

Ephesians 1:1-3 May 7, 2026 Full Purpose of the Heavenly Calling!

The heavenly realm what God has called us to. The sand of the seashore represents Israel (an earthly, visible kingdom), while the stars of heaven represent the Church (a spiritual, heavenly body). Heavenly places means we operate from a vantage point where the gravity of the world, sin, worry, and fear loses its pull. Paul writes these wonderful blessings of the heavenlies. The Canaan inheritance of the Old Testament was only a figure of our heavenly inheritance which is set forth in this book. Those of Israel who went into Canaan were the faithful ones who believed. Israel's inheritance is a physical land (Canaan), the Church's inheritance is a spiritual location, a state of being "in Christ." Canaan tells us of the blessings of the inheritance, seated in the heavenlies. It is also a place of our battles with Satan. Israel did not enter Canaan immediately after leaving Egypt. They came up through the wilderness as far as Kadesh-Barnea, which means the sanctuary of the wanderer; but they refused to go any farther. All of Paul's epistles have 3 themes, Love, Patience, and Prayer. We have studied: 1Cor; which sets the Church in order; 2Cor sets its members in motion as a spiritual priesthood; Gal; ousts legality and sets us eternally free; Ephesians sets the assembly in heaven, our eternal home. In the heavenlies occurs 5 times and is found in no other epistle. This expresses the glorious destiny of the Church.

Recorded in Joshua, Israel wandered in the wilderness 40 years until those who rebelled against the Lord died. The second generation went into Canaan. Jos 5:2 At that time the LORD said unto Joshua, Make thee sharp knives, and circumcise again the children of Israel the second time. The second generation of Israel had not been circumcised. Before they can possess the land, they must be circumcised. The sharp knives (Joshua 5:2) represent the Word of God that cuts away the reproach of Egypt or (the world's influence). The halfhearted Christian cannot enter into the fullness of God's provision. This isn't because God is holding back, but because unbelief is the cause. Satan is trying to cheat people out of laying hold of their blessings in Christ. If people allow these enemies to rule in their lives, they are never going to inherit the wonderful blessings that God intends for them to have in the heavenlies. Satan is convincing people that they already have all the provisions, so they don't need to actually walk and possess the heavenly land. If we don't practically walk in the provision, we never experience the joy of the provision. The book of Ephesians is divided into two distinct sections: the Position of the believer and the Practice of the believer.

Paul structures it this way because we cannot walk in a way that we do not understand, and we cannot manifest a life we do not yet possess. The first three chapters are about the provisions of God. In this section, there are no commands to do anything. Instead, the focus is on what God has already done. Paul describes the spiritual bank account of the New Man. We have the blueprint of Grace which is the finished work of Christ. We are shown the blood that redeemed us, the grace that accepted us, and the Spirit that sealed us. These first 3 chapters reveals that we are currently seated in heavenly places in Christ Jesus. This is the place of rest. We do not work for victory; we work from a victory that is already won. Paul ends chapter 3 with a massive Amen! He concludes by praying that we would be filled with all the fulness of God, recognizing that the provisions are infinite. Then Chapters 4-6 begin our practical walk of the New Creation. Once the Amen is spoken, Paul shifts from the sitting position to the walking position. Chapter 4 begins with the word Therefore. This is the bridge. Because we are wealthy in grace (Chapters 1-3), we should therefore walk in a way that matches our new identity (Chapters 4-6).

God's order is always Grace first, then Works. He gives us the nature of a son, and tells us how a son walks. He gives us the riches of His grace, and then He shows us how to spend them. The practical walk is not an effort to get God to love us; it is the natural overflow of a heart that realizes it is already so loved that it is sealed forever as His own. Paul teaches that these provisions are the reason for our walk, not an excuse to avoid it. Paul's letters always follow a specific order: Doctrine (what God did) followed by Duty (what we do). In Ephesians, the first three chapters are the wealth, and the last three chapters are the walk. If a practical walk were unnecessary, Paul would have ended the book at Chapter 3 with the Amen. Instead, he spent three more chapters detailing how to live. The provisions are the power source for the walk. We don't walk to get the provisions; we walk because the provisions have given us a new nature that wants to move in a new direction. The Full Purpose of Ephesians is that God gave us a heavenly position so that we would have the heavenly power of Grace to change our earthly practice. To use the position to avoid the practice is to reject the very reason God called us out of Egypt (world) in the first place. The word Ephesus means full purposed. The first 3 chapters present God's purpose, plan, and the provisions. It is this type of purpose or dedication which motivates us to take our place in the heavenlies today.

Eph 2:6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: Then we have the term "in Christ" which means that all our provisions and blessings are ours because of Jesus Christ. It is so necessary to see ourselves seated in the heavenlies. It is only after we take our place in the heavenlies that we rise above the cares and burdens of this life. From the heavenlies we view our circumstances here on earth as God does. Ro 8:28 And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose. We are provisionally seated with Him in the heavenlies. Again, Canaan tells of the blessings of the inheritance, seated in the heavenlies. Also our battles with Satan. Israel had to fight for possession of Canaan. God gave it as a free **gift**, it is true, as He has given to us the heavenlies; but they had to enter in and take possession by faith in the Word of God. This is God's provision, and the heavenly place belongs to all saints not just a few, but many will not appropriate it. Canaan was a **gift**, yet there were giants in the land. The "Heavenly Places" are where our blessings are, but Ephesians 6 tells us it is also where spiritual wickedness dwells. We do not fight to get into the heavenlies; we fight because we are in the heavenlies and the enemy wants to obstruct our view.

The victory of the Cross is the deed to the land that we are to possess in the heavenlies. Faith is the act of walking across the border. Not all saints enjoy the experience of this heavenly position. We do not gain the real victory over the flesh until we see the greater joy of the heavenlies. When we enter into the heavenlies and see the victory of the Cross, those things of the flesh fade away. We become free from Egypt or the world by laying hold of our blessings which we have in Christ in the heavenlies. We find this today that so many people who would take their place in the heavenlies are being defeated in religious ways and they get their eyes on those religious activities and some are led away in error. They are really caught in a snare. This epistle was written to the saints at Ephesus and then it is also to the faithful in Christ Jesus. Not all the saints at Ephesus or in the Church today are faithful. Eph 1:1 Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: God has made the full provision for us to have all of these glorious blessings. As believers we are entitled to all of these wonderful blessings. We are to dwell at Ephesus (full purposed).

The Saints are those set apart, but the “Faithful” are those who actually walk in that purpose. Jesus addressed this Assembly of Ephesus in the book of Revelation and He commends them for many things. He said I do have somewhat against you because you have left your first love. The Church of Ephesus is a picture of the Church as a whole in the heavenly realm. But we also find that the Church as a whole has failed in that and they also left their first love. They didn’t lay hold of all of this glorious truth as we see in this book. The Warning to the Church at Ephesus in Revelation 2 was they had the full purpose and the doctrine, but they lost the affection. The deep meaning in Ephesians is found not just in knowing we are seated with Him, but in loving the One we are seated next to. When religious activities and false doctrines replace the “First Love,” we become like the first generation of Israel, standing at the edge of the promise but never tasting the fruit. The phrase “to the faithful in Christ Jesus” is extended to us today. We can be counted among the faithful in Christ Jesus by yielding to Him and the work of the Holy Spirit in our lives. Eph 1:2 Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ.

Again note the order here; grace followed by peace. The more grace we lay hold of and experience the more the peace we are going to have in our lives. This isn't just a hello; it's a legal declaration. Grace is the supply; Peace is the result. Without laying hold of the supply of God's grace, our internal world remains in the wilderness of turmoil. Note the amount of our blessing. It is all spiritual blessing in heavenly places in Christ. Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ: God has so richly blessed us and we are wanting to return that blessing unto Him. This blessing is past tense, hath, God has already done it. He has already poured out the blessing. There is nothing that we need to wait for. The only thing we need to do is lay hold of it; just reach out for it. Then notice it is with all spiritual blessings. In the mind of God, our victory over the flesh and our inheritance have already been granted. We aren't fighting for victory; we are fighting from the victory already established in the heavenly realm. Christ won that victory at the cross. There is such a difference in Christians, because so many Christians come to the Lord and they are only concentrating on natural blessings.

Yes, God has given us many natural blessings, many material blessings and they do come directly from the Lord. But the difference in spiritual people and carnal is that spiritual people are very much concerned with spiritual blessings. Then the question is what is a spiritual blessing? What do we mean by a spiritual blessing? Paul announces the spiritual blessings in this book. Paul wants our focus on spiritual blessings. Paul lists them: Election: Being chosen before the foundation of the world (v. 4). Adoption: Being placed as legal heirs, sons of God (v. 5). Redemption: The forgiveness of sins by His blood (v. 7). Sealing: The Holy Spirit as a down payment on our eternity (v. 13-14). A carnal person wants God to change their circumstances on the earth. A spiritual person wants God to change their position to “in the heavenlies.” Once we see our circumstances from the throne room, the giants in our life look like grasshoppers. The “Full Purpose” of this book is to move the believer from the desert of trying; to the garden of trusting in what is already finished. In the Bible, the desert and the garden aren't just places; they are states of being and methods of relating to God. The desert (the wilderness) is characterized by scarcity. In a desert, they were constantly searching for resources that aren't naturally there. In the wilderness, Israel had to focus on their own footsteps. They were constantly worried about what shall we eat? and Where is the water?

This represents the Carnal Christian or the religious person who is constantly trying to perform well enough to earn God's favor. In the desert of trying, they were always almost there but never arriving. It is the exhaustion of trying to keep the Law or maintain a religious reputation through human effort. It is dry, weary, and ultimately leads to the death of the first generation which is a picture of the death of self-effort. The focus is downward, on the hot sand and the tired feet. It is the, "I must do better mindset." The Garden of Trusting is upon the Finished Work of Christ! The Garden which is Canaan/The Heavens is characterized by abundance. In a garden, the fruit grows because the environment is perfectly provided by the Gardener Christ. Remember in Joh 20:15 Jesus saith unto her, Woman, why weepest thou? whom seekest thou? She, supposing him to be the **gardener**, saith unto him, Sir, if thou have borne him hence, tell me where thou hast laid him, and I will take him away. The finished work is stated in Ephesians 1:3 God hath (already) blessed us. In a garden, we don't try to make a tree grow by pulling on its leaves; we trust the source. Trusting is the act of sitting down in the shade of what Christ the Gardener has already planted.

Eph 2:6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: When we move into the Garden, our labor changes. We are no longer laboring to find life; we are laboring to stay in the rest of God. (Practical Walk). We are appropriating the fruit that is already hanging on the branches of the "In Christ" relationship. The focus is upward and outward. It is the realization that "All things work together for good (Rom 8:28) because the Gardener Jesus is in control of the climate. The "Full Purpose" of the Ephesian letter is to act as the Jordan River crossing. To move from the Desert to the Garden, we must experience a death to the idea that we can provide for ourself. This is why the second generation had to be circumcised. It is the cutting away of the fleshly confidence. Once that confidence of "trying" is removed, we can step into the Garden of trusting. In the Garden, we realize that we aren't a servant trying to get into the house; we are an heir who was born into the estate. In the Desert, we are defined by our history (Egypt). In the Garden, we are defined by our position (in the Heavens). Paul writes Ephesians to convince us to stop acting like spiritual nomads wandering in the desert and start acting like heavenly royalty.

We mentioned the heavenly body or the heavenly seen of Abraham's seed and as the sand of the seashore and the Church fulfills that promise of the stars of heaven. The Church today has swapped the Starlight of our heavenly calling for the Sand of earthly things. While the sand (the physical, the numbers, the social impact) is part of God's promise to Abraham, it was never meant to be the primary focus of the believer's identity. This shift from the stars to the sand is seen in modern culture and it hinders the full purpose that Paul wanted for the Church. Today, the health of a church is measured by what can be seen on the seashore: attendance numbers, buildings, and such like. The problem is we can have a massive pile of sand that has no heavenly light. The Heavenly reality in Ephesians 1 focuses on being chosen in Him and accepted in the beloved. When we focus on the stars, which is our heavenly position, success is measured by how deeply a believer is grounded in Christ, regardless of whether they are in a cathedral or a prison cell. The modern church culture often treats the Bible as a manual for a better earthly life rather than a map of our heavenly inheritance. The sand focus is sermons that do not tell people the Truth of the provisions have been provided, but we must walk in them.

The tragedy of the “Sand Focus” in modern church culture is that it treats the King of Glory as a mere consultant for an earthly career. When sermons focus strictly on the provisions which are marvelous, but they effectively keep the believer in the wilderness, looking for manna on the ground. Paul’s epistles are a direct correction to this. The Bible teaches that when we are seated in the heavenlies, we become a New Creature. However, the Position without Practice tells us that because the New Man exists legally, we don’t need to put him on practically. This is deadly! It leaves the believer in a state of spiritual withering. Paul says in Ephesians 4:22-24 that we must put off... the old man and put on the new man. The reality is if we have the provision of a new suit of clothes but never put them on, we are still walking around in the rags of the world. This makes people believe they are dressed for the wedding while they are still covered in the mud of the wilderness. It turns Grace into a license for defeat. In the Bible, Grace is power. But in Position without Practice, Grace is merely an excuse. The teaching of Position without Practice is a spiritual fraud. It takes a glorious, legal truth of our position in Christ and uses it to justify a lawless, earthly life.

When Paul tells us to walk worthy, he is describing our Practical walk. People believe their practical walk doesn’t matter then grace is treated only as a passive eraser. In Paul’s epistles, Grace is an engine. It is the divine energy that enables our practical walk. Titus 2:11-12 says Grace is actually teaching us to deny ungodliness. If grace doesn’t teach us to change our walk, it isn’t the Grace of the Bible; it’s a religious hallucination. Grace is our teacher to walk a practical walk. Tit 2:11 For **the grace of God** that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12 **Teaching us that**, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; This ungodly teaching to ignore our practical walk because we have all the provisions insults the Holy Spirit. This is perhaps why it is most deadly. Ephesians 1:13 tells us we are sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise. The Holy Spirit is not a motionless seal; He is a living Person. If we claim to be in the heavenlies which is our Position but refuse to walk in the Spirit; Practically, we are effectively trying to force the Holy Spirit to participate in our carnality. Paul warns us in Ephesians 4:30, Grieve not the Holy Spirit of God. We grieve Him when we use our position as a cover for a practical walk. When preaching only focuses on the provision and not the walk, this leaves the believer defenseless against Satan.

We cannot fight a heavenly battle of Eph 6 if we are living a carnal life. If the believer is not taught how important our practical walk is, they become a target that thinks it’s a victor. This ungodly teaching splits the believer in two. It creates a person who speaks the language of the seated in the heavens on Sunday but lives in the sand of the world on Monday. Paul’s full Purpose in Ephesians shows us that we are operating from all spiritual blessings already provided. The faithful in Ephesus were those who were full purposed. When we are caught in the snare of mere activity, we are like the first generation of Israel busy walking in circles in the desert, exhausted but never actually taking possession of the land. The Church at Ephesus (Rev 2) was doctrinally sound and hardworking, but they became earth dwellers in a sense. To stay in First Love is to keep our eyes on the “seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Set your affection on things above, not on things on the earth. It is the constant realization that we are essentially aliens on earth who are legally and spiritually citizens of Heaven. Focusing on the heavenlies requires a surrender to the Holy Spirit that many today find uncomfortable. To sit in heavenly places means acknowledging a realm of spiritual warfare and divine provision that cannot be managed by a committee.

The faithful are those who yield to the Holy Spirit. The faithful are those willing to look up. The Full Purposed mindset is, the believer stops trying to build a kingdom on the sand and starts living as a representative of the Kingdom that is already established in the heavenlies. We have already been blessed with all spiritual blessings. God has given to us a full rich, well-rounded provision. There is nothing that is lacking in the blessing that God has already poured out. It is just a matter of us reaching and laying hold or apprehending those blessings. God always intended that the Church should be separate from the world. The problem today is that the Church is trying to be like the world. They are using the world's plan instead of following God's plan. The way we lay hold of spiritual blessings is we have to be heavenly minded. We have to be separated from the world. We must not just be separated from but separated unto the heavenly riches and blessings that there are in Christ Jesus. Paul tells us when this happens, we are going to have another type of battle. We are going to have a spiritual battle against principalities and powers. We will see that in Chap 6. The overall church as a whole has been chosen to dwell in the heavenly places. We can expect to have a conflict with Satan himself. The (Canaan) land of rest is also the land of war.

Paul tells us that the Practical Walk is not an option for the spiritual person; it is the necessary boot camp for anyone who intends to actually occupy their heavenly seat. If we are not taught how to walk here, we will be easily knocked out of our seat in the heavenlies. Most Christians try to fight the devil from their own strength. Paul establishes our Position in Chapters 1-3 before he mentions the War of Chapter 6. He knows that if we try to fight Satan from the desert, we will lose. We must fight from the Heavenlies. The practical walk is the process of dressing for the battle which we learn in Eph 6. Paul identifies that our enemies are not just Satan, but the flesh which are designed to keep us from our inheritance: We don't fight the flesh by staring at it; we fight it by walking away from it, looking up toward the heavenlies. We set our affections on things above. Then there is the enemy of the world. In Romans 12:2, Be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. We must be conscious of the trap: Being separated from the world without being separated unto Christ is a spiritual vacuum. If we only focus on what we have left behind in the world without laying hold of what we are moving toward (the Heavenly Riches), we end up in a dry, wilderness state of mind. We must change our mindset. Renew our mind; We are separated unto Christ.

Satan doesn't care if we leave Egypt; he only cares if we actually enter Canaan. He will let us be religious in the wilderness all day. But the moment we press toward the mark of our heavenly inheritance, the enemies which are legion come out to meet us. Paul deals with the enemies by teaching that Holiness is the only House that Satan cannot burn down. By walking practically in the provisions of Truth, Righteousness, and Peace, we aren't just talking about the heavenlies, we are demonstrating the authority of the heavenlies on the earth. When we take our seat in Christ, we realize that the enemy is not fighting to keep us out of Heaven because our destination is secure; he is fighting to keep us from bringing Heaven down to our "Practical Walk." God has given us everything in Christ.

Ephesians 1:4-14 May 14 2026 The Riches of His Grace!

Eph 1:4 According as he hath chosen **us** in him before the **foundation** of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: The word foundation means to cast down or to throw down and it tells us of the fact that this world was thrown down. The Greek word for foundation means a casting down. This points to its root meaning to describe a cataclysmic event between Genesis 1:1 and Genesis 1:2. God chose us in Christ before the world even fell in Ge 1:1 In the beginning God created the heaven and the earth. (this was a perfect creation) 2 And the earth was (become) without form, and void; and darkness was upon the face of the deep. God does not create things void or in vain. Isaiah 45:18 states, He created it not in vain, He formed it to be inhabited. Therefore, the void state of Genesis 1:2 means a judgment occurred; a throwing down associated with the fall of Satan (Isaiah 14:12-15; Ezekiel 28:12-17). Isa 14:12 How art thou fallen from heaven, O Lucifer, son of the morning! how art thou cut down to the ground, which didst weaken the nations! 13 For thou hast said in thine heart, I will ascend into heaven, I will exalt my throne above the stars of God: I will sit also upon the mount of the congregation, in the sides of the north:

14 I will ascend above the heights of the clouds; I will be like the most High. 15 Yet thou shalt be brought down to hell, to the sides of the pit. God chose us in Christ before this casting down ever happened. Our redemption was established in the heart of God before the first rebellion in the universe even occurred. The “us” of v4 is the new creation, which is Christ in us. Redemption was not an afterthought with God. The Lamb of God, Jesus Christ was the solution before the problem was even manifest to man in Adam. Refer to 1Peter 1:19-20: This identifies Christ as the Lamb who verily was foreordained before the foundation of the world. Then Revelation 13:8: Refers to the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world. God did not react to Adam's sin. He initiated a plan where the end was declared from the beginning. When Adam was formed from the dust, the remedy for his failure was already sitting on the throne of Heaven. God knew Adam and Eve would fall into sin. So why did God create them? Why did God create man? For love to be genuine, it must be a choice. If God had created Adam and Eve in a way that it was impossible for them to sin, they would have been divine robots. God didn't want programmed servants; He wanted a family. He wanted fellowship. Real love requires the potential for rejection.

By giving humanity a will (and a choice), God allowed for the possibility of the sick spell and the Fall. The fact that He created us this way shows that He valued our free will more than He valued a world of forced perfection. If sin never entered the world, there are parts of God's nature that we would never have known or experienced. Without the Fall, we would know God's power and holiness, but we never would have understood His Mercy, Grace, and His Sacrifice. Boil that down to His Divine Love! To show grace, there must be someone who does not merit favor. Ro 5:8 says, But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us. The Cross is the ultimate proof of God's character, and it only happens in a fallen world. God demonstrates His love by Christ dying for us while we were still in rebellion. Without the fall of man, we would know God is good, but we would never know the lengths He would go to rescue us. The Cross proves that His Divine love is not dependent on our performance; it is a fixed part of His nature that remains constant even when we are at our worst. The Cross is the only place where God's perfect justice and His perfect mercy meet without contradicting each other.

The Cross is the bridge that takes us from a human level of existence to a divine level of existence. It shows that God was willing to endure the greatest possible pain to bring His chosen people into a union with Him that is far more secure than what existed before the world was thrown down. The Cross is the ultimate evidence that God is exactly who He says He is. It reveals a level of commitment to His family that a perfect, unfallen world could never have fully illustrated. When we look at the Cross as the ultimate proof of God's character, we see that His love is not a passive feeling but a relentless, pursuing force. This love is so vast that it actually factored the Fall into the plan just so it could demonstrate its own depth through rescue. God did not start loving us the moment we turned toward Him, nor did He start loving humanity only after Adam sinned. Because He chose us in Christ before the foundation of the world, His love was already set upon us while the earth was still perfect. The sick spell of Genesis 1:2 and the later failure of Adam did not catch Him off guard or diminish His divine love towards us. Instead, these events became the stage upon which He could show just how far His Divine love would go. God's divine love was so great that it required a gift of equal magnitude.

By giving His only begotten Son, God was giving of His own very essence. This proves that He loves the new creation, the Christ in you, with the exact same intensity that He loves Jesus Himself. In the Garden of Eden, love was seen in the beauty of creation. At the Cross, love was seen in the scars of the Redeemer. He didn't just want to forgive us; He loved us so much that He wanted to inhabit you. The goal of His love was to bring you into a bond where you are one spirit with Him. Because this love is tied to the new nature and not the old nature, it is completely secure. The old nature is filled with failure, but God so loved the world that He provided a way to birth a new nature inside of you that is birthed directly from His own life. This means His love is not a response to our behavior; it is a commitment to His own seed within you. He saw the chaos, the darkness of the deep, and the eventual rebellion of man, and He decided right then that we were worth the price of His only Son. Every drop of blood shed at the Cross was a word spoken in a Divine language, telling us that we are cherished, we are chosen, and we are identified forever as His holy and blameless child. That is the magnitude of a God who so loved that He gave everything to have us.

The New Creation (Christ in us) is actually a higher state of being than Adam's original state. Adam had a human righteousness that could fail. The Believer has Christ's righteousness which is eternal. God allowed the Fall so that He could bring us into a union with Him that is far more intimate than what Adam had in the Garden. Adam walked with God; but through the New Creation and the redemption plan, God dwells in us. In the grand timeline of eternity, the suffering of this world is described as light affliction compared to the eternal weight of glory (2 Corinthians 4:17). God viewed the final result, which is a redeemed, tested, and voluntary family of the New Creations **who chose Him** through the fire. We have a choice and we chose Him through the fire. That is why He created us his way; He wanted a family. He didn't create Adam to watch him fail; He created the human race to eventually share in His own divine life. The judicial reality of being in Christ is: When we look at 2 Corinthians 5:17, it says that if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. God is a righteous Judge. If He has already judged our Old Nature at the Cross of Calvary, He cannot legally bring it up again to define who we are.

To God, our identity is not a mixture of a sinner and a saint. He sees the finished work of His Son. If He were to view us by our Old Nature mistakes, He would be ignoring the blood of Jesus, which He refuses to do. Because God chose us before the foundation of the world, His first thought of us was, we are in a state of holiness and blamelessness. Before Adam ever sinned, God saw us in Christ. Our mistakes are a temporary byproduct of a dead nature (the flesh), but our spirit is an eternal reality. A father doesn't define his son by the dirt he gets on his clothes while playing; he defines the son by his DNA, the life that he has in him. God defines us by His Son Jesus Christ's seed that remains in us. 1Jo 3:9 Whosoever is born of God doth not commit sin; for his seed remaineth in him: and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. It is actually impossible to live a holy life if we believe God is still counting our Old Nature mistakes against our identity. If we see ourselves as a sinner, we will eventually act like a sinner. But if we see ourselves as the Righteousness of God in Christ, we will begin to act like the New Creation we truly are. Refer to Hebrews 10:17 And their sins and iniquities will I remember no more.

He is talking about this new life, that holy life that we have whenever we are born again. So we should be holy **and without blame before him in love**: Paul is describing the new creation. This is what we are in Christ. We have seen before that every believer has two natures. There is this holy nature which is the life of Christ and there is that old Adamic nature with which we were born into this world. When a Christian sins, that's what does the sinning is, that Old Nature. It is impossible for the new nature to sin. We have the choice to surrender our bodies to either the new nature or the old nature. When we surrender totally to the new nature, it is an absolute guarantee we do not sin because of this holiness of the life of Christ. Then if we surrender ourselves to the Old Nature, we can't do anything but sin because our old man is filled with that. Eph 1:5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption (This should be Sonship) of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will. When we are talking about predestination we are talking about the new nature in Christ. That creation was predestinated to live because it is in Christ. The old creation was predestined to die because it was in Adam and God knew exactly even before Adam sinned; God knew that he would.

So this is where the predestination comes in and not a matter of individuals, but a matter of collective creation; the new creation as opposed to the old creation. When Paul speaks of being predestinated, he is describing a pre-determined track or lane that a creation must follow. Just as a train is predestined to arrive at the destination of the tracks it sits upon, humanity is predestinated based on which nature it possesses. The Old Creation in Adam was predestinated to death and judgment because it is rooted in the fall. Romans 5:12 explains that by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men. Because God knew the world would be cast down, He pre-determined that Adamic life could never inherit eternity. It was a closed system destined for corruption. The New Creation in Christ was predestinated to life and sonship. This is not about God picking and choosing individuals to save while ignoring others; it is about God pre-determining the glorious outcome for anyone who is found in Christ. Ephesians 1:5 shows that this new creation is predestinated to be placed as a son. This was the good pleasure of His will that He would have a family that shares His own life. Divine adoption differs from human adoption. With God, this placing is not just a legal ceremony; it is backed by a biological reality through the New Birth. The only way to enter the family of God is to be born into it. Jesus told Nicodemus in John 3:3 that except a man be born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

Human Adoption is a legal standing, but no shared nature. Divine Sonship is a legal standing combined with a shared nature. God does not have step-children because the Holy Spirit literally births a new spirit within the believer. John 1:13 emphasizes that these children are born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. This is why you are a literal child of God; the very life-source of the Father has been imparted to our spirit. We are partakers of the very nature of Christ, the divine nature. 2Pe 1:4 Whereby are given unto us exceeding great and precious promises: that by these ye might be partakers of the divine nature, having escaped the corruption that is in the world through lust. There is only one way to get into the family of God and that is by blood, the blood of Christ. Eph 1:6 To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. We are accepted in the beloved. We stand before God as a believer just like Christ as a son of God. The transition from the old creation to the new creation is a transition from the display of God's power to the display of His heart. While the heavens declare the glory of His handiwork, the believer declares the glory of His grace.

In the first creation God showed forth His power. In the first creation, God made something out of nothing. In the new creation, God made something holy out of something that was fallen and rebellious. In the first few chapters of Genesis we find those 7 days of creation. God chose to exhibit His glorious power in creating all of these things. But in the new creation God did that to manifest His grace. The spiritual creation is where God really reflects and enlarges upon His matchless grace. We can never try with all of our works and with all of our goodness to make ourselves worthy of God and that will never work. This is what Cain tried to do. He tried to bring all of his marvelous works before the Lord to be accepted. The very best that Cain could offer was not sufficient to give him entrance unto God. The only thing that will give us entrance into God is whether or not we are in Christ. The way to be in Christ is by virtue of the new birth. So He has made us accepted in the beloved. Grace is not just a help for the weak; it is the very power of the atmosphere of the new creation. It is the unmerited, supernatural life of God flowing into a human spirit. Accepted in the beloved in Ephesians 1:6 is one of the most powerful statements in the Bible.

It means that our standing before the Father is identical to the standing of Jesus Christ. When you are in the beloved, God does not see you as a separate entity trying to measure up. He sees you as a part of His own Son. This is the mystery of the body of Christ. 1John 4:17 says, as he is, so are we in this world. This does not say as He is, so we will be when we get to heaven. It says right now, in the midst of our daily life, our acceptance is as high and as perfect as that of Jesus at the right hand of the Father. If God were to find a flaw in our acceptance, He would have to find a flaw in Christ's acceptance, because we are in Him. We are the object of the Father's love to the same degree that Jesus is. It means if we can measure Christ's acceptance before God then we can measure our own. If we are accepted in Him then God accepts us to the degree that He accepts His Son. We are accepted not on our own merit but because we **are in Christ**. So God has tremendous blessings for us if we are just ready and willing to take it by faith. Eph 1:7 In whom we have redemption **through his blood**, the forgiveness of sins, **according to the riches of his grace**; It is upon the basis of the blood of Christ at the cross of Calvary. Paul shows that this acceptance is not a vague feeling, but a bought-and-paid-for reality. We have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of His grace.

Redemption means that we have been bought out of the slave market of the old nature and the old-world system. The price was not silver or gold, but the precious blood of Christ. This blood is what makes the new birth possible. Because the blood has cleared the deck of all sin and judgment, God is now free to pour the riches of His grace into our life. We stand before God today not on the merit of what we have done for Him, but on the merit of what the Beloved has done for us. Our responsibility is not to earn this acceptance, but to believe it and walk in the confidence of a son who is fully pleasing to his Father. There are two major avenues that Paul pursues concerning this redemption. #1 this redemption has given to us forgiveness of sins and the moment we believe we begin to enjoy that. Note this: every person has already been forgiven. It doesn't make any difference how vile a sinner that there is out there on the street today, he has already been forgiven. The reason he has been forgiven is because Christ has paid the price. Jesus already paid the price for all of those sins. So what is the difference between the sinner and the saint? The saint has claimed that place; the saint enjoys that forgiveness and the sinner doesn't. The sinner does not enjoy the forgiveness that is already his.

1 the forgiveness of sins, but here is the division where many Christians never come into the fullness of it and Paul enlarges on it in the next few verses. #2 It is according to the riches of his grace; redemption has given to us the riches of His grace. The riches of His grace is far more than just the forgiveness of sins. That is just the very beginning of what God has given to us in Christ. There is a difference between the provision of forgiveness and the possession of it. On the Cross, Jesus Christ dealt with the sin of the entire world. 2 Corinthians 5:19 states that God was in Christ, reconciling the world unto himself, not imputing their trespasses unto them. This means that from God's side of the table, the debt of the human race has been canceled. The price paid by the blood was sufficient for every sin ever committed. However, a gift must be received to be enjoyed. The sinner remains in a state of spiritual death not because God is holding their sins against them, but because they have not yet received the life that is found in the New Creation. The saint is simply a person who has accepted the legal reality and believed that Christ established that for everyone. While forgiveness is the doorway, it is not the destination. Many believers stop at the door, living their lives only focusing on the fact that they are forgiven.

Eph 1:7 In whom we have redemption **through his blood**, the **forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace**; But Paul says that redemption is **according to the riches of His grace**. If forgiveness is the canceling of a debt, the riches of His grace is the depositing of an infinite fortune into our account. Ro 5:17 For if by one man's offence death reigned by one; much more they which receive **abundance of grace** and of the gift of righteousness shall reign in life by one, Jesus Christ. This describes this **as the abundance of grace** and the **gift of righteousness**. To have the riches of His grace means you have been given: the Life of God: Not just a clean record, but the very nature of the Father. We have been given the Mind of Christ: As seen in Eph 1:8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; this grace abounds in wisdom and prudence. We have been given joint-heirship which many refuse: Everything that belongs to Christ now belongs to the New Creation. **The riches of his grace is so extensive that V7-14 comprise only two sentences.** But these two sentences and all of these thoughts are so connected; they describe to us, at least in part, of the riches of His grace. Eph 1:8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; Wherein means His grace and Paul begins to describe for us what are the riches of His grace.

As we go down through these different things, we want to point out that these are spiritual blessings. Again there are many Christians who do not realize what spiritual blessings actually are. I will read Eph 1:7-14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; 8 Wherein he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence; V8 The riches of His grace provide the believer with a spiritual mind. God did not just save us and leave us in ignorance; He lavished His grace upon us by opening our spiritual eyes. True wealth includes the knowledge of how to live and the wisdom to understand eternal things. 9 Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: The riches of His grace are seen in God's willingness to share His secrets with us. By making known the mystery of His will, He treats us as confidants and sons rather than servants. It is a sign of great wealth and favor when a King reveals His inner purposes to us. This pertains to the riches of His grace because it shows that God's favor has elevated our status, giving us access to the very heart and plans He desires for us. 10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him:

This verse shows that the riches of His grace are powerful enough to heal the entire universe. The plan to gather all things together in Christ is the ultimate display of grace's reach. It demonstrates that God's favor is not just for the individual, but is a wealth that will eventually repair every bit of damage caused by the fall and the sick spell of the earth. Grace is the unifying force that brings total order out of chaos. 11 In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: Here, the riches of His grace are defined as an inheritance. We have obtained a position where we share in the very assets of Christ. This moves us from being forgiven to being legal heirs. Predestination in this context means that God's grace has pre-calculated a fortune for the new creation that cannot be lost or diminished, because it is based on the counsel of His own will. 12 That we should be to the praise of his glory, who first trusted in Christ. The riches of His grace are intended to make us a display of His glory. When we live as those who first trusted in Christ, we become the evidence of how wealthy God is in mercy. A person's glory is often seen in the excellence of what they produce.

By transforming us into holy and blameless people, God's grace proves its own staggering value to the rest of creation. 13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise. The riches of His grace include the gift of absolute security. Being sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise is like God placing a divine lock on His treasure. This shows that the grace which saved us is also the grace that keeps us. We are not left to protect our own salvation; the wealth of God's grace provides the Seal of the Spirit to ensure we remain His purchased people forever. 14 Which is **the earnest** of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory. The Holy Spirit is the earnest or the down payment of the total inheritance. This gives us a taste of heaven right now. The Spirit's presence in the believer is a small portion of the infinite wealth we will experience in the ages to come. It serves as a guarantee that the same grace which renewed our spirits will eventually redeem our bodies, completing the full distribution of the riches of His grace. The word **earnest** in verse 14 is a beautiful link to ancient marriage customs, specifically the betrothal or engagement period.

The riches of His grace are not just a legal inheritance, but a relational commitment from the Bridegroom to His Bride. In the culture of the Bible, when a man and woman were betrothed, the groom would give the bride a gift called an arrhabōn (the Greek word for earnest). This was a down payment or a pledge. It was more than a promise; it was a piece of the actual marriage price given in advance. By giving us His Spirit, Jesus has committed Himself to the marriage union. It serves as a spiritual engagement ring, proving that He intends to return and complete the ceremony. This pertains to the riches of His grace because God did not just send a message of love; He gave a part of Himself as a guarantee of His return. While all believers are part of the family of God, the New Testament speaks of a special group, the Full Overcomers often referred to as overcomers. The Bride is not merely a follower; she is the help meet who walks beside the Lamb. This is based on the law of the first creation where Eve was not made to follow behind Adam, but was taken from his side to walk as his equal companion. The relationship between Jesus as the Bridegroom and the full overcomers as the Bride involves a deeper partaking of grace: Just as Eve was taken out of Adam; the Bride of Christ is formed out of the life and nature of Jesus.

