of Abraham see:

- Galatians chapter 3

In, Commentary New Testament (ON WEBSITE MENU).

The fulfilment and absolute awesome wonder, splendour and breath-taking magnificence of God's promise to Abraham will reach its climax when the Lord returns as, King of kings and Lord of lords (Rev. 19:11-16) to rule and reign from God's Holy City Jerusalem (on Mount Zion God's Holy Mountain) to establish God's Kingdom on earth during his millennial reign. In the first resurrection (Rev. 20:4-5) the dead in Christ and the faithful, who are alive, will be gathered together to rule and reign as kings and priests with the Lord over those nations who are left outside the Holy City of God. Christ the King united with his people will not only bring peace to the Middle East, but establish God's Kingdom of steadfast love, faithfulness, righteousness, joy and peace throughout the world and the glory of God will cover the earth. Jesus will do justice to the poor and oppressed, he will be a faithful and compassionate King forever. He will not allow anyone to strike terror in the earth or use lies and deception to enlarge their own wealth and power. The land will abundantly produce and even the deserts will flourish. The animals will not feed on each other and even the lamb will be able to lie down with the wolf and everyone will eat of their own hands because all that they plant will produce. All nations the LORD has made will come and worship before the Lord Jesus Christ. They will glorify God's Name, proclaiming the LORD is great and does wondrous things and that He alone is God. The book of Revelation states:

- Jesus Christ, the faithful witness who loved us, and washed us from our sins in his own blood has made us kings and priests unto God and his Father is coming in glory and every eye shall see him, and they also who pierced him and all kindreds of the earth (Revelation 1:5-7).

And in Revelation chapter five we are told that:

- Christ was slain, and by his blood he redeemed a people for God from every tribe and language and people and nation and made them a kingdom and priests to God and they shall reign on the earth (Revelation 5:9-10).

At the end of this glorious Kingdom age God descends to earth on a Great White Throne the sea, death and hades (the grave) give up the dead. They stand before God and are judged according to what is written in certain heavenly books according to what they have done. Death and those counted unworthy are cast into the Lake of Fire a symbol of eternal destruction (i.e., total extinction) (also called the, Second Death) (Rev



20:11-15). Christ hands the Kingdom over to his heavenly Father and God is ALL in ALL and ETERNITY begins in all its fullness and majestic royal glory. For further information see titles:

- Kingdom of God (ON WEBSITE MENU).
- The Second or Great White Throne Judgment.

In, Resurrection (ON WEBSITE MENU).

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## EPHESIANS 1:13-14

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### **Sealed with the Promised Holy Spirit.**

- **Ephesians 1:13-14:** In him you also, when you heard the word of truth, the GOSPEL of your salvation, and believed in him, were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, <sup>14</sup>who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it, to the praise of his glory.

**Sealed:** literally means to stamp something genuine with a signet or private mark to keep it secret, private and secure for the purpose of preserving and protecting it from misappropriation. Thus the phrase, "Sealed with the promised Holy Spirit" (v13) does not refer to speaking in tongues as some teach, but to God's gift of righteousness that comes by grace and by faith which God imputes to the faithful who believe the gospel and trust in the Lord Jesus Christ for their eternal salvation. It is this gift of righteousness (also called the Holy Spirit) that is the guarantee that those in Christ will inherit and acquire possession of God's glorious and majestic predestined eternal promises.

### **The promised inheritance can refer to the following two things:**

1. When our natural body is not only raised a spiritual body but also raised in power to eternal glory and puts on immortality (1 Cor. 15:41-54).
2. When Christ returns and all who have been freed from their sins by his blood will reign with him on the earth and be a Kingdom with the Lord and priests to God (Rev. 1:5-10).

**NOTE:** if God had predestined some to be saved to eternal life and everlasting glory and others to be damned to eternal death there would be no need to be sealed with the promised Holy Spirit' since if God had predestined a certain few to be saved nothing could alter it, not even the person themselves whose DNA God had pre-programmed would be able to change their predestined destiny.

**The word of truth:** the words, "When you heard the word of truth" do not refer to every doctrine and teaching of the Bible from Genesis to Revelation, but to the Gospel of salvation that unites a sinner to Christ. No-one has to be a walking Bible encyclopaedia to be saved to eternal life, but they must understand the message of the cross and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is because being saved to eternal life is not about acquiring an abundance of intellectual head knowledge, but about being in a devoted faithful and loving relationship with the Lord Jesus Christ. The Scriptures have three primary purposes:

1. To bring us into union and fellowship with the Lord Jesus Christ.
2. To teach us how to, love our neighbour as ourselves and live to honour God and the name of the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. To teach us the eternal plans and purposes of God and thereby strengthen our faith in the Lord.

