

# Online Grace Bible School

With  
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**Online Grace Bible School  
Phase 3  
Ephesians - A Glorious Church**

**1) The Amazing Plan God Has For Us – Ephesians 1:1-6**

**1:1-3.** Living from the riches of God's grace. The unsaved is concerned with earthly riches because that's where he lives. Our interest is with heavenly riches because we are seated in heavenly places. Every Christian has a human address and a divine address. Our earthly address could be in prison, a Third World country, or a modern city. But the spiritual address of all Christians is *"in the heavenly places in Christ"*.

The work of our salvation involves the three Persons of the Trinity:

The Father *planned* it – **1:4-6**. The Son *purchased* it – **1:7-12**. The Spirit *applies* it – **1:13-14**.

Note that each section ends with: *"to the praise of the glory of His grace"* or something similar.

**The Father Planned Our Salvation From Eternity...**

- ✓ **1:3.** We have been blessed with every spiritual blessing, beginning with His choosing us and ending with being filled with all the fullness of God (**3:19**).
- ✓ All that we have as believers comes through Him who is in the heavenly places. Christ is seated there in His glorified body (**1:20**). By the new birth we are joined to Him, sharing in His life. What is true of Him is true of us spiritually. As He is, so are we in this world.
- ✓ **1:4&5.** Chosen and predestined. Election refers to people; predestination to purposes. To predestine means to determine beforehand. Before the foundation of the world, God's plan and purpose was to have a people who would be redeemed and become His sons.
- ✓ We don't get into God's family by adoption but by regeneration. At regeneration we receive the *nature* of children of God. Adoption is the granting of God's children the *status* of sons.
- ✓ We are chosen in Him before the foundation of the world to be *"holy and without blame before Him in love"*. Holy = set apart. Blameless = not sinless, but handling our sin the correct way. In Christ we are blameless. In love = True holiness is characterised by love. The greatest evidence of redemption in a person is that all hostility, fear and enmity towards God is removed and replaced with love. We are now lovers of God, and we delight in Him.
- ✓ **1:6** – We are "accepted" in the Beloved. This is the same word as in Lk.1:28. *"And having come in, the angel said to her, "Rejoice, highly favored one, the Lord is with you; blessed are you among women!"* He has highly favoured us.
- ✓ Not only as He placed us in Him, but He has come into us. As He entered Mary physically, so He has entered us spiritually. Our bodies have become the temple of the Holy Spirit.
- ✓ *The beloved*, i.e. His only begotten Son. This is God's eternal Son, whom He loved from eternity. There never was a beginning for the Father's love for the Son. He has always enjoyed the whole of the Father's love (Matt.3:17; Matt.17:5). The Son was in the bosom of the Father eternally. This One came into the world to save us, Rom.8:32.
- ✓ We are now God's beloved (John 17:23; Col.3:12; 2 Thes.2:13).
- ✓ God has sent forth the Spirit of His Son into our hearts? Why? So that we would feel like Jesus in the presence of the Father (see Gal.4:4-6).

**Summary:** Drink all of the riches of God's grace. The early church majored on majors. This is obvious when we read the epistles of the Paul. The great doctrines we have looked at here were their majors. Although Paul addressed specific issues within certain churches, the majority of his time was spent teaching and reminding believers of the eternal love that God has for them through Christ, and their identity in Him. He understood that right believing produces right living (see Galatians 6:14; 1 Corinthians 2:2).

**2) The Amazing Price Jesus Paid For Us - Ephesians 1:7-12**

- ✓ **1:7&8.** Redemption involves the payment of a price to buy someone out from slavery. (1 Pet.1:18&19; Rev.1:5; Matt.20:28).
- ✓ The Bible teaches the doctrine of 'penal substitution'. Jesus' death was 'penal' = He paid the *penalty* for sins which the justice of God demanded; it was a 'substitution' = He died for us.
- ✓ This is what the apostles taught. But it also has its critics within the Church. They argue that it depicts God as angry and vindictive, and the Cross as a form of 'cosmic child abuse'.
- ✓ These critics contend that the death of Christ had no God-ward benefit. Sin, they say, is not an offence against the holiness of God demanding a death penalty. In fact, it does nothing to God, only to us. The wages of sin is no more than the law of reaping and sowing.
- ✓ We never have to choose between whether the purpose of the death of Christ was God-ward or man-ward. It was both. But it is vital to understand that Christ first died to meet the demands of the law in respect of sin, so that God could legally and righteously reconcile us to Himself. Then the redeemed are made recipients of the many blessings of the gospel.