To partake in this grace means to live entirely out of the New Creation nature, refusing to be defined by the old Adamic life. Revelation 19:7-8 says the marriage of the Lamb is come, and his wife hath made herself ready. This readiness is not based on human works, but on the fine linen which is the righteousness of saints. This righteousness is the very grace of Christ woven into the believer's daily conduct. For the full overcomers who constitute the Bride, the earnest of the Spirit is not just a promise of survival, but a training in companionship. While the world is still in its fallen state, the Bride is learning to walk in step with the Groom. Partaking in this grace means: refusing the Old Nature: Recognizing that the Adamic life has no place beside the Lamb. It is living out the holiness and wisdom mentioned in Ephesians 1:8 right now. By walking beside Him, the Bride reflects the praise of His glory more than any other part of creation. She is the evidence that God's grace was powerful enough to take a human being and elevate them to a position of equal standing in the Beloved. This side-by-side walk is the fulfillment of being accepted in the beloved, where the Bridegroom's acceptance and the Bride's acceptance are one and the same.

The earnest of the Spirit in verse 14 is the ultimate seal of Divine love that refuses to let go. When Paul speaks of this guarantee, he is describing the lengths to which God has gone to prove His affection. This is not a cold legal contract; it is the passionate commitment of a Bridegroom who so loved His Bride that He gave her His own heart as a down payment until He can return to claim her fully. God's love is so great He was willing to put His own life on the line. In ancient times, if a man gave an earnest and did not return to complete the marriage, he forfeited that gift. By giving us the Spirit, God has pledged His very self to our future. This pertains to the riches of His grace because it shows that His love is a risk-taking, all-consuming devotion. The riches of His grace are most visible in how this love prepares the Bride. Our Bridegroom loves His bride enough to provide everything she needs for her wedding day. That's why, Jesus provides the new nature so that we can walk beside Him. This is the richest Riches of His Grace! Come Bridegroom, come soon!

Ephesians 1:15-23 May 21, 2026 Realizing Our Heavenly Position!

Eph 1:15 Wherefore I also, after **I heard** of your **faith in the Lord Jesus, and love** unto all the saints. In v15, Paul identifies the two pillars of a healthy Christian life: Faith toward God and Love toward others. While these are signs of spiritual vitality, Paul uses them as a springboard to explain that the Christian journey is much higher than initial salvation. In the Greek context, this faith implies sustained personal trust and loyalty. It represents the believer's alignment with Christ as both Savior (Redeemer) and Lord (His Authority). Paul commends them because their faith wasn't a secret; it was heard of. It was active enough to produce a reputation. **If faith is the root, love is the fruit.** This is somewhat of a pattern that we find in Paul's writings to the various saints; that is he commends them for the progress they have already made. He says here that he knew that they had been saved and he knew that they had been filled with the power of the Holy Ghost. But notice he also says, I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus; I heard of your love unto all of the saints. These are marvelous characteristics to have in our experience. But what we and the Ephesians saints must realize is that we have not yet arrived. The idea that positional truth (who we are in Christ) cancels out the need for a practical walk (how we actually live) is a dangerous misunderstanding.

If faith is the root, love is the fruit. But, fake, put-on love happens when people try to tape artificial fruit onto a dead branch instead of letting the Holy Spirit produce the real thing through a disciplined, practical walk. Paul never separates our heavenly position from our earthly practice. Instead, he teaches that we are seated in the heavens so that we have the power to live rightly on the earth. Our heavenly seat is not an escape from reality; it is the source of power that allows us to face reality. The teaching that we do not have to have a practical walk rejects the daily discipline of putting off the old man. If believers follow this teaching, they cannot produce supernatural fruit. Therefore, love becomes a mask. It is a "put on" performance of politeness, fake smiles, and rehearsed phrases. It is fueled by human effort. Divine Love is born from a True Walk in the Truth: Paul states in Galatians 5:22 that love is the fruit of the Spirit that comes from walking in the Spirit. Divine love cannot be faked; it is the overflow of a life that is practically surrendered to God day by day. Therefore, Paul states in Eph 5:6 Let no man deceive you with vain words. The Ephesian saints had not come to the completion of their experience. It is easy to think that once we have solid faith and genuine love, we have made it.

The enemy is such a deceiver, he will use even Christians whom we think we can trust to lead us astray. We must stay in the word of God! However, Paul tells us that these are actually the prerequisites for deeper insight. Think of faith and love as the foundation of a house. We don't live on a foundation; we build upon it. Paul's prayer in verses (17–19) reveals that he wants their eyes of understanding to be enlightened. He is moving them from experience (what they feel and do) to revelation (what they know and inherit). The completion that Paul points toward isn't a destination we reach on earth, but it is a full spiritual maturity and realization. It's Christ in you! In Eph 1, this completion involves three specific knowings: **We must know #1 the Hope of His Calling** - Moving from I am saved to I understand the eternal purpose for which God chose me. We have to move past the idea that salvation is just an escape from judgment. Most people view salvation as a destination or a ticket to heaven. But Paul says, salvation is merely the on-ramp of a highway to an eternal throne with Christ. Why did God choose me and you? It is because our existence is wrapped up in the fact that God didn't just save us from something; He saved us for something that existed before the world began.

Eph 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: God did not just save us from something (hell, sin, and death); He saved us for something; and that something is intimate, eternal relationship. If salvation were only about a rescue mission from hell, it would be like a lifeguard pulling a drowning person out of the ocean, dropping them on the sand, and walking away. But God doesn't do that. He pulls us out of the water, brings us into His home, places us into His family, and makes us His children. The verse that is so important is this: 1Co 1:9 God is faithful, by whom **ye were called unto the fellowship** of his Son Jesus Christ our Lord. Why did God choose you and me? Because before the world was ever created, God looked across time, saw you, and said, I want that one in My family. He saved you from sin because sin was destroying you and separating you from Him. He saved you for Himself. Our existence is wrapped up in the incredible truth that the Triune Godhead of the universe simply wanted to walk with you and me. Even if you were the only person on earth, Jesus would have suffered and died just to have a relationship and walk with you.

The “Why” of our existence is to be a lively part in a new humanity. God’s purpose is to gather together in one all things in Christ (Eph 1:10). Our existence is designed to be part of God’s plan to display God’s character to the entire universe. It is to the Praise of His Glory. Three times in Ephesians 1, Paul says we exist to the praise of the glory of His grace. Why? Because we are a crown of His grace. God wanted to demonstrate His kindness in us. Our existence provides the canvas upon which God paints His greatest attributes. Why is it the Hope of His Calling? In our English, hope is a wish. In the Greek, hope is a confident expectation. Again Eph 1, shows this completion involves three specific knowings: and #2 We are the Riches of His Inheritance. We realize that we are God’s inheritance. The completion involves understanding how much God values us. Then # 3 of these specific knowings: We must know the Exceeding Greatness of His Power.

We know God is powerful, but we must experience the same resurrection power that raised Christ from the dead operating in our daily life. We often imagine power as an explosive force, like parting the Red Sea or calling down fire. However, the resurrection power Paul describes is essentially the power to bring life out of death. So, using this power every day isn't about becoming a spiritual superhero. It is simply about letting God's life work through our normal, everyday struggles. When a crisis hits, our flesh reacts one way, but the Spirit reacts another. Paul tells us that we have to actively choose to tune our mind to the Spirit in the middle of our circumstances. That pause is the act of refusing to let our flesh drive our reaction and handing the steering wheel to the Holy Spirit. The idea of stopping our own effort and admitting we can't do it isn't a mental trick to relieve stress; it is the absolute core of how Paul experienced God's power. Paul pleaded with God to remove a severe struggle in his life, and God refused, explaining exactly how His power operates: 2 Corinthians 12:9-10 And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities... for when I am weak, then am I strong. But how do we do this when a crisis hits and we feel utterly alone. Our adrenaline pumps, our flesh screams to protect itself, and the spiritual reality feels a million miles away. There is a war inside our head. When a crisis hits, two completely different reactions will instantly collide: The Voice of the Flesh: It wants to manipulate, control, worry, lash out, or despair.

It says, you are alone, so you better fix this or hide. The Voice of the Spirit produces peace, patience, and a quiet confidence in God's presence. The feeling and the urge of the flesh does not mean we have failed. It just means we are human. The battle hasn't been lost; it has just begun. How do we stop the flesh from taking over? Paul tells us in Ro 8:5 For they that are after the flesh do **mind** the things of the flesh; but they that are after the Spirit the things of the Spirit. 6 For to be carnally minded is death; but to be spiritually minded is life and peace. The word **mind** here means to set your attention or tune your wavelength. My flesh wants to react in panic/anger right now. But I am choosing to turn my attention to the Spirit. It is like changing the radio station. We don't fight the bad music by screaming at the speakers; we just turn the dial to a different frequency. We pray! Acknowledge: Lord, I am in this situation, and I feel completely alone and overwhelmed. Admit: I do not have the patience, the wisdom, or the strength to handle this. My tank is completely empty. Surrender: Because I am weak, I am stepping out of the driver's seat. I am handing the steering wheel to You. Let Your resurrection life react through me, because I can't do it. I want to tell you the secret: Resurrection power requires a corpse.

God cannot bring life out of our situation until we finally stop trying to keep our own self-sufficiency alive. When we die to our own efforts, Christ's life naturally rushes into our emptiness. When we are suffering, the enemy's favorite weapon is isolation. We feel like Paul in the arena, completely abandoned. But remember what Paul wrote at the very end of his life when everyone else walked away: 2 Timothy 4:16-17: At my first answer no man stood with me, but all men forsook me... Notwithstanding the Lord stood with me, and strengthened me. We must realize that our feeling of loneliness is an illusion and the enemy enlarges that in our minds. The very reason resurrection power is available is because the One who conquered the grave is literally standing inside the crisis with us. We are never fighting alone; we are just learning to let the Champion Jesus take over the fight. Again, Resurrection power requires a corpse. God cannot bring life out of our situation until we finally stop trying to keep our own self-sufficiency alive. In 2 Corinthians 4:10-11, Always bearing about in the body the dying of the Lord Jesus, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our body. For we which live are always delivered unto death for Jesus' sake, that the life also of Jesus might be made manifest in our mortal flesh. Paul says, every day I am handed over to death. Every day my flesh is crushed. Why?

Because Paul knew that the only way people would see the supernatural life of Jesus (made manifest in our mortal flesh) was if Paul's own self-sufficiency was dead. He didn't fight to keep his reputation, his comfort, or his control alive. He let them die so Christ could live through him. In Acts 16, Paul and Silas are in Philippi. They have just been brutally beaten with rods, their backs are shredded and bleeding, and they are thrown into the deepest, darkest, nastiest part of a Roman dungeon with their feet locked in stocks. Their flesh had every right to blast panic, anger, and despair. They could have screamed at the guards, cursed their situation, or begged God, Why did you let this happen to us? What did they do at midnight? Acts 16:25 says, And at midnight Paul and Silas prayed, and sang praises unto God. They didn't waste energy screaming at the speakers of their circumstances. They turned the radio dial straight to the heavenly frequency of praise. And what happened? Resurrection power hit the prison, an earthquake shook the foundations, the doors flew open, and chains fell off. Paul learned that his own human strength was actually a barrier to God's resurrection power. It isn't until we reach the end of our own ability that Christ's power fully takes over. It is changing from "I" to "Christ in Me."

This isn't positive self-help; it is waking up to the reality of who is actually living our life. Paul was so consumed by his union with Jesus that he considered his old, independent self to be entirely dead. Ga 2:20 I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me. Col 1:27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: When we shift our mindset from, I have to do this to Christ is doing this through me, we are simply agreeing with Paul's gospel in Galatians 2:20. We are acknowledging that we are a vessel for Christ's life to live through. Paul didn't separate the spiritual from the ordinary. He believed that everyday actions, whether it was making a tent or washing a dish could become a channel for God's life if it was done in union with Him. Col 3:17 And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by him. Doing something in the name of the Lord doesn't mean just stamping Jesus' name on it. It means acting as His representative, with His authority and His life flowing through us, even in the most basic, menial tasks of daily life.

In Eph, chapters 1-3, Paul is laying out the ultimate provisional side of our faith, revealing the unshakeable spiritual bank account we already possess in Christ before he ever gives a single command in chapters 4-6 on how to walk. These three specific knowings; grasping our eternal purpose, recognizing our immense value to God, and accessing His resurrection power are the core assets of that account. Paul insists we understand this first, because we cannot practically walk out our earthly life (Chapters 4-6) until we are fully anchored in the heavenly provisions that have already been secured for us. Eph 1:16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers. The majority of the prayer that we see in Paul's writings is for Christians. Note, the way that Paul prayed for Christians is for spiritual blessings to be poured out upon them. This is what he prayed for in V17. Eph 1:17 That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, **may give unto** you the spirit of **wisdom and revelation** in the knowledge of him: If we look at Eph 1:3, Paul has just declared that God hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. If they and we already have all spiritual blessings, why is Paul praying in verse 17 for God **to give them something** else?

The answer is the key to chapters 1-3: Paul is not asking God to give them new provisions. He is asking God to give them the spiritual eyesight to see the provisions they already possess. Revelation is the uncovering of the truth (turning on the light in the vault). Wisdom is knowing what to do with that truth (knowing how to spend what is in the vault). Un-accessed provision is practically useless. Spiritual blessings in the heavenlies require the Holy Spirit to pull back the curtain so we can say, Oh, I finally see what I have! This prayer in Eph 1:17 is the necessary bridge to get the believer ready for the practical walk, in chapters 4 through 6. Paul prays for their revelation first because our practical walk will never exceed our spiritual revelation. We cannot live out chapter 4 until the Holy Spirit illuminates chapter 1 in our heart. We have to see who we are in Christ before we can act like who we are in Christ. Paul is effectively praying: Lord, I know You have already given them everything they need in the heavenly places. Now, please open their eyes and give them the wisdom to actually comprehend it, so they can walk it out on earth. There is a particular reason why Paul addressed Him as the Father of glory in V17. It is because he wanted that same glory to be revealed in God's people.

So he prayed to the Lord Jesus Christ and to the Father of Glory. It is not just Almighty God or this great ruler of the universe, or King of Kings, although He is all of these things, but he prayed to the Father. This is a wonderful revelation to us when we learn to pray unto our Father because we see that new relationship that we have with Him. Many saints do not know this relationship. Oh such revelation as He is revealed to my heart as my Father. He is My Father. He is not a far-off distant God. He is my Father who is to be embraced intimately by us. He stands with arms wide open ready to receive us whenever we get that wonderful revelation of Him. Paul uses Father of glory because a father imparts his nature and his standing to his children. He doesn't just want us to observe His glory; He intends to produce that same glory in us. Paul wanted to give unto you the **spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him**. Eph 1:18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. God wants us to have the spirit of wisdom. That means that we operate out of the wisdom of Christ day after day. It is in our very spirit to submit to wisdom and when we speak of wisdom, we are talking about Christ Himself. Jesus is wisdom. Then he wants us to have the spirit of revelation.

We are not only talking about the riches of His grace, but we are also talking about spiritual blessings. These can be defined as spiritual blessings; the spirit of wisdom; the spirit of revelation, and the knowledge of Him. This is what God wants us to have. The spirit of revelation means that we can have that spirit whereby God can reveal His Son to us day after day. When we look into the word of God, we don't see rules and regulations and laws and do's and don'ts, we see Christ Himself. When we look into the scriptures, we are changed into that same image as we read in 2 Co 3:18. Then it is in the knowledge of Him. 1Co 1:30 But of him are ye in Christ Jesus, who of God is made unto us wisdom, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption: This is the ultimate key to chapters 1-3. God has already provided everything; righteousness, sanctification, redemption because He provided Christ. The spirit of wisdom and revelation is the provision of spiritual sight. Without it, we are a spiritual billionaire living like a pauper. God provides the light so we can finally see the provisions. Eph 1:18 The eyes of your understanding being enlightened; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. There are three things that he wanted these saints to know as a result of their enlightened understanding.

#1 what is the hope of his calling; this isn't just a career path to the mission field or to preach; it is our calling as sons of God. There is something at the end of this journey of being the sons of the living God. Our hope is to be in that bridal company; to be the closest place to the Lord Jesus Christ that there is as His bride. Then #2 what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. How does God measure the inheritance in the saints? It will be to the extent that we appropriate His provisions now. So often people think that redemption only provided something for us; that Redemption just saved us from a devil's hell. It did. **But God didn't redeem us just for us. God redeemed us for Himself.** Paul wants us to know what is the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. **God wants us to know what benefit God is going to receive in our lives. The more of the life of Christ that God can see in our lives, the greater is going to be His riches. That is His inheritance in the saints** when He sees and finds and enjoys Christ in me. In V19 #3 He wants us to know the exceeding greatness of his power. Paul wants us to know the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe in our own lives.

Eph 1:19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, Eph 1:20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places. That is the power that is expressed and put on display in our own lives. Paul isn't praying for God to give them a calling, or make them an inheritance, or send them power. They already have these provisions. He is praying they would wake up and know them. Eph 1:21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, (this Church age) but also in that which is to come: The principality and power is the satanic power. But the same power that raised Jesus from the dead will give us victory over the devil even today. Refer to Ro 8:11 But if the Spirit of him that raised up Jesus from the dead dwell in you, he that raised up Christ from the dead shall also quicken your mortal bodies by his Spirit that dwelleth in you. Eph 1:22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church. Christ isn't just a distant King; He is the Head of a living organism. In our physical body, the head is the source of all movement, direction, and life. If the hand moves, it's because the head willed it.

This is practical Headship and it must be allowed in our own lives. For Christ to be Head means we surrender our own headship, our own planning, our own reacting, and our own self-will and become responsive to His Christ in us! While Christ is the Head who directs the body, He does not leave us to guess His will. He provides the Holy Spirit as the internal engine and the Word of God as the external map to walk in the fullness of God. (that filleth all in all). Eph 1:23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. The Church is His body and the Church is the fullness of Him that filleth all in all. He has given Christ to be the head over all things to the church. That means that Christ must be allowed to assume that place of headship in my own life in a practical manner. Sadly we know that the Church is not doing that today, but we can. This is one of the most staggering statements in the New Testament: The Church is the fulness of him that filleth all in all. While Jesus was on earth, His physical body was the fullness of God. Now that He is in heaven, the Church which is the Body is to be the fullness of Christ on earth. The world cannot see the invisible Christ in heaven, but they are supposed to see the Fullness of Him through us.

We are the hands He uses to touch, the feet He uses to go, and the mouth He uses to speak. So, if the provision is perfect and the Head is perfect, the Spirit is present, and the Map of the word of God is clear, why has the Church as a whole failed? The Church hasn't failed because it lacks power; it has failed because it has disconnected the practice from the position. We have tried to do Church as an organization. It is an Organism. The Church has walked before sitting in chapters 1-3. This comes before Practically Walking in chapters 4-6. The Church is obsessed with doing, programs, and activities. They want to walk for God without sitting in the revelation of what He has already done. The result of trying to be the hands and feet of Jesus without the spirit of wisdom and revelation is just manifesting human effort. It will eventually burn out and it looks nothing like the Fullness of Christ. Many Christians still view themselves as sinners rather than saints seated in heavenly places. They spend all their time asking God for things He has already given them (the provision) instead of using what is already in the account that Jesus has provided. In many ways, the Church today has replaced the Headship of Christ with the Headship of Man, personalities, traditions, and corporate strategies.

They are asking for God's blessing on their plans instead of following the Lord's plan He has already given to us in His word. The result is a body that doesn't follow the signals of the head. This is called spastic. It moves, but it has no coordination. The world looks at a divided, chaotic Church and doesn't see Christ. The Holy Spirit is treated as a doctrine to be studied rather than a Person to be followed. The result is that the Church becomes a statue. It looks like a body, it has the form of a body, but there is no life moving through it. We don't imitate Christ but we let Him live through us. To fix the failure, we have to go back to Ephesians 1:17-18 and pray that the eyes of our understanding would be enlightened. When the Church finally realizes she is already full of Him, she stops trying to become something and starts simply being who she is. The Church today has traded spiritual revelation for religious information, and that's why the life of Christ isn't being put on display. Paul knew we would want to brag about our hard work or our spiritual discipline. So he says; For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast. Not of yourselves means we didn't build the mansion, and not of works means you didn't buy the mansion.

The boasting Paul mentions is exactly what happens when our human nature tries to take credit for our spiritual position. One reason we don't sit is that we don't feel worthy. We feel like we need to clean ourselves up before we can sit next to Christ. We think, If God knew what I thought this morning, or how I failed yesterday, there's no way He wants me sitting next to Him. We treat God like a strict judge waiting outside the courtroom until we clean off the mud. Paul tells us; To the praise of the glory of his grace, wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved. He hath made us accepted. It does not say, you must make yourself accepted. The Greek word accepted means to highly favor, surround with grace, and make lovely. God didn't look at our messy, broken life and say, I guess I'll tolerate them. He took action to make us lovely in His sight.

We are Loved with the exact same Love as Jesus. When God looks at us, He doesn't look at us in our isolation, our failures, or our unworthiness. He looks at us in Christ. God loves us with the exact same volume, intensity, and delight that He loves His own perfect Son. We might feel like a failure, but Jesus has a perfect record. We are in the beloved; Jesus's record has been placed on our account. We don't have to worry about whether we are worthy enough to sit next to Christ, because we are clothed in Christ. God welcomes us to the table because He welcomes His Son to the table. When God looks at us, He sees Christ, not our failures! Because we are in Christ, we already have all spiritual wealth. Every bit of patience, wisdom, and peace we need is already in our heavenly account. We aren't a victim trying to survive; we are a victor seated with the King. The enemy isn't looming over us; he is under our feet.

Ephesians Chapter 2:1-7 May 28, 2026. The Turning Point of Grace!

Eph 2:1 And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins; This the hopeless condition that the grace of God found us in. We were dead in trespasses and sins. When a person comes to Christ, and accepts Him as savior, they actually experience the same resurrection power that raised Jesus from the dead. Only the power of God can call us out of that spiritually dead state. Paul says this is the past tense, because once we are born again, we are no longer dead. Paul wanted us to know of such mighty power working in us. This is just the first experience of that quickening power and it must not be the last of that quickening power. God has to have us experience that quicken power over and over again until we are translated out of this world. That will be the final quickening power when God translates these bodies, but we must experience the quicken power of God again and again. That is what Paul is trying to get these Ephesians to lay hold is that glorious quickening power. A great part of that quickening power is when Christ is produced in me. We become the expression as we saw in Eph 1:23 Which is his body, the fulness of him that filleth all in all. It is the power of the Holy Ghost that expresses the fullness of Him in our lives.

So, how does this quickening power really happen in the believer? Think of our life like a smartphone. When we first accepted Christ, God didn't just give us a lifetime battery that never drains; He gave us a power cord and connected us to an infinite power source called the Holy Spirit. Because we live in a broken world, our spiritual energy drains. We get tired, angry, and so many other emotions. Experiencing the quickening power again and again means waking up every day and plugging back into the source. It is by starting our day by admitting we can't do it alone. We say, Lord, I am empty today. I need your Holy Spirit to quicken and enlivening my mind and my heart today. Then this power produces Christ in us so we can express His fullness. For Christ to be expressed out of us, our old nature has to get out of the way. Imagine we are trying to captain a boat, but the hull is full of leaks (temptation, worry, anger). We are exhausted from constantly bailing out the water, and the boat is sinking. Suddenly, a master captain, the Holy Spirit, steps on board. We don't jump overboard or turn into a robot; we simply step away from the wheel and say, Lord take the helm, you know how to navigate this storm better than I do.

When temptation rises, we don't and can't pretend we aren't there. We actively choose to step away from the wheel of our own life. We hand the controls of our mouth and thoughts over to the Holy Spirit. We are still the vessel, but He is the one steering us safely through the storm. Also, the Quicken power is activated by movement. When God told the Israelites to cross the Jordan River, the water didn't part while they were sitting on the riverbank. It parted the moment their feet touched the water. Many believers wait to feel the power before they obey God. But the quickening power usually shows up as we step out in faith. The moment we make the choice to move, the Holy Spirit releases the quickening power to change our heart and match our actions. The resurrection power works as we experience the quickening power of God bringing life out of our dead situations! These are the thoughts the enemy bombards our minds with. When the enemy bombards our minds, he loves to point at areas of our lives and whispers all sorts of things. It's over. Give up. He wants us to believe these situations are beyond hope so that we stop looking for God's quickening power. But God! God breathes new life into old callings, opens doors no man can shut, and redeems the years the locusts have eaten.

When bills pile up or a job is lost, the enemy attacks with overwhelming anxiety about scarcity. The enemy whispers, you are never getting out of this hole. You are going to lose everything. God has forgotten about your practical needs. But God with the Quickening Reality. God provided manna in the desert. God's quickening power will show up. It is seldom early, but never late! It is the supernatural provision when we hit a dead end. The enemy takes advantage of our exhaustion to make us feel emotionally numb or hopeless. But God! The Holy Spirit breaks through mental fog and emotional burnout. He revives our inner man, giving us a peace that passes understanding right in the middle of a chaotic time. The enemy wants us to look at these situations and see a tomb. But because of Ephesians 2, we know that God looks at the exact same situations and sees a womb for a miracle to be born. Every dead end is just an opportunity for His quickening power to show off! When the enemy bombards our mind with those dead situations, that is exactly when we must realize: this is the precise environment designed for the quickening power of God. Resurrection power doesn't operate in a vacuum, it requires something dead to bring back to life! Resurrection power requires a corpse! Those impossible situations are the raw material for God's provision that we see in these first three chapters of Ephesians. This is where Paul drops that massive anchor later in the chapter: But God! What about "But God"?

We often think of God as a distant helper we have to yell for when things go wrong, but the truth of the Gospel is so much more intimate. God is always here with us. He is closer than the very air we breathe. We don't have to travel to a mountaintop or wait for a special feeling to find Him. He is our provision, a present help in times of trouble. The moment the enemy whispers a thought of despair; "But God" the reality is already occupying the room with us. The enemy has to scream his lies from the outside, but the Holy Spirit speaks from the inside. He is closer to our mind than the anxiety that the enemy is trying to invade us with. When the enemy says, It's over, the Holy Spirit immediately counters closer and deeper with, But God is rich in mercy. Before our heart beats its next beat, God is already there sustaining it. He is closer to us than we are to ourselves. But God! In our daily battle, is when we understand how close He is, the phrase "But God" ceases to be just a nice quote on a wall and becomes our immediate defense. But God is right here, ready to breathe life into our situation. Our finances are ruined. But God is our provider, and He is already in our tomorrow. But God is inside us right now, offering the strength to choose a different path.

The provision of the quickening power is not a package that God mails to us from heaven; the provision is His very presence who is so close to us that He is inside us. Because He is closer than our own breath, His turning-point power of Grace is always just a whisper away. Eph 2:2 Wherein in time past ye walked according to the **course of this world**, according to the **prince of the power of the air**, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: This explains the course that we traveled before we were saved. Satan was the one directing this course. But now the quickening power of God is here by the Holy Spirit to direct our path! Refer to 2Co 4:4 In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which **believe not**, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them. Once again Paul is putting it in the past tense. He wants us to know that we have been separated from that old life. But note this; a believer cannot lose their salvation or return to being dead in trespasses (Eph 2:1), they can experience a functional, temporary blindness if they drift from the truth. Hebrews 5:11 warns of believers who have become dull of hearing, meaning they've stopped digesting deep spiritual truth and have reverted to needing spiritual milk.

When a believer listens to Satan's lies, their conscience can become calloused, making them functionally blind to God's immediate presence and goodness. Because Satan can no longer claim ownership over a believer, his primary tactic shifts from domination to deception. If he can't change our destiny, he will try to neutralize our daily victory by feeding us lies about who God is and who we are in Christ. Ro 12:2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind. Staying in the Word isn't just about rule-following; it is a daily focus of our minds. The word of God keeps the spiritual windshield clear so we can see God and our identity in Him. Joh 14:30 Hereafter I will not talk much with you: for the prince of this world cometh, and hath nothing in me. Paul tells in V2 that all of us walked according to the course of this world. We were all under satanic dominion. It does not mean we were demon possessed, but we were in his realm and under his bondage until God came forth with His power and raised us out of it. Though we were all children of wrath, we were not children of disobedience. Children of disobedience are children of the devil. (The word children here indicates a mature son) it speaks of those who have heard the message and rejected Christ as Savior. For such, there is no salvation.

All men by natural birth are children of wrath because we are born sinners deserving the wrath of God. (This word for children is one which refers to an infant or child. Once, we breathed the air of the enemy's culture, walked according to the course of this world, and were locked in his prison house of sin. We were legally under Satan's bondage, completely unable to break our own chains. This is why Paul wants the Ephesians and us to understand the scale of the power working in us. We weren't just slightly off track; we were legal captives in a dark kingdom. But God! He didn't leave us there. He broke the dominion, shattered the bondage, and legally transferred us out of the realm of wrath and into the kingdom of His dear Son. He provided this behavior-changing, life-giving grace! Jesus shattered the bondage and legally set us free on the cross. On the cross, God treated Jesus as if He had lived our old life, so that today, He can treat us as we have lived Jesus's life. The blood of Calvary didn't just wash us clean; it legally clothed us in the righteousness of Christ. When the Father looks at us now, He doesn't see a captive child of wrath; He sees a justified, beloved child of the King. The enemy cannot lock the doors of a prison that Jesus has already blown off its hinges. The cross freed us entirely forever!

The chains weren't just picked; they were shattered by the blood of Jesus! Note, Paul says in V2. the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience: That word children should be translated sons. These are sons of disobedience. A son of disobedience is one that is mature in that rebellion and disobedience. These are mature fully developed Christ rejectors. They are those that have made one decision after another to stay right where they were underneath the dominion of Satan. This same spirit is still working in these sons of disobedience. These following scriptures pertain to full grown sons of disobedience that Paul describes in Eph 2:2. Eph 2:3 Among whom also we (we here is Jew and Gentile it makes no difference) we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others. There is no person born into this world that is not under the dominion of Satan. The little innocent child, the baby born into this world, is under the dominion of Satan until he is raised out of that by accepting Christ. We all had our manner of life in times past. Then fulfilling the desires of the flesh. That is that old nature with which we were born. There is a distinction between V2 and 3.

We were by nature the children of wrath even as others, but we are no longer that way, past tense! This word children is teknon. It means an infant and we were all infants. By nature we were all infants of wrath. It means that the moment that a child is born into this world, he is under the sentence of death or wrath. Children of Wrath (Teknon): This refers to our nature. Because we are born into the human race (Adam), we are children of wrath by default. It is our heritage, not necessarily our conscious choice, similar to an infant inheriting a debt. Sons of Disobedience (Huios): This implies a mature walking in that rebellion. These are those who have seen the Light (as per Heb 6:4) and have consciously aligned their will with the prince of the air. To understand why Paul uses such strong language about the prince of the power of the air, Satan, and spiritual death, we must look at where the Ephesians were living. It was the center of magic. Ephesus was the headquarters for the occult in the Roman Empire. It housed the Temple of Artemis, one of the Seven Wonders of the Ancient World. The city was obsessed with Ephesian Letters or (magic spells) and apparent spiritual orders.

Paul wrote this letter around 60–62 AD while under house arrest in Rome. He wasn't just teaching theory; he was a man physically bound, writing to people who felt spiritually bound by dark forces. The church was primarily Gentile. These people grew up in a culture that feared destinies and planetary spirits. Paul's emphasis on Christ's quickening power was an assurance that they were now seated far above the very spirits they used to fear. The state of death that Paul uses in the Greek is a medical sense of a corpse that cannot respond. Paul tells us that before grace, humans aren't just sick or misguided, they are spiritually unresponsive. We are now alive by the resurrection power and we must experience this power of God again and again. In Greek, while the initial salvation is a completed act, the infilling of the Holy Spirit is vital. We are raised once, but we are empowered daily. The prince of the power of the air Satan was the director of the pre-Christian life. In the first century, the air was thought to be the space between earth and heaven. It is the atmosphere where demonic forces operate. By saying Christ is seated in heavenly places, Paul is telling the Ephesians that Christ has bypassed the enemy's air territory.

The **course of this world** is a current that carries everyone downstream; it requires no effort to follow, but we have the quickening life of God to resist it. Note in V2, Paul uses the pronoun ye; and in V3, he uses we. Why the difference? This is one of the most intentional grammatical shifts in the New Testament. Paul leveled the playing field. When Paul says Ye walked, he is speaking specifically to the Gentile Ephesians. He is reminding them of their specific background: paganism, idolatry, and the course of this world. When Paul switches in V3 to “Among whom also **we all**,” he is making an admission as a once Pharisee. Paul is saying, You Gentiles were dead in your paganism, but we Jews were also dead in our legalism. By nature, the Jew (the religious person) is just as much a child of wrath as the Gentile (the pagan person). Paul uses “we” to prevent the Jewish Christians from looking at themselves as superior and to show the Gentiles that the solution is the Quicken Power. It is the same for all of humanity. Ye: Your specific past in Ephesian paganism. We: The universal human condition of being dead in sins, regardless of religious heritage. Note why Paul uses the term **prince of the power of the air for Satan**. In the Greek language and philosophy of that time, there was a distinction between two types of sky. The high, bright, pure atmosphere where the gods were thought to live. Then the thick, lower atmosphere surrounding the earth, which was the space between the ground and the stars.

By calling Satan the prince of the air, Paul is identifying his territory as the immediate spiritual atmosphere surrounding human life. He is saying that while Christ is seated in the heavenly places, the highest authority; Satan occupies the low-level space where he can directly influence human thoughts, cultures, and atmospheres. Ephesus was the world capital of magic and the occult. The people believed the air was literally thick with spirits and planetary powers that controlled human fate. People of that time felt they were trapped by the spirits in the air. Paul's point by using this title, he acknowledges the reality of that spiritual influence but limits it. He calls Satan a prince or a ruler of a province, not a King. He is saying, I know you fear the spirits in the air, but it is Christ who raised you. Paul is explaining that Satan has a right to rule over those who are dead in trespasses and sin. The air represents a sphere of influence. Just as we might say there is an air of tension in the room. Paul is saying there is a spiritual climate of disobedience that Satan maintains. He directs the current of the world's values, making rebellion against God feel natural and easy. But we are not citizens of the air, subject to its dark climate.

But through the Quickening Power, we have been translated (moved) out of that atmosphere and into the Heavenly Places with Christ. We are seated together with Christ! It is a message of supreme liberation! They and we no longer fear the spirits of the air because they were now connected to the Resurrection Power of God that created the air itself. Paul's prison record is extensive. Before Rome, Paul was held for two years in Caesarea under Governors Felix and Festus. This was a legal limbo where he was kept primarily to appease Jewish leaders. The First Roman Imprisonment (c. 60–62 AD) was the house arrest mentioned at the end of Acts 28. Paul lived in a rented house. He was chained to a soldier 24 hours a day, but had the freedom to receive visitors and write letters. This is when he wrote Ephesians. The Second Roman Imprisonment (c. 66–67 AD): This happened later, under the intense persecution of Nero. This was the dungeon (likely the Mamertine Prison) where he wrote 2 Timothy. He was cold, lonely, and expecting execution at any time. At the time of writing the letter to the Ephesians, I believe Paul looked at the Roman Soldier chained to his wrist, he saw a physical display of a spiritual reality. When Paul writes about the prince of the power of the air, he is thinking about this age.

Paul realized that the Roman guards, the Emperor Nero, and the idol-worshippers in Ephesus were not the real enemies. They were merely children of disobedience being moved by an invisible current that was flowing in Ephesus. Paul may have felt that though he was the one in physical chains, the people outside serving the prince of the air were the ones actually in bondage. In Verse 1, Paul speaks of being quickened, meaning made alive. Rome boasted of the power of life and death. Caesar could kill a man, but he could never make a spiritually dead man alive. Maybe Paul was looking at his own aging, battered body. He was likely suffering from the thorn in the flesh, the wear of all his travels, and most of all the care of all the churches. Yet he felt the resurrection power that was more real than the Roman legionnaires. He wanted the Ephesians to know that the power that raised Jesus is the only power that can break the bondage of the prince of the air. The course of this world in Ephesus was a city of "flow." It was a massive port city where the current flow of global trade, sexual immorality which centered around the Temple of Artemis, and occults met. Because the Ephesians were famous for witchcraft spells, Paul used the term "Power of the Air" to speak their language.

As Paul sat in his house arrest, he likely reflected on his own life as a Pharisee. Paul realized that his religious life before Christ was just as much fulfilling the desires of the mind as the Gentiles' paganism was fulfilling the lusts of the flesh. Both paths led to being children of wrath. Paul was telling the Ephesians that the holy Jewish Apostle and the pagan Ephesian were in the exact same morgue until God quickened them. Now being born again, by the power of the resurrection, we have been quickened! Eph 2:4 **But God**, who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;). The two most powerful words in all of scripture, "But God!" Paul shifts from the graveyard of humanity to the throne room of God. In a Roman court, the "But" usually preceded a sentence of death. Here, it precedes a sentence of life. In a Roman court, when the judge said But..., it was the signal that the hammer was about to fall. It meant: You have done all these terrible things... But the law demands our execution. The word "But" was the dark doorway to the graveyard. It cut off all excuses, terminated all hope, and introduced the penalty.