Certainly it is a tremendous excitement and glorious adventure travelling through the Bible discovering new treasures and pearls of knowledge that we have not known before, but it should always be remembered that not



every Scripture or teaching is important or necessary to know for us to be in a devoted faithful union with the Lord Jesus Christ and saved to eternal life and everlasting glory.

**The Gospel of salvation:** The Gospel begins with the law of Sin and Death which states:

- The wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23).

This means that whoever sins are already judged and condemned to death and since not one of us is without sin we all stand guilty. Whereas the Gospel states for all who trust in Christ have been granted the free gift of God which is:

- Eternal life in the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 6:23), because, “The law of the Spirit of life has set them free in Christ Jesus from the law of sin and death” (Rom 8:2).

The Gospel states that the law of Sin and Death has no power over those who believe in Christ and faithfully follow him they like Christ will be raised to eternal life and everlasting glory. The focus of the Gospel is salvation from death to eternal life by faith and grace it is about believing in the death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ, recognising that one falls short of God’s Glory and absolute Holiness. It is about repentance, baptism and abiding in the Faith. Throughout the entire history of mankind there has only been one man who has ever been able to attain to God’s perfect standard. The Gospel is about recognising this reality, repenting before God and accepting His foreordained plan of salvation.

The Gospel is about trusting in the Lord Jesus Christ for one’s righteousness, looking forward to his return and being raised to eternal glory. The majestic Good News of the Gospel states that whoever comes to God through repentance and faith in His Son the Lord Jesus Christ is not only approved of and accepted by God the Father but all their sins are forgiven, not because they are deserving of it, by any self-effort or religious good works, but because through faith in Christ righteousness is imputed from God to them as a pure and free gift, but this is not the end of the Good News since God’s promise also states that the faithful in Christ will be resurrected to eternal life and everlasting glory. Can there be any better news than this? This is the reason it is called the, Good News.

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## EPHESIANS 1:15-18

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### **Paul's Prayer for all who will Believe.**

- **Ephesians 1:15-18:** For this reason, because I have heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love toward all the saints, <sup>16</sup>I do not cease to give thanks for you, remembering you in my prayers, <sup>17</sup>that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him, <sup>18</sup>having the eyes of your hearts enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints,

Paul having the heart of a true shepherd is excited and over joyed to hear that the Ephesian brothers and sisters are not only faithful to Christ, but also in their love toward those in the Lords family and those on the outside. He is so passionate about finding faithful Christians who are living to honour God and the name of Christ that he thanks God without ceasing.

**A spirit of wisdom:** Paul understanding that the human mind can be motivated by our own thoughts and opinions or be inspired by the wisdom and understanding of God’s word so he prays that God would give those in Christ a Spirit of wisdom (v17). Prior to God's word being in print this wisdom and understanding of God's purposes came to the mind of the prophets and apostles by the Spirit of God they then spoke this knowledge that came to them by revelation to the people. Once the cannon of God's

word was in print that same revelational knowledge, wisdom and understanding of God now comes to the mind by reading, mediating and hearing the same messages the prophets and apostles spoke that are now written and recorded in the Bible.

**A revelation in the knowledge of God:** the word revelation means to take off the cover and reveal, in this context it carries the idea of the mind being enlightened to something beyond normal thinking and awesomely spectacular and breathtaking. Paul prays that God the Father would give every faithful brother and sister in Christ a revelation of the knowledge of Christ and of God's glory in him. A revelation of the knowledge of Christ means:

- A revelation of Christ's power, knowledge and wisdom.
- A revelation of Christ's holy intelligence.
- A revelation of Christ's truth, grace, mercy and love.
- A revelation of Christ's character and nature.
- A revelation of Christ's, plans and the purposes of his heart.

These facts show that the title, "The Holy Spirit," contains within its meaning the collective total of all the above that is extended or imparted to the believer in the centre of their being, heart and mind (i.e., their spirit).