**Understanding The Cross From The Backdrop Of The Old Testament**

- ✓ Sin is opposition to God's will as expressed in His law (Gen.3:1-6; Rom.4:15; 1 Jn.3:4).
- ✓ The law is a transcript of God's nature. Violation of the law is an assault upon the Lawgiver.
- ✓ God hates sin with His whole being, and has to respond to it in judgment. God's judgment upon sin is death, (Gen.2:17; Rom.6:23). This is primarily separation from God, (Isa.59:2).
- ✓ So, the judgment of God against sin is not just consequential; it is punitive also.
- ✓ This is clearly seen in many instances. For example, in the case of the Flood (Gen.6:7), the judgment of Sodom (Gen.18:20&21), etc., etc. See also Rom.1:18,19&32.
- ✓ More examples: (Num.15:31; 1 Chron.10:13; Psa.11:6; Psa.75:8). Notice in the last two references that the wrath of God is referred to as His 'cup'. And Jesus spoke of His death as drinking the cup that the Father had given Him, (Matt.20:22-23; Lk.22:42).
- ✓ Punishment of sin vindicates the righteousness of God. God by no means clears the guilty, (Ex.34:7; Psa.119:137; Psa.5:4-5; Nah.1:2).
- ✓ When sin entered Eden and Adam and Eve tried to cover themselves with fig leaves, God removed these and covered them with the skins of a slain animal, (Heb.9:22). The wages of sin is death, i.e. sin demands the forfeiture of life. But God accepts a substitute.
- ✓ In Egypt, as God's judgment passed over the land, the nation of Israel was spared because of the blood of the Passover Lamb which was applied to their homes. The 5 Levitical sacrifices.

**The Cross Fulfills The Righteousness Of God**

- ✓ It is impossible for the blood of bulls and goats to take away sins, (Heb.10:4). Only Jesus could take away the sins of the world, (Jn.1:29).
- ✓ Is it conceivable that God would allow the terrible suffering of His Beloved on the Cross if it was not a necessary payment for sin? (Matt.26:39; Gal.3:21)
- ✓ Sin is so awful that the penal substitution of Jesus is its only solution, (Isa.53:5&6).
- ✓ Forgiveness of sin through the death of Christ is so thorough that it results in a complete restoration between us and God. He remembers our sins against us no more. There is no condemnation, i.e. expectation of judgment. We are sons of God and objects of His immeasurable grace and favour. We are righteous, and blessed with every spiritual blessing.
- ✓ If the death of Jesus Christ was not a judgment for our sins, then there is no judgment awaiting those who are still unrepentant and unbelieving, (see Jn.8:24; 3:36).
- ✓ The heart of the gospel is this: I owed a debt I could not pay; He paid a debt He did not owe (2 Cor.5:21). This and this alone is the amazing grace of the gospel!

### 3) The Spirit's Amazing Work In Us – Ephesians 1:13-23

- ✓ **1:13&14.** In these verses we see the two major instruments God uses in our salvation and growth – the Word and the Spirit. The two are always found together in Scripture. After we believed God's Word we were sealed with the Spirit.
- ✓ One purpose of sealing is as identification, authentication, or a mark of ownership. He has marked us out as His own. When a person is sealed they know about it, Rom.8:16.
- ✓ Another purpose is security, e.g. the tomb of Jesus was sealed. This is brought out in the term "guarantee", meaning a down payment of a purchased possession, given in advance as a security for the remainder. It is a guarantee that there is much more to come, (2 Cor.1:21-22). The firstfruits of a harvest were prepared and eaten as a foretaste of what was to come.
- ✓ **1:15-16.** Paul is sure that they are Christians because of two things that are operating in their lives – faith and love (v.15). Salvation starts with faith and finds its maturity in love.
- ✓ **1:17&18a.** The Old Testament saints prayed to the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob. Not so in the new covenant. Paul prays to the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, **1:3; 3:14.**
- ✓ What do you pray for the person who has everything (1:1-14)? Paul prays that they will be enlightened by the Holy Spirit to *know* what they have in Christ (1 Cor.2:12). He prays, in particular, that they will know three things:
- ✓ **1) The Wonder Of The Hope That Lies Ahead (1:18b).** Hope = the certain expectation of good. Hope does not disappoint. We are not disappointed with the present because of the future. Hope enables us to see things in perspective, Rom.8:18. We need to put on the helmet of the hope of salvation. Paul has one particular kind of spiritual attack in view. It is the temptation to think that our situation is hopeless. We need to put on the helmet of salvation. (e.g. Psa.73:1-5, 12-14, 16-18, 23-24; Gal.6:9). Our hope includes: \*We will be clothed in immortality. \*We will have a resurrected body. We will participate in Christ's ultimate triumph, Jn.17:24. \*We will witness the final and complete overthrow of evil. \*We will even take part in it. \*We will judge angels and administer a new world. \*We will see God and be changed into His likeness, 1 Jn.3:2.
- ✓ **2) The Wonder Of What We Have Now (1:18c).** See **1:11&13.** The *riches* of His grace, **1:18; 2:4,7; 3:8.** Paul was driven across continents to preach the unsearchable riches of God's grace. It is like looking through a telescope to measure the vastness of the universe. We are forever discovering more. Moses, on Mount Nebo, could see but not go into the Promised Land. You will never experience inheritance under law.
- ✓ **3) The Wonder Of The Power Resident Within (1:19-21).** He does not pray that the Ephesians may receive power but that they may discover the power they have. Under the old covenant God spoke of the power of creation. Under the new covenant it is the power of the resurrection. Why? Because sin undid what God did in creation; but the resurrection undoes what sin does...and more! It is the destruction of sin and the undoing of death! Satan has power over man in Adam; but not in Christ. The uniqueness of this power is demonstrated in this: When Satan and man had done all in their power to kill and bury Jesus; God raised Him from the dead and set Him at His own right hand.
- ✓ Conclusion: Are you deficient or sufficient for the totality of life?