But God inserts His own name and completely overturns the verdict. Under Roman law, a judge could not change the sentence because he felt like it. "But God" means that Jesus Christ steps down from the bench, pays the legal death penalty on Calvary, and steps back up to issue a clean verdict. But God" presents an overwhelming sentence of Life. I believe Paul contrasts between Caesar's Justice (which was harsh and based on merit) and God's Mercy. Ephesus was a city of immense material wealth. It was the banking center of Asia Minor. Paul uses the word rich to speak their language. He is saying, You think the merchants of Ephesus are wealthy; God didn't look down from heaven and choose us because we were spiritually wealthy; He chose us when we were completely bankrupt. The provisions of Chapter 1, our adoption and inheritance, and so forth were entirely motivated by a God who is rich in mercy, for his great love wherewith he loved us. His mercy paid the entry fee into His wealth.? V4-5 is the front door: We were dead outside the door, but God's rich mercy and quickening power opened the door and brought us inside. Verses 4 and 5 are the grand provision that turns dead beggars into living, empowered heirs of the King! Paul had plenty of time to reflect on his own life.

He remembered that he was once a son of disobedience who persecuted the church. He is writing as a man who is personally overwhelmed that God loved him even when he was dead in trespasses and sin. Jesus loves us so much that He gave! He gave up that place of equality with His Father for us. But soon He will have His bride. He is the merchant man who sold all He had for the one pearl of great price. It was for the likes of me and you! What a wonder, that I should deserve such a One as Christ, but then why not. What mercy, what grace, and oh what love! Even when we were dead in sins... This is the hopeless condition that we were in. God didn't wait for us to clean ourselves up. Paul connected the believer's life directly to Jesus' resurrection. Just as the power of God entered Christ's tomb, it entered the tomb of the Ephesian believers and we are included. He Quickened us together with Christ. By grace ye are saved: Why? Because as Paul looked at his Roman guard who he was chained to, a man who represented the height of human works and power, Paul saw that human effort is useless. Salvation is a gift, not a paycheck. It was all because; but God who is rich in mercy. God loved us even in our sinful life. He didn't see the outside shell of the oyster; he saw what we would become by His quicken power when He resurrected His Son Jesus. and we were right there with Him receiving the same quickening power that raised Jesus from the grave!

Paul is emphasizing that we don't improve our way out of death; we have been born again by a power that comes from outside ourselves. Divine Love is God seeing the pearl inside; the new man that his quickening power would create. God didn't wait for the oyster to open or for the shell to be cleaned. He loved us even when we were dead in our sin. This is a staggering thought: God's heart was moved by us when we were at our most unlovable. When Jesus' heart began to beat again in the tomb, our spiritual heart began to beat, too. He doesn't see our salvation as a separate event that happened years later; he sees it as a participation in the original Resurrection. Paul, the prisoner, chained 24/7 to his guard, is surging with the same electricity that blew the stone away from the garden tomb. Paul is looking at a world that Ephesus and Rome exhausted by trying to earn the favor of the gods or the Emperor.

It is as if Paul is saying: Wait, I can't just move on to the next point; It's grace! Just grace! All Grace! It is because of God's grace and mercy that we have been brought out of this condition. Not of our merit, or goodness. It is because of His great love for us. Eph 2:6 And hath **raised us up together**, and made us **sit together** in heavenly places in Christ Jesus: Eph 2:7 That in the ages to come he might **shew the exceeding riches** of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. V 6-7, moves us to the Throne Room. We have been raised together and seated together. Because Christ's sacrifice was perfect, He sat down at the right hand of God. Paul says that because we are in Him, we are sitting too. Paul is saying that while their feet are in the dusty streets of Ephesus (or his feet are in a Roman prison), their spiritual home base is the Throne of God. We don't sit there to get saved; we sit there because we are saved. Why did God go through all this trouble to rescue children of wrath and seat them in the front row of heaven? Paul is looking far beyond his house arrest and even beyond his own death. For all of eternity, God is going to use the Believers as a trophy. When the angels look at us, they don't see our sin; they see the exceeding riches of His grace. Paul uses the language of the Ephesian banks. Exceeding means to throw beyond the mark. It is off the charts wealth. In His Kindness toward us: The word for kindness refers to a mellowing or a sweetness.

God is producing the fruit of Christ in us. We will be the evidence that God's love is more powerful than Satan's dominion. Paul says, don't just visit the heavenly places. Stay there. Get comfortable in the fact that we are loved. We are God's eternal treasure of what His grace can do to a dead man. If we believe we are currently seated in heaven, we stop being afraid of the prince of the air on earth. We don't fight for victory; we fight from victory. We are to experience the marvels and the glories of divine grace right now. Many believers find themselves exhausted trying to live the Christian life in reverse. They are trying to walk their own way into a seat they already own. This also does not suggest since we are seated, we can just coast. The Seat is the Power Station for the Practical Walk in Ephesians 4:1, Paul says, I therefore... beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. We don't walk to get to the seat; we walk because we are in the seat. The title of this chapter is the Turning Point of Grace. This isn't a destination we reach at the end of a long, holy life. It is the starting line. When a runner starts a race, he has all the sweat and the work ahead. But we have a starting line because of the turning point of grace. We are seated at the King's table; we eat his food; we enjoy his wealth, and we listen to His voice. The power to change our behavior comes from the security of already being in the seat. Grace puts you in the winner's circle before you have even taken your first step!

Ephesians 2:8-22 June 4, 2026 Built Stone by Stone for the Hope of Glory!

Eph 2:8 For by grace **are ye saved** through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. This means right now and it means more than just the initial salvation from the guilt of sin. It means deliverance of whatever we may need. Day after day, delivered in one way or another, not only from, but rather delivered to the marvelous majesty of God's grace and power. It applies to initial salvation, but it goes far beyond that. For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that (faith) is not of yourselves: the faith is the gift of God: God gives us the faith. Left to our own human nature, we wouldn't choose God. He gives us the very faith we use to believe Him. Php 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. God gives us the desire (the will/faith) and the ability (the grace) to walk with Him. Another example is Hebrews 12:2, which calls Jesus the author and finisher of our faith. He writes the faith into our heart; we don't manufacture it. Then in Greek, the phrase "are ye saved" means a past action with ongoing present results. God doesn't just save us from hell; He delivers us daily from anxiety, temptation, and despair and so forth. God doesn't usually reach down and magically zap these emotions out of our brains. Instead, He delivers us by giving us a new way through His Spirit.

Anxiety is almost always rooted in a fear of the future and a desire to control outcomes we cannot control. God provides a peace that passeth all understanding (Php 4:6-7). The scripture doesn't say He changes our circumstances; it says He guards our heart and mind. When anxiety strikes, the Holy Spirit reminds us who God is. God never breaks His word. The Holy Spirit reminds our heart that God promised He would never leave us or forsake us. He is our Father, He loves us, and He is completely dependable. It's the simple comfort of knowing that the One running the universe has our back. Through faith, we actively hand the burden over to Him. We realize that if God is weaving our life one stitch at a time, then today's scary event is just a thread He is already managing. It is the scripture in action: "Casting all your care upon him; for He careth for you." (1 Peter 5:7). Deliverance happens when we literally drop the weight at His feet and refuse to pick it back up. Eph 2:9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. God gave us this gift. It is all of God. Our faith is because we simply believe God's word. So that man would not boast and brag that he did it on his own. So, if God gives the faith, and the Holy Spirit provides the peace, why does my heart still pound with panic? How do I actually let the Holy Spirit do this when my human brain is short-circuiting? When anxiety strikes, our body's fight or flight response takes over. We can't just tell a chemical surge in our brain to have more faith. Paul knew this. He was deeply aware of human weakness (he wrote, the good I want to do, I don't do).

Paul's practical remedy for this human weakness isn't to muster up fake emotional strength. Here is how Paul said we practically do this when we are too weak to lift it ourselves. Paul's remedy is in Php 4:6 Be careful (anxious) for nothing; but in everything by prayer and supplication with thanksgiving let your requests be made known unto God. 7 And the peace of God, which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus. Look at the exact verbs Paul uses; he gives us a three-step remedy for anxiety the moment it hits. 1. Be anxious for nothing... In the original Greek, this is a command to stop an action already in progress. It translates closer to: Stop harboring anxiety. Paul isn't saying never feel the initial spark of fear. He is saying don't pull up a chair for it. The moment the chest tightens, we recognize it not as a sin, but as a signal to pivot. Step 2. The Practical Exchange: ...by prayer and supplication, with thanksgiving... How do we let the Holy Spirit work? Notice the three specific words Paul uses for how we talk to God: Prayer:

This Greek word specifically means coming close to God's presence. Before we even tell Him our problem, we just acknowledge Who He is. We look at the Father, not the storm. Then Supplication: This means crying out for a specific need. God doesn't want vague, polite prayers when we are panicking. He wants raw honesty. If we are terrified of losing our job or failing, say exactly that. Then next with Thanksgiving: This is the practical engine of faith. Why thanksgiving during a panic attack? Because gratitude forces our brain to remember past faithfulness. It proves to our anxious heart that the God who saved us yesterday is already in our tomorrow. Step 3 of Paul's remedy for fear and anxiety. The Result is: ...the peace of God... shall guard your hearts! Notice the order: the peace comes after the raw output of prayer, not before. And that peace is described as a guard, which is a military term for a Roman garrison standing watch over a city. You don't manufacture peace; the Holy Spirit stationed a guard around our mind because we hand Him the keys. Because we are weak humans, as you said, we need tangible ways to cooperate with the Holy Spirit when our emotions are overwhelming. Here is the daily, practical rhythm of Ephesians 2:8 and Philippians 2:13 in action:

Php 2:13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Eph 2:8 For by grace **are ye saved** through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God. When we feel zero faith, pray the most honest prayer in scripture: Lord, I believe; help my unbelief! (Mark 9:24). Since faith is a gift from God, we can literally ask Him for the faith to trust Him in that exact second. Anxiety lives in an imaginary future (What if I fail? What if ...). The Holy Spirit always anchors us in the truth of the present. Paul tells us how to manage our thoughts a few verses later in Philippians 4:8: Whatever is true, whatever is noble, whatever is right... It may be a scary scenario happening right now? No. What is true right now? God is with me closer than the air I breathe. 1 Peter 5:7 says casting all our care, which means to violently throw something onto something else (like throwing a heavy pack onto a beast of burden). When anxiety strikes, pray with open hands and heart, saying, Holy Spirit, I cannot carry this outcome. It is yours. We don't get out of the anxious state by fighting the anxiety. We get out of it by surrendering our right to control the outcome. Philippians 2:13, it is God who works in you both to will and to do. On the days we are too weak to even pray properly, the Holy Spirit groans on our behalf. Ro 8:26 Likewise the Spirit also helpeth our infirmities: for we know not what we should pray for as we ought: but the Spirit itself maketh intercession for us with groanings which cannot be uttered. We don't have to be strong; we just have to be willing to yield.

Eph 2:10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. Because we receive God's grace, we now become God's workmanship. We are **created in Christ Jesus unto good works** and the result is good works. This is another marvelous provision that God has given us; **created in Christ Jesus unto good works** which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them. The Greek word for workmanship is poiema, from which we get our English word poem or masterpiece. We are God's poetry in motion. Notice the order: Works do not save us, but we are saved for good works. They are the natural fruit of a supernatural root. God has already laid out a path of good works for us to walk in today; our responsibility is simply to step into them. Jeremiah 18:3-4 describes God as the Potter and us as the clay. When the vessel was marred in the potter's hand, He made it again another vessel, as seemed good to the potter to make it. God is constantly reshaping us, stitch by stitch, trial by trial, into the image of Christ.

That is the good work which He has begun in us and He will complete it. We know that it took God 7 days to create this world. He didn't create it all in one day. He doesn't create everything in our lives all in one day either. Our spiritual life days consist of 7 days. God wants to produce all seven of those creative days in our spiritual experience. Day 1: The Separation of Light from Darkness. Before salvation, our lives are without form, and void (Genesis 1:2). Then, God speaks: Let there be light. This is the day of our awakening. God exposes the darkness of sin and shines the light of the gospel into your heart. 2 Cor 4:6: For God, who commanded the light to shine out of darkness, hath shined in our hearts. Day 2: Dividing the waters in the atmosphere. God separates the waters above from the waters below. In our spiritual life, this is the stage of discernment. God begins to separate the heavenly things from the earthly things in our minds. We begin to understand the difference between operating in the Holy Spirit (above) and operating in the flesh (below). Day 3: Dry Land and Fruitfulness. Earth appears and immediately brings forth grass, herbs, and fruit trees. Spiritually, this is where we take root. We are no longer tossed around like shifting seas; we stand on the dry land of God's Word, and our lives start producing the first signs of visible, spiritual fruit (love, joy, peace).

Day 4: Appointing the Sun, Moon, and Stars. God creates the lights to rule the day and night and to mark the seasons. In our walk, this represents spiritual maturity and guidance. God establishes stable authorities and truths in our lives to guide us through our bright seasons and our dark nights of the soul. We learn to navigate by His light, not our feelings. Day 5: Life in the Seas and the Air. God creates birds to fly above and fish to move in the deep. This represents expansion and liberty. The believer begins to soar above earthly trials (like an eagle) and move deeply in the deep things of God's Spirit, rather than just living a surface-level Christian life. Day 6: The Creation of Man in His Image. The ultimate climax of creation is man made in the image of God. Spiritually, this is the ultimate goal of Ephesians 2:10. God is shaping us, stitch by stitch, until we look exactly like Jesus. It is the full maturity of the new man inside us. Colossians 3:10: ...and have put on the new man, which is renewed in knowledge after the image of him that created him. Day 7: The Sabbath Rest. God rests, not because He is tired, but because the work is perfectly complete. This is the ultimate destination of our spiritual experience on earth. It is the place where we cease from our own human striving, our own worrying, and our own legalistic efforts, and we completely rest in the finished work of Jesus Christ. Hebrews 4:10: For he that is entered into his rest, he also hath ceased from his own works, as God did from his. The word workmanship means a product or a fabric; something built, or woven, or knit and that is what happens in our lives.

God builds them really a stitch at a time. He doesn't do it all in one day. All the blessings and the trials are all by Him. These He uses one stitch at a time. He does it all in Christ Jesus. He doesn't do anything apart from Christ. **We are created in Christ Jesus and the result are good works.** Only that which God is a part of can be classed as good. Think of a little toddler drawing a picture for their parents all over the wall with a crayon. To the toddler, it's a masterpiece. But to the parents, it's a mess because it wasn't done the right way or with permission. The world does a lot of good things (like giving money to charity), but if they are doing it to brag, or without God, it's not good. Good works only happen when God is the one inside us doing the work. We are created in Christ Jesus, and as we let Him develop Christ in our lives, He opens up the works for us to do. That is all we have to do is simply walk in what He has already ordained for us.

Eph 2:11 Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands. There was such a prejudice that the Jews had against the Gentiles which is reversed today, the Gentiles have such a prejudice against the Jew. Eph 2:12 That at that time ye (Gentiles) were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: Before Jesus died on the cross, we Gentiles were completely left out. We didn't have God's promises, we didn't know the true God, and when we died, we had zero hope. Eph 2:13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. Christ Jesus is the one that makes the difference in the life of the Jew and Gentile alike. This is the door of Hope open for the Gentiles at Calvary by the shed blood of Jesus Christ. Then another provision that God has made for us is, we are made nigh by the blood of Christ. God has brought us close to Himself because of the blood of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the fellowship that God has provided for us in Christ. The words made nigh mean brought really close. How did the people standing outside in the freezing rain get inside the house? Jesus opened the door. His blood paid for our entrance.

Now, we aren't just guests; we are part of the family. Eph 2:14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. This is another provision which is the oneness of Jew and Gentile. It is known as the Church. There is no such thing as a Gentile bride. The bride is going to come out of the Church and the Church is composed of both Jew and Gentile. Paul will most definitely be a part of the bridal company and Paul was a Jew. The middle wall of partition that separated the Jew and the Gentile was the law. The law was never given to the Gentiles but it was given to the Jew. That law became a real source of contention and division between the Jew and the Gentile. But Jesus abolished that law or the enemy of that law in His own flesh when He died on the cross. He took the law down into death with Himself. The reason He did it; for to make in himself of twain (that's Jew and Gentile) one new man, so making peace. So God is the one that joined these two together in the Church. Eph 2:15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; In the Jewish Temple, there was a literal stone wall. The Gentiles were allowed on one side, and the Jews on the other. If a Gentile tried to cross that wall, the guards would kill them.

It was a wall of division. Paul says Jesus broke that wall down. Eph 2:16 And that he might reconcile both (Jew and Gentile) unto God in one body (that is the Church) by the cross, having slain the enmity (the enmity of the law) thereby: Eph 2:17 And came and preached peace to you (Gentiles) which were afar off, and to them (Jew) that were nigh. Peace has been made, not only between Jew and Gentile, but between God and man. God has given the same provision to both Jew and Gentile because of Christ. It is this closeness and this oneness that we have in Christ in the Church today. Eph 2:18 For through him we both (Jew and Gentile) have access by one Spirit unto the Father. God has made us all one in Christ Jesus. We can all have these wonderful spiritual blessings. Because of Jesus, every single believer is a child of the same Father. The old walls are gone, and we are all one big family with equal access to everything God has to offer. In Eph 2:19–22, the Apostle Paul uses three vivid, real-life figures (or illustrations) to show how completely God has unified Jewish and Gentile believers into one group. Eph 2:19 Now therefore ye (Gentiles) are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; Paul uses the picture of a city, state, or country.

Before Christ, Gentiles were like illegal immigrants or traveling foreigners who had no rights, no protection, and no passport. But now, they are fully part of God's family. There are no second-class citizens with God. Jew and Gentiles share the same heavenly nationality. God identifies the Gentile now as a fellow citizen. In the Old Testament, the Gentiles were referred to as the uncircumcised heathen. But now there is a change. We are now citizens of that heavenly city. Then secondly, we Gentiles are of the household of God. We are no longer considered those who are outcasts. Eph 2:20 And are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone; He is talking about both Jew and Gentile of being a part of this house. And notice, we are built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets. This is very important because we read in 1Co 3:11 For other foundation can no man lay than that is laid, which is Jesus Christ. It was the apostles and the prophets that laid that foundation. Then in 1Co 3:10 Paul says, I have laid the foundation, and another buildeth thereon. Eph 2:21 In whom all the building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: This is the third way of being a part of God. We are portrayed as a building fitly framed together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord.

This is the secret of God's way. He doesn't come out and put up a modular building. This is something that He builds very painstakingly stone by stone (not brick by brick). God does this little by little. He presents it here framed together. Something that grows does take time and that is what God is doing. In the Bible, bricks usually represent human effort, pride, and making everyone look exactly the same (cookie cutter). Stones represent God's creation, individuality, and His personal shaping. The very first-time bricks are mentioned in the Bible are at the Tower of Babel. The people wanted to build a giant tower to make a name for themselves and reach heaven on their own power. Genesis 11:3 And they said one to another, Go to, let us make brick, and burn them thoroughly. And they had brick for stone, and slime had they for mortar. They used bricks instead of stones. Bricks are man-made. Every single brick comes out of the kiln looking exactly the same. It is a system where humans force everyone to fit into the same mold through human effort. God doesn't use molds. He creates individual, unique stones. God wants unique individuals woven together by His grace. Paul describes a magnificent stone temple being built piece by piece. How it shows Unity. God doesn't use identical, pre-made modular parts. He takes rough, unique, individual stones (individual believers) and shapes them to lock perfectly into one another.

The Apostles and Prophets laid the groundwork by writing down the scriptures. This work is finished; the foundation is set. There are no official apostles and prophets today. Because the foundation has already been laid. God is not bringing any new truth into this world. Jesus Christ himself being the chief corner stone. Jesus and His word must be the center of everything. In an ancient building, the cornerstone was the most important rock. It was placed first, and every other stone in the entire building had to line up with it. If a stone didn't align with the cornerstone, the building would be crooked. When Jew and Gentile align with Jesus (the Cornerstone), they are fitly framed together. They lock into place to create one giant, living temple where God's Spirit lives. Eph 2:22 In whom ye (Gentiles) also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit. The Church is the habitation of God. This is what God is doing in our lives today, making us a part of that wonderful building that He ordained in Christ even before the foundation of the world. The word habitation means a place of dwelling.

Do all saints let the Lord truly dwell in their lives? No. They do not allow God to build in their lives. Most of the building going on in the Church today is wood, hay, and stubble, which when the fire hits it will be burned up. The Lord Jesus lives inside a person, how can they stay completely unchanged, worldly, and indifferent to God's Word? Because they do not allow God to build in their lives. God is a gentle Master Builder, not a dictator. He will not force His way into the rooms of our hearts if we lock Him out. Scripture uses very specific language to explain exactly how a person can have the Holy Spirit inside them but show absolutely zero change in their daily walk. Paul warns us in these scriptures. Eph 4:30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. 1Th 5:19 Quench not the Spirit. To grieve means to make someone deeply sad. Because the Holy Spirit loves us, our messy, practical walk breaks His heart. To quench means to pour water on a fire. The Holy Spirit wants to burn like a fire in our lives, changing our habits, our speech, and our desires. But when a person ignores God's Word and refuses to walk the practical walk, they are throwing ice water on the Holy Spirit. The fire goes out, the power is lost, and the person stays exactly the same.

Can a person be a true Christian and refuse to change? According to Paul in 1Cor 3:15, yes: If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. They smell like smoke, their hands are completely empty, and their entire life was a waste of wood, hay, and stubble because they never let the Master Builder do His work. They trade a glorious, eternal inheritance for the cheap, temporary comfort of doing things their own way. Paul warns believers of a sloppy, sinful life; they will forfeit their inheritance. Ga 5:19-20 Now the works of the flesh are manifest, which are these; and he names them. He says, of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things **shall not inherit the kingdom of God**. Because Jesus finished the work on Calvary, we don't just coast along without effort. The Apostle Paul never separates our position in Christ from our practical daily walk in this life. The Book of Ephesians is split in half to prove this: Chapters 1–3: Our heavenly provisions (Who we are in Christ). Chapters 4–6: Our practical walk (How we must live on earth). The very moment Paul finishes talking about the provisions, he starts Chapter 4 with an urgent command:

Eph 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. Paul says, Because we have all these spiritual riches, get up and live a life that matches our high calling! There is a difference between entering a kingdom and inheriting a kingdom. Salvation gets us into the Kingdom by grace. But our inheritance, our authority, our rewards, our crown are tied to our practical walk. 1 Cor 3:12–15 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; Every man's work shall be made manifest... because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work... If any man's work shall be burned, he shall suffer loss: but he himself shall be saved; yet so as by fire. Wood, Hay, and Stubble are cheap, easy, and grow on the surface. This represents the lazy Christian walk. It looks like a big life on the outside, but it has no spiritual depth. When the fire of God's holiness tests it, it turns to ash. So many today facing the trials of life collapse because they have not been taught or have not yielded to the word of God in a practical walk. They enter heaven empty-handed. Gold, Silver, and Precious Stones are deep under the earth. They take prayer, desire, responsibility, action, yielding, and daily obedience to dig out. This is the practical walk, letting God change our habits one stitch at a time.

Fire doesn't destroy gold; it makes it pure. This builds an eternal inheritance. Many saints do not allow God to truly dwell or build in their lives. Paul explains that since the Lord lives inside us, we cannot treat our daily lives like a spiritual trash can. 1 Co 6:19–20 What? know ye not that your body is the temple [habitation] of the Holy Ghost which is in you... and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body... Then 2 Tim 2:21 If a man therefore purge himself from these, he shall be a vessel unto honour, sanctified, and meet for the master's use, and prepared unto every good work. If an earthly important person comes to live in our house, we change how we act and we clean up the rooms. How much more when the Holy Spirit moves in! A practical walk is simply us cleaning the house so the Master can comfortably live and work through us. The teaching that denies a practical walk is a shortcut of the flesh. Yes, salvation is secure in Christ. But our daily walk determines our inheritance. Every time we obey God, whether in temptation, or something that is hard, we are handing the Master Builder gold, silver, and precious stones. We are building a beautiful habitation for Him today, and securing a glorious inheritance for eternity.

We are saved entirely by God's grace through a faith He gave us, leaving zero room for human pride. God doesn't manufacture identical factory bricks; He is a Master Stonemason, painstakingly building His Church stone by stone and custom-fitting our unique life one stitch at a time through every blessing and trial. By smashing down every wall of division, Jesus has given us equal access to the Father as part of His family. However, having all these heavenly provisions means we must maintain a practical, daily walk. If we treat the Holy Spirit like a guest rather than the Lord of the house, we risk building a superficial life of wood, hay, and stubble that will burn away. We don't live a holy life to get saved, but because we are saved; so let the Master Builder, Jesus Christ have full control of His habitation today for eternal inheritance is here right now. It is Jesus Christ, our hope of Glory! Colossians 1:27 anchors everything back to the Cornerstone. Jesus is the beginning, the middle, and the end of the entire building process. Col 1:27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory!

Ephesians 3:1-8 June 11, 2026 Valley of Humility and Storehouse of Grace!

Eph 3:1 For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles. The cause that Paul is talking about is in these first chapters of Ephesians. It is all of these wonderful blessings and provisions and the riches that he points out. Even though Paul was chained to his guard 24/7, (the Roman government); Paul was a prisoner of Christ in behalf of the Gentiles. It was in order to deliver these marvelous messages. Christ was his jailor so to speak. Why was Paul imprisoned? It was because of the Gospel of the grace of God. Paul's imprisonment benefits us today. It is so we have the message of the Gospel of grace and glory. Paul has the message to the Church. This is the heart of Paul's unique ministry: his total surrender to Christ (even while in chains), and the shift from the Law to the Dispensation of Grace, and his deep desire to pass his God-given knowledge entirely to the Church. When Paul was first converted, Jesus told Ananias exactly what Paul's life would look like. Acts 9:15–16: But the Lord said unto him, Go thy way: for he is a chosen vessel unto me, to bear my name before the Gentiles, and kings, and the children of Israel: For I will shew him how **great things he must suffer for my name's sake**.

Note; "suffer." Paul didn't see his prison time as a waste; he saw it as a necessary price paid to deliver the Gospel to us. He also wrote in Colossians 1:24: Who now rejoice in my sufferings for you, and fill up that which is behind of the afflictions of Christ in my flesh for his body's sake, which is the church. Eph 3:2 If ye have heard of the **dispensation** of the grace of God which is given me to you-ward: Dispensation is the way that God deals with men during certain eras of time. Time is divided into 7 dispensations. God has dealt differently with man in each of those. The gospel of the grace of God, this dispensation of the Church age was committed into the hands of the Apostle Paul. There is the age of innocence, the age of conscience, the age of human government, and so on. We are living in this Church age. **Dispensation** means house-management. This is how God administers His grace during a specific age. Paul was given the stewardship of the Church Age, where the Law is fulfilled in Christ. Under the Mosaic Law, righteousness was pursued through a system of rules, and Israel was kept separate from the nations.

Exodus 19:5: Now therefore, if ye will obey my voice indeed, and keep my covenant, then ye shall be a peculiar treasure unto me above all people... The Freedom of the New Covenant (New Testament) was that Paul's trip to Arabia allowed him to see that the Law was never meant to save us, but to point us to our need for grace. Galatians 3:24–25: Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith. But after that faith is come, we are no longer under a schoolmaster. In the New Testament, Romans confirms that Christ summarized the Law in love. Romans 13:10: Love worketh no ill to his neighbor: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law. The Lord revealed this mystery to the apostle Paul by revelation. Eph 3:3 How that by **revelation** he made known unto me the mystery; (as I wrote afore in few words. Paul further states in Ga 1:12 For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ. The word revelation means an uncovering, an unveiling, or drawing back the curtain. It refers to God pulling back the veil to disclose truths that were previously hidden. Human intellect can guess about God, but it cannot know the specific mysteries of God unless He chooses to unveil them. In Ephesians 3, Paul is speaking of Special Revelation. The mystery wasn't a riddle Paul solved; it was a divine secret that Jesus Christ literally opened his eyes to see.

The Lord Jesus sent Paul to the wilderness of Arabia for about 3 years; and the reason was that God had to take Paul back to the place where the law was given in order for him to understand why it was given. God took Paul to Arabia (likely near Mount Sinai, where the Law was originally given) to reshape his understanding. As a Pharisee, Saul of Tarsus thought he understood the Law perfectly. God had to strip that away. Paul's Testimony of Arabia in Galatians 1:15–17 But when it pleased God... To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia... Paul had to trade his prestigious academic, legalistic background for the revelation of grace. He tells us in Philippians 3:7–8 But what things were gain to me, those I counted loss for Christ. Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord... Jesus tried to put the law in perspective when He came. He said it very briefly, the law is fulfilled in two commandments. Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart and with all thy soul and with all thy might. The second is like it.

Love your neighbor as yourself. On these two the whole law stands. They didn't understand and Saul of Tarsus didn't understand either. But God took Paul out into the wilderness to reveal to him why the law was given and he passed that on to us. Eph 3:4 Whereby, when ye read, ye may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ. Paul is not saying he wants us to understand his knowledge, and setting himself up as the great one here. He is saying, I want you to understand the same knowledge that God has given to me. This should be the purpose of every pastor and teacher. They are to pass along the wonderful message that God has revealed to them. We are not to keep it to ourselves. Or we are not to stand up and have people look at us because we know so much. The purpose is to declare the message so that all men can have the same knowledge that God has given to the Apostle Paul. Paul tells the Colossians that his entire purpose is to make every believer mature in this same knowledge. Colossians 1:28: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect in Christ Jesus. Even the Old Testament prophets looked forward to a day when God's people wouldn't just rely on a human teacher's knowledge, but would all know God intimately by His Spirit.

Jeremiah 31:34: And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor, and every man his brother, saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord... We must understand that it is a mystery and that means it is not just wide open for everybody to see. A mystery is something that you have to search for. Jesus spoke truth in parables. They were in mystery form and the reason He did that was to separate those that have an ear to hear from those that don't. If people do not have an ear to hear or a heart to understand, they will never know and understand the glories of these mysteries. God must have a heart that is submitted to Him if we are going to understand the deep mysteries of God. We can understand these mysteries. They are not locked away from us. God intends that we understand these wonderful mysteries and we will if we have that heart as Paul did. Then notice it is the mystery of Christ. It is the mystery of Jesus. It means more than that Jesus came into the world and died and went back to heaven. It includes all of the glorious provisions that God has given to us in Christ and they are inexhaustible.

We should spend the rest of our lives on this earth learning all of those glorious mysteries or provisions that abundant wealth that God has given to us in Christ. Scriptural mysteries are not intellectual puzzles to be solved by brainpower, but divine secrets unlocked by a surrendered heart. When Paul calls it the mystery of Christ, he is talking about the limitless, multi-dimensional wealth of everything we inherit the moment we are placed in Jesus Christ. It is all the provisions that we have been given. Jesus used parables and to the casual, hard-hearted listener, a parable was just a nice story about farming or fishing. But to the seeker, it was a treasure map. When the disciples asked Jesus why He spoke in parables, His answer was separating those with a heart to know God from those who were just curious or critical. Matthew 13:10–11, 15 And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given... For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing... The provision that we have in Christ is like a vast ocean. Peace, righteousness, joy, authority, and intimacy with God are all fully provided by Jesus. They are sitting there in the depths, absolute and inexhaustible.

Jesus did not die just to give us a legal contract saying we own an ocean. When some claim that a practical, surrendered walk isn't necessary because Jesus gave us all the provisions, they are confusing ownership with experience. Jesus paid for the riches, but the experiencing of those riches requires a practical, day-by-day surrender. God's mysteries are like treasure in the deep ocean. The treasure isn't hiding; it's just located in a realm that requires preparation to reach. Anyone can splash around on the surface of the water of scripture. But to see the breathtaking life at the bottom, you need specialized equipment, oxygen, and time. In the spiritual life, that equipment is a submitted heart to the word of God and the Holy Spirit. The deeper you go, the more the pressure of the world fades, and the more the hidden glories of Christ are revealed to us. The Truth is revealed by the Holy Spirit. God has given us the Holy Spirit, and He teaches a submitted heart. 1 Corinthians 2:9–10 But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit: for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. God does not hide things from us; He hides things for us, waiting for us to seek Him. God has always operated this way.

Clarity and revelation follow a wholehearted surrender. I like Jeremiah 29:13: And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart. In the Old Testament, the Hebrew word for secret is sod, which means an intimate, confidential conversation among close friends. God shares His secrets with those who respect and love Him. Psalm 25:14: The secret of the Lord is with them that fear him; and he will shew them his covenant. Remember the oil in the Tabernacle in the wilderness, picturing the Holy Spirit. It was never to be poured out on the flesh! God does not entrust His divine mysteries, power, or presence to the carnal, unsubmitted nature of man. Exodus 30:31–33: And thou shalt speak unto the children of Israel, saying, This shall be an holy anointing oil unto me throughout your generations. Upon man's flesh shall it not be poured. The anointing oil was composed of principal spices: liquid myrrh, sweet cinnamon, sweet calamus, cassia, and olive oil. To make it, these spices had to be bruised, crushed, and pressed. This perfectly typifies the Holy Spirit's ministry through the suffering and crushing of Jesus Christ. The sweetness of the Holy Spirit's presence in our lives today comes because Christ was crushed for us.

Isaiah 53:5 But he was wounded for our transgressions, he was bruised for our iniquities: the chastisement of our peace was upon him; and with his stripes we are healed. In Scripture, the flesh does not just mean our physical skin; it represents human nature apart from God. It is pride, self-will, intellect, and carnal desires. God's decree that the oil must never touch raw human flesh means the Holy Spirit will never endorse, empower, or mix with human carnal effort. Just as the physical oil couldn't be poured on flesh, the Holy Spirit cannot cooperate with an unsubmitted, carnal heart. Romans 8:7–8 Because the carnal mind is enmity against God: for it is not subject to the law of God, neither indeed can be. So then they that are in the flesh cannot please God. Paul states that these two forces are in total opposition. We cannot operate in the flesh and expect the anointing or the revelation of God. Galatians 5:17: For the flesh lusteth against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh: and these are contrary the one to the other... If the oil couldn't be poured on ordinary flesh, who was it for? God commanded that it only be poured on the Tabernacle furniture and on Aaron and his sons. It was for the priests who were cleansed, set apart, and clothed in holy garments. They were clothed in Righteousness. The priests had to be washed with water and clothed in fine linen before the oil could touch them.

The oil touched the garments of the priesthood, covering the flesh. Leviticus 8:12: And he poured of the anointing oil upon Aaron's head, and anointed him, to sanctify him. We Are the New Covenant Priesthood. Today, because of our wholehearted surrender to Jesus, we are a part of God's royal priesthood. The Holy Spirit is poured out on us because we have been washed by the blood of Christ and clothed in His righteousness. It is not because of our own fleshly merit. 1 Peter 2:9: But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people... The mystery of Christ is bigger than just His birth, death, and resurrection. It is all the provisions for us who are in Christ in the first three chapters of Ephesians. Paul later calls this the unsearchable riches of Christ (Eph 3:8). The word unsearchable means footprints that are impossible to fully track because they go on forever. This wealth in Ephesians includes adoption, redemption, forgiveness, wisdom, and an eternal inheritance. Then Eph 1:3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ. The ultimate goal is Christ Living in us! Under the Old Covenant, God dwelt in a tent and later in a stone temple with Solomon. In this current Dispensation of Grace, the mystery is that Jesus Christ lives inside of us. We are the Temple!

Colossians 1:27: To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory. We should spend the rest of our lives on this earth mining these glorious provisions. It is a lifelong journey of spiritual discovery. Mining for Treasure! The book of Proverbs describes the pursuit of this divine knowledge as a literal treasure hunt. Proverbs 2:4–5: If thou seekest her as silver, and searchest for her as for hid treasures; Then shalt thou understand the fear of the Lord, and find the knowledge of God. Growing in Knowledge, Peter encourages believers never to stagnate, but to constantly expand their understanding of these provisions. 2 Peter 3:18: But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ. In Ephesians, Paul is opening the doors to God's heavenly storehouse. Every single one of the unsearchable riches Paul lists in these chapters is designated strictly for the believer who is operating in the Spirit (the priesthood), not the old nature (the flesh). The flesh is entirely bankrupt. It cannot inherit the kingdom of God.