**The eyes of your hearts enlightened:** Paul's prayer that the eyes of the hearts of the Ephesian brothers and sisters would be enlightened (v18) refers to the Holy Spirit working within to illuminate the word of God so that it surpasses being just intellectual head knowledge and takes on a reality that cannot be shaken. Today it refers to written biblical knowledge that is complemented by an interior illumination which shines a floodlight of clarity on a particular Scripture or set of Scriptures which then makes that which God has given in the past become His living revealing word now in the present in the heart and mind of those who are enlightened in this manner.

**NOTE:** when the Bible refers to the human heart by the word spirit it generally denotes the absence of the ego and the absence of the natural or lower nature of man being involved in speech, act or deed.

**The hope to which Christ has called those in His family:** the words, "That you may know what is the hope to which he Christ has called you" (v18) refers to the promise God made to Abraham and the return of the Lord Jesus Christ (see notes following v11-12). The hope spoken of in this verse does not mean it is uncertain, but that it is unseen and not yet realised, but the hope itself is guaranteed for two reasons, firstly, because it is based on the LORD'S promise to Abraham and his Seed the Lord Jesus Christ and secondly because God cannot lie.

**The riches of Christ's glorious inheritance:** Paul's desire is that every faithful believer would know, "What the riches of Christ's glorious inheritance in the saints is" (v18). Riches in this verse does not refer to the money of this world, but to the valuable abundant eternal and spiritual blessings those in Christ have i.e., forgiveness of sins, God's grace and mercy, righteousness, fellowship with God and with Christ the promise of an immortal body and eternal life and everlasting glory etc. These are the riches that flood like springs of living water in the inner most being of the human spirit and well up to give joy, inner peace, contentment and hope to the mind of those who are faithful and make Christ their supreme desire and the highest thought of their minds.

## The Immeasurable Greatness of God's Power toward those who Believe.

- **Ephesians 1:20-23:** and what is the immeasurable greatness of his power toward us who believe, according to the working of his great might <sup>20</sup>that he worked in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, <sup>21</sup>far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and above every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come.

Christ is the perfect example of a leader, he served those he ministered to and cared about their well-being, he not only showed them compassion and kindness but laid his life down for them thus the reason God has exalted him not only above every government, every king and every world leader but also above every name that is named meaning above all of mankind not only in this world, but the eternal world to come, he is the perfect King everyone can trust to lead and be confident that they are safe and protected for eternal life in submitting to his Headship. God's immeasurable greatness and the power of God's might refers to the most breathtaking and awe-inspiring event that will have ever taken place in the history of mankind.

This spectacular event will totally change the world as we know it and manifest God's power in such an awesome manner that every other miracle will be dwarfed, this extraordinary, dramatic and thrilling event of course refers to the resurrection. God's by his creative power raised Christ one man from the dead to eternal glory, but at the resurrection God will raise literally millions who are sleeping in Christ to eternal life and everlasting wonder.

**NOTE:** some people find it difficult to comprehend God raising the dead, but think of it this way, we have super computers today that have in their memories literally trillions of bits of information and at the touch of a key any one of those bits is resurrected to us on a brightly coloured screen, then with another touch of the key it all vanishes into the super memory and is gone, until we resurrect it again. Knowing that God has given his creation a mortal mind and finite memory to be able to build such amazing computers should make it very easy to understand how God keeps us all in His immortal mind and eternal memory waiting for the right time to touch the supernatural keyboard of heaven and raise us once again to life. Added to this very few Christians have any trouble believing God created the universe that we live in so raising the dead in comparison is not such a difficult task for such an awesome, powerful and majestic God (Hebrews 11:3).

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### EPHESIANS 1:22-23

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#### Christ is Head over all things to the Church.

- **Ephesians 1:22-23:** And he put all things under his feet and gave him as head over all things to the church, <sup>23</sup>which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all.

Christ is the Head of the church and has dominion, rule and authority over all things in the church. The words, "Which is his body, the fullness of him who fills ALL IN ALL (v23) shows us the following two things:

1. All those who trust in Christ form the body of Christ.
2. It is God's Spirit (also called the Holy Spirit) that fills Christ's body (the church).

**NOTE:** God's Spirit and Christ's Spirit are in perfect unity, perfect love and in perfect harmony of mind in will and purpose therefore the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ can be viewed as being identical since those in Christ have fellowship with both the Father and the Son (1 John 1:3).

