

Analysis of

EPHESIANS

"THE WEALTH AND WALK OF BELIEVERS"

EXPANDED ANALYSIS OF EPHESIANS
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Introduction

Authorship. The first verse of this letter identifies Paul the Apostle as the author (Eph. 1:1). This was not doubted by the Christian community until [destructive critics of the Bible](#) gained widespread influence in the nineteenth century.

Recipients. The NASB footnote in connection with the phrase “at Ephesus” reads “Three early mss do not contain *at Ephesus*.” [Constable](#) adds that these are “three early Alexandrian (Egyptian) manuscripts.” He continues,

This omission has led some scholars to conclude that Paul originally sent this epistle to several undesignated local churches, probably in the province of Asia, for the recipients to circulate among them. Advocates of this view have pointed to the absence of any reference to individuals, as evidence that Paul meant it to go to several churches rather than just to the Ephesian church. However, it seems best to regard the Ephesian church as the original audience for the following reasons: Most ancient manuscripts do contain the words “at Ephesus” or “in Ephesus.” Moreover, no manuscript contains the name of any other city, or even the Greek words translated “at” or “in.” Furthermore, all of Paul’s other inspired epistles mention the recipients.

I agree with Constable. For a nuanced understanding of this issue, read my footnote in Eph. 1:1 after the phrase, “who are at Ephesus.”

Background and Date: [Conservative Bible scholars](#) hold to the belief that Paul wrote four letters, called the “Prison Epistles” during his first imprisonment in Rome under house arrest (Acts 28:11-31). These four letters include Ephesians (Eph. 3:1; 4:1; 6:20), Colossians (Col. 4:3, 10, 18), Philemon (Phm. 1:1, 9, 23), and Philippians (Php. 1:7, 13-14, 17; 4:22). As indicated, each of these letters give evidence of Paul’s imprisoned status. For example, in Ephesians specifically, Paul described himself as “the *prisoner* of Jesus Christ for the sake of you Gentiles” (Eph. 3:1). He described himself as “the *prisoner* of the Lord” (Eph. 4:1). Moreover, he called himself an ambassador *with a chain* on behalf of the gospel (Good News) (Eph. 6:19-20) (*italics mine*). Conservative scholars place the date of the writing of the four prison letters between A.D. 60-62 or 63.

Purpose: Paul’s purpose in writing this letter was to describe to his readers the “Wealth” of spiritual blessings they had received in their position in Christ (Eph. 1-3). In the last three chapters he laid out for them the appropriate “Walk” (lifestyle) they ought to be observing in response to their wealth of blessings. This letter seems to be a general letter in the sense that Paul does not seem to be combating any particular heresy or false teaching. In contrast, Paul warned his Colossian readers against a sort of “gnostic” higher knowledge, philosophy, veneration of angels, and legalistic asceticism (Col. 2:8-23).

Paul does write a great deal in this letter about the “mysteries” of Christianity. In NT terms a “mystery” (*mustêrion*, [3466](#)) was a truth fully revealed not in the OT, but in the NT. He wrote about the “mystery” of God’s will (Eph. 1:9); of the “mystery” concerning Christ revealed to him (Eph. 3:3, 4), specifically that in Christ Gentile Christians are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body of Christ along with believing [sons of Israel](#) (Eph. 3:6). It was given to Paul to expound upon the [administration](#) of this “mystery” (Eph. 3:9), tantamount to a description of the [Church](#) and the [Church Age](#), long hidden in the counsels of God. Paul wrote later, in his discussion of marriage about the greatness of the “mystery” with reference to Christ and the church (Eph. 5:32). He concluded with a request for prayer by the Ephesians so that, despite his

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chain, he might boldly speak the “mystery” of the Good News about Jesus (Eph. 6:19).

The Outline of the Book.

For a series of condensed or simplified outlines repeated in expanding detail, the reader is directed to the author’s [Brief Outline of Ephesians](#).

For a longer, more detailed outline of the book, the reader is directed to the author’s [NT Outline of Ephesians](#).

The present work, the Annotated Outline of Ephesians is the longest, most-detailed outline accompanied by the complete text of the NASB, and includes a significant number of footnotes. This outline exists in three formats:

- (1) A [.pdf file](#) of the entire Expanded Outline of Ephesians. The limitations of this format are that in this long a file, accessing the various links takes the reader away from the .pdf document. When returning to the .pdf document, one must scroll down to the last place of reading, a veritable nuisance. For that reason, I strongly recommend using option (2) or (3).
- (2) A complete word processor copy of the [Expanded Outline of Ephesians in WordPerfect](#) format.
- (3) A complete word processor copy of the [Expanded Outline of Ephesians in Microsoft Word](#) format.

EPHESIANS

"THE WEALTH AND WALK OF BELIEVERS"

A 1 THE WEALTH OF BELIEVERS 1 - 3

B 1 The Prayer Regarding the Wealth of Believers 1

C 1 Gracious greeting 1:1-2

D 1 The author: {1} Paul, an apostle¹ of Christ Jesus by the will of God, 1:1a

D 2 The addressees 1:1b

E 1 To the saints² who are at Ephesus³

¹ Eph. 1:1 - apostle: Paul was, in my opinion, one of the twelve official [apostles](#) ("sent ones") of Jesus Christ. I believe He was Jesus' choice to replace Judas. Mathias was the choice engineered by Peter (Acts 1:15-26), but not, in my opinion, by Jesus. Jesus personally chose Saul, who became Paul, while he was on the road to Damascus to incarcerate Christians (Acts 9:1-18). I believe it is his name that will appear on one of the twelve foundations of [New Jerusalem](#) (Rev. 21:14). Paul had seen Jesus personally (1 Cor. 9:1) and was able to perform miracles (2 Cor. 12:11-12), both requirements of being an apostle.

[No credible scholarship](#) disputes that Paul is the author of Ephesians.

² Eph. 1:1 - to the saints: the [dative](#) plural of the adjective *hágios* (40), literally, "to the holy ones" This is Paul's customary way of addressing the ordinary Christians in the [local churches](#) to whom he was writing (Rom. 1:7; 8:27; 12:13; 15:25, 26, 31; 16:2, 15; 1 Cor. 1:2; 6:1,2; 14:33; 16:1, 15; 2 Cor. 1:1; 8:4; 9:1, 12; 13:12; Eph. 1:1, 15, 18; 2:19; 3:8, 18, 21; 4:12; 5:3; 6:18; Php. 1:1; 4:21, 22; Col. 1:2, 4, 12, 26; 1 Thess. 3:13; 2 Thess. 1:10; 1 Tim. 5:10; Phm. 1:5, 7). They are all "set-apart ones."

This is quite in contrast to the [Vatican Church](#) (Roman Catholic) practice, found nowhere in Scripture, that certain believers have been given supernatural gifts which earn them eternal life and special honor. Mary, the mother of Jesus, being, in [Vatican](#) teaching (not in Scripture), a cut above the rest of the canonized saints, receives special honor. The following quotation is found in the Catholic Encyclopedia under the heading, "[Beatification and Canonization](#)."

The true origin of canonization and beatification must be sought in the Catholic doctrine of the worship (*cultus*), invocation, and intercession of the saints. As was taught by St. Augustine (Quaest. in Heptateuch., lib. II, n. 94; *Reply to Faustus* XX.21), Catholics, while giving to God alone adoration strictly so-called, honour the saints because of the Divine supernatural gifts which have earned them eternal life, and through which they reign with God in the heavenly fatherland as His chosen friends and faithful servants. In other words, Catholics honour God in His saints as the loving distributor of supernatural gifts. The worship of *latría* (*latreia*), or strict adoration, is given to God alone; the worship of *dulia* (*douleia*), or honour and humble reverence, is paid the saints; the worship of *hyperdulia* (*hyperdouleia*), a higher form of *dulia*, belongs, on account of her greater excellence, to the Blessed Virgin Mary.

Again, support for this teaching of the [Vatican Church](#) can be found nowhere in Scripture. It is, therefore, invalid.

In Ephesians, Paul used the word *hágios* (40) in the *plural* to describe the believers in Eph. 1:1, 15, 18; 2:19; 3:8, 18; 4:12; 5:3; 6:18. He used it in the *plural* to indicate we Christians were chosen by God that we should exhibit the quality of being holy or set apart in Eph. 1:4. And he used it in the *plural* to speak of the holy apostles and prophets (Eph. 3:5). He used it in the *singular* to designate the [Holy Spirit](#) (Eph. 1:13; 4:30); to speak of a metaphorical holy temple (Eph. 2:21); and to speak of the [Church](#) as being the holy and blameless [Bride of Christ](#) (Eph. 5:27).

³ Eph. 1:1 - at Ephesus: better, "in Ephesus" The [UBS4](#) Greek edition reads, literally, as follows, "...to the saints the ones being [in Ephesus] and faithful in Christ Jesus." According to the NetBible [note](#) at the appropriate place, "The earliest and most important mss omit 'in Ephesus'" Considerable evidence is cited in the NetBible

- E 2 and who are faithful in Christ Jesus:
- D 3 The greeting: {2} Grace ⁴ to you and peace ⁵ 1:2
- E 1 from God our Father
- E 2 and the Lord ⁶ Jesus Christ.
- C 2 Praise to God for His wealth of spiritual blessings in Christ 1:3-14

note. What follows is my analysis of the evidence there cited.

The best *speculative* explanation is that this was a circular letter to be read among several churches in the area. In the original letter there was (presumably) a blank left, and each church would fill in its own name there as it received the letter. However, the only extant copies we have are the majority, which read “*in Ephesus*,” and the three early manuscripts which have *no name*. There are *no* extant copies that contain the names of *other* churches, such as Laodicea or Colosse (cf. Col. 4:16). And there are no extant copies that contain a “blank.” It may be that this was a circular letter, but we cannot prove that theory by any extant copies. What we do know is that the only church actually *identified* as a recipient of this letter is the church *at Ephesus*. Therefore we conclude that, whatever other churches to which Paul may have wanted this letter to circulate, we cannot know. The only church we can actually demonstrate by evidence in extant copies that Paul addressed in this letter is the church at Ephesus. Therefore we conclude that this letter is properly accepted as the letter to the church at Ephesus.

⁴ Eph. 1:2 - Grace: “Grace” is here the [Nominative](#) case of the noun *ch̄aris* ([5485](#)). This quality, coupled with “peace” (*eir̄ênê*, [1515](#)), is characteristic of Paul’s greetings in each of his thirteen letters (see the next footnote on “peace”). “Grace” is used here as a greeting wishing for his readers God’s attitude of “*kindness, grace, favor, helpfulness* (John 1:16, 17; Eph. 2:8)” ([Friberg](#)). Paul uses no article here. He is actually pronouncing a preliminary blessing upon his readers, wishing that God’s grace in general be upon them. He is, in effect, praying that God will manifest upon them a stance of *kindness, favor, and helpfulness*. Paul uses “grace” (*ch̄aris*, [5485](#)) extensively in this letter – in Eph. 1:2, 6, 7; 2:5, 7, 8; 3:2, 7, 8; 4:7, 29; 6:24 – 12 X. He uses the same word 24 X in Romans; 18 X in 2 Corinthians; 10 X in 1 Corinthians; and 7 X in Galatians. Only Luke (17 X in Acts and 8 X in his gospel), Peter (10 X in 1 Peter) and the writer of Hebrews (8 X) come anywhere close to the frequency of usage. Paul is far and away the champion in using this noun, which so beautifully portrays God’s stance toward men, who are rebellious sinners. The heavenly warriors who announced the birth of the Messiah to the shocked and frightened shepherds on that first Christmas night described God’s gracious stance toward humans so beautifully, “Glory in highest places to God, and upon earth, peace among men, with whom He is well-pleased” (Luke 2:14, author’s rendering).

⁵ Eph. 1:2 - peace: Along with grace, Paul greets his readers with peace ([Nominative](#) of the noun *eir̄ênê*, [1515](#)), used here as wishing upon the one greeted an inner disposition of tranquility, welfare, and freedom from anxiety. In this sense it is similar to the Hebrew greeting of “shalom.” In more general terms, believers in Jesus experience peace with God (Rom. 5:1). They should pursue peace with one another (Rom. 14:19; Eph. 4:3). Believers should conduct their inner life with praise and prayer so they experience the peace of God within (Php. 4:6-7). All this is so because God is the God of peace (Rom. 15:33; 16:20). Paul uses *eir̄ênê* in this letter in Eph. 1:2; 2:14, 15, 17; 4:3; 6:15, 23. Paul characteristically wishes his readers both grace and peace in each of his thirteen letters – in Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Php. 1:2; Col. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:2; 1 Tim. 1:2 (where he also adds “mercy”); 2 Tim. 1:2 (where he also adds “mercy”); Tit. 1:4; and Phm. 1:3.

⁶ Eph. 1:2 - Lord: the [Genitive](#) Singular of *k̄irios*, [2962](#), here, obviously, a reference to the Lord designated as Jesus the Messiah. A *k̄irios* is someone who has legal power over property or persons (i.e. slaves). It is typically translated “lord” or “master.” A vineyard owner is called a *k̄irios* (Mark 12:9). One who owns a slave (*dōoulos*, [1401](#)) is called a *k̄irios* (Luke 12:43). Sometimes it is used as a title of respect, as in the woman at the well’s address of Jesus (John 4:11 – “Sir, you have nothing to draw with...”). In religious usage it designates God (Matt. 1:20, “angel of the Lord”) and also Jesus, the Messiah (John 20:18, where Mary told the disciples, “I have seen the Lord”). In Eph. 4:5, the “one Lord” refers to Jesus the Messiah. God the Father is addressed in Eph. 4:6. The term *k̄irios* is used 717X in the NT, a fact which gives us some idea of its importance.