It cannot understand the parables of Jesus, it cannot receive the holy oil, and it cannot comprehend the riches of Ephesians. But the moment we say, Lord, I search for you with all my heart, I count my fleshly ambitions as loss, we are stepping out behind the torn veil. It is there, in that quiet place of absolute surrender, that the Holy Spirit pours out the oil without measure, unlocking every single dynamic provision God has stored up for us in Christ! Eph 3:5 Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; This is such an interesting verse. It is this mystery which was in other ages not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit; He is talking about these other ages that preceded this age of grace. In some of those ages there were some powerful men and spiritual men. There was Enoch, Noah, Abraham and David; Isaiah, Jeremiah, and Daniel. All of these men understood great mysteries, they did not understand the mystery that God revealed to Paul. God had this mystery closed up until this Church age and He revealed it to the Apostle Paul. There was a divine strategic reason for the silence.

If the powers of darkness had known the mystery that Christ's death would not just redeem Israel, but would create a completely New Man, Christ in us, where the Holy Spirit lives inside us, they never would have proceeded with the crucifixion. Paul explains this beautifully to the Corinthians. He notes that God ordained this hidden wisdom for our glory, but kept it completely concealed from the rulers of this world. 1 Corinthians 2:7–8: But we speak the wisdom of God in a mystery, even the hidden wisdom, which God ordained before the world unto our glory: Which none of the princes of this world knew: for had they known it, they would not have crucified the Lord of glory. When we sit down with Ephesians 1–3, we are reading secrets that David would have wept to know. We are holding truths that Isaiah strained his spiritual eyes to catch a glimpse of. The fact that God bypassed the greatest kings, prophets, and patriarchs of the past to hand this ultimate revelation of Divine Grace directly to us through Paul shows the immense value of the age we live in. We aren't just reading history; we are living in the very mystery that the ages were waiting for!

Eph 3:6 That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: This verse contains the mystery for us during this Church age and He revealed it to the Apostle Paul. It was that the Gentiles should be #1 fellowheirs, and #2 of the same body, and #3 partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: This was a mystery that was hidden all those years in the Old Testament and God didn't reveal it until the Apostle Paul came on the scene. Notice, partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel: It is through the Gospel of the Lord Jesus Christ. To be a fellow heir means to share equally in the inheritance. In the Old Testament, Israel was God's chosen heir of the earthly promises. Gentiles were considered outsiders, strangers to the covenants of promise. The same body means that God didn't just make a treaty or a partnership between Jew and Gentile; He fused them together into an entirely new spiritual organism where Christ is the Head. To be a partaker of His promise means we can have an equal share in the Holy Spirit and eternal life. In the Old Testament, the blessings of God flowed primarily through the nation of Israel. But the mystery reveals that Gentiles drink directly from the exact same spiritual fountain. Eph 3:7 Whereof I was made a minister, according to the gift of the grace of God given unto me by the **effectual working** of his power. Whereof means; this Gospel is why I am here. The same thing is true in our lives.

The only way we are ever going to minister in any capacity is by the grace of God. The more of the grace that we have, the more of the ministry we are going to be able to accomplish. That was the way it was with the Apostle Paul. Paul speaks of this marvelous grace and the things that he had to go through in order to get that grace. At one point he cried out to the Lord to remove the thorn in the flesh 3 times. God didn't deliver him but said my grace is sufficient for you. Paul learned the depths of the grace of God through this thorn in the flesh that he endured. God's power is directly proportional to our surrender, and His grace is unlocked only through our humility. Paul's assignment to preach the unsearchable riches of Christ was so massive that it could never be fueled by human talent or intellect. It required a massive supply of grace. And to get that grace, Paul had to be broken, brought low, and stripped of self-reliance until he genuinely viewed himself as less than the least of all saints. What is the connection between suffering and grace? The connection between suffering and grace is one of the most beautiful statements in the Christian faith.

It is not that God brings suffering because He lacks grace, but rather that suffering is the very environment where the deepest levels of God's grace are unlocked, experienced, and displayed. By nature, human beings rely on their own strength, intellect, and talent (what the Bible calls the flesh). As long as our own reservoir of strength is full, we don't drink from the ocean of God's grace. Suffering acts as a drain. It strips away our self-reliance until we reach the end of our own capability. God led Israel through a harsh, barren wilderness, allowing them to experience hunger and thirst. It was to strip them of Egyptian self-reliance and teach them to depend entirely on His daily provision. Deuteronomy 8:3: And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna... that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the Lord doth man live. But Divine Grace floods the low points. In physics, water always seeks the lowest point. In the spiritual realm, grace does the same. Humility is a low valley, and nothing brings a human heart into true humility quite like suffering. When suffering brings us low, it creates a spiritual vacuum that God's grace rushes in to fill. When the Apostle Paul asked God three times to remove his thorn in the flesh (a deep source of suffering), Jesus didn't remove the trial. Instead, He revealed that the suffering was actually maximizing the power of grace.

Suffering and grace work together! When suffering breaks our human strength and we surrender to God, we are suddenly hooked up to an infinite, supernatural power source: the effectual working of His power (Ephesians 3:7). The Greek word for **effectual working** in V7 is from the word which we get our word energy. Paul is saying, my ministry isn't powered by my own engine; it is fueled by the supernatural energy of God's grace working inside me. Paul had to go through intense trials to access the depth of this grace. When Paul asked God to remove his suffering, Jesus gave him a spiritual formula: Human Weakness + Divine Grace = Perfect Power. The scripture for that is 2 Corinthians 12:8–9: For this thing I besought the Lord thrice, that it might depart from me. And he said unto me, My grace is sufficient for thee: for my strength is made perfect in weakness. Most gladly therefore will I rather glory in my infirmities, that the power of Christ may rest upon me. The Grace for Paul was that he never bragged about how hard he worked. Whenever he looked at his accomplishments, he pointed right back to the oil of grace fueling his priestly labor.

1 Corinthians 15:10: But by the grace of God I am what I am: and his grace which was bestowed upon me was not in vain; but I laboured more abundantly than they all: yet not I, but the grace of God which was with me. Eph 3:8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ; Being less than the least of all saints is not an option. Paul had to take that place in order for that grace to be given. The place that the revelation of the grace of God causes us to take is one of true humility (less than the least of all saints.) Scripture tells us that God resists the proud, but He gives grace to the humble. The more humble we are, the more grace we will experience in our lives. Humility is not standing up and telling everyone how humble we are. Humility is a state that only God understands and God brings this state about in our lives by the things we experience. It is God who truly understands the depths of true humility that we are in. It is that He may give us the marvelous grace that Paul is talking about here.

This grace was given to Paul to preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ. The unsearchable means wealth so vast that we can track its footprints for a lifetime and never find the end. Because Paul was entirely emptied of self-glory, he could look at this infinite mountain of spiritual wealth and pass it completely on to us without trying to steal any of the credit for himself. Isaiah prophesied about a day when the hidden, spiritual treasures of God would be opened up to those God calls by name. Isaiah 45:3: And I will give thee the treasures of darkness, and hidden riches of secret places, that thou mayest know that I, the Lord, which call thee by thy name, am the God of Israel. All Riches are Hidden in Christ. Paul tells the Colossians that every single provision, wisdom, and spiritual assets are inside Jesus and they are ours. All the treasures of wisdom, knowledge, and spiritual wealth are hidden in Christ (Colossians 2:3), and we are complete in Christ (Colossians 2:10). We don't have to look outside of Jesus for a single spiritual provision, because the moment we received Him, we received everything He is and everything He owns. We aren't waiting to become wealthy; we are already fully supplied! The provisions are here for all who will take them! It is as we accept the Valley of Humility and the Storehouse of Grace!

Ephesians 3:9- 21 June 18, 2026 The Multi-Colored Wisdom and the Open Door!

Eph 3:9 And to make all men see what is the **fellowship of the mystery**, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ: God wants us to participate in the fellowship of the mystery. Christianity and running for the prize is not something we can do from the sidelines. We must participate in it. The marvel of God and of the Holy Spirit was this message that Paul preached was hidden in the Old Testament all along. As spiritual as the Old Testament saints were, they were not given the eyes to see it because it wasn't time yet. But when the fullness of time has come, God threw back the veil and it was Paul that saw this marvelous Church age and the message hidden in the Old Testament. Once we see it, we can see it throughout the Old Testament. We see the marvelous message of Christ right from the Garden of Eden. It is in type. Adam was a type of Christ and Eve was a type of the bride of the Lamb. Their experience is a type of the redemption that we have in Christ. V8 of our previous study tells us what this mystery is. Eph 3:8 Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the **unsearchable riches of Christ**; It is the **unsearchable riches of Christ** that Paul defines as this mystery.

For thousands of years, there was an insurmountable wall between Israel (God's chosen people) and the Gentiles (everyone else). The mystery is that the cross completely leveled that wall to create something entirely new: The Church. It wasn't just that Gentiles would be saved; it was that they would have equal standing as fellow heirs in the exact same spiritual body, with no second-class citizens. Col 1:26 Even the mystery which hath been hid from ages and from generations, but now is made manifest to his saints: 27 To whom God would make known what is the riches of the glory of this mystery among the Gentiles; which is Christ in you, the hope of glory: We can see the fellowship of the mystery as an open invitation to jump out of the bleachers and onto the track to run for the prize. When we really see this mystery, we want to participate. How can we not do anything else! We realize that Christianity isn't a spectator's sport or a weekly ritual; it is a living, breathing union with Jesus Christ who gave us everything. As 1Cor 2:9-10 reminds us, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him.... but God has uniquely revealed them to us by His Spirit.

Eph 3:10 **To the intent that now** unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God. To the intent; God had a purpose then and He has one now. That now, means during this Church age; now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places. It is the Church that is spoken of here because the Church is the one that is seated in the heavenlies in Christ. The Church is the heavenly body of Abraham's seed, just as Israel is the earthly body of Abraham's seed. Then, might be known by (a better word is through) the Church the manifold wisdom of God. That is exactly what God is doing. God is putting His wisdom on display in us who are of the Church and He is putting it on display to the principalities and powers. God is showing Satan himself even through our lives the manifold wisdom of God. Because the devil from the very beginning has been against God and has tried to destroy God's masterpiece. He has never and will never be able to do it. And God is putting us on display as an absolute proof of His manifold wisdom. The Church is supposed to be, not just a weekly meeting or a social club; it is supposed to be God's Church, on display to a watching supernatural universe.

It is incredibly easy to look at the fragmented state of the modern Church, with its thousands of denominations, theological infighting, and cultural scandals, and feel a deep sense of frustration and burden. It seems completely disconnected from the glorious, unified, masterpiece that Paul describes in Ephesians. If the Church is supposed to be displaying God's brilliant, multi-colored wisdom to the universe, why does it often look so fractured and weak on earth? The answer lies in understanding the difference between the Church as God sees it, versus the Church as humans have institutionalized it. We realize that Satan's strategy is always to attack the Church. The Bible speaks of the **Church in two ways**: the visible institution and the invisible reality. The visible is what we see on the street corners, denominations, buildings, church politics, and organizational structures. Because it involves humans, it is subject to human egos, cultural prejudices, and spiritual immaturity. Denominations often form because humans prioritize being right over being united in the Spirit by the truth. The second way that the Church is described in the Bible is as a Spiritual Body. Paul is talking about this in Ephesians. It is not a building or a brand; it is the living organic unity through the Holy Spirit and the word of God through every true believer across the globe, bound together by the Holy Spirit. Man looks at the outward labels (Baptist, Methodist, Pentecostal, Non-denominational), but God looks at the heart.

In the spiritual realm, the **multi-colored wisdom** of God is not displayed through our perfect organizational structures; it is displayed through the fact that broken people from every tongue, tribe, and background are genuinely transformed by the grace of Jesus Christ. I used the term **multi-colored wisdom. Why?** The Apostle Paul uses **manifold wisdom** of God in Ephesians 3:10. This is a rare, highly descriptive word. In olden times, it was used to describe things that were multi-colored, variegated, or intricately woven together. It described a rich tapestry, an intricately embroidered royal robe, or a multi-faceted diamond that catches the light and flashes different colors from every angle. By calling God's wisdom multi-colored, Paul is telling us that God's genius is not a flat, one-color line. It is a brilliant, multi-layered, multi-colored masterpiece. Note about the multi-colored wisdom of God and what it looks like. The Multi-Colored Colors of Grace - Think of a single beam of pure white light passing through a glass prism. As it passes through, it bursts out into a brilliant spectrum of individual colors, reds, blues, greens, and purples. God's wisdom and grace operates exactly like that prism. The white light of His eternal purpose passes through the prism of Jesus Christ and splits into thousands of different expressions of Divine grace to meet every human need.

To the guilt-ridden soul, God's wisdom and grace manifests as crimson mercy and forgiveness. To the brokenhearted, it manifests as the soothing green of healing and peace. To the confused, it manifests as the brilliant gold of divine guidance and truth. No matter how dark or complex our specific problem is, God has a specific shade of wisdom perfectly colored to match and overcome any obstacle we face. That is Divine Grace! Then there is The Weaver's Tapestry and The Mystery Hidden in the Back - If we look at the back of a beautiful hand-woven tapestry, it looks like an absolute mess. It is a tangle of loose threads, knots, and mismatched colors that seem to make no sense. But when we flip it over to the front, we see a flawless, breathtaking picture. For thousands of years in the Old Testament, God was weaving the back of the tapestry. When all the principalities and powers looked down, all they saw was random, disconnected threads: They saw a bloody lamb sacrificed in Egypt. They saw a brass serpent lifted up on a pole in the wilderness. They saw a shepherd boy named David fighting a giant. They saw a prophet named Isaiah crying out about a Suffering Servant. They did not understand!

To the devil and his angels, these looked like fragmented threads of events. They couldn't see how the threads connected. But at the Cross, God flipped the tapestry over. Every single random thread perfectly converged to form the image of Jesus Christ redeeming the world. This was God's **multi-colored wisdom** that took the messy threads of human history and wove them into a seamless garment of salvation. We have the Multi-Colored Fabric of the Church - The most tangible display of this multi-colored wisdom on earth is the Church itself. In the ancient times, people stayed with their own kind. Jews stayed with Jews, Greeks with Greeks, masters with masters, and slaves with slaves. Society was strictly segregated by culture, class, and race. God's multi-colored wisdom shattered those boundaries. He took people who had absolutely nothing in common, different colors, different cultures, and different social status, and knit them together into One Body. But today it is deeply heartbreaking, isn't it? What a contradiction of our time. God designed the Church to be the one place on earth where human prejudice goes to die. Yet, when we look around today, it often feels like hate, and division has taken the steering wheel, even within religious circles.

If God's wisdom shattered these boundaries 2,000 years ago, why are we still hurting from them today? When Jesus died on the cross, He legally broke these terrible things. Paul wrote about this in Ephesians 2:14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us. The wall is legally down. However, human beings still possess what the Bible calls the flesh, our old human nature. Naturally, human beings have fear of the outsider, pride in our own group, and the desire to feel superior to someone else. These are settings of the fallen human heart, that old nature. True unity in the Church requires active spiritual effort. It requires dying to ourselves daily, practicing humility, and letting the Holy Spirit rule our mind by the word of God. When Christians stop walking in the Spirit, they automatically default back to the flesh. They build back the very walls that Jesus bled to tear down. The ultimate expression of this multi-colored wisdom is God's ability to take the very worst things the enemy throws at us and weave them into something beautiful. When Satan engineered the crucifixion of Jesus Christ, he used his dark wisdom, if you can call it wisdom, to make up betrayal, political corruption, religious jealousy, and brutal murder. He thought he had won.

But God's multi-colored wisdom in Divine Grace took the ultimate act of human and demonic evil and turned it into the ultimate act of redemption. He does the exact same thing in our life today. The enemy brings a dark, painful thread into our life; a trial, a heartbreak, or a failure. But God's multi-colored wisdom and grace takes that dark thread, knots it into His grace, and uses it to weave strength, empathy, and character into our spiritual robe. God doesn't just stop the devil; He makes the devil's attacks backfire to fulfill His own glorious purposes. That is the multi-colored wisdom of God. Satan knows he cannot stop God from saving individuals, so he does the next best thing: he weaponizes things to paralyze the church's collective witness. Satan changes the focus: He shifts the Church's gaze away from seeking those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. Instead Satan gets the church to focus on earthly things. Satan uses what I call echo chambers: He creates an environment where people only listen to those who look, think, and vote like them, fanning the flames of fear and suspicion toward anyone outside their circle.

When the world looks at a Church that is just like the rest of society, the world concludes that the Gospel has no real power. People naturally gravitate toward comfort. It is easier to go to a church where everyone shares your exact culture, musical taste, income level, and political outlook. It takes no spiritual effort to love people who are exactly like them. But Jesus said: Lu 6:32 For if ye love them which love you, what thank have ye? for sinners also love those that love them. The multi-colored wisdom isn't seen when a room full of identical people get along. It is seen when a rich man, a poor man, a black man, a white man, and an Israelite can sit at the same table, break bread, and genuinely love each other as brothers because they share the identity in Christ which is infinitely bigger than their earthly differences. While it feels like hate has taken over the visible church, it is vital to remember that the enemy's victory is an illusion. Just as in Elijah's day, when the prophet thought he was the only one left, God whispered that He had a remnant who hadn't bowed the knee to Baal. 1Ki 19:18 Yet I have left me seven thousand in Israel, all the knees which have not bowed unto Baal, and every mouth which hath not kissed him. Today, outside the camp of the visible Church that is caught up in Satan's trap, there is a quiet movement of true believers who are living out the multi-colored fabric of the Church. The hate we see today is the dying of a defeated enemy.

There are those who are taking our place on the race track, running for the prize, and showing the watching principalities that God's multi-colored wisdom of the true Church cannot be defeated by human hatred. The devil has tried to destroy God's masterpiece from the beginning. Since he cannot destroy Christ, and he cannot undo the cross, he attacks the Church's witness. If the supernatural universe is supposed to look at the Church and see God's wisdom, Satan's goal is to muddy the glass so they can't see through it. He does this through: Sowing Tares: Jesus warned in Matthew 13:24-30 that the enemy would plant tares (counterfeits) among the true wheat. Much of what the world scorns as the Church today is actually the religious, institutional shell, not the true, spirit-led believers. The multi-colored wisdom of God is His grace in living color. It is an active, brilliant force designed to transform every negative thread of our human experience into something profoundly positive. The multi-colored grace custom-matches every human need. God's grace does not offer a generic, one-size-fits-all answer to our pain. Just as white light splits into a beautiful spectrum of colors through a prism, Christ, God's multi-colored grace adapts to meet us exactly where we are. If we are drowning in guilt, His grace meets us as the crimson color of total forgiveness.

If we are walking through grief, it meets us as the soothing, peaceful green of divine comfort. If we are paralyzed by anxiety, it meets us as the bright, steady gold of supernatural strength. It means no matter how unique or dark our problem is, God has a specific, positive light of grace perfectly designed to match and overcome everything we face. His grace is a multi-layered, multi-colored, an unstoppable reservoir of goodness that ensures no matter what life throws at us. The final picture of our life will be a masterpiece of His glory if we let Him and yield to His working hand upon us. So, again all that in Eph 3:10 To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the **manifold wisdom of God**. Eph 3:11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: The Church, and the Gentiles, and the Jews together, were not an afterthought with God. God purposed all of this in Christ before the world ever began or even before He even created Adam. It was God's eternal purpose in Christ Jesus. His purpose was to visit the Gentiles to take out of them a people for His name. we were included in the purposes of God.

Now it is neither Jew nor Gentile but all that are born again have this same opportunity to be a full overcomer, just believe. Eph 3:12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. With confidence means, we know that we have a right into the very presence of God. We do not need to come tentative before God, but we come with every confidence and boldness before Him. And once again it is by the faith of Him, that He gives us. That faith is a gift of God and we come to God with the same faith that Jesus came with when He came before His Father. First, we see how Paul pulls back the veil on the sacred mystery (God's master plan). Then, he shows how this plan puts God's multi-colored wisdom on display to the entire spiritual universe. Now, Paul brings it right down to our personal, daily life. Because of this master plan, we have an open-door relationship with the Lord of the universe. Note the **three positive gifts** packed into this one verse: **boldness is a gift, access is a gift, and confidence is a gift**. Boldness meant freedom of speech or the right to say anything. It was a privilege reserved only for free citizens of a Greek city-state; a slave or a foreigner could never speak boldly or openly to a king. Paul is saying that because we are in Christ, our status has completely shifted. We are no longer a stranger, an outsider, or a spiritual slave in fear. When we pray, we don't have to walk on eggshells. We don't have to carefully phrase our words out of fear that God will reject us. We have the divine right to speak openly, and honestly with our Heavenly Father.

We can bring Him our doubts, our hurts, and our messy realities with complete freedom of speech. Then the word for **access** means an introduction or secured entry. It was used to describe an elite official; a king's favorite prince would take a common person by the hand and personally usher them directly into the royal throne room. (**access**). Because of Christ, that veil was torn from top to bottom. Jesus takes us by the hand and personally ushers us into the presence of God. The door is permanently unlocked. We never have to wonder if God is in or if He is too busy for us. We have all-access to the Father. Then the word for **confidence** means a deep, unshakeable trust and security. Notice where this confidence comes from. The verse says, by the faith of him (or through faith in Him). Our confidence to walk into God's presence doesn't depend on how well we performed today. It doesn't depend on whether we had a good spiritual day or a bad one. If our confidence relied on our faithfulness, we would approach God with hesitation every time we stumbled. But our access is built entirely on His faithfulness and what He accomplished on the cross. His perfect track record is what gets us through the door.

Hebrews 4:16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need. When we put this verse alongside the multi-colored wisdom we just talked about, it paints a stunning picture. The dark principalities and powers are watching the universe, and what do they see? They see a human being, made of dust, once broken by sin, walking straight into the holy presence of God with their head held high, speaking freely, completely secure in the Father's love. That is the practical reality of the mystery that Paul tells us here. We aren't watching God from the sidelines; we are invited directly into His inner chambers. Eph 3:13 **Wherefore** I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. Paul was not fearful. He knew that it is why God chose him. It was to deliver this message to us. **Wherefore**; Because of this message that I have declared to you in these last few verses; all of these things that I have told you about the provisions and purposes of God. Because of all of this, I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory. Why? Because this is the very purpose why God chose Paul.

Eph 3:14 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, 15 Of whom (of Christ) the whole family in heaven and earth is named, 16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man; 17 That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love, These prayers follow the pattern that Jesus gave when the disciples said Lord teach us to pray. Lu 11:1 And it came to pass, that, as he was praying in a certain place, when he ceased, one of his disciples said unto him, Lord, teach us to pray, as John also taught his disciples. Then Lu 11:2-4 is the pattern prayer and it is not the Lord's Prayer as some teach. The Lord's Prayer is found in John 17. There are principles of prayer that can be applied to our lives. The first principal is our Father who art in heaven hallowed be thy name. This is praising the Lord first and that is what Paul did here. Notice how He gives honor unto Christ. Eph 3:15 Of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named. That is giving authority and glory unto Christ Himself. He is the reason why this prayer is effective. We can gain much by consulting the way the Apostle Paul prayed. Look at how Paul starts: For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father... Jewish people traditionally prayed standing up with their hands lifted to heaven. Kneeling was a posture reserved for intense, deep emotion, complete surrender, and absolute reverence before a King. But notice, Paul falls to his knees in total awe, yet the person he is addressing is the Father.

This perfectly mirrors the pattern Jesus taught: Our Father, which art in heaven...Paul balances breathtaking reverence with intimate family closeness. He isn't begging a distant, cold God; he is appealing to a loving Father. Hallowing the Name of whom the whole family... is named; By stating that the whole family in heaven and earth is named after Christ, Paul is doing exactly what Jesus commanded: Hallowed be thy name. To give a name in the ancient times meant to claim ownership, responsibility, and authority over someone. The family in heaven which are the saints who have already run their race and are now with the Lord. Then the family on earth which are every true believer alive today. Paul is declaring that we all wear the family name of Jesus Christ. We belong to Him. When Paul anchors his prayer in the authority and glory of that Name, he is reminding us that the prayer is effective not because of Paul's goodness, but because of whose family we belong to. Praying for the inner man; most of our modern prayers are for outward circumstances: Lord, fix my finances, heal my body, change my boss, smooth out my day. But notice the shift in Paul's apostolic pattern. He doesn't pray for the Ephesians' outer circumstances to change; he prays for the **inner man**.

Ephesians 3:16 That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the **inner man**. Paul knows a fundamental truth of the Christian running for the prize: If we are strong on the inside; it is the new man that no storm on the outside can break. He asks God to pour supernatural power into their inner man, our spirit, mind, and will, out of God's limitless supply (the riches of his glory). Then Paul settles the Heart in verse 17, Paul prays That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith. Now, this can be confusing at first glance. Weren't the Ephesians already saved? Didn't Christ already live in them? Yes! But the Greek word Paul uses for dwell here doesn't mean to visit like a guest in a hotel; it means to settle down, take up permanent residence, and make oneself completely at home. Paul is praying that Jesus wouldn't just be a resident in a dark corner of their hearts, but that He would have free reign over every room of their thoughts, their ambitions, their secret desires, and their relationships.

Eph 3:18 May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; Why does he use architectural terms to describe the love of Jesus? Because he wants us to know that no matter where we go, we cannot outrun or exhaust the love of God. The Breadth is wide enough to reach across every human barrier. It is the multi-colored fabric of the Church we talked about. The Length extends from eternity past to eternity future. It is a love that never quits, never gives up on you, and runs through all our life's race. The Depth reaches down into the darkest pits of human failure, depression, and despair. This is the valley experience. There are so many lessons we are never going to learn outside of the valley. No matter how low, Christ's love goes deeper to lift us out. All of the tremendous fruit and all of these wonderful blessings of fruitfulness are not all on the mountaintop. They are down into the depths of the valley. The Height lifts us up to the heavenlies, seating us with Christ and securing our eternal destiny. It is the mountaintop experience. No person is going to be able to survive just going continually through the valley. We are promised as we are there in Psalm 23; though I walk through the valley of the shadow of death I will fear no evil.

There are lessons that we simply cannot learn any other way. Paul presents the love of God as a giant cube; and that cube corresponds with different phases and expressions of our experience; he wants us to understand **what is the breadth of the love of God**; Ps 18:19 (the Lord) He brought me forth also into a large (Breadth) place; he delivered me, because he delighted in me. It tells us of the prosperity and the blessings of the Lord. The word length means extremity when we come to the end of our rope so to speak. When we have exhausted all of our own resources. This is where we learn the lengths to which the love of God will go in order to minister unto us. So He leads us through all of these different experiences and it is to comprehend with all saints. We interact with other saints in order to fully understand and know the fullness of the love of God. Eph 3:19 And **to know the love of Christ**, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God. We cannot learn the love of Christ out of a book. We learn it by experience (to know it); the depths even by experience because it passes knowledge.

Then we come to the place that ye might be filled with all of fullness or completion. The way to be filled with all the fullness of God is to be filled with divine love. Eph 3:20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us. Paul closes this prayer, by glorifying the Lord. God will never cease to receive praise for His wondrous grace shown unto man? Eph 3:21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. Paul ends this chapter with Amen. Chapters 1–3: are The Wealth of provisions, and spiritual riches in Christ. We are told to sit down and receive. Chapters 4–6: is the Duty to walk in them. It is the practical, and they focus on our daily conduct, relationships, and warfare. We are told to get up and walk. We cannot flip the order. If we try to live Chapter 4 (the practical walk) without being anchored in Chapters 1–3 (the spiritual provisions), we will end up exhausted, and defeated. We cannot do what God asks us to do until we fully realize who God has made us to be!

Ephesians 4:1-7 June 25, 2026 Practical Walk, Worthy of Our Heavenly Calling!

In this chapter we come to a change in Paul's message. The first 3 chapters are all God's glorious provision. The last 3 chapters refer to our part in the practicality of this message. We must have the first part in order to fulfill the second part. So many Christians get in trouble here because they try to go out and practice the gospel without taking the gospel in. So we must be built up in the faith with the provisional truth and then God makes it a practicality in our lives. Paul ends chapter 3 with "Amen." Eph 3:21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end. Amen. When Paul writes Amen at the end of Ephesians 3:21, he isn't just saying the end of the prayer or talk to you later. He is concluding an expression of praise to God that serves as the grand finale for the entire first half of the Ephesian letter. Why does it matter so much for our transition into Chapter 4? The "amen" is the separation of doctrine and practice. Chapters 1–3 is what God has done for us in Christ, our identity, and the unity of the Church. It is Paul explaining the mystery of the gospel. Chapters 4–6 Paul tells us how-to live-in light of those truths. That "Amen" at the end of Chapter 3 acts as a structural anchor. It is Paul closing the doctrinal and scriptural textbook with a shout of praise before opening the practical manual in Chapter 4.

Look at Ephesians 3:20 Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think... Paul has just spent three chapters laying out a vision of God's grace so massive that it practically blows his mind. He realizes that words are failing him to describe how good God is. When he lands on the fact that God's glory will endure in the church through Jesus throughout all ages, there is only one appropriate response left for a first-century Jew: Amen. It means let it be so; it is a trustworthy truth. It's an exclamation of absolute certainty and worship. The "Amen" is the exclamation point that sets up the very next word of the letter. Notice how Chapter 4 begins. Eph 4:1 I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. That word therefore is entirely dependent on the "Amen." Paul is saying: Since God is glorious, and since His plan is this certain Amen, therefore, here is how you need to live. Chapter 3 ends with "Amen" because he has just painted a masterpiece of God's grace, and he has to stop and worship before he hands the believers their marching orders. Though Paul was a prisoner in Rome, he never acknowledged himself to be a prisoner of Rome.

He would not give man or Satan credit for his imprisonment, for he knew he was a prisoner by the will of God. Eph 4:1walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called. Note also, that the word walk is mentioned eight times in this book. The vocation refers to all of those callings that we found in the first 3 chapters. God has called us unto a heavenly inheritance. And He has called us to be one with Christ and to dwell in the heavenlies. God wants us to put this on display even as he said the provision is there and he is going to put us on display throughout all ages. Well we need to get a running start on that and manifest it right now and that is done by the walk of the saints. When churches preach that there is no need for a practical walk, they are saying there is no need for practical holiness. They are teaching people; because we already have all the provisions in Christ, and because we Christians are saved by grace alone, and have all the spiritual provisions in Christ, they are completely free from any obligation to follow the practical way that Paul tells us how they should live. Why do people fall into this trap? It sounds appealing, but it is spiritually dangerous. They teach, oh, it's all about grace, I don't need to do anything! But it is a devastating trap.

Here is what Satan is trying to accomplish through this teaching, how it affects people, and how it cripples the church today. Satan knows he cannot steal a believer's salvation. So, his backup plan is to neutralize their effectiveness. Satan wants to rob God of His Glory. In Ephesians 3:10, Paul says God's intent is that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God. God wants the church to be His crown, displaying His transformation to the spiritual Church. By convincing Christians that their daily walk doesn't matter, Satan ensures the church looks just like the dark world around it, effectively silencing its witness. Satan loves to disconnect what God joined together. Satan wants to disconnect the root of the Tree from the fruit! Chapters 1–3 are the root (doctrine); Chapters 4–6 are the fruit (behavior). If Satan can convince leaders that the root is all that matters, he ensures the tree produces no fruit. What does this do to people? When people are fed a diet of positional truth with zero practical application, it damages their souls in two distinct ways. People begin to live double lives. They use their heavenly position as a license to sin. They think, I am seated in heavenly places, so it doesn't matter how I treat people, what I do in life. It sears the conscience. It creates pew-warmers who confuse intellectual agreement with spiritual growth. They mistake knowing a doctrine for living a life. James warned about this:

James 1:22 But be ye doers of the word, and not hearers only, deceiving your own selves. This type of teaching develops monstrous, deformed growth. Imagine a human body where only the head grows, but the arms and legs remain infant-sized. That is what this teaching does. It creates spiritual bobbleheads; Christians with heads filled with knowledge, but tiny, atrophied hands and feet that don't know how to serve, love, or walk. It develops a form of spiritual pride. These believers often become highly critical of others, calling those who are spiritually walking, legal. Yet they are completely lacking in the very things Paul lists in verse 2: lowliness, meekness, longsuffering, and forbearing one another in love. Today, the enemy uses this subtle error of “no practical” teaching to create an impotent church. The enemy is convincing well-meaning leaders to preach only the provisions and never a practical walk. Satan creates churches that are irrelevant and spiritually powerless. The enemy gets the world to look at the church and say, “Why should I believe your Gospel? You talk about a heavenly calling, but you act just like us.” The “worthy walk” is the validation of the message. Without the walk, the message loses its cutting edge.

Paul is so urgent in Ephesians 4:1 because he knows that an undisciplined walk grieves the Holy Spirit (Eph 4:30) and gives place to the devil (Eph 4:27). God provided the armor (Ephesians 6), but we have to actually put it on and stand. Satan rarely presents a heresy as obviously evil; he usually wraps it in a spiritual package. This teaching of no practical walk says, my spirit is seated in heavenly places and is perfectly righteous. What my physical body does down here on earth doesn't affect my spiritual standing, so it doesn't matter. This twists the doctrine of grace. It argues, since all my sins past, present, and future are already forgiven, any attempt to strive for holiness or obey commands is legalism and a denial of Christ's finished work. This replaces God's objective standard with internal feelings. It says, I don't need the commands of Scripture to guide my behavior; I am just led by love and the Spirit. The problem is that without the boundaries of Scripture, love quickly becomes defined by whatever the culture or the individual wants it to mean. That is not Divine Love! These are half-truths taught.

It correctly highlights that we cannot earn our salvation. But it wrongly concludes that our behavior doesn't matter to God. Think of a royal family. A child carries a respected family name, and their parents absolutely expect them to conduct themselves in a manner that honors that name. If the child acts recklessly, or dishonorably, they bring shame upon the family identity. Would God expect any less of us as Christians? No. We have been bought with a price of the precious blood of Christ. We are not our own. We must walk worthy of our calling. This is exactly what God is doing in Ephesians 4:1. Paul says a few verses earlier in Ephesians 3:14–15 For this cause I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, of whom the whole family in heaven and earth is named...Paul reminds us that we have been placed into a family of the highest possible distinction, the family of God. We now bear the name of Christ (Christians). When Paul says in 4:1 to walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called, God is saying: You are my children. I have given you my Name, my Spirit, and my inheritance. Now, go out into the world and live in a way that reflects the honor, integrity, and character of the Family you belong to. The teaching that claims that practical doesn't exist in the Bible is saying that God is an indifferent Father who doesn't care if His children drag the family name through the mud.

But Scripture shows the exact opposite: because He is a Father of supreme holiness and majesty, He expects His children to walk in a manner becoming to His Name. Paul completely shatters this idea. He doesn't say, You are called, so just relax in your position. He says, You are called, therefore walk worthy. True biblical faith behaves like a tree: The Roots are our position in Christ, grace, and justification (Ephesians 1–3). The Fruit is our practical walk, obedience, and sanctification (Ephesians 4–6). a root system that produces absolutely no fruit is actually dead. Jas 2:17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. How is it that we can walk worthy of our calling? By being led by the Holy Spirit. God wants us to put this on display even as he said the provision is there and he is going to put us on display throughout all ages. Well we need to get a running start on that and manifest it right now and that is done by the walk of the saints. Eph 4:2 With all **lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.** These verses describe how we are to walk. With all #1 lowliness means we are really going to have to discover what true humility is and what the true dependence on the grace of God is. That is the only way we are ever going to be able to walk in this new life. Today humility is despised as weakness.

But biblically, humility is simply truth. It is recognizing who God is (Chapters 1–3) and who we are without Him. When we realize that every ounce of our inheritance, salvation, and breath is a gift of pure grace, pride dies. You cannot look down on another believer when you are both kneeling at the foot of the cross. True humility is the ground in which all the other virtues grow. #2. Meekness which means that we are going to have to let God fight our battles. We cannot fight and do these things in our own strength. Meekness is believing God to fight our battle rather than us doing it ourselves. Human nature wants to defend itself, strike back, and demand its rights. Meekness is often translated as gentleness, but scripturally it refers to a powerful warhorse that had been trained to submit its massive strength to the rider's bit and bridle. It is power under control. When we are meek, we don't have to claw, manipulate, or fight in our own strength to protect our reputation or position. We trust that God is our defender. #3 With all longsuffering. This is an attitude. It doesn't mean we suffer for a long time. It is an attitude whereby we may be able to bear with someone else during our walk even as God as God has been longsuffering with us.