**4) The Mystery Of The Church – Ephesians 2:1-16**

- ✓ **1:9&10.** We live in a divided world, a fragmented universe.
- ✓ This is typified by the incredible gulf between Jews and Gentiles.
- ✓ The mystery is that God will gather together in one all things under the headship of Christ.
- ✓ The phrase “gather together” literally means to re-unite. Not just gather together, but gather together *again*. Originally all things were under Him in creation, Col.1:15-19.
  
- ✓ **2:1-3.** The reason there has been no lasting peace among people and nations is that there is a spiritual history underlying all world history - the fall. First the vertical has to be fixed, before the horizontal. It begins with reconciliation to God. We were dead. Not sick, but dead. We didn't need counseling, but life.
- ✓ Death and life can only be understood in terms of relationship with God. Death is disconnectedness from God, (Gen.2:17). True life is to be in relationship with Him, (Jn.17:3).
- ✓ We walked according to the course of this world. We joined in the rebellion against God.
- ✓ “*Children of wrath.*” We can never understand the love of God, or grace, or the cross, until we understand His wrath, (Jn.3:18,36; 2 Thess.1:8&9; Eph.5:6).
  
- ✓ **2:4-6.** “*But God...*” Jesus came to fix the vertical by taking the just punishment for sin, i.e. death. And in so doing He smashed all horizontal barriers to unite all things in Himself.
- ✓ When Jesus died He was as dead as any man in a casket has been. Then He was raised again.
- ✓ He didn't return to life to continue as before. He came back as the Head of a new creation.
- ✓ He made a way out of Adam and created a new man. Through identification, death and resurrection we are joined to Him. We are now seated with Him in the heavenly places (Eph.1:22&23).
  
- ✓ **2:8-10.** By grace we are saved. Grace is the unmerited favour of God. “*Not of works...*” It is always in connection with works that we boast, (Rom.3:27; Phil.3:3-9; Lk.18:9).
- ✓ We receive God's grace through faith.
- ✓ We are His workmanship, Greek *poiema* = a work of art. Salvation is not the end but the beginning. We are a work in progress, (2 Cor.3:18; Rom.8:29). The Church is His *redemptive* poem. If we are His workmanship then God is the workman. This is grace!
  
- ✓ **2:11-16.** This prepares us to understand how God will reunite all things in Christ. As Jesus removed the vertical barrier, so in the same way He removes the horizontal barriers – by grace. Any opportunity for works-based boasting has to be eliminated.
- ✓ The grace of God that split the veil also demolishes the walls of separation. The differences that became walls and caused enmity have been abolished. E.g. Cornelius. Acts 15:9,11. The distinctions contained in the law are destroyed and there is now one way for all, (Gal.3:28).
- ✓ He “*...made both one...*” (2:14,15,16,18&19). The Church is a new creation. Not a coalition of two existing parties but the creation of something altogether new. The old is done away with, (Gal.6:15). The Gentile doesn't have to become a Jew, and the Jew doesn't have to become a Gentile. Both enter the new man.
- ✓ Compare **2:7** with **3:9&10**. The mystery was hidden; yet it was always there. It was not an afterthought. History was not out of God's control. God never had to revise His plan.
- ✓ It was hidden in the old covenant era, and even amongst angels, (1 Tim.3:16; 1 Pet.1:12; Luke 15:10. 1 Cor.4:9; 11:10).
- ✓ There is nothing beyond the Church. She is the supreme manifestation of God's wisdom. He saved the best until last. He will present us as an exhibit of His glory throughout eternity.
- ✓

**5) For This Cause... Ephesians 2:19-3:13**

- ✓ **1:9&10.** *"In the fullness of times"*, i.e. beginning at the first coming of Christ (Gal.4:4; Heb.1:2; 1 Cor.10:11) God will gather together in one all things under the headship of Christ.
- ✓ **2:10.** His workmanship, *poiema*, i.e. work of art. The world is God's *creative* poem. The Church is His *redemptive* poem. A *new* creation. God is the workman. Grace! We are a work in progress, (2 Cor.3:18; Rom.8:29). God begun the work, He will perfect it.
  