Paul uses this title 26X in 25 verses in Ephesians. Frequently it refers to the Lord Jesus or Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:2, 3, 15, 17; 3:11; 5:20; 6:23, 24). More often it refers to Deity, without specific regard to whether Christ is meant, or God the Father, or perhaps both (Eph. 2:21; 4:1, 5, 17; 5:8, 10, 17, 19, 22; 6:1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 21). In two instances, Paul is referring to a human “master” or “lord” (Eph. 6:5, 9).

- D 1 The declaration of praise 1:3
 - E 1 The content of praise: {3} Blessed be
 - E 2 The object of praise: the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ,
 - E 3 The reason for praise: who has blessed us
 - G 1 The quantity and quality of blessings: with every spiritual blessing⁷
 - G 2 The sphere of blessings: in the heavenly places
 - G 3 The ground of blessings: in Christ,
- D 2 The enumeration of the blessings 1:4-13
 - E 1 God's choice of us 1:4a
 - G 1 The reality of His choice: {4} just as He chose us⁸

⁷ Eph. 1:3 - with every spiritual blessing: For the NT Christian, a participant in Christ's Universal [Church](#), the blessings are, by design, largely spiritual, rather than physical in nature. Several of these spiritual blessings are enumerated in the subsequent verses – (1) God's [choice](#) of us (1:4a); (2) God's [adoption](#) of us (1:4b-6); (3) God's [redemption](#) of us (1:7-8a); (4) God's plan to head up all things in Christ (1:8b-10b); (5) God's appointment of believers in Christ to [inherit](#) the benefits of His supremacy (1:10c-12); (6) God's [sealing](#) of believers in Christ with the [Holy Spirit](#) (1:13-14). Proponents of the [Health and Wealth Gospel](#) confuse God's promises of physical blessing for OT believers (Deut. 28:1-14) with His promises of spiritual blessings for NT believers (Eph. 1:3-14).

⁸ Eph. 1:4 - just as He chose us in Him: Paul enumerates the first spiritual blessing – “God chose us for Himself in Christ” (author's paraphrase, which reflects the Middle voice of the verb, along with the antecedent of the pronoun “him”). The verb is the [Aorist](#) tense (point action) Middle voice (action done for oneself) of *eklēgō* (1586). [It should be noted that this Strong's entry is listed in the Middle/[Passive](#) voices, not the [Active](#) voice. This is probably done so because it appears in the NT only in the Middle/[Passive](#) voices.]

Most of us as children participated in a game in which two people alternately chose other children to be on their sides in a particular game. It was gratifying to be chosen during the early parts of the process; humiliating to be chosen at or near the end. Every Christian has become a Christian because, and only because God has chosen him to be “in Christ” (Eph. 1:3), the nearest antecedent of “in him.” It is exceedingly gratifying, but also humbling that God has chosen us in Christ. It is necessary that God chooses us. If He did not choose us, we would never come to Christ (John 6:44), because we would be utterly incapable of doing so otherwise. (Paul will state the extent of our incapacity in Eph. 2:1-3. Elsewhere he has done so in Rom. 3:10-18.) Of course, the one who has been chosen must respond in faith (John 1:11-13; 3:14-18, 36). But he will choose Christ only because Christ has first chosen Him (John 15:16).

God's choice of certain people in Christ is based strictly upon grace, not our own merit, for we have none (Eph. 2:7-9; Rom. 9:10-13). God cannot be charged with injustice in choosing some to be saved, for it is His prerogative to extend mercy and compassion upon whomever He wishes (Rom. 9:14-18). All will receive what they deserve. Some will receive much more than they deserve (Matt. 20:1-16). The process of God's choice is spelled out in Rom. 8:29-30: (1) God [foreknew](#) certain people as His own from eternity past (Rom. 8:29). This [foreknowledge](#) is not stated to be “facts about people,” but rather “of people.” I have heard a Southern Baptist argue that this passage means God knew in advance which people would choose him, so God chose them first. But that makes a mockery of God's choice. God is not a prisoner of man's actions. And this passage does not say that God foreknew which people would choose Him. It states rather that God knew certain people as His own (in the sense of John 10:14, 27) from eternity past. (2) This same group of people He [predestined](#) to be conformed to the image of His Son (Rom. 8:29-30). (3) This same group of people He [called](#) (Rom. 8:30). (4) This same group of people He [justified](#) (Rom. 8:30). (5) This same group of people He [glorified](#) (Rom. 8:30). There is no leakage from this group. All are included. None are lost

- G 2 The sphere of His choice: in Him ⁹
- G 3 The time of His choice: before the foundation of the world, ¹⁰
- G 4 The purpose of His choice: that we would be holy and blameless before Him. ¹¹
- E 2 God's adoption of us 1:4b-6
- G 1 The motivation for His adoption: In love ¹² 1:4b

in the process. And this whole process does not ignore, but rather includes good works. But these good works are not a cause of salvation, but rather the result of salvation (Eph. 2:8-10). We call this glorious reality (outlined in Eph. 1:4-5 and Rom. 8:28-30) [Eternal Security](#). For a summary of God's choice of us, see [Election](#).

⁹ Eph. 1:4 - in Him: The nearest antecedent of *en autō*' ([846](#)) is Christ (Eph. 1:3).

¹⁰ Eph. 1:4 - before the foundation of the world: "foundation" is *katabolē*' ([2602](#)), literally, "casting down; hence *foundation, beginning* (Matt. 25:34)" ([Friberg](#)). The word (in Greek) that appears immediately after *katabolē*' is *kósmos* ([2889](#)), which in this context refers to the planet Earth as created by God in the beginning. The language is graphic – picture God "casting down" the world into His newly created universe (as in Gen. 1:1). These two words are used in conjunction with each other in the NT in Matt. 13:35 (however, there is a textual problem here); Matt. 25:34; Luke 11:50; John 17:24; Eph. 1:4; Heb. 4:3; 9:26; 1 Pet. 1:20; Rev. 13:8; 17:8. The only time *katabolē*' is used in the NT in which it is not used in conjunction with *kósmos* is in Heb. 11:11, where it refers to Sarah as having the received the power to "cast down seed" [from Abraham] by faith, obviously a reference to her miraculous conception in her old age.

The point here is that God [chose](#) us believers in Christ before He ever created the Earth! This is both magnificent and utterly humbling! Why would He choose me? None of us believers is an after-thought in the mind of God. He deliberately chose us for Himself some time in eternity past before the creation of the universe. God's [choice](#) of us was not on the basis of any good works or response toward Him He saw we would perform. It was totally a gracious choice, a choice that, I might add, could not be side-stepped, evaded, or forfeited. If God chooses a person for Himself, that eventual fulfillment is inevitable. Of course, we must believe, but God's [choice](#) cannot be thwarted. I have seen some Christians despise [election](#) on the basis that, in their opinion, it violates man's free will and hinders evangelism. What these antagonists do not understand is that if God did not [choose](#) certain people, none could respond or would respond in faith. So God's election, contrary to being an impediment to evangelism, is the only thing that makes evangelism productive. Our task is not to determine who is among the [elect](#). Our task is to be His witnesses to the ends of the earth (Acts 1:8).

¹¹ Eph. 1:4 - that we would be holy and blameless before Him: There is a reason God has [chosen](#) certain people. God [chose](#) us for Himself to be believers in Christ before His creation of the world so that we would be holy (*hágios*, [40](#)) – set apart to God, consecrated to reflect His character and values – and blameless (*ámōmos*, [299](#)) – morally and spiritually without blemish, fault, or blame. The adjective "holy" (*hágios*, [40](#)) appeared first as "the saints" ("the holy ones") in Eph. 1:1. See the appropriate footnote in Eph. 1:1 for a more extensive discussion of the word. It will appear again in this chapter in Eph. 1:13, 15, 18. The adjective "blameless" (*ámōmos*, [299](#)) will appear a final time in this letter in Eph. 5:27.

¹² Eph. 1:4 - in love: NASB editors, contradicting the editors of the [ABS4](#), have determined that "in love" modifies God's predestining us to adoption as sons, rather than to our being holy and blameless before Him. Commentators who side with the [ABS4](#) reading do so on [three grounds](#): (1) Modifying phrases usually follow the verbs in this context (Eph. 1:3-4, 6, 8-10); (2) The other five occurrences of "in love" (Eph. 3:17; 4:2, 15-16; 5:2) all refer to human, not Divine love; and (3) It makes sense to say that we should be holy and blameless in love.

In support of the NASB reading, however, we can argue (1) that modifying phrases do not *always* follow verbs in this context. The present case is one exception ("in love He predestined us") (Eph. 1:4-5); and there exists another: "In wisdom and insight He made known to us the [mystery](#) of His will" (Eph. 1:8-9). (2) Furthermore, to argue that "in love" usually refers to human love does not rule out the fact that "in love" *can* refer to God's love, particularly in a section that resonates with God's spiritual blessings for believers. (3) It makes sense to understand

- G 2 The securing of His adoption: {5} He predestined us¹³ 1:5a
- G 3 The goal of His adoption: to adoption as sons¹⁴ 1:5b
- G 4 The instrument of His adoption: through Jesus Christ 1:5c
- G 5 The beneficiary of His adoption: to Himself, 1:5d
- G 6 The justification of His adoption: according to the kind intention of His will, 1:5e

that God's love was what motivated Him to predestine us to adoption as His sons. (4) Why should our being holy and blameless be restricted to the area of love? We should be holy and blameless in *all* areas of our lives.

Love (*agápē*, [26](#)) refers to "...an attitude of appreciation resulting from a conscious evaluation and choice; used of divine and human love, devotion" (excerpted from [Friberg](#)). Love (*agápē*, [26](#)) appears 10 X in this letter: Eph. 1:4, 15; 2:4; 3:17, 19; 4:2, 15, 16; 5:2; 6:23. It appears to refer to the love of God (or Christ) in Eph. 1:4-5; 2:4; and probably in Eph. 3:17. It appears to refer to the love which humans exhibit in Eph. 1:15; possibly Eph. 3:17; and in Eph. 4:2, 15, 16; 5:2; 6:23. The noun "love" appears 18X in 1 John; 14X in 1 Corinthians, and 10X in Ephesians, the third highest usage in the NT. Its corresponding verb, *agapáō* ([25](#)) appears 7 X – in Eph. 1:6; 2:4; 5:2, 25, 28, 33; 6:24.

¹³ Eph. 1:5 - In love He predestined us: It is God's love (*agápē*, [26](#)) that motivates His [predestination](#). "Having predestined" translates the [Aorist Participle](#) of the verb *prooridzō* ([4309](#)), which means "decide on beforehand, determine in advance" ([Friberg](#)). This verb is used in Acts 4:28, referring to God's [predestining](#) the death of Christ at the hands of both [Israel](#) and [Gentiles](#); Rom. 8:29, 30, referring to God's [predestining](#) those whom He foreknew to be conformed to the image of His Son; 1 Cor. 2:7, referring to God's [predestining](#) of hidden wisdom; Eph. 1:5, referring to God's [predestining](#) believers to adoption; and Eph. 1:11 referring to believers' having obtained an inheritance, having so been [predestined](#) according to the purpose of God, who works all things according to the counsel of His will. It is always and only used with reference to God. No mere human can determine anything in advance.

There are some who despise and reject the idea of God [predestining](#) anything. They deeply desire what they perceive to be as "man's free will." (I have some deep-set misgivings about man's presumed "free will." I don't think his will is nearly as free as many humans wish to think. More about that in Ephesians 2.) My only response is this: "If God didn't [predestine](#) anything, how could He guarantee it would happen?" In this present context, if God did not [predestine](#) you to adoption, what guarantee would you have that you would actually be adopted by Him? It might happen or it might not. Something might come up to change it. What if the [Devil](#) stepped into your life and prevented your adoption? The correct view is that your adoption occurred because, and only because God [predestined](#) it to occur. If He had not [predestined](#) it, it would not have happened.

Here (in Eph. 1:5) Paul states that God in love [predestined](#) us believers to adoption. In Eph. 1:11, he will add that we have also been predestined to receive an inheritance as sons. See WordExplain's article on [Predestination](#).

¹⁴ Eph. 1:5 - to adoption as sons: "[Adoption](#) as sons" translates the single noun *huiōthesía* ([5206](#)), used only by Paul, and only in Rom. 8:15, 23; 9:4; Gal. 4:5; Eph. 1:5. NASB always translates this word the same way. Technically, one word would be sufficient – the word "[adoption](#)." But etymologically, the Greek word presumably combines two words, the noun "son" (*huiós*, [5207](#)) and a derivative of the verb "to place" (*tithēmi*, [5087](#)). So the Greek word "[adoption](#)" means "to place as a son." Thus, the translation "[adoption](#) as sons," though a bit redundant, is at least accurate. According to the notes in [NetBible](#),

The Greek term *υιοθεσία* ... was originally a legal technical term for adoption as a son with full rights of inheritance.... *Adoption as his sons* is different from spiritual birth as children. All true believers have been born as children of God and will be adopted as sons of God. The adoption is both a future reality, and in some sense, already true. To be adopted as a son means to have the full rights of an heir. In the future sense, our full placement as a son of God ([adoption](#)) awaits our glorified bodies (Rom. 8:18-22) and our sharing in the [inheritance](#) of reigning with Christ (Rev. 20:4-6; 22:3-5).