#4 forbearing one another in love. Again this is the practicality of this walk and we will have to forbear with one another in love. We are going to have to have a little grace with other people and be longsuffering and forbearing with them. Then #5; in V3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Once again unity with the saints of God is another expression of this wonderful worthy walk. So, Paul tells us, Lowliness or humility; Meekness; Longsuffering; Forbearing; Unity and if we put them all together. If we don't have humility (#1), you will be full of pride. If we have pride, we won't be meek (#2); we will fight for our own way. If we are fighting for our own way, we won't be patient (#3) or forbear with anyone (#4). And without those, unity (#5) is completely destroyed. We must know how Satan works: the enemy wants us to try to do (Unity) without (Humility and Meekness). True biblical unity can only be maintained when saints are walking the practical walk in the power of the Spirit, letting God fight their battles, and extending massive amounts of grace to one another. The word endeavouring means to guard something of immense value with intense effort. Why do you think the enemy fights so hard to disrupt the unity of the church?

When we look at how Satan uses leaders to preach against a practical walk, we can see that it isn't just a theological disagreement, it is a targeted military strike on the church. The enemy's plan is to separate unity with the teaching that we don't need a practical walk. The trap becomes completely exposed. Here is exactly how that false teaching serves as Satan's primary tool to destroy church unity: It removes the glue (Verses 2 & 3). Paul gives a precise formula for unity in verses 2 and 3. Lowliness + Meekness + Longsuffering + Forbearing = Unity. Every single one of those ingredients is a practical action. Humility is a practical choice to count others better than yourself. Longsuffering is a practical choice not to snap at someone. Forbearing is the practical hard work of putting up with people's flaws. When a leader preaches that a practical walk isn't necessary because we have all the provisions in Christ, they are effectively telling the congregation: You don't actually have to do the hard work of verses 2 and 3. But the moment they remove the practical walk, they remove the ingredients required to maintain unity. The glue is gone, and the church naturally fractures into selfishness, and pride.

When leaders teach that our daily behavior doesn't matter to God because of our heavenly position, people stop fighting their personal pride, and selfishness. What happens when a church building is filled with people who are convinced they are seated in heavenly places but are practically letting their carnal flesh run wild? Jas 4:1 From whence come wars and fightings among you? come they not hence, even of your lusts that war in your members? The false teaching allows people to remain selfish while feeling spiritually secure. Satan doesn't even have to show up to divide the church; the people's unchecked flesh will do it for him. It redefines "Unity" into a counterfeit. When leaders discard the practical walk, they still know the church needs to look unified to survive. So, they have to invent a fake unity. You got love, but it is cotton candy love. Instead of a supernatural unity built on mutual forgiveness and divine love (which takes practical effort), they create a surface unity. People think they are unified because they all like the same pastor, listen to the same music, or belong to the same meeting; all the while, they do not stand for the truth. This is a surface unity. It looks great on Sunday morning, but it has no structural strength. The moment a real trial, an offense, or a disagreement happens, this counterfeit unity shatters instantly because it lacks the bond of peace that only comes from a shared, practical walk in Christ.

This is Satan's ultimate chess move: He uses the pulpits to disarm the soldiers. If he can get a leader to teach that the practical walk isn't necessary, he effectively gets the church to drop its shields. The congregation stops "endeavouring" (straining every nerve) to keep the unity because they've been told there's nothing they need to do. By separating doctrine (Chapters 1-3) from practice (Chapters 4-6), the enemy ensures that the church remains spiritually paralyzed, unfit for warfare, devoid of the Spirit's power, and completely divided. This is why Paul uses that heavy, exhausting word "Endeavouring." It means to labor, to strain every nerve, to act with haste. Paul doesn't say, sit back and enjoy the unity. He says, guard it like a soldier guarding a treasury, because the enemy is actively trying to break in and steal it. Every time we choose humility over pride, or longsuffering over a quick temper, we are actively pushing back the forces of darkness. Paul lays out the exact pastoral job description later in Ephesians 4:11-12. Eph 4:4 There is one body, (this is the body of the Church) and one Spirit, (this is the Holy Spirit) even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; One Body (The Organism) as the mystical body of Christ. It includes every true believer across the globe and throughout history.

Just as a human body has billions of cells but remains one single organism, the Church is unified under one life-source. Man-made efforts to unite different churches through compromise are completely unnecessary, because God has already made the true Body perfectly one. One Spirit is the Life-Giver: The Holy Spirit is the nervous system of this organism. He stimulates the Body. If the same Spirit lives in a believer in America, a believer in Africa, and a believer in Asia, they are fundamentally connected, regardless of cultural or organizational differences. One hope of your calling is the overall hope of being with Christ. In the Bible, hope is never a wishful thought (like I hope it doesn't rain); it is a confident expectation of future certainty. Our single, shared destiny is to be glorified with Christ, dwelling in the heavenlies with Him forever. We are all walking toward the exact same finish line. We don't try to make the body one. It is already one Body. It is a mystical body of Christ. It is an organism not an organization. No efforts of man can bring together a more perfect body than that made by the Divine working of God. Eph 4:5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, Christ is the head of His body. There is one faith and that is the faith of our Lord Jesus Christ.

There is one baptism and that happened on the day of Pentecost and it is on the basis of what happened on the cross. Eph 4:6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all. It is a wheel of six spokes reaching out from a hub in the center. Jesus Christ is the Hub, for He is named in the middle, with three on either side. God the Father is not the Hub, because He is not the Head of the Church. Neither is the Holy Spirit. Note then, that the first spoke - one Body, is directly opposite the last - one God and Father. The second spoke - the one Spirit, is directly across from the sixth - the one baptism. Is that not rich and interesting? Finally, the third - the one hope, looks over the Hub and beholds her twin sister - the one faith. Our wheel is complete, perfect, beautiful, simple, and powerful. If the Church had rolled on during the past nineteen hundred years in full accord with this wheel, what would she have become? Nevertheless, thank God, some saints have seen this sevenfold truth and have lived and labored accordingly. Eph 4:7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. As we prepare to move into verse 7, Paul transitions from talking about our corporate unity to talking about our individual gifts. Understanding this fierce spiritual battle for unity changes the way a believer should view their individual spiritual gifts. The church is an army locked in a brutal fight against a strategic enemy.

We realize that Christ hands out gifts the way a military commander hands out specialized equipment. One soldier is given the gift of teaching (heavy artillery). Another is given the gift of encouragement or mercy (the medic). Another is given administration or leadership (logistics and communications). Verse 7 says this grace is given according to the measure of the gift of Christ. He doles out exactly what the foxhole needs. We don't own our gift; it was issued to us by the Commander-in-Chief to help the foxhole survive and win the battle for unity. Christ gives individual gifts to every believer to help fulfill this grand design. Paul places the massive weight on the church leadership to keep the body anchored in both truth and practice? Satan loves to twist definitions. He tries to convince Christians that unity means everyone has to look, talk, act, and think exactly the same way (uniformity). Paul shatters this with that word: **But...** unto every one of us is given grace... Paul is saying that true unity is achieved through diversity, not by erasing it. Think of a musical orchestra: if every instrument was a trumpet playing the exact same note, you wouldn't have a masterpiece; you'd have a headache. True harmony happens when the violins, the flutes, and the trumpets all play different parts under the direction of the same Conductor. Our individual gift is our unique instrument.

We use it to enhance the harmony (unity) of the body, not to compete with others. When we don't understand the battle for unity, individual gifts become a breeding ground for division. People with prominent gifts (like preaching or leading) get puffed up with pride. People with quiet, behind-the-scenes gifts (like helps or hospitality) get jealous and feel unimportant. But look at verse 7 again: it is given grace. We didn't earn our gift. We didn't buy it. It was measured out to us by sovereign grace. The enemy is trying to break the shield, we don't look at the soldier next to us and get jealous of his bigger shield or sharper sword. We thank God He has the soldier next to us, because the Lord's strength keeps us alive. Understanding the battle forces us to view our gifts with lowliness and meekness. My gift is not about my platform; it is about protecting my brothers and sisters from the deceptive schemes of the Devil. Paul in the next few verses is going to describe Christ as a conquering King returning from battle, leading a train of defeated enemies, and riding into His city to distribute the spoils of war to His people. And those spoils of war are the very gifts and gifted people He gives to the church. Whatever spiritual enablement, talent, or capacity we have been given by God was personally measured out and handed to us by Jesus Christ Himself, specifically designed to help the body of Christ, the church stand firm.

Our spiritual gifts are not accidental talents; they are sovereignly distributed spoils of a universal war. When Jesus ascended into heaven as the ultimate victor over sin, death, and the demonic realm, He didn't keep the plunder for Himself. He turned around and dropped those spoils of war right into the laps of His people in the form of spiritual capacities and gifted leaders. Because the Lord loves us with an unimaginable, boundless love, He has placed us into His own family and granted us a high, heavenly vocation. He has poured out His grace to provide everything we need to live in victory. We must never forget what this provision cost the Lord Jesus. To hand us these gifts and secure our heavenly inheritance, Jesus had to pay an infinite price. Driven by His wonderful love and grace, He who was seated in the highest glory willingly descended into the lower parts of the earth. He took on human flesh, suffered, bled, and died on a cruel Roman cross, absorbing the full weight of our sin. He went into the dark depths of the grave to completely disarm Satan, sin, and death. Our spiritual gifts are the hard-won spoils of that monumental war.

He bought them with His life, and He rose in absolute victory, and now He distributes them to us out of the infinite storehouse of His grace. Because it costs Him everything to provide these tools for us, walking worthy of Him isn't optional; it is our highest privilege and our ultimate expression of worship. Therefore, Paul pleads us to walk worthy of this high calling. This worthy walk is not powered by our own human grit, but by total dependence on God's grace. This is our Practical Walk, Worthy of Our Heavenly Calling!

Ephesians 4:8-15 July 9, 2026 Anchored in the Word: Stand Firm Against The Wind!

Eph 4:7 But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. Again we are speaking of individuals. We are a collective body, but it is individual members that make up that body. We must understand how important they really are. We are not just another number to be lost in the shuffle. Eph 4:8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. Wherefore means because He has given this grace to us. When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. This is a reference to when Jesus went into upper Sheol or Paradise. Paradise before Christ's resurrection was down below, but Paradise now is in the third heaven. Remember when Jesus told the thief on the cross; today thou wilt be with me in Paradise. This is what He is talking about. It is the abode of the righteous dead at that time. When Jesus ascended on high, He took all of those captive spirits that had been held in upper Sheol throughout all of those ages. He took all of those captive spirits back to heaven with Him. So Paradise is no longer in the heart of the earth. It is now in heaven. Here are some scriptures to clarify that. Mt 12:40 For as Jonas was three days and three nights in the whale's belly; so shall the Son of man be three days and three nights in the heart of the earth.

Lu 23:43 And Jesus said unto him, Verily I say unto thee, To day shalt thou be with me in paradise. Lu 16:22 And it came to pass, that the beggar died, and was carried by the angels into Abraham's bosom: the rich man also died, and was buried; 2Co 12:2 I knew a man in Christ above fourteen years ago, (whether in the body, I cannot tell; or whether out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) such an one caught up to the third heaven. 3 And I knew such a man, (whether in the body, or out of the body, I cannot tell: God knoweth;) 4 How that he was caught up into paradise, and heard unspeakable words, which it is not lawful for a man to utter. Compare this with: 1Pe 3:19 By which also he went and preached unto the spirits in prison; 20 Which sometime were disobedient, when once the longsuffering of God waited in the days of Noah, while the ark was a preparing, wherein few, that is, eight souls were saved by water. Mt 27:52 And the graves were opened; and many bodies of the saints which slept arose, 53 And came out of the graves after his resurrection, and went into the holy city, and appeared unto many. Jesus did something else when He was raised from the grave. He gave gifts unto men. These gifts are detailed in the next few verses.

Overall Jesus gave each one of us as a gift to the rest of the body. We are to be beneficial to the rest of the body of Christ as a gift from God. Eph 4:9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) Paul is quoting King David in V8: Psalm 68:18 Thou hast ascended on high, thou hast led captivity captive: thou hast received gifts for men... In ancient times, when a king won a massive war, he would return to his capital city in a triumphal procession. He would march the defeated enemy kings and captives behind him in chains (leading the captors captive) and distribute the spoils of war to his citizens. By dying and descending, Jesus broke the power of spiritual death. When He ascended, He emptied the Paradise compartment of Sheol, marching those Old Testament saints triumphantly up into the Third Heaven as the spoils of His victory. Paul uses this exact same military terms in Col 2:15 And having spoiled principalities and powers, he made a shew of them openly, triumphing over them in it.

Eph 4:11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; The spoils Jesus won during His ascension were not kept for Himself. He turned around and gave people as gifts to the Church, and spiritual abilities to individuals so that all in the body of Christ participate in the spoils.¹² For the **perfecting** of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: These are ministers and every one of us are to be a minister to the body of Christ. All of us may not have the official place spoken of here. The word perfecting means to equip, mend, or restore to usefulness. A pastor's job is to practically equip the saints so that they can do the work of the ministry and build up the body. You cannot equip someone by only telling them what they possess; you have to train them in how to use it. Overall Jesus gave each one of us; He gave us as a gift to the rest of the body. We are to be beneficial to the rest of the body of Christ as a gift from God. There are some other ministry gifts mentioned in 1Cor 12:28. Between these two scriptures in 1Co 12:28 and Eph 4:11 everybody can find their place in the body of Christ.

Again, the definition of perfecting is mending, equipping, or restoring to usefulness, which is perfectly illustrated by how God built the Old Testament Tabernacle. Exodus 31:1-5 (Bezalel and Oholiab): Moses was given the blueprint, but he couldn't build it alone. God said, I have filled him with the spirit of God, in wisdom, and in understanding, and in knowledge, and in all manner of workmanship... And I, behold, I have given with him Oholiab... that they may make all that I have commanded thee. God gave gifted individuals to the community to do the work. When Jesus cleared out Paradise and ascended to heaven, He secured the ultimate victory. But instead of remaining distant, He poured out His Spirit to ensure that we, uniquely, have a specific job, a specific design, and a specific value to the people around us. We are a gift from Christ to His Church. All the purposes of these gifts are listed in Vs 12-16. It is for #1 the perfection of the saints. God does intend to perfect or to complete or to bring the saints to maturity. God says in the scriptures that we are to be brought to completion and to maturity in Christ Jesus and He has given all these tools to do that. God gave this message that we #2 might complete the work that He has given to us in the ministry. Then He says for #3 the edifying of the body of Christ.

God intends that every one of these should edify the rest of the body. All of them have one thing in common and that is the ministry of God's word. All of them minister the scripture in some capacity. That is how God has them to fulfill this ministry of edification to the rest of the body. Eph 4:13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: It is that we may grow up into Christ. God does intend to be bring that #4 unity about. In the bridal company this will be accomplished to the very greatest degree. To the rest of the church, it will be accomplished to some degree because all of the church will be in heaven. The Bridal Company will reach the ultimate degree of this unity. In Song of Solomon 6:9, the Bridegroom says of his bride: My dove, my undefiled is but one; she is the only one of her mother... She represents a distinct group that has found a singular, undivided devotion to the King. In the New Testament, Jesus prayed earnestly for this specific unity right before the cross in John 17:21 That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us... Then, of the #5 knowledge of the Son of God. This is what God wants to happen through these gifts and those who give out the word of God. It is the knowledge of the Son of God we are to be bringing forth. This is what Paul was so concerned with.

He wanted to give forth that knowledge of the Son of God to those that were hearing him. This is not merely historical facts about Jesus; it is the deep, experiential, relational knowledge that Paul pursued. Jeremiah 31:34 prophesied of the New Covenant: And they shall teach no more every man his neighbor... saying, Know the Lord: for they shall all know me, from the least of them unto the greatest of them, saith the Lord. Paul states his ultimate life goal in Philippians 3:10: That I may know him, and the power of his resurrection, and the fellowship of his sufferings, being made conformable unto his death. Then #6 unto a perfect man; that means unto a complete man. Nothing missing or nothing left out; no deficit unto the perfect or the complete or the mature man. Then #7 unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: This is what God is wanting to do. He is wanting to produce His Son in us. The only life that God has ever been completely satisfied with is the life of Christ. He has given that life to us. He intends that each one of us manifest that life to the degree that we all come together unto the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ: In 1 Kings 7:45-51, when Solomon built the Temple, every vessel had to be fully completed, polished, and dedicated before the glory of God could fill it.

God doesn't inhabit a half-finished work. Paul uses the exact same concept in Colossians 1:28: Whom we preach, warning every man, and teaching every man in all wisdom; that we may present every man perfect [mature/complete] in Christ Jesus. Then in Numbers 11:16-17, Moses was overwhelmed by doing all the ministry alone. God took the Holy Spirit that was upon Moses and placed it upon 70 elders so they could bear the burden of the people with him. In the early church in Acts 6:1-6. The Apostles realized they couldn't do everything, so they appointed seven deacons (like Stephen and Philip) to handle practical ministry. This allowed the word of God to increase and the body to multiply. These gifts have the Ministry of the Word in common to build up the church. In Nehemiah 8:8, after the walls were rebuilt, the people needed spiritual building. Ezra and the Levites read in the book in the law of God distinctly, and gave the sense, and caused them to understand the reading. This reading and teaching built up the shattered community's faith. Acts 20:32 confirms that the Word of God is the tool for building: And now, brethren, I commend you to God, and to the word of his grace, which is able to build you up, and to give you an inheritance among all them which are sanctified.

When Moses finished the Tabernacle (Exodus 40:34) and Solomon finished the Temple (2 Chronicles 7:1), the Shekinah glory filled the structures so completely that the ministers could not even stand to minister. The physical structure was completely consumed by the divine presence of God which is a perfect picture of the Church being filled with the all fullness of Christ. Wouldn't that be wonderful! Paul wanted the same thing in Galatians 4:19: My little children, of whom I travail in birth again until Christ be formed in you. God does not intend for His people to go from place to place hearing every wind of doctrine. One of the greatest purposes God has for us is that we are not tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine. Satan is having a hay day with many Christians today because they are not exercised in the knowledge of God's word. We are to learn God's word so that we are not tossed about to and fro. #8 Eph 4:14 That we henceforth be no more **children**, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the **sleight** of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; Satan also has his ministers out there and we see that here. He does it with every wind of doctrine.

There are so many ungodly doctrines of men that put people in absolute fear and they could be put to rest if they just understood the marvels and the depths of God's word. Paul calls them children or infants. It is by the sleight of men or the trickery of men. There are those today that are practicing that just to promote their own agenda. God doesn't want us to fall victim to it whereby they lie in wait to deceive. This is a massive strategic trap that many believers fall into. It is spiritual immaturity that makes a believer highly vulnerable to deception, turning them into a theological ship on a stormy sea, at the mercy of whatever wave rolls in next. Satan's primary tactic against the Church is rarely a direct frontal assault; it is the slow, tactical poisoning of truth through unbalanced, ungrounded doctrines. Paul uses the image of a small boat without an anchor, completely at the mercy of the waves. Children are easily amused, easily frightened, and easily tricked by strangers. God warns that a lack of deep, practiced knowledge of His Word is fatal. In Hosea 4:6 My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge: because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee... Then Jacob prophesies over his firstborn son, Reuben in Genesis 49:4 Unstable as water, thou shalt not excel...

This is exactly what happens to a Christian who switches doctrines every few months. They never grow deep roots, so they never produce lasting fruit. Hebrews 5:13-14 For every one that useth milk is unskilful in the word of righteousness: for he is a babe. But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. We need to be exercised in the Word of God. The Greek word Paul uses for sleight means dice-playing or gambling. It refers to a con artist cheating with loaded dice. False teachers often look like they are playing a fair game, but the game is rigged to lead people into fear and bondage. In Jeremiah's day, there was the peace deception of false prophets who ministered a doctrine that put people into false security or deep confusion. Jeremiah 6:14 They have healed also the hurt of the daughter of my people slightly, saying, Peace, peace; when there is no peace. Then there were the False Dreamers in Deuteronomy 13:1-3. God warned Israel that some teachers would perform signs or have dreams to lead them away from the established commandments. The test of a true teacher of the truth is never their charisma; it is their alignment with the Word of God.

Paul warns us that Satan has a pulpit ministry: 2 Corinthians 11:13-15 For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness... I have brought out that the same things happened in the Old Testament and they are still continuing today. Why? Solomon said in Ecclesiastes 1:9: The thing that hath been, it is that which shall be; and that which is done is that which shall be done: and there is **no new thing under the sun**. Satan is not creative. He does not write new scripts; he simply changes the costumes, updates the vocabulary, and runs the exact same plays he used in the Garden of Eden and ancient Israel. If we look closely at Scripture, we can map today's modern deceptions directly onto the ancient errors of the past. That ungodly teaching that we don't need a practical walk because we already have all provision in Christ is a perversion of grace. It confuses our legal standing in Christ which is perfect and complete with our experiential state, which requires daily obedience, crucifixion of the flesh, and walking out our faith. God legally gave Israel the Land of Canaan as an inheritance (Joshua 1:2). It belonged to them completely.

However, they still had to put their boots on the ground, march, fight, and practically drive out the giants to possess it (Joshua 1:3). In ancient Israel, the people lived in open idolatry and sin, but they ran to the Temple on the Sabbath, believing that God's covenant structure protected them from any personal responsibility. God exposes this exact mindset in Jeremiah 7:9-10 Will ye steal, murder, and commit adultery, and swear falsely... And come and stand before me in this house, which is called by my name, and say, We are delivered to do all these abominations? They believed their standing excused their walk. **There is no new thing under the sun.** Isaiah said it plainly. Isa 8:20 To the law and to the testimony: if they speak not according to this word, it is because there is no light in them. When a pastor or teacher comes with a brand-new revelation or an exciting new theological, the grounded saint doesn't get excited. They open their Bible, look back at the historical patterns of Scripture, and say, I see what you're doing, Satan. I've read the scriptures before, and I know how it ends. Jude 1:4: For there are certain men crept in unawares... ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness [unrestrained living], and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ.

Note how Korah and his followers used democratic sounding language to rebel against what God had set up through Moses and Aaron. Numbers 16:3: They gathered against Moses and said, Ye take too much upon you, seeing all the congregation are holy, every one of them, and the Lord is among them: wherefore then lift ye up yourselves above the congregation of the Lord? It sounded deeply spiritual, but it was a demonic wind designed to scatter the people from God's appointed safety. Paul constantly had to fight cunning craftiness that tried to pull people away from the simplicity of Christ into error. Paul warns us not to let anyone cheat us of our reward in Col 2:18 Let no man beguile you of your reward in a voluntary humility and worshipping of angels, intruding into those things which he hath not seen, vainly puffed up by his fleshly mind. Israel rarely rejected God completely; instead, they added pagan practices to their worship of God, blinding themselves to the truth. 2Ki 17:33 They feared the LORD, and served their own gods, after the manner of the nations whom they carried away from thence. This is the ultimate description of a compromised believer. The same happened to the Galatians. They started perfectly in the spirit, but false teachers blew a wind of doctrine that told them they needed Christ plus the old ceremonial laws to be truly complete.

Every single wind of doctrine Satan casts at the church, past or present, can be identified by looking at its fruit. God's blueprint always leads to the purposes laid out in this chapter; unity, maturity, experiential knowledge of Jesus, and the edification of the body. Satan's recycled lies always do the exact opposite. Eph 4:14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive. Paul tells us: Php 2:12 Wherefore, my beloved, as ye have always obeyed, not as in my presence only, but now much more in my absence, work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. 13 For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Paul commands us to: ...work out your own salvation with fear and trembling. If a practical walk wasn't needed, Paul wouldn't have spent chapters 4, 5, and 6 of Ephesians giving highly practical rules for marriage, parenting, speech, and work! Eph 4:15 #9 But speaking the **truth** in love, **may grow up** into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: The Truth causes saints to grow in Christ. In order to speak the truth we have to know the truth. Truth is the greatest weapon against error; against falsity; against lies. Truth must be spoken in love.

Truth without love is a blunt instrument that breaks people; then love without truth is a compromise that leaves people in deception. Together, they create the perfect atmosphere for growth. Then #10 may grow. This one is divided up into 4 parts. The first part is, may grow. The second part is may grow up. The third part is to grow up into him. Then the 4th part is to grow up into him in all things. Many Christians stop along with any of those. If a Christian listens to the word of God and goes to a church meeting, there will be some growth, but to grow up and come to the place of maturity and then of course into Christ, Jesus must become the center and focus of all of our lives. Every area and part of our lives must be focused on Christ. These gifts contribute to all 10 of these things above. The fivefold ministry gifts of the apostle, prophet, evangelist, pastor, and teacher is what Christ uses to activate all ten of these divine purposes within the church. The perfection of the saints is through the Word of God, which equips the saints to handle the work of the ministry. By the word of God, this shifts the church from a passive into an active, trained army. As everyone begins operating in their gift, the word of God brings about the edifying of the body of Christ, ensuring that the church is structurally built up on a steady diet of sound scripture.

This consistent teaching anchors the people into the unity of the faith, neutralizing carnal divisions and grounding everyone in the truth. The word of God is the foundation, and the gifts continually unveil the true, experiential knowledge of the Son of God. This shifts the spotlight away from self-help and places it entirely onto the Person of the Lord Jesus. This focus on Christ elevates the church unto a perfect man, elevating the congregation out of spiritual infancy and into stable adulthood. By refusing to let the church settle in error, these gifts should drive us directly toward the stature of the fullness of Christ, holding Him up as the ultimate standard of our maturity. They teach us the vital art of speaking the truth in love, showing exactly how to confront error and sin with an uncompromised standard but a deeply compassionate, shepherd's heart. This clears away the deceptive, unstable winds of doctrine, establishing the environment necessary for growth so that we no longer drift aimlessly. Ultimately, these leadership gifts challenge us to surrender every hidden, private, and practical compartment of our existence until we grow up into Him in all things, ensuring that Jesus Christ completely dominates every single square inch of our lives.

Our study through Ephesians 4 has shown us God's master blueprint for the individual believer and the corporate body of Christ. Just as God gave Moses a precise pattern on the mountain for the Tabernacle in the wilderness, where every board, curtain, and vessel had a map to follow God's divine glory. He has given us His holy Word as our map today, leaving absolutely nothing to chance or human invention. We have seen how Jesus executed this master plan by descending into the heart of the earth, emptying Paradise, and triumphantly leading a procession of captive spirits straight into the third heaven. Out of that ultimate victory, He poured out His heart by giving gifted ministers to the Church according to this divine blueprint. They are not to do all the work, but to train, mend, and violently protect the everyday saints from the loaded dice of demonic deception and the unstable, shifting winds of modern doctrine. God is not content to let us wander off the map or remain easily tricked, tossed to and fro by clever lies. His love for us is utterly fierce, deep, and unyielding.

Jesus loves us so intensely that He refuses to leave us. Instead, He followed the blueprint perfectly to give us directly to the body as a precious, essential gift. Apostle Paul writes this with a burning, pastoral passion because he wants us to follow God's map and inherit absolutely nothing less than His absolute best. He wants us to have a life where we grow up into Christ in every possible way, ultimately manifesting the stature and complete fullness of the Son of God, Jesus Christ. We have the divine blueprint and map needed to stay unshakeable in a stormy world. We can stay Anchored in the Word, Standing Firm Against The False Winds of Doctrine!

Ephesians 4:16-32 July 16, 2016 The Great Exchange: Off With the Old, On With the New!

These next few verses are so very interesting because, it is only as we take of Christ that we are able to minister to the rest of the body. The only thing we can give is what belongs to us. We found that out in our study in 1 Corinthians. We cannot give what we do not have. That is why Paul says, a man must give what he has; it applies to everything we have, not just money; we give according to what we have and not according to what we do not have. So we have to have something to give. There are no useless parts in the body of Christ. Eph 4:16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. When we grow into Christ, then we draw from Him. Jesus pictured it as I am the vine and you are the branches. The grape has to stay on the vine and draw from the life of Christ and that is the way with us. We must draw from the vine in order to have any fruitfulness to give to God or man. **So what does every joint draw from Christ? The answer is love!** We draw love from Christ and then we show that same love back to the rest of the body.

We have to have a supplier if we are going to dispense or if we are going to supply to the rest of the body. First, we draw from Christ and then we supply according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love. The Redwood Sequoia trees are some of the tallest living things on Earth, stretching over 350 feet into the sky, higher than a 30-story skyscraper. Botanists studied these giant trees and found a profound mystery. Trees of that immense height should logically have deep, massive taproots driving dozens of feet into the earth to keep them from toppling over in fierce coastal storms. But when researchers dug down, they were shocked to find that redwoods have incredibly shallow root systems, rarely going deeper than five to six feet. How could a tree so tall withstand the wind and weather without crashing down? The secret lies in how they are fitly joined together. Instead of growing deep, a redwood's roots reach out horizontally, stretching hundreds of feet in every direction. As they reach out, they intertwine, fuse, and lock together with the roots of all the surrounding redwoods. They form a vast, unbroken underground network. Because they are physically fused together, something remarkable happens: It is a shared supply:

If one redwood is growing in a spot with poor soil or a lack of water, it doesn't wither. The stronger trees, planted near deep water sources, draw up nutrients and moisture and literally pump them through the interconnected root system into the weaker tree. Most incredibly, scientists have discovered rare albino redwoods. These trees with white needles completely lack chlorophyll. They cannot photosynthesize; they cannot produce their own food. By all laws of nature, they should die. Yet, they survive for decades. Why? Because the healthy green trees around them recognize them as part of the body, draw nutrients from the earth, and supply the albino trees with the life they cannot generate themselves. Just like the redwoods, the Vine and we the Branches cannot survive on our own. They must be grounded in the same rich soil and draw from the ultimate Source (Christ). By that which every joint supplieth. A single redwood facing a storm alone will fall. But when locked together, the entire grove stands. When we draw love from Christ, we automatically pass it from the roots to the body to sustain someone else who might be running dry. The healthy redwoods can only feed the weaker ones because they themselves are deeply connected to the source of water.

We cannot dispense encouragement, grace, or love to the body of Christ unless we are first grounded, drawing our essential nutrients from Jesus Christ. Eph 4:17 This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind. Paul hits them and us between the eyes with the practical walk. Paul doesn't just give us some high-level theology; he steps right into our daily lives and asks, how are you actually walking? What Paul is saying is that people today are going in their own way feeling no need for God or His plan of redemption. Walk not as other Gentiles who walk in the vanity of their mind. Paul describes that walk. It is a walk that every one of us had before we came to the Lord. It is a walk that many Christians have after they come to the Lord because they do not draw from Christ. People are generally truth seekers! But many do not walk in the right way because they simply do not understand how to walk in the right way. They have never been taught or they are following someone or something that only feeds their fleshly desire. They focus only on what they can see, taste, touch, and feel right now. Many people start with a genuine hunger for truth. They want a meaningful path, but because they are spiritually young or unguarded, they get pulled off course by subtle counterfeits.

The believers in Galatia are a good example of this. They wanted God, they received the Spirit, but then someone came along and fed their desire to earn their way. Paul writes to them with sincere shock: Galatians 3:1, 3 O foolish Galatians, who hath bewitched you, that ye should not obey the truth... Are ye so foolish? Having begun in the Spirit, are ye now made perfect by the flesh? They didn't set out to rebel; they were simply vulnerable to a message that appealed to their old nature. People genuinely have the desire to feel in control of their own righteousness. Then Paul says in Col 2:8 Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ. The word spoil here actually means to be carried off as a captive. These are people looking for truth, but they get plundered by clever, worldly arguments that feed the ego rather than the spirit. Then, there are also those who aren't just misled; they are actively resistant. They see the light and deliberately close their eyes because they prefer their own way. Paul warns Timothy that some people will actively seek out teachers who will justify their defiance, preferring comfortable lies to convicting truths: 2 Timothy 4:3-4 For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.

In the next verse Paul describes it to us. In Eph 4:18 is #1. Having the understanding darkened, #2 being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the #3 blindness of their heart. People will never walk the Christian life without Christ Himself and without yielding to Christ and having Him in their heart. It is because of the blindness or the hardness of their heart. Eph 4:19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. Past feeling; Once the alarm system (the conscience) is dead, there is nothing left to hold the flesh back. Because they were taught that the practical walk didn't matter, they have successfully bypassed their soul's built-in alarm system. Notice the phrase: given themselves over. It is no longer just slipping into sin; it is deliberate. The tragedy of the misled believer is that they started by wanting to enjoy freedom from legalism, but by discarding the necessity of a practical walk, they end up in the ultimate slavery. It is slavery to an insatiable, numb self. Galatians 5:13 For, brethren, ye have been called unto liberty; only use not liberty for an occasion to the flesh, but by love serve one another.

It starts with a hard heart, leads to a darkened mind, and results in a numb conscience (past feeling). When someone becomes past feeling, their conscience has been seared.

When people claim we don't need a practical walk just because the word practical isn't in the bible, they are playing word games to excuse lazy or sinful living. Paul uses words like walk, run, strive, and fight, all of which are deeply practical, action-oriented terms. Paul tells us in 1Cor 9:24 that an athlete must be temperate (self-controlled) in all things. Run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is **temperate in all things**. We cannot win a race by lying on the couch claiming we have athletic provisions. We have to actually get up, and train to run. Paul finishes this thought with a sobering warning. 1Co 9:27 But I keep under my body, and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway (means disqualified. If Paul himself had to practically discipline his body and actions to avoid being disqualified from his reward, how much more do we? Eph 4:18-19 is not a description of the life of Christ. It is a description of the old fallen Adamic nature which we must leave behind.

Our goal today is exactly what Paul's goal was: to finish the course before we get the prize. We cannot collect a trophy at mile marker 5; we have to cross the finish line first. Look at Paul's final testimony before he was martyred. He didn't say, I believed, so my lifestyle didn't matter. He said: I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith in 2 Timothy 4:7 Notice the progression: I have fought... (Active, practical warfare against sin in the flesh and the devil). I have finished my course... (He didn't quit running when it got hard or tedious). I have kept the faith. (He guarded the truth and lived it out). The deception of provision without practice is a trick of the devil because it attempts to separate justification (being declared righteous by God) from sanctification (the practical process of becoming holy in our daily lives). If someone claims to have all the provisions of Christ but their daily walk looks exactly like the blind, hardened, past feeling walk of the world, they are deceiving themselves. Why are we given the provisions of Christ? It is so that we have the power to run the race and finish our course. Why do we eat food? So we have the energy to go to work! Eph 4:20 But ye have not so learned Christ; Now there is a change.

Eph 4:21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: The key to the rest of these verses is, ye have heard Him down through the end of this chapter.

We must hear Him. That is what Paul is trying to get us to do. Hearing is the food of what God has to say about the matter. If you have heard (Feed on Him)Him and been taught by Him, as the truth is in Jesus. Paul shifts from how the world walks to the practical reality of how a believer must walk. Paul says that a lifestyle of selfishness, hard-heartedness, and moral numbness opposes knowing Jesus. The words, "that ye have heard and have been taught by Him." Paul isn't talking about sound waves hitting our eardrum. He is talking about an internal, life-altering reception of the truth. This directly connects back to what Jesus said repeatedly during His earthly ministry: Matthew 11:15 He that hath ears to hear, let him hear. Jesus knew people listened to His sermons but never actually heard Him because their hearts were closed. V21 means to allow His voice to pierce through the heart, and shatter the blindness of the mind. Paul emphasizes that we must be taught by Him, because the truth is in Jesus. Why does Paul phrase it this way? Because Jesus is the only perfect, living definition of a practical walk. The world changes its mind always about what is right, wrong, moral, or selfish.

Jesus never Changes: He is the same yesterday, today, and forever! In Jesus, we see exactly how we are supposed to live, speak, love, and obey God. Jesus said: I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me. (John 14:6). If we want to know how to finish our course and run our race, we don't look at modern culture or a watered-down theology, we look at Jesus. Eph 4:22 That ye **put off** concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And **be renewed** in the spirit of your mind; Paul now tells us what this hearing practically produces. It results in a three-step action plan: 1. Put off the Old Man (Past Lifestyle); 2. Be Renewed in the Spirit of your Mind; 3. Put on the New Man (Righteousness & Holiness). The danger for us today is if we stop hearing Him. We can let the noise of the world, false doctrines, or our own flesh drown out His voice. Paul gives us a stern warning in Hebrews 3:15 Today if ye will hear His voice, harden not your hearts, as in the provocation. Hearing Him requires an ongoing, daily attitude of surrender. When we open the Word of God and say, Lord, speak, for your servant is listening, He teaches us how to walk, how to run, and how to successfully finish our course.