**The Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ:** to attempt to dissect down to microscopic detail the Spirit of God and the Spirit of Christ as a spiritual surgeon with a scalpel is (I think) to do God and the Lord an injustice since there is nothing in prayer we can say to Christ that God does not hear neither is there anything we say to the Father that the Son is not also listening to and there is nothing we can hide in deed or action from either God or the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the reason God's Spirit and Christ's Spirit can be seen as being identical especially in prayer since they are united together in perfect love, mind and purpose and both God and Christ dwell in the heart of every brother and sister in Christ by faith and God's grace.

**A torch its light and God and Christ:** if we were to attempt to explain the Spirit of God and of Christ in simple material terms (howbeit very limited) the Spirit of God and of Christ could be likened to a golden torch, its light and its batteries. The torch gives brilliant light that dispels darkness and allows all who walk in its light to clearly see, but without batteries the torch has no power since they are the source of its light. Thus, Christ could be likened to the torch and God to the batteries since God is the source of all life, but the batteries without the torch or the torch without the batteries cannot give light.

This is another reason we should not try to dissect in microscopic detail God's Spirit from Christ's Spirit or Christ Spirit from God's Spirit but always allow a certain amount of mystery since they are together united in perfect unity, perfect love and perfect mind will and purpose. Added to this there is nothing the Father wouldn't do for us that Christ wouldn't also gladly do, nor is there anything that Christ would do for us that the Father would not also be pleased to do. But there is another great insight we gain from the words, ALL IN ALL. Paul wrote a similar statement in his letter to the Corinthians:

- God has put all things in subjection under his feet. But when it says, "all things are put in subjection," it is plain that he is accepted who put all things in subjection under him. When all things are subjected to him then the Son himself will also be subjected to him who put all things in subjection under him that God may be ALL IN ALL (1 Corinthians 15:27-29).

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These verses also clearly show that God has exalted Christ as the Head above all things, but they also tell us something more and that is; "When all things are subjected to Christ then he will also be subjected to God so that God will be ALL IN ALL. The expression, "God will be ALL IN ALL" in this context lifts the mind of the ardent Bible student at lightning speed and transcends it forward in time to the glorious and majestic vision of a godly man on the isle of Patmos who wrote:

- I saw a new heaven and a new earth, for the first heaven and the first earth had passed away, and the sea was no more and I saw the holy city, New Jerusalem, coming down out of heaven from God, prepared as a bride adorned for her husband. And I heard a loud voice from the throne saying, "Behold, *the dwelling place of God is with man. He will dwell with them, and they will be his people, and God himself will be with them as their God.* He will wipe away every tear from their eyes, and death shall be no more, neither shall there be mourning nor crying nor pain anymore, for the former things have passed away." And he who was seated on the throne said, "*Behold, I am making all things new*" (Rev. 21:1-5).

This is the splendour, the glory the wonder and the climax of God's promise to Abraham made many thousands of years ago and the inheritance of all who are children of Abraham by faith and brothers and sisters of Christ. Is there any other religion on earth that proclaims such a glorious eternal hope? (This author has not found one). The Good News of the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ in sharp clearness proclaims that the stunning splendour of this glory is not dependent on our abilities and talents or our lack of them since God in His wisdom has made salvation to eternal life and everlasting glory available to all, not by our own self-effort, but through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and God's grace can there be any better news than this, "I think not" thus the reason the Gospel of Christ is called the Good News.

**The church, which is Christ's body, the fullness of Him who fills All in All:** the word church in the following verse, "The church, which is his body, the fullness of him who fills all in all (Eph. 1:23-22) should never be limited to the established religious institutions, denominations or church buildings though they may form a part of the body of Christ they are not the only part. There are many individual Christians in all countries of the world who meet in coffee bars, social outings and mostly their own homes (as the early church did) to give thanks to Christ and share their discoveries of God's word and their spiritual experiences with Him. Many of these people are helping others and simply manifesting the reality of their faith to the people that come into their lives. God is not limited to any one pattern or organisation; He is far too creative for that. Jesus church is global and is manifested in a vast variety of ways across the face of the earth. In many third world countries church is held outside under a tree (for shade) with its members sitting on the dusty ground often with dogs, chooks and other animals roaming around. It is also important to be aware that the word church does not embrace everyone simply because they confess to be Christians (Matt 7:21-23). When the Bible uses the term church it primarily refers to those who belong to Christ and those who do the will of his Father. The will of God in this context is summed up in Jesus words:

- Love your neighbour as yourself (Matt 22:37-39) (Mark 12:29-31).