- G 7 The purpose of His adoption: {6} to the praise of the glory of His grace,¹⁵ 1:6
- H 1 The recipients of His grace: which He freely bestowed on us¹⁶
- H 2 The channel of His grace: in the Beloved.¹⁷
- E 3 God's redemption of us 1:7-8a
- G 1 The means of redemption: {7} In Him
- G 2 The beneficiaries of redemption: we have redemption¹⁸

¹⁵ Eph. 1:6 - to the praise of the glory of His grace: It is evidently important to God that His redeemed subjects render praise (*épainos*, [1868](#)) to Him for His glorious grace! “Praise” here is the [Accusative](#) of *épainos* ([1868](#)), used “as an expression of high evaluation” ([Friberg](#)). The word does not occur frequently in the NT, and is used most often by Paul, and twice by Peter. This word occurs, in this letter, in Eph. 1:6, 12, 14.

“Glory” ([Genitive](#) of *dóxa*, [1391](#)), is the visible radiance of God’s persona combined with the attribute of majestic power. Here, God’s grace is said to possess the attribute of glory! See the appropriate footnote on “glory” at Eph. 1:17. This same word will be used again in Eph. 1:12, 14, 17, 18; 3:13, 16, 21.

“Grace” is the [Genitive](#) of *cháris* ([5485](#)). “Grace” is used here “as a religious technical term for God’s attitude toward human beings *kindness, grace, favor, helpfulness* (John 1:16, 17; Eph. 2:8)” ([Friberg](#)). Paul is thinking of a particular manifestation of God’s [grace](#) (note the article, “the grace”). It is the grace with which He graced us in the beloved one (namely Jesus). Paul uses “[grace](#)” (*cháris*, [5485](#)) extensively in this letter – in Eph. 1:2, 6, 7; 2:5, 7, 8; 3:2, 7, 8; 4:7, 29; 6:24.

¹⁶ Eph. 1:6 - which He freely bestowed on us: This phrase makes perfect sense in English, but it does not capture Paul’s play on words. In its entirety, Eph. 1:6 reads as follows in a literal translation, “to the praise of the glory of His grace (*cháris*, [5485](#)) with which He graced ([Aorist](#) tense of *charitōō*, [5487](#)) us in the Beloved One.” “[Grace](#)” (*cháris*, [5485](#)) is used a remarkable twelve times in this fairly short epistle. *Charitōō* ([5487](#)) appears only twice in the entire NT: Luke 1:28 and Eph. 1:6. It means “to show favor or kindness to someone (adapted from [Friberg](#)). The point of time at which God “graced” us was the time when He sent the Eternal Second Person of the Godhead to Earth to be born as a baby, become one of us, live a perfect life, be anointed as [Prophet](#), [Priest](#), and [King](#), serve with confirming miracles, be put to death to pay for our sins, be resurrected, and ascend back to heaven. The whole of Jesus’ appearance here on earth is looked at as an action at a point in time.

¹⁷ Eph. 1:6 - in the Beloved: “in the One having been loved” translates the Singular [Masculine Perfect Passive Participle](#) of *agapāō* ([25](#)). The appearance of the article in front of the verb makes it obvious that the author is referring to the particular (male) person having been loved. That is obviously Jesus, uniquely loved by God (Isa. 42:1; Matt. 3:17; 12:18; 17:5; Mark 9:7; Luke 9:35; Eph. 1:6). Jesus is the focal point of God’s favor upon mankind (cf. Luke 2:8-14).

¹⁸ Eph. 1:7 - In Him we have redemption: “[Redemption](#)” is *apolútrōsis* ([629](#)), which appears in Luke 21:28; Rom. 3:24; 8:23; 1 Cor. 1:30; Eph. 1:7, 14; 4:30; Col. 1:14; Heb. 9:15; 11:35. The meaning of this noun is fascinating. On a literal level it means the “buying back of a slave or captive through payment of a ransom; hence *setting free, release* (Heb. 11:35).” On a figurative level it refers (i) to “rescue from sin” (and, I think, from the [Devil](#), under whose power all unbelievers reside – Eph. 2:1-2), and can be translated “*redemption, deliverance*,” (ii) to “the release of the body from earthly limitations and mortality *liberation, deliverance* (Rom. 8:23);” (iii) “of Christ as the one who sets free from sin redeemer, deliverer (1 Cor. 1:30)” (adapted from [Friberg](#)). See [Redeem, Redemption](#).

- G 3 The cost of redemption: through His blood,¹⁹
 - G 4 The specification of redemption: the forgiveness of our trespasses,²⁰
 - G 5 The motive for redemption: according to the riches of His grace
 - G 6 The abundance of God's grace: {8} which He lavished on us. 1:8a
- E 4 God's plan to head up all things in Christ 1:8b-10
- G 1 The wisdom of God's plan: In all wisdom and insight²¹ 1:8b
 - G 2 The fact of His revelation: {9} He made known to us 1:9a
 - G 3 The newness of His revelation: the mystery of His will,²² 1:9b
 - G 4 The motive for His revelation: according to His

¹⁹ Eph. 1:7 - through His blood: Our [redemption](#) (*apolútrōsis* ([629](#))) is purchased solely at the cost of Jesus' blood (Lev. 17:11; Heb. 7:27, 28; 9:11-14, 22-26; 13:12).

²⁰ Eph. 1:7 - the forgiveness of our trespasses: Here is Paul's definition of [redemption](#) (*apolútrōsis*, [629](#)). "Forgiveness is the singular of *áphesis* ([859](#)), used predominately in the NT in relation to the forgiveness of sins or "cancellation of guilt," as in Matt. 26:28; Mark 1:4; 3:29; Luke 1:77; 3:3; 24:47; Acts 2:38; 5:31; 10:43; 13:38; 26:18; Eph. 1:7; Col. 1:14; Heb. 9:22; 10:18 (adapted from [Friberg](#)). "Trespasses" = the plural of *paráptōma* ([3900](#)), usually translated "transgressions" in the NASB. The word means "a deviation from living according to what has been revealed as the right way to live *false step, sin, transgression*;" used of serious offences against both God (Eph. 1:7) and man (Matt. 6:15)" ([Friberg](#)).

²¹ Eph. 1:8 - In all wisdom and insight: This phrase is best understood as modifying the following clause, "He made known to us the [mystery](#) of His will" God's [revelation](#) is made known "in all wisdom (*sophía*, [4678](#)) and insight (*phrónēsis*, [5428](#))." (See the footnote on "[mystery](#)" in Eph. 1:9.)

In Ephesians, "wisdom" (*sophía*, [4678](#)) refers to the infinite insight and understanding of God (Eph. 1:8) seen as greatly-varied (Eph. 3:10). God wants us believers to partake of His wisdom in understanding Jesus as God discloses Him to us (Eph. 1:17).

"...insight" (*phrónēsis*, [5428](#)) relates "...to the action of thinking; (1) *way of thinking, wisdom, outlook* (Luke 1:17); (2) *intelligence, understanding* (Eph. 1:8)" ([Friberg](#)).

²² Eph. 1:9 - the [mystery](#) of His will: "[Mystery](#)" (*mustērion*, [3466](#)), used in this letter in Eph. 1:9; 3:3, 4, 9; 5:32; 6:19, refers to that which can only be known through revelation mediated from God – that which *was not known before* (Matt. 13:11)" (adapted from [Friberg](#)). Generally, [mysteries](#) were unrevealed in the OT but are now revealed in the NT. Some of the "[mysteries](#)" in Scripture include the [mysteries](#) of the kingdom of the heavens / kingdom of God (Matt. 13:11; Luke 8:10); the [mystery](#) of God's will (Eph. 1:9); the [mystery](#) of the Messiah (Eph. 3:4; Col. 2:2; 4:3); the [mystery](#) of the partial, temporary hardening of [Israel](#) (Rom. 11:25); the [mystery](#) of believing [Gentiles](#) joining-believing [Israelis](#) in the [Church](#) (Eph. 3:3-10; Col. 1:26, 27); the [mystery](#) of lawlessness (2 Thess. 2:7); and the [mystery](#) of [Babylon the Great](#) (Rev. 17:5).

kind intention which He purposed in Him ²³ 1:9c

G 5 The fulfillment of the revelation: {10} with a view to an administration ²⁴ suitable to the fullness of the

²³ Eph. 1:9 - in Him: I.e., in Christ

²⁴ Eph. 1:10 - administration: The word is *oikonomia* (3622). It refers, literally, to the task of a household steward (*oikonómos*, 3623) in managing the household. Here, it is used in a metaphorical sense, and it refers to God's household arrangement that will take place "in the fullness of the times," when God will sum up all things in heaven and upon earth under Christ. That particular arrangement engineered by God awaits Christ's [Millennial Reign](#) (Rev. 20:1-6), but also includes His eternal co-regency with His Father in [New Jerusalem](#) upon [New Earth](#) (Rev. 21:1-22:5). Synonyms for the Greek word *oikonomia* (3622) include "administration," "stewardship," and "management."

The KJV translated this word "dispensation." It is from this word that we derive the theological system of [Dispensational Premillennialism](#). Though looked upon with contempt by [covenant theologians](#), [amillennarians](#), and others, this is a very Biblical system that interprets prophetic Scriptures literally instead of metaphorically, whenever possible. A key test case is Ezekiel 40:1-48:35. From a [dispensational](#) point of view, the language in these chapters must be taken literally. It refers to a literal temple to be built during Christ's Kingdom here upon earth. It will be complete with (memorial) animal sacrifices and topographical changes, including living water that flows from the temple and rejuvenates the Dead Sea so that an abundance and variety of fish may be caught there (Ezekiel 47:1-12). That 1000-year arrangement (Rev. 20:1-6) is the [Dispensation](#) or Stewardship or Administration of Christ's [Millennial Kingdom](#). [Covenant Theologians](#), for example, think it is absurd to take this passage literally. For example, Dr. Kim Riddlebarger, Senior Pastor of Christ Church in Anaheim, employs a figurative interpretation, which he feels the context demands. He has written an [essay on Ezekiel 40-48](#). He sees this temple "as a picture of a real heavenly temple, which will be established on the earth in a non-structural way in the latter days [citing] (Beale, *The Temple and the Church's Mission*, 335)." Whatever he means by "non-structural", he means it is *not* a literal temple. He continues,

In other words, I believe Ezekiel is giving us a picture of the new earth in the prophetic terms with which his readers were familiar (Hoekema, *The Bible and Future*, 205). This is a picture of the new earth as the dwelling of God. Ezekiel prophesies it in earthly terms (complete with all the temple utensils), while John describes its fulfilled version (in eschatological terms).

Riddlebarger explains further:

Finally, it is obvious that Revelation 21 presents Ezekiel's vision in its consummated fulfillment. In other words, John is given a vision of the same temple, but now from the vantage point of Christ's death and resurrection and the dawn of the new creation – something which would have made no sense whatsoever to Ezekiel or his hearers. As Beale points out (pp. 346-345), the new heavens and earth are now the holy of holies, as well as the new Jerusalem, and the new Eden. On the last day, all creation becomes the temple of God. The temple has been expanded (extended) from a building, to a city, to all of creation.

So there you have it. You cannot take either Ezekiel 40-48 literally, nor can you take Revelation 21:1-22:5 literally either, according to Riddlebarger and his cronies. The temple refers to "all of creation." To me his explanation is impossible, if not ludicrous. The temple in Ezekiel has animal sacrifices and the land has fish in the Dead Sea that are being caught in nets and eaten. John in Revelation is talking about something entirely different, a glorious, huge city that HAS NO TEMPLE AT ALL, for God and the Lamb are its temple (Rev. 21:22). And NO FISH will be eaten in New Jerusalem, for there will be NO DEATH there (Rev. 21:1-4). Only fruit and vegetation will be imbibed (Rev. 22:1-2). Ezekiel and John are describing two different cities, one earthly, the other New Earthly. Similarity does not mean identity.

One of the greatest weaknesses of [Covenant Theology](#) and [Amillennialism](#) is that neither has a way adequately to account for the *details* of Prophetic Scripture. We have a colloquial saying, "The devil is in the details." That is exactly where Riddlebarger, Hoekema, and Beale all founder. They wind up waving their non-literal [eisegetical](#) wand, transforming an ordinary horse into an ethereal, non-structural unicorn. But it's all transparent and logical [to them] because it represents the kingdom of God and the people of God throughout eternity. The temple of Ezekiel 40-48 is "all of creation"? Ludicrous! Only [Dispensationalism](#) is able to harmonize all the details of prophetic Scripture without creating exegetical loopholes large enough through which a freight train might be driven!

Paul will next use the word *oikonomia* (3622) in Eph. 3:2, where he will speak of "the *stewardship* of God's grace ... that the [Gentiles](#) are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the [gospel](#)" (Eph. 3:2, 6). Following that he will again use the term in Eph. 3:9, where he will speak of the privilege given to him "to bring to light (for the benefit of the [Gentiles](#)) what is the *administration* of the [mystery](#)" ... so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the [church](#) ..." (Eph. 3:8-10).