- ✓ **3:1.** *"For this cause..."* Paul was a prisoner and at the time of writing had probably been a prisoner for 5 years. The mystery is a good cause to live for, die for and go to prison for.
- ✓ **3:4.** It is the mystery of Christ. Read through the epistles of Paul and underline every mention of Christ. He was a Christ-intoxicated man! Christianity is Christ.
- ✓ God has purposed that through the Church all things will be reconciled. What about now? Is there a present tense enjoyment of this great final purpose of God? Yes, we are...
  
- ✓ **1) Fellow Citizens With The Saints (2:19)**
- ✓ We are citizens of the City of God, (Phil.3:20).
- ✓ By the new birth we changed allegiance and entered the Kingdom, (Col.1:13).
- ✓ These are our fellow-citizens! (Heb.12:22-24).
- ✓ Citizens unite in their allegiance to the King. We fight the good fight of faith.
  
- ✓ **2) Members Of The Household Of God (2:19)**
- ✓ Citizenship is a general relationship; household is a personal relationship. *"Predestined unto adoption as sons."*
- ✓ Spiritual birth. Physical descent does not advantage nor disadvantage you, spiritually.
- ✓ Only when we know our position can we enjoy our privileges.
  
- ✓ **3) A Holy Temple For God (2:21)**
- ✓ The old covenant temple, where God took up residence, has been replaced by the Church.
- ✓ Built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets. There is only one foundation, (Gal.1:8)
- ✓ Jesus Christ is the cornerstone (Isa.28:16) set into the foundations and giving alignment to the entire house. If it was removed all the building would collapse into rubble.
- ✓ *"Being fitted together."* This phrase is not used anywhere else. It was invented by Paul. It means harmoniously fitted together.
- ✓ Every stone is different in size and shape. We have been carefully chosen for the place we will occupy, and the part we will play.
- ✓ It is cultish when the Church seeks to force conformity. Cloning, sameness, conformity, mass-production are all foreign to God and His purpose. Don't copy others; discover your uniqueness.
- ✓ No tool was heard in the temple. All prepared away from it. It is God's work! Not done by planning or church growth conferences.

## 6) Experiencing Christ – Ephesians 3:14-21

**3:14-21.** The cause for which Paul gave His life, He also prays for, i.e. the Church. Paul prayed:

- ✓ **1) “That He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory, to be strengthened with might through His Spirit in the inner man” (Eph.3:16)**
- ✓ We have an inner man as well as an outer man. The inner man is the spiritual part of us, and the outer man the material part. The world concentrates on the outer man.
- ✓ The outer man is breaking down. But the inner man is being renewed, (2 Cor.4:16).
- ✓ Paul doesn’t pray for deliverance from problems, but the building up of the inner man.
- ✓ The Holy Spirit does this in answer to prayer, (Jude 20; Lk.18:1).
- ✓ This is *according* to His riches, *not out of His* riches. A proportion, not a portion.
  
- ✓ **2) “That Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith” (Eph.3:17a)**
- ✓ Christ dwells in the spirit of every believer, but not necessarily in the heart (see Jn.14:23).
- ✓ Don’t be cheated out of a relationship with Jesus.
- ✓ He will dwell in our hearts by faith – don’t let it become a work.
  
- ✓ **3) “That you, being rooted and grounded in love” (Eph.3:17b)**
- ✓ Is this our love, or God’s love? Whenever the Bible refers to the *root* of love it is a reference to God’s love for us. When it refers to the *fruit* of love it is our love flowing from the root.
- ✓ “*Grounded*”. A wise master builder pays great attention to foundations. He will take time to lay deep foundations.
- ✓ “*Rooted*”. This draws attention to the content of the soil; grounded refers to the depth of our foundation.
- ✓ Show me a person who is lacking in love to God and others and I’ll show you a person who lacks a revelation of God’s love towards him. We love, because He first loved us.
  
- ✓ **4) “May be able to comprehend with all the saints what is the width and length and depth and height — to know the love of Christ which passes knowledge” (Eph.3:18&19a)**
- ✓ When you know that you are rooted and grounded in His love you can receive more and more. Whoever has, to him more will be given.
- ✓ “*Comprehend*.” This is revelation knowledge, (Phil.1:9-10). This shows us the ocean of God’s love.
- ✓ “*With all the saints*”. It’s going to take all the saints to understand God’s love. It passes knowledge. It can only be known in its fullness in the outworking of relationships.
- ✓ Width – every tribe, nation...(Rev.5:9,11; 7:9). Length – from eternity to eternity. Depth – the depth that Jesus came down to, (Phil.2:5-11). Height – united with Him and seated with Him in heavenly places. The final drama, (Jn.17:24).
- ✓ But then there is the experiential...this is beyond knowledge. You can’t analyse and dissect a fragrance. Still less can you do that to God’s love.
- ✓ If knowledge doesn’t bring us to this, it will just puff up.
  