In the New Testament this is called the, Royal Law (James 2:8) and means do-good to others. Those (especially those who belong to Christ) who deliberately harm people physically, financially, sexually, verbally, emotionally or spiritually and those who use others for their own selfish gain and greed are referred to by Christ himself as workers of iniquity. The Bible teaches that some will be cast out of God's Kingdom which means not everyone who confesses to know Christ is part of his church there are those in his present Kingdom who he calls wicked servants. They use God's grace, Jesus good name and his Gospel for their own selfish gain and line their own greedy pockets with the wealth and riches of this world by making merchandise of those who do belong to Christ. Nevertheless, Jesus knows those who are his and those who are not and will not only reject anyone who uses his message of grace, mercy, compassion and love for their own selfish gain, but when he returns will deny them entry into his eternal Kingdom. (Matt 8:12) (Matt 22:13) (Matt 25:30). Jesus said:

- I am the good shepherd. I know my own and my own know me, but you do not believe because you are not part of my flock. My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow me. (John 10:14) (John 10:26-27).

Building God's house is not about financing opulent mega million dollar buildings, but rather it is about people gathering together to share their faith in any place they are able, nevertheless a building maybe required for practical purposes (i.e., the size of the congregation etc.), but if it is built by cleverly twisting and distorting Scriptures to manipulate the congregation to give from guilt or built upon vast amounts of borrowed money so that the oversight and the congregation are put under extreme financial oppression then the building is not in the will of God. The book of Proverbs states:

- The borrower is the slave of the lender (Prov. 22:7).

Building God's House (Temple) is about becoming more Christ like, and living in the will of God. New Testament Christianity is fluid and not restricted to a particular building or even a special day. The Christianity Christ taught is so exciting and real, it cannot be contained. It has no limitations and overflows into every moment of a Christian's life, thus the New Testament house of God is global, moving and manifested in the lives of all those who are faithful and who belong to the Lord Jesus Christ

Since the Bible was written in an entirely different culture to ours and the body of Christ is a global family filled with people from different nations, countries, cultures, backgrounds, knowledge, levels of education, hurts and troubled pasts there is always going to be certain amount of Scripture we will all understand differently. Paul in the book of Romans tells us to avoid those who cause divisions contrary to the doctrine that he taught the brothers and sisters in Rome. In the context of the entire letter that he wrote to the Roman brothers and sisters the doctrines he had in mind when he said, "Avoid those who cause divisions" are the following three:

1. Doctrines that are contrary to the teaching that salvation is by grace through faith in the Lord Jesus Christ contrasted to works of the law, self-effort and keeping religious customs and traditions etc.
2. Doctrines that are contrary to the truth that Jews and Gentiles who accept Christ become one nation in Christ, contrasted to them being two separate nations.
3. Doctrines which are contrary to godly behaviour and lead people away from the Lord Jesus Christ.

These are the three major topics Paul has focused on in his letter to the brothers and sisters in Rome and the doctrines he has in his mind when he says be careful of those who cause divisions and create obstacles. Naturally within the global House of God there are many varied understandings of many Scripture, but not all teachings are important to know to be saved to eternal life nor does one have to have perfect understanding of every teaching from Genesis to Revelation to know Christ and be in union with him, but of course we must all understand the message of the cross and the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ that leads to eternal life. No-one has to be a walking Bible encyclopaedia to be in the family of Christ and saved to eternal life, but should any teacher proclaim a message of works and self-effort to be saved or teach that Jews and Gentiles are two separate groups/nations in Christ, or teach doctrines that lead people away from godly behaviour and from Christ Paul says they should be avoided (Rom 16:17-19).

**NOTE:** though the visible global church in many regions has not presented a good reflection of Christ to the secular world, it should always be remembered that there are literally hundreds of thousands of humble Christian brothers and sisters in Christ spending their time helping the poor and the less fortunate, but sadly this type of news does not attract the attention of global TV news media since there is no profit to be made in good news.

- The body is the reflection of Christ on earth and therefore should be walking in the same Spirit of love, kindness, compassion and grace etc. that Christ walked in while on earth.

For further information see the title:

- Church (The Definitions of a Church) in, Various Topics (ON WEBSITE MENU)

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*As the founder of Bible House of Grace, I would like to thank the many Christian scholars, commentators and theologians who have gone before me, and the many today, who have freely made available their works to enhance the knowledge of the Bible to all people worldwide. It is only with the help of these faithful writers that much of Bible House of Grace exists as it does today.*

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