- times,²⁵ 1:10a
- G 6 The substance of the revelation – God's purpose to head up all things in Christ: that is, the summing up of all things in Christ,²⁶ 1:10b
- H 1 things in the heavens²⁷
- H 2 and things on the earth.²⁸
- E 5 God's appointment also of believers to inherit, in Christ, the benefits of His supremacy 1:10c-12
- G 1 The sphere of God's appointment: In Him 1:10c
- G 2 The nature of the appointment: {11} also we have obtained an inheritance,²⁹ 1:11a
- G 3 The achievement of the appointment –

²⁵ Eph. 1:10 - an administration suitable to the fullness of time: Literally, "to an administration [or [dispensation](#)] of the fullness of the time." This looks ahead, first, to the [Millennial Kingdom](#) of Christ (Rev. 20:1-6) and, second, to the co-regency of Christ and God the Father from their joint throne in [New Jerusalem](#) in connection with [New Earth](#) (Rev. 21:1-22:5).

²⁶ Eph. 1:10 - the summing up of all things in Christ: Literally, "the Christ." "Summing up" is the [Aorist Infinitive](#) of *anakephaliōō* (346), used only here and in Rom. 13:9. It speaks here "of bringing everything under the control of one person *gather (everything) together, unify, make into one* (Eph. 1:10)" ([Friberg](#)). This has not yet happened. The vast majority of people on earth are not submitting to "the Christ." Obviously, the demons (fallen angels) are not yet subject to the Messiah. In the future, both of these rebellions will be put down.

²⁷ Eph 1:10 - things in the heavens: This will eventually include the entire realm of fallen angels, that which Paul calls "the rulers," "the powers," "the world forces of this darkness," and "the spiritual forces of wickedness in the heavenly places" (Eph. 1:12). These are all presently subject to the authority of God and Christ, but they still have access to the world (1 John 5:19) and even to Christians (Acts 5:3). The time is coming when they will be banished from the entire universe (Matt. 25:41; Rev. 20:10)

²⁸ Eph. 1:10 - things on the earth: During Christ's [Millennial Kingdom](#), the [devil](#) (and, presumably, his demons) will be prevented from deceiving people upon earth (Rev. 20:1-3). Ultimately, he and his angels, and all those humans who serve them, will be cast into the [lake of fire and brimstone](#), and [New Earth](#) will not be defiled by any evil or any evil people (2 Pet. 3:11-13; Rev. 20:11-15; 21:8; 22:14-15).

²⁹ Eph. 1:11 - In Him also we have obtained an inheritance: "In Him" refers to "the Christ" (Eph. 1:10); "...we have obtained an inheritance" translates the 1st person plural [Aorist](#) tense, [Passive](#) voice of the verb *klêrōō* (2820), occurring only here in the NT. Literally, in the [active](#) voice it means "choose by lot;" in the [passive](#) voice it means "obtain an inheritance, be appointed as an heir." In Eph. 1:11 it is used metaphorically "to denote God's appointment of both Jews and [Gentiles](#) to partake of a spiritual inheritance through their relationship to Christ" ([Friberg](#)). However, I believe [Friberg](#), et al are in error to suppose that it is only a spiritual inheritance which we believers inherit. Jesus told His followers He was going to the Father's House to prepare dwelling places for them (John 14:1-3). I believe those dwelling places are sumptuous appointments in the fabulously wealthy city of [New Jerusalem](#) (Rev. 21:1-22:5). Furthermore, Jesus stated the gentile are blessed, "for they shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5), and He wasn't just uttering pious platitudes. We will cash in on our material inheritance initially during Christ's [Millennial Reign](#) here upon this present earth; and we will continue that inheritance in incorruptible and imperishable surroundings in [New Jerusalem](#) and upon [New Earth](#)!

predestination: having been predestined³⁰ 1:11b

H 1 The basis of predestination: according to His purpose³¹

H 2 The achievement of predestination – God's constant activity: who works³²

H 3 The extent of predestination: all things³³

H 4 The wisdom of predestination: after the counsel³⁴

³⁰ Eph. 1:11 - having been predestined: These three words in English translate the First Person Plural [Nominative Masculine Aorist Passive Participle](#) of the single verb *prooridzō* (4309), to “decide on beforehand, determine in advance” ([Friberg](#)). We believers have obtained an [inheritance](#) in Christ because it has been so [predestined](#), presumably, by God. In Eph. 1:5 we learned that God, in love, [predestined](#) us to adoption (“as sons”) through Jesus Christ to Himself. It stands to reason, then, that we have also been [predestined](#) to obtain our [inheritance](#) as sons. See WordExplain’s article on [Predestination](#).

³¹ Eph. 1:11 - according to His purpose: Paul is saying that we have been [predestined](#) to obtaining an [inheritance](#) *according to the purpose of the One* working all things according to the counsel of His will (emphasis mine). “Purpose” is the noun *próthesis* (4286). This word is a combination of the preposition *pró* (4253), “before,” and the general-purpose verb *títhēmi* (5087), “to place, or set.” Combined, the words mean, literally, “to place or set before,” or, in a derived sense, “to purpose.” Thus, the noun *próthesis* (4286), in a literal sense of “purposed” or “consecrated” bread (Matt. 12:4; Mark 2:26; Luke 6:4); it can also refer to a “purposeful” or “resolute” heart (Acts 11:23); and to sailors obtaining their purpose (Acts 27:13) with a favorable wind. In Rom. 8:28 God works all things together for good on behalf of those called according to His purpose. In Rom. 9:11 God’s purpose is related to His choice of Jacob over Esau before the twins had done anything good or bad. In Eph. 1:11 God works all things according to the counsel of His own will. In Eph. 3:11 God has an eternal purpose in conjunction with Jesus, the Messiah, our Lord. In 2 Tim. 1:9 God saved us and called us with a holy calling, not according to our works, but according to His own purpose and grace. The point in Ephesians 1:11 is that God’s predestination of us to our [inheritance](#) as adopted sons was done according to HIS purpose, not ours! God has HIS reasons for doing things, and they are not based on our merit. The Scriptures make that quite clear. His purposes include our believing in His Son, the Messiah (John 1:11-13; 3:16-18, 36; 5:24; 20:30-31).

³² Eph. 1:11 - who works: Literally, “the one (presently) working” ([Genitive Present Participle](#) of *energēō*, 1754). God is here seen as *being at work, being active, working, or energizing* all things after the counsel of His will. In Eph. 1:11, God is presently working all things in accordance with His will; in Eph. 1:20 He exerted energy to bring about the resurrection and ascension of Christ; in Eph. 2:2 there is an evil spirit, the [Devil](#), who energizes the “sons of disobedience”; in Eph. 3:20 it is God’s power that energizes us believers.

³³ Eph. 1:11 - all things: The text is explicit – “according to [the] purpose of the One the all things working according to the counsel of His will” (author’s literal translation). God works “the all things” according to the counsel of His will. That leaves nothing to chance. And how could it be any other way? If God only worked “some things” according to the counsel of His will, how could He ever be certain that the “other things” would not interfere with His will? He could not leave certain things to chance and yet guarantee other things. This is the only way God can work together all things for good for the ones loving God – for the ones being called (literally –) “according to purpose.”

At the same time I reject all notions that God compromises His pristine morality, or that He does that which is morally and ethically reprehensible. God cannot be tempted to perform evil (James 1:13).

³⁴ Eph. 1:11 - after the counsel: better, “according to the counsel” “Counsel” is *boulē’* (1012), which is here, at least from a human perspective, an inward thought process or deliberation leading toward a decision, purpose or plan (adapted from [Friberg](#)). For humans, this may take a period of time and may require consultation with counselors. With God, who is infinite, neither lapse of time nor consultation with counselors are needed. His plans are from eternity past, and He needs no assistance in making decisions. His plans and His will are worked out in time

- H 5 The inevitability of predestination: of His will,³⁵
- G 4 The goal of the appointment – that Church age believers, who first hoped in Christ, should exist for the praise of God's glory!" 1:12
- H 1 The subjects of the goal: {12} to the end that we who were the first to hope in Christ³⁶
- H 2 The achievement of the goal: would be to

in human history.

³⁵ Eph. 1:11 - of His will: "will" is *thélēma* (2307), that which one desires to happen or causes to happen or permits to happen. It would appear that there are some things which God desires to happen in this life, but do not necessarily happen. We might call that will of God His "moral" will. For example, it is God's will for believers in Christ to give thanks for everything (Eph. 5:18). But that does not guarantee that all believers will, indeed, be thankful. So it is God's moral will that all believers give thanks. In His permissive will, (that which He wills to permit) that thanksgiving may not necessarily take place. There is another description of God's will, that which I call His "directive" will. That is, there are things that God desires to occur that inevitably do occur. For example, it was evidently God's "directive" will that Paul be an apostle of Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:1). God desired it, and it indeed inevitably happened. In the present context (Eph. 1:11) God's will is probably a combination of His permissive will and His directive will. There are some things that God guarantees to happen (His directive will) and others that He permits to happen (His permissive will). All in all, God is the One "the all things" working according to the counsel of His will (Eph. 1:11).

At the end of history, even though God is "not wishing ([Present Participle](#) of *boúlomai*, 1014) for any to perish but for all to come to repentance" (2 Pet. 3:9), and though [New Jerusalem](#) and [New Earth](#) will be filled with redeemed people from all ages (Rev. 21:1-22:5), and yet, though "... the cowardly and unbelieving and abominable and murderers and immoral persons and sorcerers and idolaters and all liars, their part will be in the lake that burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death" (Rev. 21:8), God's will ultimately will have been accomplished. With God there are no accidents, no mistakes, and no "oops, I didn't see that one coming." If it were up to my will, I would allow no evil and no evil people in my universe. But I humbly concede that God is infinitely wiser than I, and so I trust in His judgment, and in His will.

³⁶ Eph. 1:12 - we who were the first to hope in Christ: When I completed this outline in 1991, I took, following Harold Hoehner in *The Bible Knowledge Commentary (TBKC)*, [NT volume](#), the view that Eph. 1:11-12 described [Jewish](#) believers. The arguments supporting this view are (1) Paul's use of the words "also (*kai*) we" in Eph. 1:11, which supposedly is to be distinguished from the previous "we's" in Eph. 1: 3-10, and then (2) Paul's switch to "you also" in Eph. 1:13. The effect of this grammatical interpretation is to make those who were "the first to hope in Christ" to be [Jewish](#) people.

However, this leads, in my opinion, to a rather forced interpretation – that it is [Jewish](#) Christians who have obtained an [inheritance](#) (Eph. 1:11) (and [Gentile](#) Christians haven't?); that it is [Jewish](#) Christians who have been [predestined](#) (Eph. 1:11) (and [Gentile](#) Christians haven't?); that it is [Jewish](#) Christians who would be for the praise of God's glory (Eph. 1:12) (and [Gentile](#) Christians wouldn't?).

To me, it makes more sense to say that "we who were the first to hope in Christ" refers to the [Church](#) (composed initially of redeemed [Israelis](#), but by this writing, largely, but not entirely, of [Gentiles](#)) in distinction from the nation of [Israel](#), who will hope in Christ as a nation *later* (Zech. 12:10; Rom. 11:26-27). Paul disassociates himself from his (largely [Gentile](#)) readers in Eph. 1:13 ("you also") because he is reminding them of their subsequent salvation encounter with Christ through faith whereas they initially were "dead" in their "trespasses and sins" (Eph. 2:1), as well as "separate from Christ" (Eph. 2:12). He himself joins the discussion of having received, along with them, the [Holy Spirit](#) as a pledge of "our" [inheritance](#) in Eph. 1:14.

"We who were the first to hope" translates the 1st Person Plural [Perfect Participle](#) of *proelpidō* (4276), used only here in the NT. It means "hope before or first, be the first to hope" (adapted from [Friberg](#)).

the praise of His glory.³⁷

- E 6 God's sealing also of the Gentile readers, believers in Christ 1:13-14
- G 1 The sphere of sealing: {13} In Him, 1:13a
- G 2 The subjects of sealing: you also, 1:13b
- G 3 The prerequisites of sealing 1:13c
- H 1 after listening to the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation –³⁸
- H 2 having also believed,³⁹
- G 4 The nature of sealing: you were sealed in Him⁴⁰ with the Holy Spirit of promise,⁴¹ 1:13d

³⁷ Eph. 1:12 - would be to the praise of His glory: This is the reason for the existence of all created beings, and, in this context, of all redeemed beings. We do not exist to further our own glory, but His. And somehow, the [redemption](#) of fallen men praises the glory of God greater than if God had created humans so perfectly they would never have been capable of sinning in the first place. I can't understand that, but God obviously can.

³⁸ Eph. 1:13 - In Him, you also, after listening to the message of truth, the [gospel](#) of your salvation –: literally, “in whom also you, having heard the word of the truth – the good news of your salvation –” (author’s literal translation). The “message” (*tôn lōgon*, [3056](#)), most often translated, “word.” It is the noun corresponding to *légō* ([3004](#)), to speak or say. This message is defined as “the message of the truth” ([Genitive of alētheia](#), [225](#)), that which corresponds to reality, conveying “certainty and validity” (adapted from [Friberg](#)).