God teaches us to think differently if we are going to walk differently. We must be renewed in our minds in order to put on the new man and it is as we put on the new man that we are able to lay aside the old. Eph 4:24 And that ye **put on the new man**, which after God is **created** in righteousness and true holiness. When Paul commands us to put on the new man, he is using a very practical image. In the Greek, the phrase means to literally clothe yourself or dress yourself. Paul is saying a Christian cannot walk out into the daily race without consciously dressing themselves in the character of Jesus Christ. We have to be renewed in our minds. God is renewing our minds through the Bible studies. Look closely at how Paul describes this new outfit: ...which after God is **created in righteousness** and true holiness. Notice the word **created**. This isn't our old self just trying harder, acting nicer, or turning over a new leaf. As 2 Corinthians 5:17 says, If any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new. This new man is patterned after God, and it reflects God's own character. It is woven out of two things: Righteousness and True Holiness. It is Created, but we must put it on. This is where the false teachers get completely tripped up.

They say, because the new man is already created inside us, we don't have to do anything. But Paul says the opposite. The new man is a gift created in us, but we still have a daily responsibility to put it on. We cannot run the Christian race wearing the heavy, filthy rags, and boots of the old man. If we try, we will trip, burn out, and be disqualified. God has graciously provided the new man, created in perfect righteousness and true holiness. Our practical walk is to actively dress ourselves in Christ, so that we can run with endurance for the prize at the finish line. Notice the order in V24. Eph 4:24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness. We must be renewed in our minds in order to put on the new man and it is as we put on the new man that we are able to lay aside the old. Paul said 1Th 1:9 For they themselves shew of us what manner of entering in we had unto you, and **how ye turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God**; To the degree that we turn to God is the same degree in which we will turn away from idols. The more that our minds are renewed by the truth of God's word, and we put on the new man, then just that much more, we are going to put off the old man. We cannot simply vacuum out the darkness; we have to turn on the light.

Paul shows us how the Gospel of the grace of God differs from law keeping. Law keeping wants to cut off all of these things we have in V18 and 19 and it wants to cut off these things in the next few verses from V25 on. God's way is to replace that which is undesirable, not cut off and leave empty. The Law demands righteousness from a bankrupt sinner and leaves them frustrated. Grace provides a brand-new nature created in righteousness and true holiness, and as our minds are renewed by this truth, the old habits naturally begin to fall off like dead leaves in the fall. Notice how specific Paul gets in V25. Eph 4:25 Wherefore putting away lying, (Then he tells us) speak every man truth with his neighbor: for we are members one of another. It means there is no way that we are going to effectively put away lying unless we are willing to speak truth. We replace the lie with the truth. We read in Ro 12:21 Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good. It is only as we exercise good that we overcome evil. It is only as we are willing to express and tell truth that we will put away lying. Paul doesn't just say, stop lying! That would be the Law to cut off. Instead, he uses **God's method of replacement: What is God's method of replacement?** God never leaves a vacuum. When God delivers us, cleanses us, or commands us to put off our old life, He never intends for that space to remain empty.

If we try to empty our life of a bad habit, a sin, or an idol using our own willpower without replacing it with something greater, that space will eventually be refilled by something just as bad or worse. Jesus gave us an example in Matthew 12:43-45 When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. The problem wasn't that the house was dirty: The house was swept and garnished (reformed, neat, orderly). The problem was that it was empty, because the house had no new tenant. It was a void and invited an even greater occupation of darkness. This is the ultimate failure of legalism and mere behavior modification. It sweeps the house, cuts off the bad behaviors, but leaves the soul empty of the living Christ and a renewed mind. God does not leave a void because He is a Creator. When light enters a room, darkness doesn't have to be manually shoveled out; the presence of the light automatically displaces it.

Paul applies this exact replacement therapy in the verses right after Ephesians 4:25. He shows that every single "put off" has a corresponding, greater "put on." Eph 4:26 Be ye angry, and sin not: **let** not the sun go down upon your wrath: It means don't justify our wrath. Apply scripture to the wrath. Go by the principles of scripture and don't justify it or excuse it. So don't let the sunlight of God's word get lost on maintaining or justifying the anger. Some people teach that it means not going to bed angry. But it would say, alright you can get angry early in the morning and you can hold it all day long but be sure you get rid of it before you go to bed. That is not what the scripture says. There is a reason for that is in V27. 27 Neither give place to the devil. The void to Avoid: Don't let anger sit in our heart, because bitterness creates a vacuum that the devil will inhabit (neither give place to the devil). We don't just stop being angry. We replace it: Eph 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you. Then again,: Eph 4:28 **Let** him that stole steal no more (this is the Old, the Void) but rather let him labor, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. (This is the replacement.)

God doesn't just want a thief to stop stealing and sit on his hands. He replaces a lifestyle of taking with a lifestyle of laboring and giving. The vacuum of the old man is replaced by the generous overflow of the new man. So substitute the stealing with work. We replace it with labor not only to meet our own needs, but to give to somebody else that needs it. Then the Old, Void again : Eph 4:29 **Let** no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, (the replacement is) but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers. Paul summarizes this entire principle in another chapter of this same letter: Ephesians 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; A person drinks to excess because they are trying to fill a void of loneliness, anxiety, or boredom in their soul. Paul doesn't just say stop drinking. He says: Fill that void with the Holy Spirit. When our heart is packed tight with the love of God, the truth of His Word, and the presence of Christ, there is literally no room left for the garbage of the old man. God's method is never starvation; it is satisfaction by replacement. He replaces our broken cisterns with a well of living water springing up into everlasting life (John 4:14). Note the word "let" (V29) which is actually one of the most important keys to understanding how the Christian life practically functions.

When Paul says **let** no corrupt communication proceed, or **let** him that stole steal no more, or **let** all bitterness... be put away, he is revealing that as believers, **we have been given the keys to our own front door**. By using the word "**let**," Paul is teaching us three profound truths about our daily responsibility, our spiritual authority, and the nature of grace. #1 We choose what is allowed across the threshold of our front door. The word "**let**" is a word of permission, allowance, and yielding. It implies that a choice has to be made. Before we met Christ, we didn't have a choice. Our old nature was a slave to sin (Romans 6:17). We couldn't help but walk in the vanity of our mind. But now that we have put on the new man, the power of sin has been broken. Sin no longer has the legal right to dominate us unless we let it. Think of our life, our mind, and our mouth like a gated house: The old man, the devil, and the world will constantly bring these awful things to our front gate. They cannot force their way in because we belong to Christ. They have to stand outside and knock. When Paul says Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, he is saying, we are the gatekeeper. Do not give it permission to pass. Keep the gate locked.

This is exactly why Paul writes in Romans 6:12 Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof. The very fact that God tells us not to let sin reign proves that through Christ, we now have the power to stop it. #2. It requires a yielded will (not human willpower). There is a massive difference between trying to white-knuckle our way into being a good person and simply letting the new man rule. When we look at a tree, it doesn't scream and strain to produce fruit. It simply abides in the vine and lets the sap flow through the branches. The fruit is a natural byproduct. In the same way, the New Man created inside us is already full of righteousness, true holiness, and gracious words. Our practical walk today isn't to manufacture holy words out of our own empty strength. It is to stop choking out the Holy Spirit. It is to let the new nature flow out of us. Look at how Paul uses "let" in other letters to show us how to yield: Colossians 3:15 Let the peace of God rule in your hearts... (The peace is already there; we just have to stop overriding it with anxiety. Colossians 3:16 Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly... The Word is powerful; we just have to open the door and give it space to work in us.

Every time we see the word “let” in these verses; it is a reminder of our practical responsibility in running the race. God provided the new man, but He will not force us to put it on. He will not mechanically close our mouth when we want to speak corrupt words. He says, I have given you My life, My Spirit, and a new heart. Now, let it rule. Open the gates to righteousness, and bar the door against the old man. Eph 4:30 And grieve not the holy Spirit of God, whereby ye are sealed unto the day of redemption. We grieve the Holy Spirit by not walking after the Spirit. Isaiah says it this way; Isa 63:10 But they rebelled, and vexed his Holy Spirit: therefore he was turned to be their enemy, and he fought against them. It is rebellion that grieves the Holy Spirit. To grieve the Holy Spirit is not to allow Him to do these things in our lives that He wants to do. Satan cannot reach us or touch the new nature, but he can get through to any Christian through the flesh. So our battle is against Satan, but the vehicle is our own flesh. So we must bring our own flesh into submission and follow these exhortations for our own protection so that Satan does not get a hold on us. He will use our flesh and the flesh of other people. I can’t judge your flesh or anyone else’s, but I can see to it that my own is brought into submission and held in the death state. This is the truth of the Great Exchange: Off With the Old Nature, and On With the New Creation in Christ!

Ephesians 5:1-8 July 23, 2026 Eagles in Molehills! Or Eagles That Soar!

Eph 5:1 Be ye therefore **followers** of God, as dear children; The therefore points back to our previous chapter. We are able to put on righteousness as we found there in 4:24 and all those verses that tell us the wonderful way that God intends for us to conduct ourselves of the things that are to be true in our lives. The only way we are going to achieve that is to follow God. God does not demand this. This word is follow. And He does not drive us. God wants us to follow in these steps. The phrase as dear children indicates the attitude of complete trust and faith that we as children of the Lord should have in our Heavenly Father. When Paul says Be ye therefore followers [imitators] of God, as dear children, he is appealing to the deepest form of family relationship. Children naturally mimic their parents because they trust them totally and feel entirely secure in their love. This word “dear” indicates that very special place that we have in God’s heart. It is a matter of endearment and love and intimacy. God so loved! There are 3 distinct walks in this chapter. All of these 3 are a part of being these followers [imitators] of God as dear children. Eph 5:2 And **walk in love**, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour.

Then in Eph 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: **walk as children of light**: Then the 3rd is Eph 5:15 See then that **ye walk circumspectly**, not as fools, but as wise. Eph 5:2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. The standard for walking in love is Christ Himself. The passage notes that the standard for love isn't our own feelings; it's Christ's sacrifice, which was an offering that deeply pleased God. In the Old Testament, a sacrificial offering was entirely consumed on the altar. It cost the giver (Jesus) everything, and the smoke rose as a pleasant aroma to God. That phrase, a fragrant sweet smelling offering, is rooted in the Old Testament temple sacrifices. When a sacrifice was made in faith and love, the smoke rose toward heaven, and Scripture calls it a sweet-smelling aroma to God. When sacrificial love is real, it leaves behind a distinct scent that fills the room long after the sacrifice is made. It carries three unmistakably divine promises: Life, Unity, and Peace. The question is, Where does my sacrifice love serve to protect, heal, and build up the Body of Christ most effectively in order that there is Life, Unity, and Peace?

When Jesus gave Himself up, it wasn't just an act of kindness; it was total self-emptying. Feast on just these 2 verses for a moment. Eph 5:1 Be ye therefore followers [imitators] of God, as dear children; 2 And walk in love, as Christ also hath loved us, and hath given himself for us an offering and a sacrifice to God for a sweetsmelling savour. In John 15:13 Greater love hath no man than this, that a man lay down his life for his friends. Jesus did that for us! 1John 3:16 Hereby perceive we, the love of God, because he laid down his life for us: and we ought to lay down our lives for the brethren. Notice the progression. Because we have experienced this ultimate love from Christ, we are now expected to express it. Sacrificial love means laying down our rights, our time, and our comfort for the sake of others. Now these verses take on a greater meaning. Be ye therefore followers [imitators] of God, as dear children; Ephesians 5 is calling us to be imitators as children imitate their parents. God doesn't drive us with a whip to do this; He invites us, as His dear children, to look at the cross, look at how we have been loved, and walk doing the exact same thing for others. Jesus said in the book of John that we are to love one another as I also have loved you. He is the standard and the example and the pattern.

As we have experienced the love of Christ in our own lives, it is to that same degree that we are able to express that love to other people. We are also going to have to understand what sacrificial love means. What makes Christian sacrificial love so distinct from standard human affection is its target. Christ didn't die for us when we were at our best; He sacrificed Himself while we were actively hostile to Him. Romans 5:8 But God shows his love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us. Just as Christ looked at us in our spiritual hostility and weakness and moved toward us, sacrificial love moves toward people when they are at their most fragile. Christ gave up everything for me when I had nothing to offer Him. Sacrificing my comfort for His flock is simply walking in His footsteps. With Ephesians 5, we can see the change from the old life of darkness to the sacrificial walk of love, light, and wisdom that we are transformed into by the love of Christ. The story of Zacheus (Luke 19:1–10) provides a wonderful concrete example of exactly what Paul is talking about. Zacchaeus was the Tax Collector. Before meeting Jesus, Zacchaeus was the chief tax collector in Jericho. In first-century Judea, this meant he was considered the worst kind of sinner.

He didn't just collect taxes for the Roman Empire; he used his position of power to extort money from his own countrymen, bleeding them dry to enrich himself. He lived entirely in the darkness of greed, selfishness, and isolation. But everything changed when Jesus entered Jericho. Because Zacchaeus was short, he climbed a sycamore tree just to get a glimpse of Jesus passing by. In Luke 19:5–6 And when Jesus came to the place, he looked up, and saw him, and said unto him, Zacchaeus, make haste, and come down; for today I must abide at thy house. And he made haste, and came down, and received him joyfully. Notice that Jesus didn't scold him from the bottom of the tree. He didn't demand that Zacchaeus fix his life first. Instead, Jesus offered him immediate intimacy, friendship, and love, treating him like a dear child before Zacchaeus had done anything to earn it. How does this connect the story to the Three Walks in Ephesians 5? The moment Zacchaeus experienced the unconditional love of Christ, his entire lifestyle shifted. He immediately began walking in the three ways outlined in Ephesians 5: He Walked in Love by his Sacrificial Giving. The moment Zacchaeus stood before Jesus, his grip on his wealth shattered. Luke 19:8 And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor...

For a chief tax collector, giving away 50% of his accumulated wealth on the spot was financial suicide. It was a completely sacrificial act. He went from taking from his neighbors to pouring his life out for them, mirroring Christ's standard of sacrificial love. (imitators of Christ; followers of Christ) He Walked as a Child of Light exposing the darkness as Paul says in Ephesians 5:8, Ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord. Light brings hidden things into the open. Zacchaeus openly confessed his past corruption: Luke 19:8 ...and if I have taken anything from any man by false accusation, I restore him **fourfold**. Four is the number for human weakness. Roman law only required a 10-20% penalty for tax fraud, and Jewish law required a fifth more. By offering a fourfold (400%) restoration, Zacchaeus went far beyond what duty demanded. He brought his dark, hidden thefts into the bright light of honesty and made them right. (followers and imitators of Christ). He walked circumspectly or wisely. To walk circumspectly means to look around carefully and make wise choices with our future. Zacchaeus looked at his wealth, looked at his community, and realized that his eternal standing with God was worth infinitely more than his earthly riches.

He redeemed the time by instantly mending his broken relationships with his community.(Followers and imitators of Christ). Jesus watched this transformation and declared: Lu 19:9 And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of man is come to seek and to save that which was lost. God did not drive Zacchaeus out of the tree with threats, nor did He demand obedience by force. Jesus simply offered His presence and His love. It was that experience of love that enabled Zacchaeus to turn around and express sacrificial love to the very people he used to hurt. Ephesians 5 three walks were shown in Zacchaeus's transformation: Walking in Love The moment Zacchaeus experienced Christ's love, his greed shattered. He sacrificially gave half of his goods to the poor, putting the needs of others entirely ahead of his own wealth. Walking as Light exposes the dark, hidden things. Zacchaeus brought his secret corruption into the open, publicly confessing his fraud and promising to restore fourfold (400%) of anything he had stolen by false accusation. Walking Wisely (circumspectly):

He looked carefully at his life and chose eternal value over worldly riches. By instantly mending his relationships and correcting his path, he redeemed his time and aligned his daily conduct with his new identity as a son of God. We may also be sacrificing in behalf of other people but our sacrifice is just like Christ's. It is sacrificing unto God. We know that we are the beneficiary. We know that we are the ones that were the recipients of this wonderful plan of redemption, but what we have to realize is what motivated Christ to sacrifice Himself unto His Father. And that is what motivates us. We lay our own lives; our own bodies as we read in Romans 12. Present your bodies a living sacrifice holy acceptable unto God. This is the way we are able to sacrifice. We often think that sacrificial love is primarily about the person we are helping. But biblical sacrifice is always directed upward to God first, before it ever flows outward to others. Eph 5:2, Paul doesn't just say Christ gave Himself for us; he explicitly says He gave Himself an offering and a sacrifice to God. While Jesus loves us deeply, His ultimate motivation on the cross was perfect obedience and love for His Father. In the Garden of Gethsemane, when Jesus was sweating drops of blood, His prayer wasn't about the disciples; it was to the Father:

Not my will, but thine, be done (Luke 22:42). Because Jesus did it unto God, His sacrifice didn't depend on whether the world appreciated it. Even while people were mocking Him at the foot of the cross, His sacrifice remained a sweetsmelling savour to the Father. Paul says in Romans 12:1 I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies **a living sacrifice**, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. In the Old Testament, the sacrifice was killed and placed on the altar. It was a one-time event. A living sacrifice means we are on the altar every single morning. We choose, minute by minute, to lay down our own desires, our rights, our comfort, and our pride. Acceptable unto God: Just like Christ, our life is offered to God, not to men. If our motivation for sacrificing is only for the sake of the other person, we will eventually burn out, become bitter, or quit. Why? Because people can be ungrateful, and unappreciative. But when we realize our sacrifice is actually a gift given unto God, everything shifts: If we view that service as an offering poured out directly to God, we are doing it for the One who already gave us everything. Laying down our life doesn't always mean dying a martyr's death. Most of the time, it means sacrificing our time to listen to someone, using our finances to help someone in secret, or biting our tongue when we want to argue. Romans 12 says presenting our body, our hands, our feet, our mouth in these quiet, daily moments is a beautiful, fragrant worship to God.

As Jesus noted in Matthew 25:40 Inasmuch as ye have done it unto one of the least of these my brethren, ye have done it unto me. When we love others sacrificially, we aren't just serving humanity. We are handing a love offering directly to our Heavenly Father, being followers [imitators] of the exact path of Christ. Paul told the Philippian saints when they had given to him and sacrificed for him; he said this sacrifice which you have made is a sweetsmelling savour unto God. This is what we want our lives to be. That is how we walk in love as Christ did. Php 4:18 But I have all, and abound: I am full, having received of Epaphroditus the things which were sent from you, an odour of a sweet smell, a sacrifice acceptable, **well-pleasing to God**. In this passage, Paul is writing from a cold Roman prison cell. The church at Philippi had gathered their financial resources and sent a man named Epaphroditus to deliver a care package to Paul to meet his physical needs. By using the exact same Old Testament sacrificial language (sweetsmelling savour), Paul is teaching us a truth about how we walk in love. When we sacrifice our resources, comfort, or time to care for another believer, God views it the exact same way He viewed Christ's offering on the cross, as a fragrant, pleasing act of worship directed straight to Him. Paul didn't thank the Philippians by praising them for the gift. He immediately pointed them upward.

Because their sacrifice was well-pleasing to God, the reward didn't come from Paul's ability to pay them back. Right after this, in the very next breath, Paul writes one of the most famous promises in the Bible: Philippians 4:19 But my God shall supply all your need according to his riches in glory by Christ Jesus. Because they poured out their sacrifice unto God, God took ownership of the debt and promised to personally pour back into their lives. Walking in love as Christ did means realizing that every act of daily, sacrificial love, no matter how small or unnoticed by men is a sweet-smelling incense burning before the Father. As we read these next few verses, we might wonder after knowing that these are full overcoming Christians, so why in the world would we read such language as this is the book of Ephesians. Eph 5:3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; 4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. Paul knew that while our new creation is perfect, we still live in a body of humiliation and weakness. Satan cannot touch our eternal security in Christ, but if we yield to the flesh, he can completely shipwreck our daily walk, steal our joy, and rob us of our spiritual inheritance.

If we yield to the flesh, it is possible for Satan to attack us. We learn to overcome the flesh and learn to resist temptation. What we want to bring out here is this is beyond natural fornication. This is something that people really do not understand in this world today and that is spiritual fornication. We must realize this is the one point that Jesus found against the Ephesians there in the book of Revelation. Revelation 2:4 (Jesus says) I have somewhat against thee, because thou hast left thy first love. The Ephesians were doing everything right outwardly. They had good works, patience, and sound doctrine. But they lost their intimate, burning passion for Jesus Himself. When intimacy with Christ dries up, a vacuum is created, and believers naturally slip into spiritual fornication. What is spiritual fornication? In the Bible, physical fornication and harlotry are consistently used as pictures of idolatry (unfaithfulness to God). Simply put, spiritual fornication occurs when the church or an individual Christian takes a head other than Jesus Christ. It happens when we substitute a man or something for Christ. Sometimes human leadership and denominations replace Christ's authority as head. Religious rules and programs replace the moving of the Holy Spirit.

Sometimes our own ambition and will for God's clear direction will try and usurp God's authority. In Numbers 25:1-2, when Israel abode in Shittim and began to commit whoredom with the daughters of Moab, who invited them to the sacrifices of their gods. This Old Testament pattern compromises with the world which always leads to false worship. When we look to worldly systems or human structures for our security and identity instead of Christ alone, we are committing spiritual harlotry. When a person leaves their first love, it leaves them open to spiritual fornication and uncleanness or covetousness. Covetousness as idolatry in V5 isn't just wanting a better car; in a religious sense, it is longing for a position, recognition, or spiritual authority that God has not ordained for us. When a Christian seeks human applause or religious power, they are worshipping an idol of self. Eph 5:4 Neither filthiness, nor foolish talking, nor jesting, which are not convenient: but rather giving of thanks. This filthiness simply means shameful. Foolish talking means rebelliousness. When we see fool in the scripture we are talking about rebellion. Ps 14:1 The fool hath said in his heart, there is no God. That word jesting simply means a well-turned joke. This is talking about something at someone else's expense.

There are some that would make others look real small just for a good laugh. Then Paul says, which are not convenient: which means not proper. Our speech concerning other people should be unto edification, to build them up not to tear them down and to make them the point of embarrassment. Then Paul says, but rather of giving thanks. This is where our speech should take us into giving of thanks unto God and indeed for people. Eph 5:5 For this ye know, that no whoremonger, nor unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, hath any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. This robs him from any inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and of God. This verse is not talking about life and death. It is talking about inheritance. There are some religious idolaters who are saved, but they have taken other headships. They will be saved, but they are not going to have an inheritance and Paul brought that out in 1Co 3:12 Now if any man build upon this foundation gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, stubble; 1Co 3:13 Every man's work shall be made manifest: for the day shall declare it, because it shall be revealed by fire; and the fire shall try every man's work of what sort it is. We must build on the right foundation and build with the right materials and build in the Spirit of the Lord if we are going to be rewarded.

Paul tells of this in Ga 5:21 Envyings, murders, drunkenness, revellings, and such like: of the which I tell you before, as I have also told you in time past, that they which do such things shall **not inherit the kingdom of God**. These simply do not appropriate the blessings of the Lord; therefore they are not going to get the very lavish inheritance that they could have had if they had believed God. Paul warns us in this verse. Eph 5:6 Let no man deceive you with **vain words**: for because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. Paul is taking aim at empty, hollow, theological arguments that sound deeply spiritual but produce no real fruit. The Greek word for vain means empty or void of truth. Vain words that flood the religious world today are dangerous because they take what Christ has done and use it to excuse spiritual laziness and loose living. Deception that we have all spiritual provisions, so we don't need a practical walk is half-truth. Vain words are half-truths. It takes verses like Ephesians 1:3 (blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places) and uses God's grace as an excuse or a license to sin. The scriptures that Paul teaches consistently tie our spiritual position directly to our practical responsibility.

Then James 2:20 But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? Notice James uses the same word, vain, for a faith that lacks a practical walk. If we have all provisions, (and we do) it means we have zero excuse not to have a practical walk! The provisions were given precisely so we could step out and live victoriously. Some say we are already married to Jesus or the whole Church is the bride, so no preparation is required. That is spiritual harlotry in disguise. It is identical to a bride refusing to put on her wedding dress, refusing to keep herself pure during the engagement, and assuming the wedding will just happen anyway. Paul concludes verse 6 with a sobering reality check:...for because of **these things** cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. These **things** he is talking about are the very sins of verses 3 and 4 (uncleanness, covetousness, religious idolatry, and the speech). Vain words try to minimize these sins. Vain words say, God understands, you're under grace, it's just our flesh. But God does not wink at these things. They are toxic. They bring destruction. When a believer listens to these empty teachings, they stop resisting temptation, step out from under the headship of Christ, and end up experiencing the harsh, corrective chastisement of God in their lives because they walked like the children of disobedience.

Our defense against these empty, vain words is a relentless focus on the word of God, the cross, keeping Christ as our absolute Head, and ensuring our daily walk matches our heavenly calling. Paul also says, because of these things cometh the wrath of God upon the children of disobedience. So there is in fact a price to be paid. Men cannot go around and speak things that are contrary to the truth or even half-truths and get away with it. These things sound so wonderful and good to the flesh. Then notice God will judge Christ rejecters, but He will also have to judge those Christians that do these things. God is not going to let them go. He is a God of justice and of righteousness. So if He judges these sons of disobedience, there is also judgment for those believers who teach these half-truths which are vain words. They will not lose their salvation, but they will most certainly lose their inheritance. They will not get by with it. There is a price to be paid. If Christians engage in those things mentioned in V5, then v6 says there is judgment coming for them too. God does not have a double standard. God doesn't excuse His children just because they are His children, they will pay the price which will be their inheritance.

Eph 5:7 Be not ye therefore partakers with them. Don't be partners in this judgment for this judgment is coming. Eph 5:8 For ye were sometimes darkness, but now are ye light in the Lord: walk as children of light: We were sometimes darkness, (past). But now we are light in the Lord. The children of the devil are sons of darkness. God's children even though they may not always act like it, are born again and we are children of light. We are that by our new birth. So what do we do about it? Paul says, walk as children of light. He means become active in that light. This must be in our lives in a very practical sense. The practical Word of God. This is what God wants to do. So walk as children of light. Let the world know we are of the light. Notice Paul's precise choice of words. He doesn't say, we were hanging out in the dark, and now we have a little flashlight. He says we were darkness, and now we are light. Before salvation, our very nature was aligned with the dark kingdom. But through the new birth, our spiritual DNA was completely changed. We didn't just receive a set of new rules; we received a new identity.

Colossians 1:13: [God] hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son. Because this light is now who we are by birth, hiding it or trying to look like the darkness is completely unnatural. It's like an eagle trying to live like a mole. The mole is designed for darkness. Its eyes are tiny and practically useless because it spends its entire existence tunneling through the dirt. It navigates by feeling its way through the dark. This is exactly what Paul describes as the old man, a life buried in earthbound worries, covetousness, and the dark habits of the flesh. The eagle is as the new creation of the heavens. It is built with a massive wingspan designed to catch the thermal updrafts so it can soar miles above the earth without even flapping its wings. It has unique, specialized eyes that can look directly into the blazing sun and spot its target from thousands of feet in the air. It nests on the highest mountain peaks. It breathes the clean, crisp air of the heights. Imagine an eagle that suffers from an identity crisis. It forgets who it is. It folds up its magnificent wings, hops down from the mountain peak, and tries to force itself into a mole hole. The eagle tries to use its sharp, powerful talons meant for gripping high branches and victory, to scoop dirt out of a dark tunnel. It doesn't work.

The tunnel is too tight; its wings get bent, bruised, and pinned against the dirt walls. It is constantly choking on the dust of the earth. This is the exact spiritual condition of a born-again Christian trying to live without a practical walk using the provisions provided to them in Eph 1-3. You cannot enjoy the mud anymore! The worldling can live in sin and think nothing of it because they are a mole, it's their nature. But when a child of light tries to crawl into the darkness of fornication, greed, or bitter speech, they are utterly miserable. Their new nature is constantly screaming, You don't belong here! If the eagle would remain down in the dirt acting like a mole, it would completely miss out on its inheritance. It was meant to feast on the heights. It would be a king living like a scavenger.

This doesn't mean the eagle stops being an eagle (it doesn't lose its life), but it completely forfeits the joy, the freedom, and the majestic experience of its true calling, flying and seated in the heavens. Paul is telling us in Ephesians 5 that he is looking at eagles who have crawled into mole holes, trying to blend in. Paul says: Look at our wings! Look at our heritage! We are light in the Lord! Why are we choking in the dirt of disobedience? Eph 5:8 walk as children of light: Isaiah 40:31 But they that wait upon the Lord shall renew their strength; they shall mount up with wings as eagles; they shall run, and not be weary; and they shall walk, and not faint. Walking as a child of light means refusing to dig in the dirt with the moles of this world. It means unfolding the wings of faith, taking our headship from Christ alone, catching the wind of the Holy Spirit, and soaring in the realm we were actually born to live in. Is it Eagles in Molehills! Or Eagles That Soar!

Ephesians 5:9-21 July 30, 2026 Our Practical Walk in the Light!

Eph 5:9 (For the fruit of the Spirit is in all goodness and righteousness and truth;). Then note the fruit of darkness in Eph 5:3 But fornication, and all uncleanness, or covetousness, let it not be once named among you, as becometh saints; V9 is the walk of the children of light manifested in the fruit of the Spirit. When we manifest the fruit of the Spirit in our lives, it is an indication that we are walking as the children of light. Also notice V9 is a parenthesis. It simply describes in a very few words what the walk of the children of light is. V3 We must learn how to make Christ and Christ alone our head. We cannot come under denominational heads, or dictates, or things of this nature. That is exactly what they did in the Old Testament. By the way, fornication simply means harlot or idolatry. They mean the same and are the same word. Eph 5:10 Proving what is acceptable unto the Lord. This verse is on the heels of Eph 5:8 ..walk as children of light: This is what we are supposed to do today walking as children of light in order that we might prove what is acceptable unto the Lord. The word “proving” in Greek means testing, discerning, or examining to see if something is genuine. Walking as a child of light isn't an inactive condition; it is an active, daily process of testing every habit, choice, and motive against God's Word to see what pleases Him.

When King David first tried to bring the Ark of the Covenant to Jerusalem, he placed it on a new ox cart, copying the method used by the Philistines. This resulted in tragedy when Uzza reached out to steady it and died (1 Chron 13). David realized he had done things humanly/culturally rather than examining what God actually commanded. In 1 Chronicles 15:13–15, David corrected the mistake. They carried the Ark on the shoulders of the Levites as God had told them. Christians shouldn't adopt the world's methods or religious methods just because they seem convenient or popular. We must continually prove (or test) our lives against the Scriptures to ensure our choices honor and are acceptable unto God. Eph 5:11 And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather reprove them. What is so grieving is that there are so many Christians who are in fellowship with the world. They are actually a partaker of the unfruitful works of darkness that is of this world. Fellowship implies partnership, joint participation, and sharing in common. Paul isn't calling for total withdrawal from society. We cannot be the light of the world either, if we hide under a bushel, but he instructs Christians not to participate in or condone sinful practices.

Reproving them doesn't mean becoming self-righteous or hostile; it means letting our lifestyle, and our light we have received, expose the spiritual dark practices. They need the light of the Word of God. It is the light of the Gospel. It is Christ's life that is manifest within us and without. Eph 5:12 For it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. The way to condemn abortion and homosexuality and all of these is not to get on our soap box and declare all of the shameful ungodly things they are doing. Paul says, it is a shame even to speak of those things which are done of them in secret. What he means is we don't want to enlarge on those things at all. So what do you do? The answer is in Eph 5:13 But all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. He told us in V11 we are to reprove them. All things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light. If we walk in the light in our own lives, we reprove the darkness by letting our light shine. I can't make somebody else walk in the light. I can't demand that congress walk in the light or any other person to walk in the light, but I can walk in the light.

How do we reprove or expose darkness without turning into self-righteous noise or getting overwhelmed by the culture around us? In Ephesians 5, Paul's point isn't that every believer must run around acting as the moral police for Congress, the media, or their neighbors. The word translated as reprove (Greek) means to expose or bring to light. The most powerful way light exposes darkness isn't by yelling at the dark; it's simply by shining. When a bright light enters a pitch-black room, the darkness is automatically exposed. When the Pharisees brought a woman caught in adultery to Jesus, they wanted to make a public spectacle of her sin and use a soapbox argument to entrap Jesus. They were showing public outrage, and condemnation. Jesus did not magnify the nature of the sin. He stooped down, wrote on the ground, and simply said: He that is without sin among you, let him first cast a stone at her. It was the light of His sinless presence and quiet truth that convicted the accusers from the eldest to the youngest, and they walked away one by one. Jesus then told the woman, Go, and sin no more. We don't need to yell at the culture or point out the sin to make our point. When we live pure, loving, and truth-filled lives, our presence itself acts as a quiet spotlight, bringing conviction and showing a better way forward. It is the walk of light that reproves darkness.

Daniel lived in the heart of a pagan culture, under a king who demanded absolute allegiance to Babylon's customs and idols. Daniel could have compromised by adopting their idols, practices, and diet, which was spiritual fornication/covetousness. Instead, Daniel purposed in his heart that he would not defile himself (Daniel 1:8). He produced goodness, righteousness, and truth in a hostile system. Today, walking as a child of light means refusing to let culture, political movements, religiousness, or earthly leaders dictate our morality. Christ is the sole Head of the believer. Eph 5:14 Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light. This verse is directed to Christians who are asleep to the workings of God in their lives and in the world. The little word wherefore is here because he has just been talking about all things that are reprov'd are made manifest by the light: for whatsoever doth make manifest is light. Wherefore, because of that principle that we find in V13, Paul says we need to wake up and let the light shine. He is talking about Christians here. We have said over and over that sinners are not asleep; sinners are dead. So Christians are not dead, they are just sleeping. There is not a lot of difference in a sleeping Christian than a dead sinner.

They look the same. A sleeping Christian possesses life in Christ, but they are completely unconscious of spiritual reality, inactive in their faith, and insensitive to the Holy Spirit. A prime example is a Christian who believes they have all provisions in Christ, but they do not believe they have to have a practical walk. This is one of the most common and dangerous traps in the Christian walk today; a theological imbalance that leads directly to spiritual slumber. They may chew the cud of scripture, but they do not have a separated walk. As we learned in our study in Leviticus 11 we must have both. We must chew the cud of scripture and have the split hoof of the separated walk in order to have an overcoming life. This is the divide between positional truth (who we are in Christ) and practical truth (how we actually live day-to-day). When a believer relies solely on their status in Christ without pursuing a practical walk, they end up holding a belief system that functions like this: They say, I am saved, justified, rich in spiritual blessings, and seated with Christ in heavenly places (Ephesians 1:3, 2:6), which is all true. Because Christ did it all, I don't need to exert effort, discipline my flesh, or change my habits. My spiritual standing is fixed, so my daily lifestyle doesn't matter. (false lie from the devil, Chameleon; just change it a little; change the color). This mindset turns God's grace into an excuse for inactivity.

This is just what the Chameleon, the devil, would want you to do. It creates a Christian who has a full bank account in theory, but starves in reality because they refuse to eat the food that has been bought for them. A sleeping Christian with this belief system exhibits three main signs: They are asleep of the Spiritual reality. They know the Bible doctrine in their head, but they are blind to what God is doing around them right now. They live like a spiritual spectator, without realizing they are meant to be light, salt, and an active ambassadors of Christ. James writes about inactive in Faith. James 2:20 Faith without works is dead. A believer who refuses a practical walk has a faith that produces nothing. They do not pray with expectation, they do not serve, they do not give, and they do not share the Gospel. Their spiritual life is a complete flatline. They become insensitive to the Holy Spirit. The Holy Spirit doesn't just seal us for salvation; He prompts, convicts, guides, and empowers us to walk in holiness. When a believer continually ignores the Holy Spirit's prompting to change their behavior; reasoning that Christ already covered it; they quench the Holy Spirit. It dulls their spiritual senses. The prime example of knowing without walking is the Church at Laodicea (Revelation 3:14–22). We are in the Laodicean times today.