- ✓ **5) “That you may be filled with all the fullness of God” (Eph.3:19b)**
- ✓ Filled with the fullness of God, (Col.1:19; Col.2:9; John.1:14&16).
- ✓ We are predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ.
- ✓ To be filled with the fullness of God might seem an impossible thing to ask for, thus **3:20&21**. All things are possible to Him!

**7) Diverse, But Not Divided – Ephesians 4:1-10**

**4:1.** Walk worthy. The word “worthy” means:

- ✓ ‘Becoming’ or what is appropriate, as in dress, (Phil.1:27; Tit.2:10).
- ✓ The idea of equal weight. When you put two things of equal weight in opposite pans of a set of scales there is perfect balance. Here we are exhorted to give equal weight in our lives to doctrine and practice. Paul does not just preach doctrine, but exhorts us to apply the truth to daily living.

**4:2&3.** Having stated the mystery of Christ re-uniting all things (1:9-10; 2:11-13), the first thing we are urged to do is to keep that unity in the bond of peace. Our unity is based on 7 spiritual truths:

- ✓ **One Body.** Eph.1:22&23; 2:15&16. This unity expresses itself outwardly in many ways, but it is internal, organic by nature. Life begins with a cell that reproduces. The Church is an organic growth from one original cell. There is diversity in this unity.
- ✓ **One Spirit.** You and I have a human spirit. Where is it? The human spirit cannot be localized in any one organ or limb or gland. In a sense it is present in all the members of the body. So too with the Spirit of God. (Rom.8:9; 1 Cor.12:13).
- ✓ **One Hope.** There is a collective glorious destiny for the Church.
- ✓ **One Lord.** Christianity is Christ. He is Lord. Christians gather around His Lordship. He is indivisible. Divisions arise when we do not make Him the focus.
- ✓ **One Faith.** This is justifying faith. There is only one faith, i.e. in Christ as our righteousness.
- ✓ **One Baptism.** i.e. We are baptized into Christ. We are all incorporated into Christ.
- ✓ **One God.** God is not the Father of all mankind, but of all those who are in Christ.

Our unity is a reality. **4:7.** “But...” Unity is not conformity. We can have diversity without division. We do not lose our individuality. Yet no two Christians are alike. Each one has a distinct new creation identity. This uniqueness is made manifest by the special gifts for service that we each possess. We determine the way God wants us to serve by discovering our gifts.

- ✓ **4:8-10.** See Psa.68:18. God cannot ascend any higher than He is. The only way God could ascend is first to descend. Jesus is God. But He first descended into the lower parts of the earth. This phrase just means the earth, or the womb of a mother, (Phil.2:5-8; Psa.139:15; Jn.3:13). Jesus didn’t descend into hell, but to earth to save us.
- ✓ Then He returned to heaven triumphant, giving gifts to His people. Just as the physical members of the body cannot choose their parts or locations, so too God appoints who and where and as He sees fit.
- ✓ This represents the ‘unity in diversity’ which is in the Body of Christ, (Rom.12:4&5).
- ✓ The point is that everyone has received a gift. Each part of a body has a distinct, vital role to play, and is interdependent upon the other members of the body. Harmony is essential for the successful function of the body. All members must work together in one accord.

If all the parts were the same members, where would be the body? God has arranged the different parts of the body to function as one living, organic whole. There are two dangers:

- 1) Those in authority are afraid of diversity and try to clone everything.
- 2) People emphasize their differences to the point of separation.

**8) Equipping The Saints – Ephesians 4:11-16**

**4:11&12.** The word “*equipping*” is a translation of the Greek word *katartismos*. The picture is of a thing we want to use but something has to be done to it first. It carries the idea of:

- ✓ To repair (Matt.4:21). The ministry of God’s Word puts us back together again.
- ✓ To prepare (Heb.13:20&21). The Church is not a hospital ship; it is an army with a mission.