Truth is an undiminished attribute of God (Rom. 1:25; 3:7; 15:8; 1 Tim. 2:4; 1 John 4:6); of Jesus Christ (John 1:14, 17; 14:6; 2 Cor. 11:10; Eph. 4:21); and of the [Holy Spirit](#) (John 14:17; 15:26; 16:13; 1 John 5:6). The particular truth Paul and his associates conveyed to the Ephesians was “the good news of the salvation of you” (author’s literal translation). The particular good news (*euaggēlion*, [2098](#)) of which the author wrote pertains to his readers’ (particular) [spiritual salvation](#) ([Genitive of sōtēria](#), [4991](#)) – the salvation from sin, death, and hell.

[Lōgos](#) ([3056](#)) appears in this letter in Eph. 1:13; 4:29; 5:6; 6:19; [alētheia](#) ([225](#)) appears in this letter in Eph. 1:13; 4:21, 24, 25; 5:9; 6:14.

³⁹ Eph. 1:13 - having also believed: Literally, “in whom [i.e. the Christ – see Eph. 1:12] also having believed ([Aorist Participle](#) of *pisteúō*, [4100](#)) – placing confidence in and making a religious commitment to God or the Christ [so here] as the object of faith (adapted from [Friberg](#)). The Ephesian recipients of this letter had also, along with the earlier [Church-age](#), mostly Jewish believers, (see Acts 2:1-4, 36-47) made a commitment of faith in and to Jesus as the [Messiah](#).

⁴⁰ Eph. 1:13 - you were sealed in Him: In the Greek text this clause reads as follows – “in whom also, having believed, you were sealed with the [Holy Spirit](#) of promise.” The person in whom the Ephesians believers were sealed is the [Christ](#). (The title “the [Christ](#)” is the last word of Eph. 1:12, and the antecedent of both relative pronouns in Eph. 1:13.) “You were sealed” is the Plural [Aorist Passive](#) of *sphragidzō* ([4972](#)). This verb, in a literal sense, refers to the visible, tangible marking of an object or document or letter to certify ownership or validity or authority. In this sense the Jewish leaders had Jesus’ tomb sealed. To break the seal and enter the tomb was to invite the wrath of the government (Matt. 27:63-66). In Rev. 7:3-8 144,000 [Israelis](#) were marked with a visible seal on their foreheads, showing God’s ownership and protection. In a metaphorical sense, God seals each believer with the [Holy Spirit](#), who is invisible, as a pledge, or down payment of final redemption (2 Cor. 1:21-22; Eph. 1:13; 4:30). See also [Sealing](#).

⁴¹ Eph. 1:13 - with the [Holy Spirit](#) of promise: John the Baptist had predicted that One mightier than he would [baptize Israelis with the Holy Spirit](#) and [fire](#) (Matt. 3:11-12). Jesus had promised that He would, on behalf of His followers, ask the Father, who would give them the “Helper,” the [Spirit](#) of truth, who would indwell them (John

- G 5 The significance of sealing: {14} who is given as a pledge of our inheritance,⁴² 1:14
- G 6 The effectiveness of sealing: with a view to the redemption⁴³ of God's own possession,⁴⁴

14:16-17, 26; 15:26; 16:7-15). On the [Day of Pentecost](#), Peter acknowledged that Jesus, having ascended to the right hand of God, had indeed received from the Father the promise of the [Holy Spirit](#), and had poured forth upon the early [Church](#) the manifestation of fire, the sound of a rushing wind, and the ability to speak in unlearned foreign languages that the crowd at [Pentecost](#) had witnessed (Acts 2:32-33). The adjective "Holy" (*hágios*, 40), as in "[Holy Spirit](#)," appeared first in Eph. 1:1. It means, essentially, "that which is set apart to God." By implication, that which is set apart to God is untainted by sin or evil. The [Holy Spirit](#) is very much in contrast with evil spirits or [unclean spirits](#), otherwise called demons. See the appropriate footnote at Eph. 1:1 for a fuller discussion of the word "holy." It will next appear in Eph. 1:15.

"Spirit" here is the [Dative](#) of *pneûma* (4151), used 379 X in the NT. It is one of those words that can do "double duty." It can mean the tangible movement of air, as in "breath" (2 Thess. 2:8) or "wind" (John 3:8), or it can refer to an invisible, noncorporeal spirit being, whether of a human (Eph. 1:17; 4:23), or of God (often designated "[Holy Spirit](#)") (Eph. 1:13; 2:18, 22; 3:5, 16; 4:3, 4, 30; 5:18; 6:17, 18), or of the [Devil](#) (Eph. 2:2). In the NASB *pneûma* is translated "Spirit" 241 X; "spirit" 101 X; "spirits" 32 X; "breath" 3 X; "spiritual" 1 X; "wind" 1 X; "winds" 1 X. Its next use in this letter will be in Eph. 1:17. Here in Eph. 1:13 Paul refers to the [Holy Spirit](#), the third member of the Godhead, the One who was promised by Jesus as the Helper (*paráklêtos*, 3875) (John 14:16), also known as the Comforter, Advocate, Intercessor (NASB footnote).

⁴² Eph. 1:14 - who is given as a pledge of our inheritance: The [Holy Spirit](#) has been given to us believers as a pledge (earnest or deposit) of the inheritance that has been laid up for us. See also [Sealing](#).

"Pledge" is *arrabôn* (728), used only 3X in the NT, and always with reference to the [Holy Spirit](#) (2 Cor. 1:22; 5:5; Eph. 1:14). This word is "transliterated [into Greek] from the Hebrew [*ārābôn* (6162)]; literally, as a legal and commercial technical term, an advance transaction that guarantees the validity of a contract or a full purchase price *down payment, first installment, pledge*; figuratively in the NT, of the gift of the [Holy Spirit](#) to believers (2 Cor. 1:22)" ([Friberg](#)).

"[Inheritance](#)" is the [Genitive](#) of *kléronomia* (2817). Our [inheritance](#) as believers in Jesus appears to be unconditional (Eph. 1:14, 18). In other passages it seems to be performance-based (Col. 3:23-25). There are minimal behavioral standards for obtaining this [inheritance](#) (Eph. 5:5). This [New Covenant inheritance](#) is eternal (Heb. 9:15). This [inheritance](#) is imperishable, undefiled, unfading, reserved in heaven for those who are protected by God's power through faith for a [salvation](#) ready to be revealed in the last time (1 Pet. 1:4-5).

⁴³ Eph. 1:14 - with a view to the redemption: a literal rendering is "unto [redemption](#)" (*apolútrōsis*, 629). See the explanation of this word at the footnote on Eph. 1:7. It will be used again in Eph. 4:30. See the explanation of *apolútrōsis* under the glossary item [Redeem, Redemption](#). The [Holy Spirit](#) is given to us as a down payment on our [inheritance](#). His presence as the indwelling [Spirit](#) guarantees that God will actually [redeem](#) us from sin, decay, aging, death, hell, and enslavement to the [devil](#), for we are God's own personal possession!

⁴⁴ Eph. 1:14 - of God's own possession: "possession" is the [Genitive](#) of *peripotēsis* (4047), the act of preserving, or saving, or keeping or acquiring for oneself (adapted from [Friberg](#)). The words "God's own" are not present, and are appropriately supplied by the translators. Literally, it is simply "of the possession." Paul used this term only here in Ephesians, but also in 1 Thess. 5:9 of the believers' "obtaining" [salvation](#); in 2 Thess. 2:14 – God called the Thessalonians through Paul's [gospel](#) so they might "gain" the glory of Christ; in Heb. 10:39, the "preserving" of the soul; and in 1 Pet. 2:9, as here in Eph. 1:14, a people for God's own "possession."

- G 7 The goal of sealing: to the praise⁴⁵ of His glory.⁴⁶
- C 3 Prayer request for full knowledge of God 1:15-23
- D 1 Thanksgiving to God for the Ephesians' faith and love 1:15-16
- E 1 Paul's reason for praise – having heard of the Ephesians' 1:15
- G 1 Faith in the Lord Jesus: {15} For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus which *exists* among you⁴⁷
- G 2 Love for the saints: and your love for all the saints,⁴⁸

⁴⁵ Eph. 1:14 - to the praise of His glory: "Praise" is the [Accusative](#) of *épainos* (1868), used "as an expression of high evaluation" ([Friberg](#)). The word does not occur frequently in the NT, is used most often by Paul, and is used twice by Peter. This word occurs, in this letter, in Eph. 1:6, 12, 14. It is used here in the transitive sense, for Paul is saying that God's final [redemption](#) of His purchased possession (specifically here, of [Church-Age saints](#)) will accrue to the praise of His own glory (see the next footnote).

⁴⁶ Eph. 1:14 - of His glory: "Glory" is the [Genitive](#) of *dóxa* (1391), a multi-layered noun. "Glory" sometimes manifests itself in the visible display of blinding light (as in Luke 2:9; 9:31-32; John 1:14; 17:5, 24; Acts 22:11, and probably Acts 7:55). At other times it refers to the act (or in some cases the non-act) of giving credit and praise to God (Acts 12:23; see also Luke 17:18). Paul speaks frequently in Ephesians of giving God His proper praise and the credit which is due His magnificent and splendorous person (Eph. 1:6, 12, 14; 3:21). Elsewhere God is characterized as the "Father of glory" (Eph. 1:17), which probably describes both his visible brilliance, His infinite person, and his marvelous works. In Eph. 1:18, glory speaks of the splendor and magnificence of God's investment in the saints. In Eph. 3:13, Paul sees his troubles on behalf of the Ephesians as somehow accruing to their glory. (This must mean they are to feel that they are worth a great deal to Paul.) In Eph. 3:16, the wealth of God's glory must refer to His great power and magnificence.

⁴⁷ Eph. 1:15 - the faith in the Lord Jesus which *exists* among you: This is a bit of an awkward sounding translation. That is because the NASB editors typically try to stay as close to the Greek text as possible. The Greek text is even more awkward. It reads, literally, "On account of this, I also, having heard of the with-respect-to you faith in the Lord Jesus" "With-respect-to" or "according-to" is a legitimate translation of the very fluid preposition *katá* (2596). Paul uses it 24 X in 17 verses in Ephesians. In this letter it is usually translated "according to" or "in accordance with." That translation works perfectly well here. Most English translations simply omit the awkward (in English) wording and translate simply, "your faith."

Paul was here applauding the Ephesians' particular faith ("the faith," [Accusative](#) of *pístis*, 4102), used here in an active sense "as belief directed toward a person ... *confidence, faith, trust, reliance* (Matt. 9:2)" (excerpted from [Friberg](#)). Obviously, the faith of the Ephesians was anchored in the Lord ([Dative](#) of *kúrios*, 2962), Jesus.

"*Kúrios*" designates someone who has both power (ability, might) and authority (jurisdiction) over property (Mark 12:9, where it is translated, "owner") or persons (Luke 12:43, where it is translated as "master" of a slave). In religious use it designates God (Matt. 1:20, which speaks of an angel of the "Lord," i.e. God), who has absolute power and authority; and, more frequently, as here in Eph. 1:15, the Lord, Jesus (John 20:18; Rev. 19:16) who as the [Messiah](#) (Eph. 1:17) (God's Anointed [Prophet](#), [Priest](#), and [King](#)) also has absolute power and authority, but used only at the instruction and will of God the Father (heavily adapted from [Friberg](#)). Someone who has faith in the Lord Jesus, properly instructed, exercises faith in Him as God's [Messiah](#) (John 20:31; Eph. 1:17).

⁴⁸ Eph. 1:15 - and your love for all the saints: "Saints" is the plural [Accusative](#) case of *hágios* (40). Here with the article, "the saints," it refers to the "holy ones" or "set-apart-ones" who are the people of God, believers in Jesus as the [Messiah](#), members of the [Universal \(Catholic\) Church](#). See the appropriate footnote at Eph. 1:1 for a more extensive discussion of *hágios* (40). It last appeared in Eph. 1:13. It will appear again in Eph. 1:15.

It is important for us Christians to exhibit love (*agápê*, 26) toward all other believers, regardless of whether we happen to agree in all aspects with them or not. The noun refers to "...an attitude of appreciation resulting from a conscious evaluation and choice; used of divine and human love *love, devotion*" (excerpted from [Friberg](#)). *agápê*,

- E 2 Paul's thankfulness 1:16
- G 1 His ceaseless thanks: {16} do not cease giving thanks⁴⁹ for you,
- G 2 His concomitant prayers: while making mention of you in my prayers;⁵⁰
- D 2 The object of the request 1:17a
- E 1 {17} that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ,
- E 2 the Father of glory,⁵¹
- D 3 The content of the request: may give to you 1:17b

first appeared in Eph. 1:4. (See the appropriate footnote there for further information.) It will next appear in Eph. 2:4.

⁴⁹ Eph. 1:16 - giving thanks: the [Present Participle](#) of *eucharistēō* (2168), which primarily means expressing gratefulness to God *thank, give thanks to* (John 11:41); sometimes it is a prayer of thankfulness, especially at meals *give, or return thanks, bless* (Mark 8:6); sometimes as expressing gratitude generally *thank* (Rom. 16:4) (adapted from [Friberg](#)). Paul will use this word once again – in Eph. 5:20. The [present](#) tense aspect is reinforced by the negation of the [Present](#) tense of *paúō* (3973), used here in the [Middle](#) voice “to stop (oneself), *cease, leave off* (Luke 5:4)” ([Friberg](#)). Paul continually gives thanks to God for these Ephesian readers, who had believed in Jesus (Eph. 1:13, 15) and who possessed a tangible love for all the [saints](#) (Eph. 1:15). In Eph. 4:1-6:24 Paul will exhort these readers to adjust their walk (lifestyle) to take advantage of all the spiritual blessings they have received (Eph. 1:1-3:21).