When we view Laodicea through the lens of Leviticus 11, the diagnosis is exact: they were a cud-chewing church with no cloven hoof. They had no separated walk. They had accumulated spiritual concepts, correct vocabulary, wealth, and light. Yet, their practical walk was entirely unseparated from the culture around them, resulting in a state of spiritual lukewarmness that made God sick enough to spue them out of His mouth. Laodicea was a wealthy banking hub known for fine black wool and a famous eye-salve institute. The church in that city mirrored its environment. When Jesus told the church at Laodicea to anoint thine eyes with eyesalve, that thou mayest see (Revelation 3:18), He was using a play on words. He used their local commercial product of their famous eye-salve institute, which they were so proud of, to expose their deep spiritual blindness. Jesus offered them the ultimate cure: the light of the Holy Spirit. They chewed the cud: They had endless teachings, and biblical information. They Lacked the cloven hoof: Their daily walk was not separated from the world. They dressed like the world, invested like the world, but lacked the split hoof of an upright separated walk of the holy life. Jesus didn't condemn them for being cold (open rebellion) or praise them for being hot (separated or obedient). He condemned them for being lukewarm.

Laodicea produced a world-famous eye powder, yet Jesus told them they were blind. The natural mind cannot comprehend the things of God (1 Corinthians 2:14). The eyesalve is the Holy Spirit rubbing away the film of worldly thinking off our eyes so we can understand the deep truths of Scripture and see the glory of Christ. Laodicea was a hub for Greco-Roman medicine and housed a world-renowned medical center dedicated to eye care. The eye medicine was known as Phrygian powder; named after the region of Phrygia where Laodicea was located. People traveled from all across the Roman Empire to buy this powder or seek treatment at Laodicea's medical school. It was one of the three massive pillars of Laodicea's staggering wealth (along with their banking system and their glossy black wool coats). Because of their eye salve, the citizens of Laodicea felt they were helping the whole world to see. They had so much pride in being a place of medical illumination and physical healing. Jesus was using a masterpiece of spiritual reality. He was saying: You manufacture an eye powder that you ship to the ends of the earth, bragging that you fix people's sight.

Yet you are so spiritually blind that you can't even see that I am standing outside the door of your own church! You don't need your Phrygian powder; you need the anointing of My Holy Spirit so you can finally see truth from error. Today, many believers are saturated with biblical content, thinking they see everything, yet completely lack spiritual discernment. They cannot discern the chameleon false doctrines creeping into the pulpit. They mistake emotional highs for genuine repentance and worldly success for divine favor. The most tragic image in Revelation 3 is verse 20 Behold, I stand at the door and knock. Think of that? Jesus is standing outside His own Church. That should grip our hearts! The Christians in Laodicea believed they had everything covered. Revelation 3:17 Because thou sayest, I am rich, and increased with goods, and have need of nothing; and knowest not that thou art wretched, and miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked... They thought their status and spiritual heritage meant they were in great shape. They were lukewarm, spiritually asleep, and completely ineffective. Jesus told them to wake up, buy true gold, and repent. Paul says that true grace doesn't make us passive, it teaches us to live godly lives right now:

Titus 2:11–12 For the grace of God that bringeth salvation **hath appeared to all men**, (there is no excuse for people not to see Spiritual truth) teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world. We are living in the final age of church history. We are in the Laodicean period right now before Christ's return. The spirit of this age led by the Chameleon (Satan) tells believers that they can have all their heavenly credentials while walking completely after the flesh. Chewing on truth without walking in holiness produces lukewarmness, and lukewarmness is an abomination to God. As the return of Christ draws near, the Laodicean church today is called to open the door, let the fire of the Holy Spirit back in, wash its garments, and pair a deep love for the Word with a sharp, separated walk in the world. The Apostle Paul never separates salvation from our walk. In Ephesians 5:8–14, he tells us that because we are light in the Lord (position), we must walk as children of light (practice). The practical walk isn't how we earn salvation. It is the direct, necessary evidence that we are awake, alive, and yielding to the Holy Spirit. When God commanded Jonah to go to Nineveh, Jonah fled on a ship to Tarshish.

A massive storm threatened to break the ship apart, terrified the pagan sailors, and drove them to pray to their gods. Jonah was the sleeping believer. Where was Jonah during this spiritual and physical crisis? Down in the hold of the ship, fast asleep (Jonah 1:5). He possessed true knowledge of the Living God, yet he was completely oblivious, passive, and useless in the midst of the emergency. The pagan ship captain had to wake the prophet of God, saying, What meanest thou, O sleeper? arise, call upon thy God... (Jonah 1:6). Just like Jonah, a sleeping Christian lies inactive while the world around them is tossed by the chaos of sin. When believers sleep, the world misses out on the light and truth they are meant to reflect. On the night before His crucifixion, Jesus took Peter, James, and John into the Garden of Gethsemane. He asked them to watch and pray with Him during His hour of greatest agony. Instead of standing guard in prayer, the disciples were overcome by fatigue and fell asleep repeatedly. Jesus returned and said to Peter, What, could ye not watch with me one hour? Watch and pray, that ye enter not into temptation... (Matthew 26:40–41). Because they were spiritually asleep, they were unprepared for what came next.

Within hours, Peter panicked, drew a sword in anger, cut off the soldier's ear; Then he ultimately denied knowing Christ. Their sleepiness left them vulnerable to temptation and neutralized their strength. Spiritual sleep sneaks up subtly. It looks like routine Christianity, going to church, using religious language, but living with no passion, no active obedience, no separated walk, and no understanding of the Holy Spirit's prompting. To awake means to make a conscious choice to stir up our faith. It means turning off the noise of the world, re-engaging with Scripture, and actively seeking God in prayer. Eph 5:15 See then that ye walk circumspectly, **not as fools**, but as wise. The word circumspectly means exactly in the right way. We do not wander about staggering like some drunk man. We have a definite purpose in our walk. There are many Christians today who are just taken by the tide, ambling around and taking the path of least resistance and that is not an exact or a circumspect walk. They are floating down stream like dead fish. In order to walk circumspectly, we must put our feet exactly where they need to be so that we don't trip or fall. A fool's walk is one who simply leaves God out of his life, rejecting the principals and the ways of God. A wise person is one that walks in together with the scripture. How can we walk wisely in this evil day? Eph 5:16 Redeeming the time, because the days are evil. It is by redeeming the time and by taking advantage of every opportunity that the Lord gives us.

We can't wait until tomorrow to start walking. The days are evil now and not just the immortality and the ungodliness in this world, but there is the religious evil in this world which is so deceptive. Eph 5:17 Wherefore be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. Wherefore; again because of these things that we have read, be ye not unwise, but understanding what the will of the Lord is. The unwise person is one who rejects God's counsel. The will of the Lord and true wisdom is found in God's word. When we understand the word of God, we will understand the will of God. Paul uses the word wherefore to bridge his previous thoughts of waking up from spiritual sleep (v. 14), walking circumspectly or carefully (v. 15), and redeeming the time in evil days (v. 16). Because the days are evil and spiritual laziness is a constant threat, Paul issues a sharp command: Do not be unwise! Foolishness isn't a lack of intellectual IQ; it is a spiritual condition. The unwise person is someone who relies on human reasoning, cultural opinion, or personal feelings while discarding or ignoring God's revelation. God's will is not a hidden secret or a dark mystery meant to keep believers guessing. His sovereign design and expectations are revealed in His Word. To know God's mind, we must know God's Word.

True spiritual wisdom is simply seeing life through the lens of Scripture through the lens of the Holy Spirit, and aligning our choices with what God has already spoken. King Saul shows us an example. In 1 Samuel 13, Saul was facing a massive Philistine army. Samuel had told Saul to wait seven days for him to arrive and offer the sacrifices before going into battle. As the deadline neared, Saul's soldiers began scattering out of fear. Panicking, Saul took matters into his own hands and offered the burnt offering himself, violating God's command that only the priesthood could perform this duty. Samuel arrived and said to Saul: Thou hast done foolishly: thou hast not kept the commandment of the Lord thy God, which he commanded thee... (1 Samuel 13:13). Saul thought he had a good reason to disregard God's command because the circumstances looked dire. But rejecting or bending God's word under pressure is the definition of spiritual foolishness. Then note Jesus' parable of the two builders (Matthew 7:24-27). Jesus compared two types of people who heard His teachings: The wise man heard Christ's words and did them. He built his house on the rock. When the rains and the floods came, the house stood firm.

The foolish (unwise) man heard the exact same words of Christ but did not do them. He built his house on the shifting sand. When the storm hit, his house collapsed completely. Both men heard the Word. The difference between wisdom and foolishness was not information, but application. The wise man understood God's will through His words and lived it out practically. We cannot understand the will of the Lord by accident. It is found in God's word. Heb 5:14 But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who by reason of use have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Eph 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; We must understand what Paul means by this wonderful statement; be filled with the Spirit. Remember when they were filled by the Holy Spirit on the day of Pentecost and there were those that said these are those that are full of wine. They were acting like drunk people. This is what Paul is talking about here. Paul is not talking about natural wine. It is the wine of religion found in Re 17:2 With whom the kings of the earth have committed fornication, and the inhabitants of the earth have been made drunk with the wine of her fornication. Paul says, and be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit; V18 forms the basis for the rest of this book.

In some places, even today, they are trying to carry on this Pentecostal experience day after day after day and they are never going to grow. They are never going to come to maturity if they just continue to drink. Do you know what happens to an alcoholic? He drinks, and drinks, and he doesn't eat. This is what is happening in the spiritual sense with people who just want to have this spiritual high. They begin to manufacture this, which in reality turns into the fleshly wine as the Apostle Paul says. They do not eat and mature in the word of God. So make no mistake, we must have that initial experience of being filled with the Holy Ghost. But God did not allow the Church to camp around Pentecost. He scattered them and they had all kinds of problems and so forth. They didn't lose the Holy Spirit and they didn't quit walking in the Spirit. But they really found out what it meant to walk in the Spirit, trusting the Lord in all the trials and learning **by experience** the word of God.

When believers chase emotional ecstasy or sensational experiences day after day, they begin treating the presence of God like a shot of adrenaline. They often bypass the daily intake of God's Word (the solid food). Just as a physical alcoholic drinks constantly while neglecting real food, a spiritual seeker can become addicted to emotional highs while growing malnourished, unstable, and carnally driven. The in-filling of the Holy Spirit produces self-control, wisdom, and obedience to the Word, not a disorderly spectacle. There are 4 major ways of being filled with the Spirit that Paul discusses. #1 Eph 5:19 Speaking to yourselves in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody in your heart to the Lord; This verse is the first thing that it means to be filled with the Holy Spirit. #2 Eph 5:20 Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ; #3 Eph 5:21 Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. This one is so important and so all-inclusive that it reaches from V21 down to chapter 6:9. All of those verses are about submission. The fact is we must have the power of the Holy Ghost to submit in all of these areas. As we are filled with God's Holy Spirit, we are able to submit in all of these areas. Then the 4th one is in V 6:10- to the rest of chapter 6. Eph 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. That is being filled with the Holy Ghost. This one is for our battle against Satan in the heavenlies.

Note that in the original Greek, Ephesians 5:18–21 is one single, continuous sentence. Why is that? In English Bibles, verses 19, 20, and 21 are often split into separate sentences with capital letters and period stops, making them look like a list of separate rules or spiritual assignments. Speak and sing; Give thanks; Submit to one another. At the center of this long sentence sits one single verb which is a direct command. Be filled with the Spirit (in the Greek it is one word) Ephesians 5:18. Everything that follows in verses 19 through 21 consists of five present active participles that modify that one main verb. When we are being continuously filled with the Holy Spirit, the natural result will be that we find ourselves speaking, singing, making melody, giving thanks, and submitting. Think of it like an apple tree. An apple tree doesn't wake up in the morning and strain or force itself to produce apples through sheer effort. Apples are the natural result of the tree being healthy, rooted, and receiving water and sunlight. Flesh-driven religion tries to grow fruit in its own power. It says, I must force myself to sing, try really hard to be thankful, and grit my teeth to submit to my boss or spouse. This leads to burnout, hypocrisy, and frustration.

The Spirit-filled walk focuses on yielding, which is letting the Holy Spirit fill, control, and saturate our life. As a result, praise, gratitude, and humble submission flows out as fruit produced. Throughout the word in the Psalms when people sing songs, they are in victory. God is wanting this in our lives. When we are able to sing a song then we have victory in spirit. That is what Paul is talking about here. Then making melody in your heart. This is the secret of a spiritual song. It is not done as a performance. Now we love special singing and specials. We love songs that are motivated and empowered by the Holy Spirit. But we must realize if we are singing those songs, we must first make melody in our heart to the Lord. Every song that we sing should be sung to the Lord. It is because of Him. It is out of a heart of worship and praise to Him. That is a heart that is motivated by the Holy Spirit of God. We are to give thanks always for all things. There are some things that we have to do that we don't want to do. There are some things that we almost refuse to do.

Yet to be filled with the Holy Spirit and manifest that Spirit filled life, we must come to that place where we can honestly give thanks always for all things. It is unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ. It is because of Christ that we are able to come to the Father in this manner giving thanks always for all things. Because Jesus in His mercy has already saved us, our daily walk isn't a stressful test to earn His favor. It is the joy of an accepted child exploring what pleases a loving Father, producing goodness, righteousness, and truth as the natural fruit of His love inside us. In His love, Jesus doesn't leave us to navigate life's complexities through trial and error or human guesswork. Through His Word and His Holy Spirit, He gives us His very mind which is true wisdom. Understanding His will isn't a secret test we have to decode; it is a gift He holds out freely to anyone who humbly opens Scripture and listens to His voice.

Ephesians 5:22-33 August 6, 202 In His Shadow, From His Side!

Eph 5:22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. A wife is called to submit specifically to her own husband, not to all men in general. This design is meant to be a safe, exclusive covenant modeled directly after Christ's relationship with the church. Do the same as unto the Lord. Submit to your husband as if the Lord Himself were standing right there in front of you. Verse 22 does not exist in isolation. Verse 21 opens the entire section with: Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. The call for wives to yield and husbands to serve grows out of a shared attitude of humility before Christ. Eph 5:23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the savior of the body. This is God's ordained place for the husband as the head of the wife. There are 5 major definitions of what it means to be a head. The first point is Christ is the head of the Church; He is the savior of the body. The chief role of any husband is as savior or protector and it means that he must submit to her needs at the expense of his own just as Christ did. The husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church. The husband is also in submission. The husband is submissive to the needs of his wife just exactly the way Christ is.

Every husband is going to have to have the power of the Holy Ghost to really do that. The first point is Christ is the head of the Church; He is the savior of the body. The chief role of any husband is as savior or protector and it means that he must submit to her needs at the expense of his own just as Christ did. Eph 5:24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in everything. Before the Church can experience the protection of Jesus, they must submit to His authority. We will never experience the protection of Christ to its fullest degree unless we submit to Jesus. A wife will never experience the protection of her husband unless she submits to him. It is a place of protection for her. So as the Church is subject unto Christ, so let wives be to their own husbands in everything. It is sometimes easy to submit in one part but then difficult in other parts, but it must be in everything. We must learn to submit in the natural and then in the spiritual as well. When we look at how the Church rests under Christ's authority, His protection isn't a weapon used to coerce us, it's a fortress created by His love. When we yield to Christ, we step inside His covering. In the same way, when a husband leads sacrificially like Christ, a wife's submission positions her to enjoy the safety, unity, and covering of that covenant.

In Ruth 3:9 when Ruth approached Boaz at the threshing floor, she asked him to spread his garment over her. The Hebrew word used here for garment or skirt is the exact same word translated as wings. Earlier, Boaz had said to her: Ruth 2:12 A full reward be given thee of the Lord God of Israel, under whose wings thou art come to trust. By stepping under Boaz's authority and covenant as her kinsman-redeemer, Ruth came under his physical, financial, and legal protection. Boaz immediately handled the legal matters at the city gate to secure her future. Her willingness to trust his role allowed him to act as her shield. Submission is not a test of who is stronger; it is an act of trust in God's design. When a wife yields to her husband as unto the Lord, she isn't putting her ultimate faith in a human man. She is putting her faith in God, who promises to cover and honor those who walk in His order. Eph 5:25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; The second point of headship is sacrificial love. Christ manifests His love for the Church in verse 25. It is because of vs. 26 and 27. A husband cannot lead his wife without taking the heat for her. If a husband is really going to love his wife, he must do it at the sacrifice of himself.

That means the husband has to take the heat. If the husband is going to love his wife in this manner then he is going to have to sacrifice himself and take the heat for her just as Christ has done for us and the Church. A verse that goes along with this is Song 2:3 As the apple tree among the trees of the wood, so is my beloved among the sons. I (she) sat down under his shadow with great delight, and his fruit was sweet to my taste. The only way that she can sit in His shadow is if He takes the heat. An apple tree in the middle of a wild forest provides shade, shelter, and sweet fruit. But for the woman to sit in that cool, refreshing shadow with delight, the tree itself must bear the full heat of the sun. In the exact same way, Christ stood in the direct heat of God's judgment and the world's hostility so that His Church could rest safely in His shade. A husband who truly leads like Christ, steps out in front to absorb the stress, financial pressure, spiritual attack, and heat of life so his wife can flourish beneath that covering. Taking the heat means taking responsibility: When trouble enters the home, a Christlike husband doesn't point fingers or pass the blame. Just as God called out to Adam in the garden, holding him accountable even though Eve ate first (Genesis 3:9).

A husband takes ultimate ownership of his family's spiritual, physical, and emotional climate. In Song of Solomon 2:3, the shade isn't formed by demanding anything from the bride; it is formed by the tree simply standing tall between her and the scorching sun. A husband takes the heat when he steps between his wife and external pressures, whether that means handling difficult family dynamics, shouldering heavy financial stresses, or standing in spiritual warfare on her behalf in prayer. The 3rd point of headship is in Eph 5:26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word. The husband must sanctify and cleanse her just like Christ does the Church. That does not mean he comes along and straightens her out. It means that he leads her by the word of God. It is the word that cleanses. Religion tries to fix people through criticism, rules, and harsh correction. Christ sanctifies through grace and the Word. It is up to that husband to sanctify and cleanse her with the washing of water by the word just as Christ does for us. Jesus said in John 15:3 Now ye are clean through the word which I have spoken unto you. Water does not crush or break; it refreshes, cools, and cleanses gently.

Then there is the second part of that in Eph 5:27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. It means that a husband does everything in both word and deed to consecrate this woman to him. A husband must treat his wife in a manner that she wants to be with him more than anything else in the world. That is what Jesus does; He sanctifies us and cleanses us with the washing of water by the word of God. Therefore, we want to be with Him more than anything else in this world. So a husband must learn to love his wife, to sanctify her in exactly the same way. Christ's goal in loving the Church is to present her to Himself glorious, not having spot, or wrinkle... but holy and without blemish. Christ does not drag the Church into His presence by force or guilt. He loves us so deeply, forgives us so completely, and cares for us so faithfully that our natural response is: 1John 4:19 We love Him, because He first loved us. The husband's goal is to treat his wife with such tenderness, honor, and selfless care that she naturally delights to be near him. When a husband consistently protects her (takes the heat), nourishes her soul (washes with the Word), and values her above his own desires, he creates an environment where she feels safe, cherished, and honored. His presence becomes her shade, not her storm.

When a husband stands tall like the apple tree, absorbing the heat of life through self-sacrifice and pouring out the cool water of God's Word through his speech and actions, his wife won't have to be forced into submission. She will gladly sit under his shade with great delight, because in his leadership she experiences the very love and safety of Jesus Himself. Eph 5:28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. In other words, he has to make her a part of his life. In the world today, people often view marriage as two separate individuals sharing a house while pursuing independent lives. But Paul's statement here links back to the creation design in Genesis 2:24: and they shall be one flesh. Because a man and his wife are one body in God's eyes, how a husband treats his wife is how he is ultimately treating himself. No healthy person starves, neglects, or deliberately hurts their own physical body. When our hand gets cut, our whole body stops to care for it. When our body is tired, we feed it and let it rest. A husband cannot neglect his wife's emotional, spiritual, or physical well-being without causing damage to his own life. If his wife or the husband is hurting, stressed, or drained, the body of the marriage is sick.

A husband doesn't have his life and then her life or vice versa. His decisions, finances, time, dreams, and daily schedule are completely tied to her. Her joy becomes his joy, and her burden becomes his burden. A husband who loves his wife as his own body realizes that he cannot win if she is losing. When he cherishes her, includes her, and protects her, he builds a life that brings strength and glory back to himself and to God. Eph 5:29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: The 4th point of headship is he nourishes her. This means he feeds her in the natural and provides for her and gives her food, but it means he has to nourish her spiritually. Every husband must take that place of nourishing his wife. The Greek word Paul uses for nourishes goes beyond handing someone a plate of food; it means to bring up to maturity, to rear, and to provide continuous, life-giving sustenance. It is not only in the natural realm, of his wife's material needs that are met; shelter, food, and security. Spiritually, a husband nourishes his wife by feeding her soul. He ensures that their home is an environment where spiritual growth can happen. Just as a plant needs soil, water, and sunlight to mature, a wife needs biblical encouragement, emotional safety, and spiritual nourishment to step into the fullness of who God created her to be. All of this speaks of what Christ is doing for us.

Just hear Him! Christ does not leave the Church stranded to figure out how to survive on its own. He continually feeds us through His Word, His Spirit, and His grace, strengthening us as we grow toward spiritual maturity. Then the 5th point of headship is Cherisheth her, which means to warm, or to brood, or to foster. The Greek word for cherish means to warm, to brood over, or to foster with body heat. It is like a mother bird sheltering her chicks under her wings to keep them warm and safe. This requires tenderness, gentle touch, affectionate words, and emotional warmth. To cherish someone means to make them feel uniquely valued above all other earthly pursuits. When Christ bought the Church, He gave His very life for her. When a husband cherishes his wife, he makes it clear by his choices, his time, and his attitude that she is his most prized earthly treasure. In Matthew 23:37, Jesus wept over Jerusalem, saying: How often would I have gathered thy children together, even as a hen gathereth her chickens under her wings... This is the heart of cherisheth. It is creating a warm, protective environment where fear, insecurity, and coldness cannot enter. That is the way Christ does the Church. When Christ found one pearl of great price he went and sold all that he had and bought it. He tied up His whole life in that one pearl. For the record, he found other pearls, but that one pearl made it worthwhile.

He doesn't treat it as a routine purchase; he anchors his entire estate to its worth. That is how Christ views His Church, and how a husband is commanded to view his wife. Headship is not a position of privilege; it is an attitude of devotion. When a husband nourishes his wife (feeding her soul with God's Word) and cherishes her (wrapping her in Christlike warmth and protection), he reflects the Gospel to the world. He shows that just as Christ tied His life to the Pearl of Great Price, he has gladly tied his entire life to her. We have noticed the headship of a man and what it means for a man to be the head of his wife. We must also know the key to understanding a wife's submission to her husband. It is as we understand the believer's submission to Christ. In the natural or in spiritual submission, it means we must submit in all of those ways above that we have mentioned. As Christians, we must learn to submit to Christ in every one of these ways. We must **let** Him love us sacrificially. We must **let** Him be our Savior. We must **let** Him sanctify us. We must **let** Him nourish us and we must **let** Him cherish us. It is a place of total dependence upon Christ. Why does Paul teach us all of this? Because this is an important part of our practical walk that we must learn.

Eph 5:30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. We are all a part of the body of Christ. Eph 5:31 **For this cause** shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. Paul in these next few verses teaches us that the whole Church is not the bride of Christ. Though we are members of his body and of his flesh and of his bones, V31 marks the difference. For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife. What is the cause that Paul is talking about? This is what Adam said when God brought Eve to him; He said she shall be called woman because she was taken out of the man. The bride of Christ is taken out of the (body) church. The whole body of Adam was not used to make Eve only one little rib portion. In Genesis, God put a deep sleep on Adam. Just like there is a deep sleep over the Church today as a whole and what is God doing while that Church is sleeping. He is taking one rib portion and with that He is creating and forming a body that is the bride of the Lord Jesus Christ. It is for this cause, because this rib portion was taken out of Adam that a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined unto his wife and notice.

They two shall be one flesh. It is no more just a matter of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones; they too shall now be one flesh. The bride of Christ is going to be one with Christ. While the broader church slumbers, God is quietly fashioning, shaping, and refining a portion that yields completely to Him to become one flesh. Ro 13:11 And that, knowing the time, that now it is high time to awake out of sleep: for now is our salvation nearer than when we believed. This is the spiritual slumber/apathy of the broader Church in the end times. Just as Adam's side was opened to extract the rib, Jesus' side was pierced by a spear (John 19:34), releasing blood and water, the foundational elements used to build and cleanse His spiritual Bride. It is one thing to be a member of a household, or a limb on a body, but it is another thing entirely to enter into the covenant of marriage. This points to the maturity of oneness. Being a member of the body represents grace given to us, while becoming the Bride represents our yieldedness to that grace, allowing the Holy Spirit to fashion that "rib portion" into a mature, spotless companion capable of reigning alongside Christ. Paul tells us how we do that: Know, Reckon, and Yield to the word of God by the power of grace through the Holy Spirit. Walk in the Spirit!

A child is born into a family as a member, but as that child grows up, they leave home to be joined to a spouse in the marriage union. The phrase for this cause points to God's ultimate goal in creation, which is not just to save people from sin, but to **prepare** a bride for His Son who shares His nature, His heart, and His mind. When Scripture speaks of servants in a household, the focus is on duty and work, describing those who are subject to the Master's commands. When Scripture speaks of children or heirs, the focus is on position and birthright, describing those who are born into the family of God. When Scripture speaks of the Body, the focus is on the diversity of gifts and functions, describing hands, feet, and eyes working together under one Head. When Scripture speaks of the Bride, the focus shifts to intimacy, covenant, and oneness, describing a one flesh relationship where the bride shares His throne, His name, and His nature. In Revelation 19:7, the Bible declares that the marriage of the Lamb has come because His wife has made herself ready. This shows that the Bride plays an active role by yielding, walking, purifying herself, and waking up while others remain asleep. What are the practical implications? We must be awake to the Bridal calling. God is forming a Bride portion out of the sleeping church today.

It carries direct meaning for every individual believer. It means a practical surrendering to the shaping process. God did not simply remove the rib from Adam; He built and fashioned it into a woman. Being part of the Bride requires letting the Holy Spirit cut away self-will, pride, and earthly attachments so we can be shaped into Christ's image. The difference between those who walk as the Bride and those who remain spiritual infants is not a secret election to an elite class, but a daily choice to yield to the Holy Spirit's pruning. This touches on a dangerous, ancient error that continuously repackages itself in every generation. Those who teach that a practical walk is unnecessary claim that because believers possess all spiritual blessings in Christ (Ephesians 1:3), any human effort or practice is legalism or an attempt to earn what has already been given. However, Scripture rejects this. The mistake these teachers make is confusing Positional Truth (what Christ accomplished for us) with Practical Application (what Christ accomplishes in and through us). Christ indeed holds all provisions, but having a provision available is not the same as practically possessing and living in it. For example: God gave Israel the entire Promised Land as a free gift (Joshua 1:2–3). Positionally, it was already theirs.

Yet God told Joshua: Every place that the sole of your foot shall tread upon, that have I given unto you. Israel had to put on their armor, march out, and possess the land step by step. If they had stayed in the wilderness arguing that we already have the land, so we don't need to walk, they would have died in the desert. And the first generation did in fact die in the wilderness. Jericho's walls did not fall while Israel sat passively in their tents. They had to strap on the armor, carry the Ark, and march around the city for seven days. God's sovereignty does not eliminate human responsibility; rather, God's sovereign promise is the foundational requirement for human action. Believers march because God has already provided all the provisions and given them the land, not to convince Him to give it. Paul writes that believers are a new creation, yet he commands us in Colossians 3:10–12 to put on the new man like a suit of clothes. The garment exists in heaven, but we must practically put it on daily through obedience, prayer, and yielding. If Christ's finished work eliminated the need for a practical walk, over half of the New Testament would be unnecessary. If a practical walk were unnecessary, Paul's list of daily instructions, along with those in Galatians, Colossians, and Romans would be meaningless. This principle ties directly back to the rib taken from Adam.

When God took the rib from Adam, it was not yet a woman; it was a bone. Genesis 2:22 says God built (fashioned/shaped) that rib into Eve. The Provision was the rib came out of the man (it had the nature of the man). The Process was that God designed, shaped, and built it into a bride that could match Adam. In the spiritual realm, our Provision is that we are a born-again spirit that has received Christ's life (1 Corinthians 6:17). Our process is that our soul (mind, will, and emotions) must be fashioned and surrendered to match that spiritual reality. If a believer refuses the practical walk, they remain like an uncarved block of raw material. They possess the life of Christ positionally, but they cannot express the Bride's character practically. Philippians 2:13: For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure. Some say, see there God does it all! However, they intentionally cut off verse 12: They do not take scripture into context rightly dividing the word of truth. Philippians 2:12–13 Wherefore, my beloved... **work out** your own salvation with fear and trembling. For it is God which worketh **in you** both to will and to do of his good pleasure.

Notice the divine order: God **works in you**, His provision, His grace, His life. **We work out**, our practical walk, our choices, our obedience. How? Know, Reckon, and Yield! We cannot work out what God has not worked in. God has put His life inside of us, but if we refuse to live it out in our daily choices and actions, that life stays trapped inside and never shows on the outside. God gives us His life on the inside, but if we don't put it to work in our daily decisions, that spiritual life gets choked and produces no real fruit on the outside. To claim that Christ's complete provisions remove the need for a practical walk is like buying a grand mansion and then refusing to step inside because owning it is enough. Christ's provisions are the foundation; our practical walk is the building raised upon it. The Holy Spirit takes the provisions of Christ and practically chisels away our pride, softens our heart, and disciplines our habits so that we can grow into the Bride. The Bride does not just exist as a theory in heaven, but as a living, holy, and transformed reality on earth. We must move beyond mere profession. It is not enough to simply claim church membership or maintain a nominal faith. The call of the Bride is an invitation to total oneness, where we allow Christ to live His life through us in full, uninterrupted fellowship.

God's ultimate desire goes beyond saving a crowd. He is seeking a unified, fully surrendered Bride, just as Eve was taken out of Adam's side to become one flesh with him. Eph 5:32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. What is this great mystery? V31, it is the rib portion that is the mystery that Paul is talking about here. Marriage itself is no mystery. It is God's decree from the very beginning of time. The mystery is this rib portion which is being fashioned today and will be taken out of the entire body of Christ for which Adam says, for this cause (because she has been taken out of my body) then she shall be joined unto me and these are the ones that will become one flesh. The great mystery is the relationship between Christ and the rib portion. The Bride moves beyond being mere members of His body, flesh, and bones; they become truly one flesh and one spirit with Jesus. We cannot view Ephesians 5 purely as a list of rules for human marriage. But Paul reveals this great mystery: Human marriage is a living parable meant to show us what a relationship with Jesus actually looks like. To submit to Christ is not to be conquered by an enemy; it is allowing ourselves to be loved, protected, washed, nourished, and cherished by our Savior.

It requires laying down our pride, self-sufficiency, and desire, stepping into a place of total dependence upon Christ. True submission accepts that Jesus paid the full price on the Cross while we were still sinners (Romans 5:8). It means receiving His grace when we know we don't deserve it. Human nature wants to build its own security through wealth, status, or self-effort. Submitting to Christ as Savior means stepping under His protective wings, trusting Him alone to shield our lives, our families, and our futures. We often try to clean ourselves up before coming to God, or we resist when His Word exposes areas that need to change. Letting Him sanctify us means yielding to the washing of water by the Word. We must allow Scripture to correct, purify, and reshape our hearts. Submitting to His nourishment means feasting daily on His Word (Matthew 4:4) and depending on the Holy Spirit for spiritual energy and strength. Many can accept God as a strict Judge or a distant Master, but they struggle to accept Him as a tender Savior who warms, fosters, and delights in them. Submitting to His cherishing means letting go of fear, shame, and feelings of worthlessness to rest in His personal, tender affection.

All saints do not have these things that Paul just described in regards to the spirit of submission unto Christ. As Christians we must learn to submit to Christ in every one of these ways. We must let Him love us sacrificially. We must let Him be our Savior. We must let Him sanctify us. We must let Him nourish us and we must let Him cherish us. It is a place of total dependence upon Christ. The call of Ephesians 5 is an invitation to stop fighting, stop striving, and step into the safe, protective, and tender covering of Jesus Christ. When we yield to Him as our Savior, Leader, Sanctifier, Nourisher, and Cherisher, we enter the place of true peace, true spiritual rest, and complete safety. The Call of the Bride is grown in His Shadow, from His Side!

Ephesians 6:1-10 August 13, 2026 We're Being Built for the Battle!

This chapter describes the next part of submission. Eph 6:1 Children, obey your parents in the Lord: for this is right. Eph 6:2 Honour thy father and mother; (which is the first commandment with promise;) Paul means we must give it first priority. If we look at the Ten Commandments this is not the first one. But Paul says make it your first priority. Eph 6:3 That it may be well with thee, and thou mayest live long on the earth. In vs. 1-3 children, vs. 4 parents, vs. 5 servants, and vs. 9 Masters. Paul uses these natural relationships to further illustrate our spiritual lives under authority. These are at different stages of maturity or rank in our lives. We must be obedient to the Lord's leading. In Ephesians 5:18, Paul says, Be filled with the Spirit, and what follows in chapters 5 and 6 is the natural fruit of that Spirit-filled life. Submission to God-ordained authority isn't human willpower; it's the outward evidence of the Holy Spirit inside us. In V2 when Paul says honor thy parents, the first commandment with promise, he isn't saying it is the highest priority over loving God, which is the primary summary that Jesus noted in Matthew. Mt 22:37 Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind. 38 This is the first and great commandment.

In Ex 20:12 Honour thy father and thy mother: that thy days may be long upon the land which the LORD thy God giveth thee. This is the very first commandment that connects a specific, personal promise to its obedience (that thy days may be long upon the land). In Luke 2:41–52, twelve-year-old Jesus went to Jerusalem for Passover. Though He was fully God and possessed wisdom far beyond the religious leaders in the temple, Scripture notes in Luke 2:51: And he went down with them, and came to Nazareth, and was subject unto them. Even the Creator of the universe submitted Himself to His earthly parents, leaving a clear model of Spirit-led humility for every child. Eph 6:4 And, ye fathers, provoke not your children to wrath: but bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. This is still an expression of the infilling of the Spirit. Be ye filled with Spirit by being submissive in all these ways. This verse describes how parents are instructed to raise their children in this darkened world. Note it is a child not an adult son or daughter. Parenting in a fallen world is not about producing well-behaved moralists for society; it's about teaching young hearts to come to know the love of Jesus Christ.

Eli in 1Samuel 2–4 was a High Priest who personally served God, but he failed to correct his sons, Hophni and Phinehas. 1 Samuel 3:13 tells us of God's judgment on Eli's house. It was because his sons made themselves vile, and he restrained them not. Eli's lack of parenting led to family tragedy and destruction. His failure was active headship and divine boundary-setting for his sons. Eli was not just bad at parenting; in God's eyes, it was a form of idolatry. By tolerating his sons, Hophni and Phinehas's blatant corruption, stealing raw meat from sacrifices before it was offered to God and committing sexual immorality at the door of the Tabernacle. Eli effectively placed his sons' desires and feelings above God's holiness. In 1Samuel 2:23–25, Eli says to them: Why do ye such things? for I hear of your evil dealings by all this people. Nay, my sons; for it is no good report that I hear...Notice what is missing: It was the official authority that he needed to exercise: Eli wasn't just a father; he was the High Priest and a Judge in Israel. It was his sworn duty to remove ungodly priests from ministering at the altar. Then there was no restraint: He scolded them verbally, but 1Samuel 3:13 it states, he restrained them not. A gentle warning to grown men engaged in sacrilege and abuse of power was tragically inadequate. By partaking in the meals provided through his sons' corruption, Eli became complicit in their sin. His lifestyle silently tolerated the very abuse he verbally condemned.

In 1 Samuel 2:34 And this shall be a sign unto thee, that shall come upon thy two sons, on Hophni and Phinehas; in one day they shall die both of them. 1Sa 4:11 And the ark of God was taken; and the two sons of Eli, Hophni and Phinehas, were slain. When the news reached Eli that the Ark was captured and both his sons were killed on that single day, 98-year-old Eli fell backward off his seat, broke his neck, and died (1 Samuel 4:17–18). This is one of the most sobering displays of divine judgment in the Old Testament. What does this tell us today as believers? Eli's house was judged first because those closest to God are held to the highest standard. Peter explicitly states this for the New Testament church: 1 Peter 4:17 For the time is come that judgment must begin at the house of God: and if it first begin at us, what shall the end be of them that obey not the gospel of God? Ga 6:7 Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap. This is one of the most serious principles in all of Scripture. To mock God does not mean simply making fun of Him; the Greek word literally means to turn up the nose at or to treat God's word, authority, and holiness with contempt.