**4:13.** We are on a journey, until every member of the Body comes to its proper place in unity, maturity and intimacy. The five-fold ministries play a vital part in this process. God’s 3-fold purpose:

- ✓ **1) Unity.** “...*the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God...*” Our unity is a fact. All that remains is the demonstration or outworking of it, **(4:2&3)**. I must understand the truth about my identity, i.e. that I am a member of a body.
- ✓ If I operate as an individual detached from the body, I will fragment what God has united.
- ✓ Our unity is in Him; it is organic. There is nothing that will automatically cause us to experience unity more than to focus on Jesus. What is Christianity? *It is Christ*. Nothing else. Christian community is experienced through connection with Him, Col.3:16.
- ✓ **2) Maturity.** “...*to a perfect man*” i.e. “into a full-grown, fully developed new man”.
- ✓ The Church must relate to the Head, with each member playing its part.
- ✓ **4:14.** “*That we should be no longer children...*” Children are characterized by 3 things:
  1. Infantility in understanding. (1 Cor.14:20).
  2. Instability in behavior. “*Tossed to and fro*” i.e. feelings-based.
  3. Infiltration of false teaching. Children are easily convinced and deceived. Carried about with every wind of doctrine. “*Every wind*” – coming from all directions. This is due to ignorance. No foundation. No reference point. Therefore, no ability to test things.
- ✓ Warnings about false teachers are given extensive mention in New Testament. Missionaries have more trouble with false teachings than with unbelief. If Christians are not firmly established in the truth they will be a target for cults and false teachings. Cults draw most of their membership from weak and immature Christians. They “*lie in wait*”. This is the same word used for Eve/the fall, (2 Cor.11:3), and Jesus’ tempters, (Lk.20:23).
- ✓ **4:15.** We go from being “*no longer children*” to “*growing up into Him in all things*” unto “a perfect man” by speaking the truth in love.
- ✓ **3) Conformity.** “...*to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ...*” That which is filled with or by Christ, (Eph.1:23). We are predestined to be conformed to the image of Christ, in whom dwells all the fullness of the Godhead. Of His fullness we have received.
- ✓ This is Christian growth - developing into the full measure of the stature of Christ. Jesus lived by an indwelling Father. Now, what God the Father was to Jesus Christ, Jesus Christ is to you and to me. Filled with the fullness of God is a result of union with Christ.
- ✓ **4:16.** The body builds itself up in love. Beware of the counterfeit! When we do not experience life we will substitute it with activity. We can be full of works, but void of life. Life should be our concern. The Head initiates life!

**9) From Grave Clothes To Grace Clothes – Ephesians 4:17-32**

**4:17.** The word “*worthy*” (4:1) means ‘becoming’ or what is appropriate, as in dress (Phil.1:27).

- ✓ When a beggar inherits a fortune he puts off his old rags. Lazarus was raised from the dead, but still bound with the grave clothes. They represented the realm of death from which he had come. But now he was alive and these were not appropriate for him.
- ✓ “From grave clothes to grace clothes.” We put off the old way of life in Adam and put on the new life in Christ.
- ✓ **4:25-32.** Examples - “lying”, “anger”, “stealing”, “corrupt language”, “bitterness”, “slander”

**How do we put off these grave clothes? Incorrect ways:**

- ✓ Crisis experience.
- ✓ Cast out the demon.
- ✓ Afflict yourself.
- ✓ “Let go and let God.”
- ✓ Moralizing.
  
- ✓ **4:17-20.** “*But you have not so learned Christ...*”
- ✓ **4:22-24.** What does it mean to put off the old and put on the new?
- ✓ We have put off the old man, i.e. the unregenerate person we once were in Adam.
- ✓ The old nature is what we were by birth, (Rom.6:6). This has been done away with at the new birth.
- ✓ Yet, here in Eph.4:22 we are exhorted to put off the “*conduct*” that corresponds to the old man. This is a reference to the behavior, habits, lifestyle, (Heb.12:1; Jas.1:21; 1 Pet.2:1).
- ✓ Put off the grave clothes; but don’t remain naked. Put on the grace clothes of the new man.
- ✓ The exhortation to put on the new man is to be who we are. This is the New Testament way of holiness. Believe who you are and live accordingly.

Two important truths that distinguish the Christian life from legalism and morality:

- 1) We have been given something. This new man, this new garment is not something we manufacture. We have been given a life; His life! He that has the Son has the life.
- 2) The way Christians are to deal with the old is to focus on the new: “*I say then: Walk in the Spirit, and you shall not fulfill the lust of the flesh*” (Gal.5:16). “*Put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make no provision for the flesh, to fulfill its lusts*” (Rom.13:14). Examples:
  - ✓ **4:26.** Stop lying by speaking the truth with every one
  - ✓ **4:28.** Stop stealing by learning to give.
  - ✓ **4:29.** Let no corrupt word proceed out of your mouth by using your tongue to edify people
  - ✓ **4:31&32.** Put away bitterness, wrath, anger, clamor, evil speaking & malice by being kind, tender-hearted, etc.
  - ✓ Don’t let sin reign in your body, by yielding your members as instruments of righteousness unto holiness.
  - ✓ Don’t fight the darkness; turn on the light!
  - ✓ Don’t focus on overcoming evil; do good!
  - ✓ Don’t fight Satan; love and fellowship with God! “*Submit to God. Resist the devil and he will flee from you.*”
  - ✓ Don’t concentrate on putting off the old; put on the new – that’s the secret!