⁵⁰ Eph. 1:16 - prayers: It is in his prayers ([Genitive](#) of *proseuchē*, 4335) that Paul gives thanks for the Ephesians and also offers up requests on their behalf. *Proseuchē* is a religious technical term describing a request for help, speaking to God (rarely to Christ), usually in the form of petition, vow, or wish *prayer* (1 Pet. 3:7) (adapted from [Friberg](#)). Paul will again refer to this process in Eph. 6:18, where he lists it as one of the tools with which to defend oneself against the wiles of the [Devil](#) and his minions.

⁵¹ Eph. 1:17 - the Father of glory: Literally, “the Father of the glory.” Paul repeatedly refers to God as “the Father” (here [Nominative](#) of *patēr*, 3962) in this letter – Eph. 1:2, 3, 17; 2:18; 3:14; 4:6; 5:20, 31; 6:2,4, 23. The other three occurrences refer to human fathers (Eph. 5:31; 6:2, 4). God is addressed as “the Father of the Lord Jesus Christ” (Eph. 1:3); He is the Father of all believers (Eph. 1:2); He is, simply, “the Father” (Eph. 2:18; 3:14; 5:20); He is “God the Father” (Eph. 6:23); He is “the Father of glory” (Eph. 1:17); and He is “one God and Father of all” (Eph. 4:6). God as Father is the begetter of all fathers and of every family ([Nominative](#) of *patriá* (3965). Our American culture continually and increasingly denigrates fathers and families. (Notice the commercials that mock stupid white men. Also notice the left's war against marriage between man and wife, along with its war against sexuality as God created it – its championing of so-called “transgenders” and its attempts to establish “transgender” rights in public restrooms. President Obama is responsible for great evil in this regard. A distortion of fatherhood and families is actually a war against God the ultimate Father and Creator of every family (Eph. 3:15). God will hold all these evil people accountable for their evil unless they repent.

Paul identifies God as “the Father of the glory” ([Genitive](#) of *dóxa*, 1391), “(1) as a manifestation of light *radiance, brightness*, (Acts 22:11); (2) as a manifestation of God's excellent power *glory, majesty* (Rom. 9:23) ...” ([Friberg](#)). In my opinion, both of these definitions are in order here. God is the personification of light (1 John 1:5), both metaphorically and literally. The first “speaking” act of God on Day 1 of Creation Week, after He had created the unformed earth and the framework of the heavens in which it was situated (Gen 1:1), and pursuant to the Spirit of God moving over the surface of the dark waters on the shapeless earth (Gen. 1:2), was to speak light into existence (Gen. 1:3), “Then God said, ‘Let there be light’; and there was light.” God the Father is the ultimate manifestation of “the glory.” “Glory” (*dóxa*, 1391) has already been used in Eph. 1:6, 12, 14, 17. It will again be used in Eph. 1:18; 3:13, 16, 21.

- E 1 a spirit of wisdom and of revelation ⁵²
- E 2 in the knowledge of Him. ⁵³
- D 4 The condition of the request – their past enlightenment: {18} *I pray that* ⁵⁴ the eyes of your heart may be enlightened, ⁵⁵ 1:18a
- D 5 The specifics of the full-knowledge in the request: so that you will know ⁵⁶ . . ." (1:18b) 1:18b-23

⁵² Eph. 1:17 - may give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation: Paul's prayer request was that God might give to his Ephesian readers a spirit of wisdom and revelation in full knowledge of Him. "Spirit" is the [Accusative](#) of *pneûma* ([4151](#)). In this context, and without the article, it is most likely Paul was requesting for them a human spirit of wisdom and revelation. They already possessed the [Holy Spirit](#) (Eph. 1:13-14). So we Christians need (and Paul was praying for us to have) an inner spirit / attitude / trait of wisdom ([Genitive](#) of *sophia*, [4678](#)), the God-given, yet humanly sought after ability to see all of life and issues from a wise, Godly perspective. The fear of the Lord is the beginning of wisdom (Psalm 111:10) (Psalm 110:10, LXX). This Godly wisdom comes by way of "revelation" ([Genitive](#) of *apokálupsis*, [602](#)), an "*uncovering, disclosing, revealing*" (excerpted from [Friberg](#)) from God. True wisdom (James 1:5; 3:17) and true revelation (Eph. 3:3) come from God. But we must also strive after wisdom, and we must exert effort to study God's Word, which encapsulates God's wisdom and revelation in written form.

⁵³ Eph. 1:17 - in the knowledge of Him: More literally, "in full knowledge of Him" (God). "Full knowledge" is the [Dative](#) of *epignōsis* ([1922](#)), which combines the preposition *epi* ([1909](#)) ("upon," along with many other nuances) with the ordinary word for "knowledge," *gnōsis* ([1108](#)). *Epignōsis* is full, complete precise knowledge. Often it is translated (in the NASB) simply as "knowledge" (e.g., Eph. 1:17; 4:13), but at times NASB translators render it more fully, as "real knowledge" (Php. 1:9), and as "true knowledge" (Col. 2:2; 3:10; 2 Pet. 1:3, 8). Paul wants his readers' human spirits to be characterized by wisdom and revelation in the *full knowledge* of God.

The verbal complement to *epignōsis* ([1922](#)) is *epiginōskō* ([1921](#)), to know thoroughly, accurately, and well. Some instructive examples: "No one *fully knows* the Son except the Father; nor does anyone *fully know* the Father except the Son, and anyone to whom the Son wills to reveal Him" (Matt. 11:27 – italicized words are my paraphrase of the verb in question). "For now we see in a mirror dimly, but then face to face; now I know (*ginōskō*, [1097](#)) in part, but then I will *know fully* (*epiginōskō*, [1921](#)) just as I also have been *fully known* (*epiginōskō*, [1921](#))" (italicized words are NASB's translation of the verb under consideration).

⁵⁴ Eph. 1:18 - *I pray that*: These italicized words do not appear in the Greek text. Eph. 1:18 continues the content of the prayer announced in Eph. 1:16, and begun in Eph. 1:17. Here is the content of Paul's prayer as he stated it: (1:17) "That the God of the Lord of us, Jesus Christ, the Father of the glory, might give to you a spirit of wisdom and revelation in full knowledge of Him, (1:18) having been enlightened – the eyes of your heart – so that you might know what is the hope of His calling, what is the wealth of the glory of His inheritance in the saints ..." (author's literal translation). The prayer carries on, but we will stop it there.

⁵⁵ Eph. 1:18 - the eyes of your heart may be enlightened: A very poetic and graphic way of requesting that his readers might REALLY understand the hope of God's calling along with the wealth of God's glorious inheritance in the saints. The text reads, literally, "Having been enlightened – the eyes of the heart [of you]" "Having been enlightened" is the Plural [Perfect Passive Participle](#) of *phōtízō* ([5461](#)). By using the [Perfect](#) along with the [Passive](#), Paul is praying that the eyes of their heart might arrive at and remain at a state in which they have been illuminated by means of the wisdom and revelation that come from God so that they might have "full knowledge" of God (Eph. 1:17), and further, might know the hope of His calling and the wealth of His inheritance in the saints. "Eyes" is the Plural [Accusative](#) of *ophthalmós* ([3788](#)). "Heart" is the [Genitive](#) of *kardia* ([2588](#)). The words "of you" (i.e. "your") appear in brackets in the [UBS 4](#) Greek edition. Centuries ago some copyist added the pronoun to make the meaning clearer. Again, Paul uses this poetic phrase to convey his prayer that his readers might really and fully understand all that God has in store for them.

⁵⁶ Eph. 1:18 - so that you will know: "Know" is the [Perfect Accusative Infinitive](#) of *oída* ([6063](#)). In this context it means "to perceive, recognize, understand" (adapted from [Friberg](#)). *Oída* seems, at times, to convey more of an intuitive knowledge, and *ginōskō* ([1097](#)), more of an experiential knowledge.

- E 1 what is the hope of His calling,⁵⁷ 1:18b
- E 2 what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints,⁵⁸ 1:18c
- E 3 The greatness of His power toward believers 1:19-23
 - G 1 The superlative of His power 1:19
 - H 1 The greatness of His power: {19} and what is the surpassing greatness of His power⁵⁹
 - H 2 The beneficiaries of His power: toward us who believe.⁶⁰

⁵⁷ Eph. 1:18 - what is the hope of His calling: “Hope” is the [Nominative](#) of *elpis* (1680), “an expected and awaited good *hope, expectation, prospect* (Acts 27:20)” ([Friberg](#)). According to Paul, before his Gentile readers embraced Jesus as the [Messiah](#), they had no hope, and were without God in the world (Eph. 2:12). But having responded affirmatively to God’s calling, they now possessed “the hope” (Eph. 1:18), and experienced the “one hope” of their calling (Eph. 4:4).

“Calling” here is the [Genitive](#) of the noun *klêsis* (2821), used, in this letter, in Eph. 1:18; 4:1, 14. *Klêsis* (2821) is essentially an invitation, and usually, in the NT, it speaks of God’s calling or inviting us to belong to Him and the Kingdom of His Son (Col. 1:13). God’s calling (invitation) is irrevocable (Rom. 11:29); is usually, but not always, extended to plain, ordinary people (1 Cor. 1:26); gives hope (Eph. 1:18; 4:4); carries with it a responsibility to walk in a manner worthy of that calling (Eph. 4:1; 2 Thess. 1:11; 2 Pet. 1:10); includes an “upward call” of God for those who are in Christ Jesus (Php. 3:14); is also called a “heavenly calling (Heb. 3:1); and is a “holy” calling, one which is not based upon our good works, but rather granted from eternity past on the basis of God’s own purpose and grace in Christ (2 Tim. 1:9).

⁵⁸ Eph. 1:18 - His inheritance in the saints: Literally, the text reads, “...What is the wealth of the glory of the [inheritance](#) of Him in the [saints](#).” Earlier, Paul had spoken of believers as having obtained an [inheritance](#) ([Aorist Passive](#) of *klêroō*, 2820) (Eph. 1:11). Later Paul indicated that we believers were [sealed](#) in Christ with the [Holy Spirit](#) of promise (Eph. 1:13), who is given as a pledge of our [inheritance](#) (*klêronomia*, 2817) (Eph. 1:14). Here, Paul states that God receives us, the [saints](#), as His [inheritance](#) (*klêronomia*, 2817)! What a glorious reality! “Because of the glorious grace (1:6) of the glorious Father (1:17), He will receive a glorious [inheritance](#) (1:18)” (Harold W. Hoehner, *TBKC, NT*, p. 620). We will see the word “[inheritance](#)” (*klêronomia*, 2817) once more, in Eph. 5:5. Believers are to “know with certainty that no immoral or impure person or covetous man who is an idolater, has an [inheritance](#) (*klêronomia*, 2817) in the kingdom of Christ and God” (Eph. 5:5).

⁵⁹ Eph. 1:19 - and what is the surpassing greatness of His power: The Greek text is dramatic – “and what is the unparalleled greatness of His power toward us, the ones believing...” (author’s translation).

The word I have translated “unparalleled” (NASB, “surpassing”) is the [Present Participle](#) of *huperballō* (5235), used only by Paul in 2 Cor. 3:10; 9:14; Eph. 1:19; 2:7; 3:19. The word combines two words, *huper* (5228), literally, “over, above” ([Friberg](#)) and *ballō* (906), to hurl or throw without regard to destination. The combined word, *huperballō* (5235), means, “strictly *throw over or beyond, excel in throwing*; in the NT as expressing a degree beyond comparison *go beyond, surpass all measure, go beyond all comprehension*” ([Friberg](#)). Paul wants believers to know the unquantifiably great power that God places at the disposal of the ones believing in Jesus and in God.

“Greatness” is *mégēthos* (3174), used only here in the NT. It refers to the “size, quantity or degree (of *greatness*” (Eph. 1:19) ([Friberg](#)).

“Power” is the [Genitive](#) of *dynamis* (1411), which here is the ability “to produce a strong effect *power, might, strength* (Acts 1:8), opposite *asthénia* (769) (weakness);” ([Friberg](#)). Paul wanted his readers (and us) to know that we believers possess an incalculably great power working on our behalf. He used this word in this letter in Eph. 1:19; 21; 3:7, 16, 20.

⁶⁰ Eph. 1:19 - toward us who believe: Literally “unto us, the believing ones.” That which I have translated, “the believing ones” is the [Present Participle](#) of *pisteuō* (4100), which means here to be convinced continually ([Present tense](#)) of the worthiness and integrity and power of God and His Messiah. It amounts to an active and ongoing

- H 3 The bench mark of His power: *These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might⁶¹
- G 2 The standard of His power 1:20-23
- H 1 The raising of Christ from death 1:20a
- J 1 The object of His power: {20} which He brought about⁶² in Christ,
- J 2 The supreme moment of His power:

committal of oneself to God and Christ and their kingdom for all of eternity.