When leaders teach falsehood, redefine sin, or twist Scripture, they are acting as if God does not see, does not care, or is powerless to enforce His Word. One of the traps of Satan is when false **teachers often mistake God's patience for approval**, because God is long suffering. Because divine judgment isn't always immediate, they grow bolder in error. But Peter points out that God did not spare the rebellious angels, the ancient world during the Flood, or Sodom and Gomorrah. He will certainly not spare those who corrupt His truth and lead His people astray. Just as Eli and his sons corrupted the sanctuary in Shiloh, modern church leaders risk exposing the church to God's refining judgment when they lead believers into ungodly doctrines and moral errors. Eli's main failure was a leadership failure. The New Testament repeatedly warns that those in leadership positions face a stricter, more exacting judgment from God. James 3:1 My brethren, be not many masters [teachers/leaders], knowing that we shall receive the greater condemnation. Then Paul outlined the requirements for church leaders (elders and deacons) in the New Testament, he essentially wrote a standard designed to prevent another Eli scenario:

1 Timothy 3:4–5 One that ruleth well his own house, having his children in subjection with all gravity; (For if a man know not how to rule his own house, how shall he take care of the church of God?). Paul directly ties a man's spiritual authority in the church to his willingness and ability to discipline and manage his own household. This was the very thing Eli failed to do. But also note: Managing one's household is the testing ground or prerequisite for church leadership, **but it is not the sole qualification**. If a man manages his home well but fails to shepherd and protect God's church from moral and doctrinal poison, he is failing at the second half of what Paul tells us. In fact, he is acting worse than Eli: Eli failed in both home and sanctuary, but some pastors today enforce order at home while deliberately abandoning order in God's house! Paul instructs us in 2Ti 4:2 Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. Pastors who allow open sin in the church under the flag of grace are not preaching the Gospel; they are setting up their congregation, and themselves, for the very judgment of God that Peter warned about. Paul tells us of the danger of sharing in other men's sins. By failing to restrain Hophni and Phinehas, Eli became complicit in their wickedness. Paul warns Timothy against this exact form in 1 Timothy 5:22. The New Testament reaffirms that while God is abundant in grace, He remains a consuming fire (Hebrews 12:29).

Leaders, parents, and believers are called to active faithfulness. We are to love people enough to set boundaries, correct error, and place the honor of God above all earthly relationships. Why is God's judgment so severe against those who teach error? Because false doctrine does not just harm the teacher, it poisons the hearers. False doctrine leads people into a false sense of security, convincing them they are in good standing with God while living in unrepentant sin. When we talk about the reverence for God and personal holiness being removed from church teaching or left out of the message, it means a preacher stops telling people that God is holy, stops warning about sin, and stops calling believers to live clean, obedient lives. Instead, they only talk about God's love and forgiveness, leaving out the parts of the Bible that command us to turn away from evil. When believers are not taught to stay away from sin, they walk right into traps, bad relationships, destructive addictions, ruined marriages, and dishonest habits. It is because nobody warned them that those things are deadly. When a pastor ignores the fear of God and personal holiness, he is taking away the spiritual armor God gives to us to protect our lives.

That is why Paul teaches us the provisions in Ephesians 1-3 and why he is teaching us how to walk in those provisions in Ephesians 4-6, so that we can use those provisions to put on the whole armor of God. When a pastor leaves out reverence and holiness, this breeds in young leaders a parrot response with the exact same messages. The entire congregation slowly begins to speak and think in the same compromised way. This is not accidental. In the Apostle Paul's writings, we see the exact mechanism of how false doctrine, once introduced at the top, systematically replicates itself through an entire church meeting. Paul's Gospel explains this tragic progression: The reason young leaders and church members start sounding like a parrot is people imitate their spiritual fathers. Paul understood the power of imitation, and that is why he frequently told his young disciples (like Timothy and Titus) and his churches to imitate his life and doctrine: 1 Corinthians 11:1 Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. 2 Timothy 1:13 Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me... When a senior pastor preaches a compromised gospel, the younger leaders look up to him as their primary model. They copy him because they assume he represents biblical truth without searching the scriptures for themselves.

When the leader of a church serves poisoned bread, the younger leaders learn how to bake the exact same poisoned bread and serve it to others. Paul tells us of leaven (yeast) to explain how a corrupt idea or an unaddressed sin quietly spreads until it completely transforms the whole environment. In Galatians, Paul was telling them they were listening to a distorted gospel. He warned that if we allow even a small distortion of truth into the church, it will eventually ferment and corrupt the mind of every person sitting in the pews. Satan is the ultimate architect and master deceiver behind the entire system. Satan's strategy against Adam and Eve had three distinct steps. They are the exact same steps false teachers use today: #1 Cast doubt on God's Word. Genesis 3:1 And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? Satan subtly raised the question: Did God really say that? Today, Satan uses leaders to whisper: Did God really mean we have to live a practical holy walk? Is God really that strict about sin? #2 Deny the consequences of sin. Genesis 3:4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die... This was the first great lie told to humanity. God had warned that disobedience leads to death (Genesis 2:17). Satan directly contradicted God by promising immunity from judgment.

Leaders are telling people, they can ignore personal holiness, and you will not surely die, your salvation is secure. They say, you will not lose your salvation, that's true Jesus paid it all, but they are teaching people that sin consequences for our daily walk. # 3 is false discernment. Genesis 3:5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods... Satan framed disobedience as freedom and false discernment. Today, leaders leave out the reverence or the fear of God. This is done by not teaching what Paul said in Eph 4:1 by walking **worthy of the vocation** wherewith ye are called. The vocation Paul speaks of is the high calling of God, united with Christ, and indwelt by the Holy Spirit. Paul teaches us that in Chapters 1–3: The Believer's position is what God has done for us in Christ. That is our Vocation. Then is chapters 4–6: The Believer's practice is how we are to live in light of that, which is our practical Walk. To walk worthy of our vocation, or in our position of what God has done for us in Christ, means to live a life of practical holiness, humility, unity, and obedience that matches the glorious position Jesus bought for us on the Cross.

From Genesis to Revelation, Satan's primary strategy has never changed: he destroys people not by openly opposing God at first, but by subtly corrupting what God actually said. Jesus called Satan a liar, and the father of it (John 8:44), and why Paul urged believers to put on the whole armor of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles [schemes] of the devil (Ephesians 6:11). Note how Jesus spoke when He addressed the religious leaders of His day who substituted human traditions for God's commandments: Matthew 15:13–14 Every plant, which my heavenly Father hath not planted, shall be rooted up. Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch. How does the Judgment of error unfold? Scripture outlines how God judges those who mock Him by twisting His truth: It is by spiritual blindness and strong delusion: When men persistently teach error or lies, they are rejecting truth. God often gives them over to the very deception they promote. They end up believing their own errors or lies. 2Th 2:10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved. 11 And for this cause God shall send them strong delusion, that they should believe a lie:

12 That they all might be damned who believed not the truth, but had pleasure in unrighteousness. Paul warns in 1 Corinthians 3:13–15 that every teacher's work will be tested by fire. Teaching built on cheap, corrupt materials (wood, hay, stubble) will be burned up entirely. As with Eli's house, God eventually strips away the façade of corrupt leadership, exposing false motives to safeguard His true remnant. To teach error while claiming to represent God is to treat Jesus as if He were blind, deaf, or indifferent. But God is not mocked. His truth endures forever, and every teacher will stand before Him to give an account for every word preached and every soul influenced. Note the opposite which is the faithful nurture of Lois and Eunice in 2Timothy 1:5; 3:14–15. Young Timothy grew up to be a strong pastor and missionary. Paul credits Timothy's mother Eunice and grandmother Lois, who instilled the faith in him from early childhood through teaching him in the Holy Scriptures. Eph 6:5 Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in **singleness of your heart**, as unto Christ; We do need the infilling of the Spirit in order to do this because there are some difficult masters or bosses in this world. But we are to be subject to them according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, how? As unto Christ; It is as we do it unto the Lord we attain this place as full overcomers.

This is how to attain the rank of the Bride of the Lamb. It is in singleness of heart unto the Lord. This continues the momentum from Ephesians 5:18 (Be filled with the Spirit). Eph 6:6 Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; Eyeservice is performing only when an earthly supervisor or authority is watching. It is God who sees what we do. Eph 6:7 With **good will** doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: This good will means a good attitude. It is an attitude of the heart. The Holy Spirit changes not just what we do, but the spirit in which we do it. We are to please the Lord with our life. Eph 6:8 Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. This is where we must realize that even though we are working for a man, we are doing it unto the Lord. Our money and sustenance and our reward come from the Lord. Refer to Colossians 3:23–24 And whatsoever ye do, do it heartily, as to the Lord, and not unto men; Knowing that of the Lord ye shall receive the reward of the inheritance: for ye serve the Lord Christ. Then, 1Corinthians 10:31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

Eph 6:9 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons with him. Eph 6:10 Finally, my brethren, **be strong in the Lord**, and in the power of his might. This is the 4th part of being filled with Spirit. The power of His might is be filled with the Spirit and there is a very special reason for that. The word “finally” is key. It is not just an ending transition; it is the summary and application of everything Paul has been building since Eph 5:18 And be not drunk with wine, wherein is excess; but be filled with the Spirit. In Ephesians 6:6–10, Paul brings his teaching on Spirit-filled relationships to its ultimate height, bridging our daily conduct on earth directly into spiritual warfare. The momentum that began in Ephesians 5:18 (Be filled with the Spirit) moves through the home, into the workplace, and finally onto the spiritual battlefield. When Paul calls us to serve with good will or a right attitude in V6 and then to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might, V 10; he is making an important connection. Spiritual strength is not a sudden emotion we come up with during a crisis. It is built daily as we yield to the Holy Spirit in the ordinary routines of life.

We serve from the heart, trusting God for our true reward, and walking under His authority. Why is being filled with the Holy Spirit the secret to His Might? Paul does not say be strong in ourself or be strong in our own will. He says, be strong in the Lord. Why? Because human strength cannot stand against spiritual forces. Spiritual strength is not a sudden panic button we push when a crisis hits; it is the natural, accumulated result of absorbing God's provisions Ephesians chapter 1-3 and exercising them daily in our practical walk Ephesians 4-6. If we skip Chapter 1–3, we have no spiritual nutrition. If we skip or do not teach Chapters 4–5, we have no spiritual muscle. And if we have no nutrition and no muscle, we cannot wear or lift the heavy armor of Chapter 6. Le 11:3 Whatsoever parteth the hoof, and is clovenfooted, and cheweth the cud, among the beasts, that shall ye eat. We must have a parted hoof (separated walk) and we must chew the cud. (eat the word of God). We have to have both a separated walk and the provisions of the word of God. Before Paul tells us to do anything, he tells us what God has already done. This is the food or the provisions that nourish our spiritual identity: You are blessed with all spiritual blessings (Eph 1:3). You are adopted, redeemed, and forgiven (Eph 1:5, 7). You are sealed with the Holy Spirit (Eph 1:13). You are seated with Christ in heavenly places (Eph 2:6).

Then Paul prays in Ephesians 3:16 that God would grant you: to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man. This inner strength comes from knowing, meditating on, and eating these truths until they become part of our spiritual DNA. Then eating food does no good if it isn't digested and used to build muscle. When we yield to the Holy Spirit in difficult situations and trials in this life, we are exercising our faith. We are turning the provisions of grace into practical spiritual stamina. Grace is a power. Now look at how Paul introduces the armor in Ephesians 6:10 Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Notice the word finally. Paul does not start his letter with Put on the armor of God! He puts it at the very end. Why? Because we cannot stand against demonic powers if we haven't been using or eating the provisions of the word of God or practicing righteousness in our daily walk. This reveals the fourfold progression of the Spirit-filled life in Paul's letter. Spirit-filled worship and thanksgiving (Ephesians 5:19–20). Spirit-filled harmony in marriage and family (Ephesians 5:21–6:4). Spirit-filled integrity and goodwill in work/labor (Ephesians 6:5–9). Spirit-filled power for spiritual warfare (Ephesians 6:10–18).

We cannot jump straight to step 4 (Spirit-filled power for spiritual warfare) without steps 1, 2, and 3! The believer who learns to surrender to the Holy Spirit in the small, simple areas of life, submitting to parents, raising children gracefully, working with goodwill under a tough boss, treating subordinates with fairness is the very believer who becomes rooted in the power of His might. Victory over the enemy on the battlefield begins with Spirit-led submission in the home and workplace. If a soldier, in the natural, sits on a couch, eats zero food, builds zero muscle, and never exercises, putting heavy iron armor on him will only crush him. He will collapse under its weight! In the same way, a believer who disregards or does not use the provisions (Chapters 1–3) and refuses a practical walk of holiness (Chapters 4–5) cannot suddenly put on the armor in a day of crisis. They won't even know how to hold the Sword of the Spirit because they never practiced using it in daily life. Refer to 1 Peter 2:2: As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby. Hebrews 5:14: But strong meat belongeth to them that are of full age, even those who **by reason of use** have their senses exercised to discern both good and evil. Notice the phrase by reason of use. Muscle is built when spiritual food is combined with exercise (use).

Paul told Timothy: 2Ti 2:3 Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. 4 No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier. 5 And if a man also strive for masteries, yet is he not crowned, except he strive lawfully. A soldier's endurance is built on the training ground, long before he reaches the battlefield. Ephesians 1–3 is the FEAST: We eat the glorious truths of what Christ has provided. Ephesians 4–5 is the EXERCISE: We put those provisions into practice by walking in holiness, submission, truth, and love. Ephesians 6 is the BATTLE: Having eaten well and trained hard, we stand firm in full armor when the enemy attacks. Without Chapters 1–3, we have no strength. Without Chapters 4–5, we have no training. But with both, we are fully equipped to stand against the wiles of the devil and remain standing when the battle is done. When like in Leviticus 11, we chew the cud and have a separated walk, we are being built for the battle and we follow Paul as he followed Christ, when he said 2Ti 4:7 I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: 8 Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing. We are being built for the Battle!

Ephesians 6:11-24 August 20, 2026 Clear to the Light: The Heart of Spiritual Warfare!

Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Spiritual forces (v12) are not controlled by human intellect, physical strength, or fleshly determination. If we attempt to engage spiritual warfare in our own strength, we are relying on the flesh. Satan easily defeats the flesh because the flesh is already fallen. In 2 Kings 6:15–17, when the King of Aram surrounded Elisha's city with horses and chariots, Elisha's servant panicked. Elisha prayed for the servant's eyes to be opened, and suddenly the servant saw the hills filled with horses and chariots of fire surrounding them. Just as the servant initially only saw human soldiers, we often see only physical threats, but Paul calls believers to recognize God's unseen power in the middle of spiritual conflict. Then, in Matthew 4:1–11, when Satan tempted Jesus in the wilderness, he did not use physical force, but rather Satan used wiles, which is twisting Scripture, appealing to physical hunger, offering instant earthly power, and inciting pride. Jesus defeated him not with human arguments, but with spiritual authority, responding every time with, It is written.

It is deeply heartbreaking to watch a mature Christian, someone who knows the truth, sit week after week under false doctrine, hanging their head in quiet grief. The motives for staying are understandable on a human level: decades of history, deep family ties, fear of social rejection, or the hope that the pastor will eventually change. However, Scripture, especially the Apostle Paul, leaves no room for remaining under spiritual error. Sitting under false teaching is not a neutral position or a passive sacrifice; it is an active compromise that defiles the soul and ultimately constitutes a rejection of Jesus Christ Himself. The person hanging their head may think, I know the truth in my heart, so the error won't affect me. But Scripture explicitly warns that spiritual poison cannot be ingested week after week without corrupting the hearer. It Spreads Like Gangrene: Paul writes in 2 Timothy 2:16–17, But shun profane and vain babblings... And their word will eat as doth a canker [gangrene]. You cannot sit in a room filled with spiritual infection and remain immune. It slowly numbs your spiritual discernment. When a believer stays in a church that preaches a distorted gospel: They give their presence and support to another Jesus.

They prioritize their comfort, family ties, and tradition above the honor of the true Jesus Christ that gave us all. Jesus said in Joh 10:4 And when he putteth forth his own sheep, he goeth before them, and the sheep follow him: for they know his voice. 5 And a stranger will they not follow, but will flee from him: for they know not the voice of strangers. To stay under a stranger's voice rather than flee is to disobey the Chief Shepherd. When a believer sits under false doctrine week after week, hanging their head in quiet grief, they are attempting to fight a spiritual conflict with fleshly tools. Paul tells us in Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. The believer is not merely sitting in a pew struggling with the error taught, they are caught in a spiritual trap engineered by principalities, powers, and spiritual wickedness in high places. Satan uses spiritual **wiles** to keep a knowledgeable Christian paralyzed in a house of compromise. Literally, wiles means cunning arts, deceits, craftiness, or calculated strategies. When a Christian stays in a compromised church, thinking: I am strong enough to handle hearing error every week, or I will just endure it for the sake of my family, or I will pray in secret and wait out the pride that I see, they are relying entirely on fleshly endurance.

Satan easily defeats the flesh. In fact, keeping a mature believer seated in that pew, grieved, silent, and drained, is a tactical victory for darkness. The believer's spiritual energy is exhausted simply surviving the service, leaving them completely neutralized and leaving them spiritually depleted and unable to bear true fruit for Christ. Just as God's chariots of fire with Elisha's servant were invisible at first, God's spiritual provision and escape are invisible to the believer as long as they focus on physical consequences. They fear what they will lose (friends, family) rather than seeing what God has already provided with His power, grace, truth, and true fellowship. Putting on the Armor means stepping out. Jesus defeated Satan in the wilderness by standing uncompromised on "It is written." The moment the devil realized Jesus would not bend a single **word of God** for physical comfort or earthly influence, Satan left Him (Matthew 4:11). The mature Christian hanging their head in the pew must have their spiritual eyes opened like Elisha's servant. They must realize that Satan is using their natural affection for family, tradition, and comfort as spiritual chains. By staying under false doctrine, they are attempting to fight a spiritual war with fleshly compromise, and the flesh will always lose.

To put on the whole armor of God is to follow Christ out of the camp of compromise. As Paul writes in 2 Corinthians 6:17 Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you. To have true spiritual victory, protection, and power, we must put on the whole armor of God which is only found when we stop compromising our walk with error, lift our heads, and walk in absolute obedience to the uncompromised Word of God. Paul is explaining the warfare because our primary battle is spiritual rather than physical, relying on human strength is insufficient. To stand firm, we must put on the full armor of God, depending entirely on His truth, righteousness, peace, faith, salvation, in the Word of God. When Paul penned these words, he was under house arrest in Rome, bound by a heavy iron chain to a rotating guard of Roman soldiers. For months, Paul lived directly with these men, meaning he could not move, eat, or sleep without hearing the clinking of metal armor, or the shifting of iron chains. Paul observed the soldier standing guard beside him every day. God likely used the man's everyday military equipment as a living object lesson for spiritual reality.

A Roman soldier never went into battle with a loose tunic fluttering in the wind, so he buckled a thick leather belt tightly around his waist to hold his weapons and allow free movement. As Paul watched the guard tighten his belt, could God have inspired the thought that truth is what pulls everything together and holds the believer's life in place with no compromise. The soldier also wore an iron breastplate of interlocking metal plates across his chest to protect his heart and vital organs from fatal blows, which Paul connected to how righteousness protects the believer's heart from Satan's accusations. Looking at the soldier's heavy leather boots, which were studded with iron nails on the soles to provide traction on slippery terrain, Paul recognized that the peace of the Gospel provides the sure-footed stability needed to stand firm when evil presses in. Hanging nearby was a large, wooden shield covered in leather, which soldiers would soak in water before the battle so that flaming arrows shot by enemies would extinguish upon impact. Paul saw that faith functions as this exact kind of shield, quenching the fiery, toxic lies of the enemy. The guard's bronze or iron helmet was designed to absorb crushing blows to the head. Then Paul penned that salvation protects the believer's mind, thoughts, and hope from crushing attacks.

Finally, the only offensive weapon the guard carried at his side was a short thrusting sword used for close-quarters combat, leading Paul to explain that the Word of God is the living, active sword used to cut through deception. Rome believed Paul was captive with physical chains and guards, but through the Holy Spirit, God was teaching Paul about a surrendered life submissive to Him alone. The Scriptures demonstrate a profound transformation in Paul. Before Saul of Tarsus was driven by self-righteous pride, human credentials, and his own physical zeal. But now Paul, through his sufferings and imprisonment, God broke down his reliance on self-will and taught him total submission to Jesus Christ. Paul actively learned to live this surrendered, submissive life while in prison: While the world saw Paul as a prisoner of Rome, Paul's letters written from prison show his surrendered life. He did not view Rome as his master, nor did he view his chains as an unfortunate accident. He submitted to the circumstance because he saw himself entirely under the sovereign authority of Jesus. Paul was the prisoner of Jesus Christ for you Gentiles. In his Prison Epistle to the Philippians, Paul uses the word learned twice to describe his experience with hardship and restriction. Submission to God's will in difficult circumstances is not automatic; it is a process.

The Holy Spirit allowed Paul to see past the physical guard. The conflict was not between Rome and a prisoner in chains. The physical soldiers were equipped to enforce an earthly kingdom, God used this picture to reveal to Paul that we are soldiers in a far greater spiritual battle. We are equipped with the divine, indestructible armor of God to stand firm against spiritual darkness. Through this, Paul was taught that everyday submission builds Spiritual authority. Authority in the spiritual realm is tied to being under authority. In Matthew 8:8–10: the Roman Centurion told Jesus, I am a man under authority, having soldiers under me: and I say to this man, Go, and he goeth. The Centurion understood that his command carried the full weight and might of Rome only because he himself was fully submitted to Caesar's authority. It works the exact same way with the Holy Spirit: If a believer refuses to yield to the Holy Spirit in their home, in their walk, or in compromise of the truth, they are walking in self-will, not the Holy Spirit. If they try to stand against the devil in Ephesians 6:10, they will be operating out of their own fractured authority.

The believer who submits daily to the Holy Spirit in their walk and in the truth, crucifies the flesh. Paul was learning this in the very prison that held him. Why? So we would know these things. This is Paul's personal experience in prison with the command to put on the armor of God. The armor is not a set of tools a believer picks up to use in their own strength; it is the grace, and character, power, and presence of God Himself, which can only be worn when self-will has been surrendered. When Paul says to be strong in the Lord, he is pointing out reality: we cannot use human muscle to fight a spiritual battle. Trying to take on spiritual trouble by willpower, or anger is like bringing a plastic butter knife to a sword fight. Self-will only relies on personal strength, and Satan knows exactly how to break that strength. He understands human weakness, pride, and fear. Paul tells us to be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. He is saying that spiritual authority is outside of human effort. A believer operating in self-will is trying to fight a spiritual enemy with carnal strength, which creates a fatal mismatch. The story of the seven sons of Sceva in Acts 19 shows what happens when someone tries to use spiritual authority without having a submitted heart. These men saw Paul casting out evil spirits and tried to copy him by saying, We command you to come out in the name of Jesus whom Paul preaches. But the evil spirit answered, Jesus I know, and Paul I know, but who are you?

The demon-possessed man then jumped on them, beat them up, and chased them out of the house naked and bleeding. They were using Jesus' name like a magic trick, but because they had no real relationship with God and no actual surrender to Him, they had zero real authority, leaving them completely exposed. True spiritual authority comes from daily surrender to God in the quiet, normal moments of life. By surrendering our will to the Holy Spirit in those small, hidden choices, God's actual power fills our life, giving us the real, solid ground that we need to stand firm when life gets hit by spiritual storms. **Daily surrendering to God is how we put on the whole armor of God.** Many people treat the Armor of God like magical gear that we pray on each morning. The armor of God is actually Jesus Christ Himself, and putting it on simply means surrendering our own daily choices to the Holy Spirit. Paul explains this in Ro 13:12 The night is far spent, the day is at hand: let us therefore cast off the works of darkness, and let us put on the armour of light.¹³ Let us walk honestly, as in the day; not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife and envying. ¹⁴ But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

Paul shows us that wearing the armor and living like Jesus are the exact same thing, meaning we cannot truly wear God's armor while continuing to follow our own selfish will. Each piece of armor represents a real way of living that only comes through daily surrender. Truth means choosing to agree with God's Word. Righteousness is about obeying God and relying on Jesus' goodness instead of our own. The peace that covers our feet is the quiet calm that stays inside us when we trust God, even when life around us feels out of control. Faith is not about trying to feel super confident, but rather choosing to trust God's promises over what our eyes can see right now. Salvation protects our mind and thoughts by keeping our hope fixed on God's eternal home rather than our temporary earthly desires and problems. The sword of the Spirit is the Word of God, which we use to cut through error and temptation in real time, just like Jesus did when He was tempted in the wilderness. When a person chooses to live by their own self-will, they leave open gaps in their spiritual defense. For example, if we hold onto anger and refuse to forgive someone, we step out from behind the protection of righteousness. If we rely entirely on our own cleverness, we unbuckle the truth that holds our life together. If we let fear control our decisions, we drop our trust in God.

The enemy is not afraid of human willpower or religious routines, but he is powerless against a believer who has **surrendered** their lives to the Lord, which is putting on the whole armor of God. A person who lets go of self-will is completely wrapped in the power and presence of Jesus. Ultimately, putting on the armor of God is simply the quiet, everyday habit of telling God, "I choose Your way instead of my own way today." Paul was not merely preaching on theology from an armchair; he was actively living out this crucifying of the flesh inside a Roman prison cell. In the hidden, humiliating details of his captivity, chained, deprived of comfort, unable to travel, and subject to the earthly guards, Paul had every natural reason to resent his circumstances or operate in self-pity and frustration. Instead, as he wrote in Philippians and Ephesians, he viewed himself not as a prisoner of Rome, but as a "prisoner of the Lord. By yielding his will to the Holy Spirit in those quiet, uncomfortable moments, Paul allowed the Holy Spirit to change him. Because Paul allowed God to break his self-will in the hidden places of a prison cell, he could speak with authentic, divine authority about standing firm against the dark powers of this world.

God orchestrated Paul's circumstance so that we would understand that true spiritual authority is not born out of human boldness, loud declarations, or self-effort, but out of quiet, daily submission to the Holy Spirit in the simple details of life. When we stand up to put on the spiritual armor (Ephesians 6:11–18), we are **not** standing in our own strength, we are completely hidden in Christ. You want to put on the whole armor of God, submit to the will of God and the Holy Spirit in every aspect of our lives. Walk the walk! Run the race to win Him, Give Jesus the best place in our lives as our first love. After all, think real hard about this, Jesus gave us everything! Reach back to Ephesians 1-3 and glean every provision that He has provided just like Ruth gleaned in Boaz's field. When we look at the story of Ruth through the lens of Paul's letters, Boaz stands as one of the clearest Old Testament pictures of Jesus Christ, our true Kinsman-Redeemer. Just as Boaz owned the fields, possessed all the wealth, and extended unmerited favor to a poor foreigner, Jesus owns all spiritual wealth and opens His limitless estate to us. Jesus didn't just leave us at the edge of the field. He commands the Holy Spirit to drop "handfuls of purpose" directly in our path:

Ruth 2:16 And let fall also some of the handfuls of purpose for her, and leave them, that she may glean them, and rebuke her not. Handfuls of purpose means intentional, deliberate blessings. It describes a gift that looks like a happy accident to the person receiving it, but was actually planned on purpose by the giver. Jesus gave us all (Eph 1-3) The handful of placing us as sons; the handful of Redemption and Forgiveness; the handful of the Holy Spirit's Seal; the handful of Being Seated in Heavenly Places; the handful of the Unsearchable Riches of Christ; We are to do exactly what Ruth did: Wake up, go into His field, and glean! All provisions in Eph1-3! We don't go to other fields of error to find our identity. We stay fast by Christ, our first love. We take those glorious provisions from Ephesians 1–3, feed on them, build spiritual muscle, put on the whole armor of God, and walk the walk in victory! Eph 6:11 Put on the whole armour of God, (why?) that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. We must be filled with the power of the Holy Ghost in order to wage this successful warfare against the enemy. Notice it says, ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. God is not so much concerned with the power of the devil. God is concerned about us falling prey to the wiles or the tricks of the devil.

We must be filled with the Spirit of God in order that we do not succumb to the wiles or the tricks of the devil. That is where the Church has really failed. The Church has been so deceived by the enemy today. Eph 6:12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. This whole book has been about taking our place in the heavenlies in Christ. And when we do that we are going to go head-to-head against Satan himself because he is the prince of the power of the air. Therefore we must be filled with the power of the Holy Ghost in order to wage that kind of warfare. Notice it is against spiritual wickedness in a completely different realm. This battle is in a spiritual realm. Therefore we must have the power of the Holy Ghost in order to do that. Human effort is useless in a battle fought against spiritual deception. When Paul warns us about the wiles of the devil, he highlights that the enemy's chief weapon is not overwhelming force, but trickery, deception, and subtle distraction. Satan knows he cannot overpower the God inside a believer, so he uses cunning strategies to trick believers into stepping out from under God's authority and operating in their own flesh.

When a believer stays in a church that preaches false doctrine, thinking their intellect, family loyalty, or personal willpower will keep them safe or change the situation, they are operating according to the flesh. They are falling for the exact trap the enemy set. Satan does not fear human willpower, or family loyalty. In fact, he uses those exact human attachments as the bait to keep believers trapped in an environment of error. They are acting as if their flesh can defeat the enemy. Jesus did not go to the Cross merely to give us social gatherings or family traditions; He died to redeem us out of deception and sanctify us in His truth. Joh 18:37 Jesus said.... To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice. Deception is ramped and that's why Paul stresses being filled with the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 5:18) right before introducing the Armor of God. Eph 6:13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. Wherefore is because of the attacks of the devil; it is a spiritual warfare. We do have victory over Satan. We don't want to imply that we do not. The greatest victories that we will have is to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. We are to hold our ground. We are not wiping out the devil as some people seem to think.

We are doing well just to hold back the forces of darkness standing against what we have. Deception is all around us today, but we are called simply to hold onto the truth of Jesus and refuse to follow the crowd. That is one of the biggest victory's we can have. Eph 6:14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; The girdle of Truth or the Word of God is the basis of all other pieces of armor. Faith stands in the middle at the highest point above all. It reaches back to the girdle of Truth, to the breastplate of righteousness, and to the shod feet. It reaches forward and connects vitally with the three remaining parts of the armor. Every operation of every weapon is by faith. Faith in divine Truth makes that Truth practical and powerful in our lives. Faith in the righteousness of Christ enables us to walk uprightly in this evil world, so that Satan cannot condemn us before men, and God will not disapprove of us nor be ashamed of us. The Truth is so essential, that it is also the sixth piece of the armor, expressed by a different figure, the Sword of the Spirit. To take in the Word of God with all our heart is to have the loins girt with Truth. Some know and admit the Truth. It is in their heads.

But it is of no practical profit to them, because they do not believe it and they do not rest upon it. It is as we believe the Word of God. If we eat all the Truth; if we believe all the Word of the Lord; if we yield to all its instructions, prohibitions, and admonitions; then we will grow into all the fullness of God. The Bible route seems narrow, because it is hard on the flesh and is bitterly opposed by Satan. But, the Word, Paul says, 1Th 2:13 For this cause also thank we God without ceasing, because, when ye **received the word of God** which ye heard of us, ye received it not as the word of men, but as it is in truth, the word of God, which **effectually worketh** also in you that believe. Twice the apostle Paul counsels us to have on the whole armor of God. It is composed of seven irresistible parts. These are all spiritual weapons, or weapons of the Spirit. These only are adequate against the enemy; and these are entirely sufficient. Only with these divine weapons can saints have victory over darkness and the cunning tricks of Satan. We need no other equipment. Eph 6:15 And your feet shod with the **preparation** of the gospel of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked.

17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; Having on the breastplate of righteousness; that breastplate is the righteousness of the Lord Jesus Christ. This is the breastplate that is over the heart. It speaks of having that love for Christ; a preeminent love for Jesus. This is what will carry us through. The word preparation means readiness. **Preparation** of the gospel of peace. It is as we are ready to give forth the gospel to those whom the Lord brings into contact with us. Being filled with the Holy Spirit is the necessary preparation of readiness that we need. It does not say shod with the gospel of peace. It says with the preparation of the gospel of peace. This means we have to put in the time of preparation. We have to prepare for this message. It does not come magically all at once. It must be prepared that we might actually walk in it and it is going to take some time of preparation. Eph 6:16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. We can compare this with Ro 10:17 So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God.

If we are going to have faith we must put in the time in God's word. Notice these are darts and they are shot from afar and if people succumb to that then he can get closer in. We want to be those that are able to quench the fiery darts. Eph 6:17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: The helmet of salvation guards our head. We can compare this with 2Co 10: 5 Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ; Scripture guards our minds and our thoughts and reasonings. The devil can inject such thoughts into our minds. The helmet of salvation is the helmet of deliverance knowing that God is going to deliver us. It means putting our confidence in His deliverance rather than in men. And the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: We have to know what that sword is. When Jesus went against the devil, He quoted very specific scripture. That is why we need to know the word of God. When Satan comes against us, we need to know the Word. It is the sword of the Spirit that is our offensive weapon.

Eph 6:18 **Praying** always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and **watching** thereunto with all perseverance and **supplication** for all saints; The prayer meeting is the backbone of any meeting. Prayer is just as much a weapon or as part of the armor as all of the other 6 that we have mentioned. Then Paul says, watching thereunto. The word watching means sleepless or to keep awake and the reason we do that is to pray. Satan's chief strategy during the evil day is to lull believers asleep. Then watching thereunto with perseverance (this means not just one time and we forget it, we persevere) and supplication (this word means to beg as binding oneself; it means that we are completely cast upon the Lord Himself) for all saints. We are not in this armor just for ourselves but it is for all saints. Prayer is the engine that powers the entire Armor of God. We do not put on God's armor merely to survive our own private battles; we wear it to stand guard and intercede for the entire body of Christ. Spiritual warfare is not a solo sport. A Roman soldier never fought alone; soldiers stood shoulder-to-shoulder. Their large shields overlapped to form an unbroken wall of defense. When Paul tells us to offer supplication for all saints, he reminds us that our spiritual health and prayers directly impact our brothers and sisters in Christ. Eph 6:19 And for me, that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel. We leave one battle with ammunition for the next. Paul asked for prayer. It is that Paul's gospel would go forth.

Eph 6:21 But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things: Paul realized the need of communication with others. It is one thing to preach the message and think that you are all alone. We need the interaction and the interest of other people. It is good to know that other people are prospering and preaching this message too. We are all connected together. We are all one body in it together battling against the same enemy. Eph 6:23 Peace be to the brethren, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. These two love and faith go hand in hand. Eph 6:24 Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. Amen. Do you know what Paul is getting at here in this verse? Preeminent love. When Jesus wrote that letter there in Rev 2. Thou hast left thy first love. Paul in his last exhortation to those Ephesian saints, he said, Grace be with all them that love our Lord Jesus Christ in sincerity. That is the preeminent love that we must have for Jesus and the Father if we are going to succeed. When Paul wrote his final blessing to the Ephesian believers, he was leaving them with a vital warning and key to survival: Grace belongs to those who love Jesus in **sincerity**.

Decades later, when Jesus evaluated that exact same church in Revelation 2, they had kept their doctrine pure and worked hard, but they had lost that very thing, their preeminent, **sincere** first love. One of the meanings of sincerity is clear to the light or tested by the light. In the Middle Eastern marketplace, when a shopper went to buy fine pottery or silk, dishonest merchants would hide cracks in the clay with dark wax, or hide flaws in fabric by keeping their shops dimly lit. A clever buyer would take the pottery out of the dark shop, hold it high above their head, and turn it directly into the full glare of the midday sun. In spiritual warfare, the devil operates entirely in darkness, lies, and shadows. His wiles depend on finding hidden cracks in a believer's heart; cracks like pride, secret bitterness, double-mindedness, or self-will covered over with religious wax. When we stand before God clear to the light, the enemy has no hidden crack in us that he can exploit. Truth isn't just something we speak; it is what we are under the light. That is why Paul prays grace upon those who love Jesus in sincerity. Their love has been held up to the blazing light of God's holiness, and it has been found real, pure, and uncracked.

The End of the Book of Ephesians.