**10) Remember Who You Are – Ephesians 5:1-16**

**5:1&2.** Recap: The word ‘worthy’ = contains the idea of equal weight or balancing. When you put two things of equal weight in opposite pans of a set of scales there is perfect balance. Give equal weight in our lives to doctrine and practice. Begin by asking “who am I?” Then live accordingly. This is “learning Christ” as opposed to man-made ways to holiness. Remember who you are.

If you don’t know who you are, you can’t be that person he was. Do you know who you are?

- ✓ **5:1.** We are His “*dear children*”, i.e. beloved (*agapatos*). This is the same word God used in Matt.3:17; 17:5. Do you know how dear you are to God? (John 17:23; Col.3:12).
- ✓ **5: 2.** Also, Jesus gave Himself as a sweet-smelling sacrifice to God for us.
- ✓ We do not understand God’s love if we leave out the real meaning of the Cross (1 Jn.4:10).

So, remember who you are! But what if we forget?

- ✓ **v.3-5.** “*But*” contrasts **5:1&2**. Remember, we have been saved for a purpose, i.e. that we should be holy and without blame before Him in love. There are certain things which we as Christians must never do because they are totally incompatible with what it means to be a Christian. Unbecoming for saints! Something that doesn’t fit is uncomfortable.
- ✓ Example: Fornication and covetousness are both the sin of taking what does not belong to us, (Heb.13:4). The problem behind covetousness is the lie of what money can do for us; which leads us to trust in it instead of in God. Paul goes on, in verse 5, to define covetousness as idolatry!
- ✓ “*Filthiness*” “*foolish talking*” “*coarse jesting*”. This does not refer to all humour or jesting, but that which is inappropriate for a Christian.
- ✓ **5:5-7.** Those whose hearts are filled with these things forfeit the kingdom of God.
- ✓ If we are saved by grace, i.e. not by our works, how can we be lost? But then, how do we understand these verses, and other conditional passages?
- ✓ Salvation is a gift based on the work of Christ.
- ✓ If we are sons, then we are heirs, i.e. firstborn sons. Once a son, always a son; once a firstborn son, not necessarily always a firstborn son. Examples: Esau and Reuben were both firstborn sons who forfeited their birthright.
- ✓ Conditional passages relate to this, Gal.5:21; 1 Cor.6:9-10.
- ✓ To practice these things is different to falling into these things. It means to delight in them to the extent that these very things become our habitat. “*Such were some of you...*” (1 Cor.6:11).
- ✓ Examples of the danger of losing our crown or reward: 1 Cor.5:1-5; 1 Cor.3:10-15; 1 Cor.9:24-27; 1 Cor.10:1-13; Rev. 3:11; Rev.3:5; Rev.3:21; Rev.2:10.
- ✓ **5:7-8.** God’s way of sanctification is clearly seen again. First, we need to know who we are; then exhorted to walk worthy of our calling in Christ. You were darkness, but no more! You are children of light, so walk as children of light.

**11) A Great Mystery - Eph.5:22-32**

- ✓ We must know the doctrine of marriage before we talk about practicalities.
- ✓ To understand marriage we must understand the relationship between Christ & the Church.
- ✓ **5:31&32.** It is a great mystery, i.e. a truth that was hidden but has now been revealed. Where did God hide it? In Adam and Eve.
- ✓ The main purpose of marriage is revealed here. It is to meet the need of loneliness. It is a covenant of companionship, (Prov.2:17; Mal.2:14). “You will never be lonely as long as I live.”
- ✓ Problem: When God created man on the 6th day, He had finished His creation. But Eve had not been created
- ✓ She already existed – in Adam.
- ✓ God put Adam to sleep, opened his side, extracted a rib and created the woman.
- ✓ This is a great mystery. Eve was in Adam as long as Adam lived.
- ✓ **Eph.1:4.** In the mind and eternal purpose of God we have always been in Christ.
- ✓ Adam was incomplete without Eve. Thus, the Church is, “the fullness of Christ”, **Eph.1:23.**
- ✓ She is the glory of man, (1 Cor.11:7-9). The Church is the exhibited glory of Christ.
- ✓ In order to bring forth Eve, who was in Adam, an operation was performed on the side of Adam. His flesh was opened and a rib extracted, and Eve was built from this, (Gen.2:23).
- ✓ God performed an operation on the side of Jesus to bring forth the Church (Jn.19:34).
- ✓ Eve was made from the rib of Adam. She shared his life.
- ✓ Marriage is a shared life.
- ✓ So is the Christian life, (1 Cor.6:17).