⁶¹ Eph. 1:19 - *These are* in accordance with the working of the strength of His might: The alert reader will note that the first two words of this sentence are in italics, indicating they do not appear in the Greek text. The editors added them to fill out the meaning they thought the English reader needed. In my opinion, the plural “these” obscures the meaning. “In accordance with” translates the preposition *katá* (2596), typically “according to” in this context. But there are not multiple antecedents to the preposition, rather, only one. And that is the word “power” (*dúnamis*, 1411), which occurs earlier in this verse. Paul wants his readers to know the greatness of the power that works in us, the believing ones (Eph. 1:19a). That power is in accordance with the working (Accusative of *énérgēia*, 1753) (“function, activity; in the NT used of supernatural activity *energy, operation, working*” – Friberg) of the strength of His might which He exercised in raising Christ from the dead (Eph. 1:20)! That is powerful energy!

“...of the strength” – “strength” is the Genitive of *krátos* (2904), “denoting the possession of force or strength that affords supremacy or control; (1) of God *sovereignty, power, might, dominion* (1 Tim. 6:16); (2) of the devil *power, control* (Heb. 2:14); (3) concretely, *mighty deed, miracle* (Luke 1:51)” (Friberg). In the NASB, it is translated as “dominion” 6X (1 Tim. 6:16; 1 Pet. 4:11; 5:11; Jude 1:25; Rev. 1:6; 5:13); as some variation of the word “might” 3X – “mighty deeds” (Luke 1:51); “mightily” (Acts 19:20); “might” (Col. 1:11); as “strength” 2X (Eph. 1:19; 6:10) – because in both cases it appears in tandem with *ischús* (2479) [discussed in the next paragraph of this note]; and as “power” 1X (Heb. 2:14, where it is used in reference to a trait employed by the devil – the “power” of death.

“...of His might” – “might” is the Genitive of *ischús* (2479). It means “strength, power, might; used of the ability of human beings (Mark 12:30), of angelic power (2 Pet. 2:11), and as an attribute of God (Rev. 5:12)” (Friberg). [Technically, in Rev. 5:12, “might” is ascribed to the Lamb, not to God – JTB.] In the NASB it is translated “might” 5X (Eph. 1:19; 6:10; 2 Pet. 2:11; Rev. 5:12; 7:12); “strength” 4X (Mark 12:30, 33; Luke 10:27; 1 Pet. 4:11); and “power” 1X (2 Thess. 1:9). It is used with reference to human (inner) strength in Mark 12:30, 33; Luke 10:27; and in 1 Pet. 4:11 (where however, it is [human] “strength which God supplies”); with reference to God’s might (Eph. 1:19) and might ascribed to God (Rev. 7:12); with reference to the might of the Lord (Jesus?) (Eph. 6:10); almost certainly so in 2 Thess. 1:9; and might ascribed to the Lamb (Rev. 5:12); and finally, with reference to the might of angels (2 Pet. 2:11).

Paul is piling descriptive noun upon noun to make his point. When dissecting each word, it is easy to lose sight of where he is heading in this sentence. For the sake of perspective, let me give the reader my periphrastic / literal translation of Eph. 1:19-20. Paul wants his readers to know (Eph. 1:18), among other things (Eph. 1:18) “and what is the unparalleled greatness of His power toward us, the ones believing – according to the working of the (controlling) strength of His might (Eph. 1:19) which He set at work in the Anointed One, having raised Him from (among) (the) dead ones, and having seated (Him) at His right in the heavenlies” (Eph. 1:20), author’s translation. I have placed supplied (but necessary) words in parentheses (.). The sentence goes on in Eph. 1:21, but this is sufficient.

⁶² Eph. 1:20 - which He brought about: God exerted energy (3rd Person Singular Aorist Indicative Active of the verb *energēō*, 1754) in “the Christ” in a powerful way when He raised Him from the dead, etc. This verb is used in Eph. 1:11; 1:20; 2:2; 3:20. An examination of the English words used to translate this Greek verb in the NASB are instructive. 18X some variation of the verb “work” is used: “works” 7X; “work” 6X; “working” 2X; “effectually worked” 2X; “performs ... work” 1X. The other translations include “effective” 2X; “accomplish” 1X; “brought about” 1X – here in Eph. 1:20. If there is any virtue in consistency, and I think there is, a slightly better translation here would be “which He worked in the Anointed One,” etc. (author’s translation).

when He raised Him from the dead ⁶³

- H 2 The seating of Messiah 1:20b-21
- J 1 The place of seating 1:20b
- K1 and seated Him at His right hand ⁶⁴
- K2 in the heavenly places,
- J 2 The superiority of the seating: {21} far above ..." 1:21
- K1 all rule ⁶⁵

⁶³ Eph. 1:20 - which He brought about in Christ, when He raised Him from the dead: The standard of God's power in the NT era is His resurrection of Jesus, the Messiah, from the dead (Acts 1:22; 2:24, 31; 4:33; Rom. 1:3-4; Php. 3:10; 1 Pet. 1:3). The standard of God's power in the OT era was God's engineering of [Israel's](#) exodus from Egypt (Ex. 13:3; 15:13, 16; 20:1-2; Deut. 7:8; 24:18; 2 Sam. 7:23; 1 Chron. 17:21; Mic. 6:4).

A more literal translation of this phrase in Eph. 1:20 is as follows: "which He worked in the Anointed One, having raised Him from among the dead ones" (author's literal translation). The verb "He raised" (NASB) or "having raised" (JTB) is the [Nominative Masculine Singular Aorist Active Participle](#) of the verb *egeirō* (1453).

In its most literal sense this verb has to do with physically "raising up" or "assisting someone or some animal to get up" (Matt. 12:11; Acts 3:7; 10:26); or, alternatively when a person of his own accord "rises up" or "gets up" (Matt. 2:14, 21; 8:15, 26; 9:7, 19, 25; Acts 9:8). In a more figurative sense, it refers to awakening someone from sleep, or someone awakening from sleep (Matt. 1:24; 8:25; Acts 12:7; Eph. 5:14). In its most advanced figurative sense, it refers to raising someone from physical death (Matt. 10:8; 11:5; 14:2; 16:21; 17:9, 23; 20:19; 26:32; 27:52; 28:6, 7; Acts 3:15; 4:10; 5:30; Eph. 1:20; Col. 2:12; 1 Thess. 1:10; 2 Tim. 2:8; Heb. 11:19; 1 Pet. 1:21).

"...from the dead" – this is good Greek idiom – literally, "from (among) the dead ones." "...dead" is the [Genitive Masculine Plural](#) of the adjective *nekrós* (3498), "dead." Greek idiom typically looks at the plurality of physically dead people in this context. The Bible does speak about [spiritual death](#), but the context here is of [physical death](#).

Paul's point is that God displayed enormous power when He raised up Jesus from among the universe of dead people. This is the first time in history that someone was raised from among the dead with a glorified, resurrected body. Those whom Jesus (John 11:43-44) or Peter (Acts 9:36-42) raised from the dead during their ministries were still in their mortal bodies. They would inevitably die again. In God's great power, He raised Jesus from the dead never to die again! This is incredible power!

⁶⁴ Eph. 1:20 - and seated Him at His right hand: Jesus, as the Messiah, is presently seated at God's right hand (Matt. 22:44; 26:64; Mark 14:62; 16:19; Luke 20:42; 22:69; Acts 2:25, 33, 34; 5:31; 7:55-56; Rom. 8:34; Eph. 1:20; Col. 3:1; Heb. 1:3). His primary role at the present is to serve as the great High Priest, as the writer to Hebrews makes abundantly clear (Heb. 2:17; 3:1; 4:14, 15; 5:10; 6:20; 7:25-26; 8:1; 9:11). [Amillennialists](#) and even [Progressive Dispensationalists](#) believe Jesus is presently reigning as King, but He is not. How can He be reigning as King over [Israel](#) when the Jewish people do not yet recognize Him as their King? The rule depicted of the Messiah is one of ruling over the [Gentiles](#) with a rod of iron and shattering them like clay pottery (Psa. 2:4-9). That is certainly not happening today. Evil people are winning all over the world. So to say that Jesus is reigning today in any meaningful sense does not square with Scripture and does not square with reality. He is waiting for His kingdom (Psa. 110:1-2). Meanwhile He is serving as the perpetual Priest according to the order of [Melchizedek](#) (Psa. 110:4), himself a King/Priest (Gen. 14:18).

⁶⁵ Eph. 1:21 - far above all rule: "rule" is the [Genitive](#) of *archê* (746), "strictly *primacy*; ... (3) in relation to rank (*position of*) *power, rule, domain* (Eph. 1:21); as a person with authority or a supernatural being *ruler, authority* (Rom. 8:38)" ([Friberg](#)). This would include the ascended Jesus' superiority over any [angel](#) or [demon](#) powers (see [Thayer](#)). Of course he would be superior to any human rule or ruler. *archê* appears in this letter in Eph. 1:21; 3:10; 6:12.

- K2 and authority⁶⁶
- K3 and power⁶⁷
- K4 and dominion,⁶⁸
- K5 and every name that is named,⁶⁹
- L1 not only in this age⁷⁰
- L2 but also in the one to come.

⁶⁶ Eph. 1:21 - and authority: the [Genitive](#) Singular of *exousia* (1849), used 102 X in the Greek NT. NASB translates it as “authority” or “authorities” 72 X, as “power” or “powers” only 12 X, and as “right” 11 X, which is a synonym for “authority.” According to [Friberg](#), the word means “authority, right, power;” but in this context, meaning ... (6) as those in whom authority for ruling rests, both supernatural and human, especially in the plural *officials, authorities, dignitaries, (the) government* (Col. 1:16)” In Ephesians, the word is inconsistently translated in the NASB: as “authority” or “authorities” (Eph. 1:21; 3:10); as “power” or “powers” (Eph. 2:2; 6:12). In my opinion, there is no reason why this word could not be uniformly translated as the singular or plural of “authority” consistently in this letter. That is its preferred translation.

⁶⁷ Eph. 1:21 - and power: the [Genitive](#) Singular of *dúnamis* (1411), which emphasizes “brute” strength, inherent power, ability, capacity, capability, force, as opposed to having authority, right, or privilege. In this context, Jesus, as ascended Messiah possesses greater power, strength, and might than any other entity whether human or supernatural.

⁶⁸ Eph. 1:21 - and dominion: the [Genitive](#) Singular of *kuriótês* (2963), used only here in Ephesians, and elsewhere in Col. 1:16; 2 Pet. 2:10; Jude 1:8. It speaks “(1) of power and position as lord *lordship, dominion* (Jude 1:8); (2) plural, of supernatural beings possessing dominion, especially angelic powers *authorities, rulers, lordships* (Col. 1:16)” ([Friberg](#)). The ascended Messiah is above *every* (singular of *pâs*, 3956) lordship [note that *kuriótês* (2963) comes from *kúrios* (2962), which means “lord” or “master”], whether human or supernatural.

⁶⁹ Eph. 1:21 - and every name that is named: Jesus (whose name means “Yahweh is Salvation”), the ascended Messiah (Anointed Prophet, Priest, and King), possesses a name greater than that of any king or emperor or president, or leader such as Muhammad, Buddha, Karl Marx, or Charles Darwin, or supernatural being, such as Lucifer or Satan, or any other rival. Here, the name of Jesus is to be taken as formally and completely capturing the grandeur and essence of all that the [Messiah](#) is in His ascended state. He is the Supreme Being in human, but glorified, resurrected form. There is no greater person or power in all the universe.

“...every” is the [Genitive](#) Singular [Neuter](#) of the adjective *pâs* (3956) (“each” or “every” in the singular, as here, or “all” in the plural).

“...name” is the [Genitive](#) Singular [Neuter](#) of the noun *ónoma* (3686), here, probably the proper noun, or nominal classification by which an important person is identified.

“...that is named” literally, “being named” – the [Genitive](#) Singular [Neuter Present Passive Participle](#) of the verb *onomádzō* (3687), or in this case, “being formally identified.” Synonyms in this context would include “named,” “designated,” “called,” “entitled,” “designated,” “identified” (adapted in part from [Friberg](#)). The translation “and every name being named” is the preferred translation, which preserves, in English, the [consonance](#) of the noun and verb in Greek.

⁷⁰ Eph. 1:21 - not only in this age: “age” is the [Dative](#) Singular of *aiōn* (165), “era, time, age;” used here “(1) as a segment of contemporary time *lifetime, era, present age* (Luke 16:8);”

... and, in the next phrase, “but also in the one to come,” – “(4) ... of time to come *eternity, age to come* (Luke 20:35 ...)” ([Friberg](#)).

By “this age” Paul was referring to the present [Church Age](#), though he never uses that precise term. By “but also in the one to come,” Paul was referring both to the subsequent [Millennial Age](#) and the [Eternal State](#). The Messiah’s preeminence in power and authority will extend throughout the present and into the eternal future. Paul uses *aiōn* (165) in this letter in Eph. 1:21; 2:2, 7; 3:9, 11, 21.