Application**1) “Wives, Submit To Your Husbands”**

- ✓ Because the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ is the Head of the Church. See **Eph.1:22.**
- ✓ What does that mean? The head is the source and centre of the life of the body.
- ✓ There is only way the Church can function as the Church, i.e. in submission to Christ. A Church that acts independently of Christ is like a body without a head.
- ✓ No authority is inherent. I have authority as a pastor, husband, and father only because I am under authority. That authority is for the purpose of doing God’s will.
- ✓ Submission is something which is given, not taken.
- ✓ It is addressed to ‘wives’ not husbands. If it’s given it is submission; if it’s taken it is control.
- ✓ It is voluntary submission to godly leadership.
- ✓ A wife seeks to meet four special needs of her husband: respect; honour; appreciation; physical Intimacy.

**2) “Husbands, Love Your Wives”**

- ✓ Love seeks the highest good of the other person.
- ✓ This is A) A realistic love; B) A sacrificial love, (5:25); C) A purposeful love, (5:26-28); D) A practical love, (Ephesians 5:33).
- ✓ True love is not self-serving.
- ✓ So, walking in love the husband seeks to understand and meet four special needs of his wife. These are: security (physical, financial and emotional); commitment; affection; emotional intimacy (communication).

**12) Spiritual Warfare - Ephesians 6:10-18**

- ✓ Jesus faced Satan under the same conditions as Adam. Where Adam failed, Jesus prevailed.
- ✓ During His *life*, Jesus only defeated Satan for Himself.
- ✓ But through His *death* on the cross He overcame him for us, (1 Jn.3:8).
- ✓ The word 'destroy' here is a translation of the Greek word *luo*. This does not mean to make an end of but to loose, dissolve, sever, untie. We have been severed from Satan's control, (Acts 26:18; 1 Jn.5:18&19).

We are exhorted to:

- 1) Stand against the wiles of the devil. The only weapon Satan now has is deception. Every other influence that he brings to bear upon the children of God stems from this. He is the Father of lies and has seducing spirits, lying spirits. He deceives by: *questioning* God's Word, *denying* God's Word, sending false teachers, creating false doctrines, etc.
- 2) Be strong in the Lord. He causes us to triumph. He makes us more than conquerors. He gives us the victory. This is the victory- our faith. So, spiritual warfare is fighting the good fight of faith, (1 Tim.6:12).
- 3) Put on the whole armour of God. It is the armour of *God*. It is the means by which we can be connected to His grace and power.
- 4) Stand. Be clear about the nature of our warfare. We are not called to defeat Satan; He is defeated. We are facing an enemy who has no authority over us. We are just to stand in the finished work of Christ.

**The Armour Of God**

- ✓ **The Belt of Truth**. God's Word is truth. If Satan can get you to believe a lie he can control that part of your life. To combat the deception of the enemy God has given us the belt (tunic) of truth. "*Gird up the loins of your minds...*" The Christian's power is in the truth. The truth that sets us free. Regeneration is what *God* does. Renewing the mind is what *we* do.
- ✓ **The Breastplate of Righteousness**. Righteousness gives us standing before God. Rom.10:3. It is HIS righteousness. Righteousness comes by believing in Jesus. It is imputed by faith.
- ✓ **The Shoes of Grace**. Repeatedly we are told to **stand** against the enemy. But what enables us to stand? The shoes. **Rom.5:1&2**. Because of His righteousness we are at peace with Him. The consequence of this is that we have access into God's grace in which we stand.
- ✓ **The Shield of Faith**. The fiery darts come from all directions. The fiery trial of the enemy. Taking the shield of faith means putting the Lord between me and my circumstances.
- ✓ **The Helmet of the Hope of Salvation**. Focus on the big picture. The final victory has already been assured. Paul says that our present sufferings are not worthy to be compared with our future hope, (v 18). We are not discouraged by the present because of the future, (e.g. Psa.73:1-5, 12-14, 16-18, 23-24; 2 Cor.4:8-10; Gal.6:9; 1 Cor.15:32).
- ✓ **The Sword of the Spirit**. It is the sword of the Spirit because it is *His* answer to the attack of the enemy we are facing at any given time. For example, Jesus in the wilderness. Satan has power to sow thoughts into the mind, but he does not know how we are responding to those thoughts until we speak out. He is not omniscient. Only God is. When we speak out, then he knows how we are handling his attack. That is why we must do what Jesus did. There are many Christians who are sincere yet are defeated by verbalizing defeat, doubts, fears, etc. The secret to victory in any situation is to know what God says and then agree with Him. Don't agree with the enemy, or even with your circumstances, (Joel 3:10 & 2 Cor.12:9&10).