- H 3 The subjection of all things under Christ: {22} And He put all things in subjection under His feet, 1:22a
- H 4 The placement of Christ as Head over all things in the [church](#) (it being): and gave Him as head over all things to the church,⁷¹ [1:22b]1:22b-23
- J 1 {23} which is His body,⁷² 1:23a
- J 2 the fullness of Him who fills all in all.⁷³ 1:23b

⁷¹ Eph. 1:22 - head over all things to the [church](#): Jesus (not [Peter](#), or any [pope](#)) is the head (*kephalê*, [2776](#)) of the [church](#) (*ekklêsia*, [1577](#)). For other Scriptural references to Christ as the Head of the [Church](#), see also Eph. 4:15; 5:23; Col. 1:18; 2:19. The [Church](#) of which Paul writes here is the [Universal \(Catholic\) Church](#), which is not coterminous with the [Vatican Church](#). The word “[church](#)” (*ekklêsia*, [1577](#)) is a compound word coming from *ek* ([1537](#)), meaning “out of, from, by, away from” ([Thayer](#)) and *kalêō* ([2564](#)), meaning, generally, “to call” (adapted from [Thayer](#)). Putting those two words together, we have the derived meaning, “called out ones.” *Ekklêsia* is used in the following senses in the Greek NT: “(1) in a general sense, as a gathering of citizens *assembly, meeting* (Acts 19:32); (2) as the assembled people of [Israel](#) *congregation* (Heb. 2:12); (3) as the assembled Christian community *church, congregation, meeting* (Rom. 16:5); (4) as the totality of Christians living in one place *church* (Acts 8:1); (5) as the universal body of believers *church* (Eph. 1:22)” ([Friberg](#)). In summary, the [church](#), as we translate the word in English, consists of Christ’s “called out ones” regardless of whether the reference is to the sum total of all believers everywhere, or to the “called out ones” of a particular location, such as Ephesus or Thessalonica.

⁷² Eph. 1:23 - which is His body: The [Universal Church](#) constitutes the [body of Christ](#), into which all believers in Christ are baptized by Jesus [by means of the Holy Spirit](#) at the moment they place their faith in Christ (1 Cor. 12:12-13). Mere [water baptism](#) cannot place us into the [body of Christ](#) any more than John’s baptism could make participants repentant (Matt. 3:5-10). Only Jesus’ Baptism [by means of the Spirit](#) can place believers in Christ into His Body, the [Church](#) (Matt. 3:11-12; Acts 1:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-13). It is best to understand Romans 6:1-7 as [Spirit Baptism](#), not [Water Baptism](#). [Christian Water Baptism is not necessary for regeneration or salvation](#). It is necessary, however, for obedience. The New Testament knows of no unbaptized believers. The uniform testimony is that people believed in Jesus, and were thus saved. Then they partook of water baptism. See also [Four Different Types of Baptism](#).

⁷³ Eph. 1:23 - the fullness of Him who fills all in all: Literally, this sentence fragment might be translated, “the fullness of the One – the all things in all places – filling for Himself” (author’s translation).

The term, “the fullness” (*to plêrōma*, [4138](#)), is [neuter](#) in gender, and probably refers back to “body” (*sō’ma*, [4983](#)), which also is [neuter](#) in gender. Paul is saying that the [Church](#), which has been (and is being) constituted as the “[Body](#)” of Christ (in a metaphorical/spiritual sense), is the “fullness” of the [Messiah](#). In other words the [Church](#), as the [Body of Christ](#), fills up and makes Jesus, the [Messiah](#), complete. No one who read, in the OT, the many prophecies concerning the [Messiah](#), would ever have dreamed that the [Messiah](#) would have been brought to a state of fullness or completeness by having a Body as complex and diverse as the [Church](#). But so it is. The [Church](#) makes the [Messiah](#) much more special than He would have been without it.

In both instances the word “all” *pas* ([3956](#)) is [neuter](#) plural in gender. But the first *pas* appears in the [Accusative](#) case, accompanied by the article, while the second *pas* appears in the [dative](#) case without an article. Thus, I feel justified in translating the first *pas*, with the article, as “the all things,” whereas I have translated the second *pas*, without an article, but preceded by the preposition “in” (*en*), as “in all places.”

The phrase, “the all things,” is an all-inclusive, amorphous “catch-all” that includes all created entities, whether animate (animals, men, angels), inanimate (plants, planets), or aggregate (the [church](#), [Israel](#), the [nations](#)). The phrase, “in all places,” includes not only the entire extent of the created universe, but the unseen (to us) world of angels, and of heaven itself – the abode of God – along with [New Jerusalem](#) under construction, along with any other place that exists out there.

The elliptical phrase, “the one ... filling for Himself” (*toū ... plêrouménou*), I have thus translated because “filling for Himself” stands for the [present](#) tense, middle voice, [participle](#) mood of *plêrōō* ([4137](#)). This person could be either God or Christ. I take it to refer to Christ Himself, the One for whom and through whom all things have been

B 2 God's Wealthily Gracious, Life-giving Salvation in Christ of Dead Sinners-- Both Jew and Gentile 2:1-10

- C 1 The believers' pathetic, evil-dominated plight in the past 2:1-3 (Gentile emphasis)
- D 1 Dead in sins: {1} And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,⁷⁴ 2:1
- D 2 Walked in sins: {2} in which you formerly walked⁷⁵ 2:2
- E 1 Dominated by the [world](#): according to the course of this world,⁷⁶

created (Col. 1:15-17).

The [Church](#), the [Body of Christ](#), is the full and complete expression of Christ, for it gathers into one body both believing [Jew](#) and [Gentile](#), and it is the greatest expression of the [Messiah](#), being both His body and His bride. This does not mean, however, that either believing [Israel](#), or believing [Gentiles](#) outside the [Church](#) in other ages are either eclipsed by the [Church](#) or are irrelevant, for all three entities will exist forever upon [New Earth](#) and in its eternal capital city, [New Jerusalem](#) (Rev. 21:1-22:5).

⁷⁴ Eph. 2:1 - And you were dead in your trespasses and sins: This phrase describes the Ephesians (and all other people) before trusting in Jesus as the [Messiah](#). They were constantly living ([Present Participle](#) of *eimi*, [1510](#)) in the state of being dead (*nekrós*, [3498](#)) (used also in Eph. 1:20; 2:5; 5:14) in their trespasses (*paráptōma*, [3900](#) – used also in Eph. 1:7; 2:5) and sins (*hamartia*, [266](#), used only here in Eph.). This death is [spiritual death](#). There are those who object to the notion that God [chose](#) us for Himself (Eph. 1:4 – [Aorist](#) Middle of *eklégō*, [1586](#)) without reference to any allowance that we would one day trust in Jesus. They are afraid a Biblical understanding of God's [election](#) will dampen evangelistic effort. Many also wish to make an allowance for man's "[free will](#)." But how can a man who is constantly living in a state of [spiritual death](#) be free to make any spiritual overtures toward God? Dead men do nothing! Furthermore, Paul's depiction of man in Romans 3:10-19 is damning. Unsaved people, unaided by God, can make no move whatever toward Him. Any human movement toward God at all always begins with God's initiative, not man's! Moreover, if God did not choose some for salvation, evangelism would be utterly futile. None would ever respond!

Paul drives six nails into the coffin of men without Christ. This is the first. (1) They are in a perpetual state of [spiritual deadness](#) in their trespasses and sins.

⁷⁵ Eph. 2:2 - in which you formerly walked: "walked" is the [Aorist](#) of *peripatēō* ([4043](#)). Literally, it means, "walked around." This is a Greek idiom for "lived your lifestyles." Not only were his readers formerly perpetually [dead](#) in their trespasses and sin, they characteristically conducted their lifestyles with these vices!

This is the second nail Paul drives into the coffin of men without Christ. (1) The first was that they are perpetually [dead](#) in their trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:1). (2) The second is that they characteristically are engaged in a lifestyle of committing trespasses and sins (Eph. 2:2). How much "[free will](#)" does unregenerate man possess?

This verb is used 8X in this letter: Eph. 2:2, 10; 4:1, 17, 17; 5:2, 8, 15.

⁷⁶ Eph. 2:2 - according to the course of this [world](#): Better, and more literally, "according to the age of this [world](#);" and even more colloquially, "according to the era of this [world](#)." NASB's "course," (more literally "age," or more colloquially, "era") is the [Accusative](#) of *aiōn* ([165](#)), which NASB editors translated as some variation of "forever" 49 X; as "age" or "ages" 26 X; and with several other variations multiple times; but as "course," only once. Why they did so here is beyond my comprehension. Ever since the fall of man, this present [world](#) has been under the aegis of the [Devil](#), and Paul refers to the present-day workings of this [world](#) as being "the age (era) of the world."

In the NT, "[world](#)" (*kósmos*, [2889](#)) appears frequently as an evil, [Satanic](#)-inspired place with a negative connotation when used, as here, in ethical contexts. Some of these are as follow: (1) The world hates Jesus (John 7:7); (2) Satan is the ruler of this world (John 12:31; 16:11); (3) The world cannot give peace (John 14:27); (4) The world hates followers of Jesus (John 15:18, 19; 17:14; 1 John 3:13); (5) The [Holy Spirit](#) convicts the world of sin, righteousness, and judgment (John 16:8); (6) The world is a source of tribulation for believers (John 16:33); (7) Believers are not "of the world" (John 17:14, 16); (8) The world does not know God (John 17:25); (9) The world has its own, ungodly wisdom (1 Cor. 1:20, 21) which is foolishness to God (1 Cor. 3:19); (10) The world will be

E 2 Dominated by Satan

G 1 according to the prince of the power of the air,⁷⁷G 2 of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience.⁷⁸

condemned (1 Cor. 11:32); **(11)** The world has a deadly sorrow (2 Cor. 7:10); **(12)** The world emits an aura of darkness, crookedness, and perversity (Php. 2:15); **(13)** The world has its “elementary principles” which are inimical to the values of Christ (Col. 2:8, 20); **(14)** Friendship with the world is hostility toward God. Whoever wishes to be a friend of the world makes himself an enemy of God (James 4:4). **(15)** The world is characterized by a corruption that provokes “lust” (meaning it emits a strong attraction) (2 Pet. 1:4); **(16)** The world defiles (2 Pet. 2:20); **(17)** The Christian is not to love the world or the things in the world. If he does so, the love of the Father is not in him (1 John 2:15); **(18)** Everything that is in the world is characterized by the lust of the flesh, the lust of the eyes, and the boastful pride of life. None of this comes from the Father (1 John 2:16); **(19)** The world is temporary, passing away. So also its lusts (1 John 2:17); **(20)** The world does not know believers because it never knew God (1 John 3:1); **(21)** The world is characterized by deceptive false prophets and the spirit of antichrist (1 John 4:1, 3; 2 John 1:7); **(22)** The One who is in the believer is greater than the one who is in the world (1 John 4:4); **(23)** The world listens to its own (1 John 4:5); **(24)** Whatever is born of God conquers the world by virtue of his faith (1 John 5:4, 5); **(25)** The whole world lies in the power of the evil one (1 John 5:19); and, finally, **(26)** The time will come when the kingdom of the world will become the kingdom of our Lord and of his Christ, who will reign forever (Rev. 11:15).

This is the third nail Paul drives into the coffin of the unregenerate person – he characteristically lives his whole life powerfully influenced by the evil world in which he is immersed. Here is a reprise of the three nails in the coffin of an unbeliever: **(1)** He is spiritually dead. **(2)** He characteristically is engrossed in committing trespasses and sins. **(3)** He is powerfully influenced by the era of the evil world in which he lives. How much “[free](#)” [will](#) does he have?

⁷⁷ Eph. 2:2 - according to the prince of the power of the air: more literally, “according to the ruler of the authority of the air”

“...prince” is the [Accusative](#) of *árchōn* (758), used 37 X in the NT, and translated by NASB as “ruler” or “rulers” 29 X, but as “prince” only once, here. (Why not “ruler” here?) This is the only occurrence of *árchōn* in the letter to the Ephesians.

“...power” is the [Genitive](#) of *exousía* (1849), and is used 102 X in the Greek NT. NASB translates it as “authority” or “authorities” 72 X, as “power” or “powers” only 12 X, and as “right” 11 X, which is a synonym for “authority.” The NASB editors were inconsistent in Ephesians. They translated it as “authority” in Eph. 1:21 and “authorities” in Eph. 3:10. But in Eph. 2:2 they translated it as “power” and in Eph. 6:12 as “powers.” If Paul had meant “power,” a much more characteristic word would have been *dúnamis* (1411), universally translated as “power” in Eph. 1:19, 21; 3:7, 16, 20. I suspect the NASB translators were unduly influenced by desiring this well-known reference to the [Devil](#) to sound like the KJV. “Authority” would have been a better choice.

“...air” is transliterated (in English) from the [Genitive](#) of the Greek *aêr* (109), and refers to the air or atmosphere. It is universally translated as “air” in NASB. The air, or atmosphere surrounding earth seems to be the particular domain of Satan.

Although the [Devil](#) has to report to God, presumably up in heaven, God’s abode (Job 1:6; 2:1), his characteristic target is the planet Earth (Job 1:7; 2:2), where he always seeks to subvert humans to follow himself instead of God (Gen. 3:1-7). We are told that the entire earth reclines under the influence of the “Evil One” (1 John 5:19).

This is the fourth nail which Paul drives into the coffin of the unregenerate person – he lives his life dominated by the evil influence of the [Devil](#). We have already learned that unsaved man is (1) spiritually dead; (2) characteristically living his life committing trespasses and sins; (3) powerfully influenced in the era begun in Genesis 3 by the evil world in which he lives; and here, (4) powerfully influenced by the [Devil](#), the ruler of the authority of the air which surrounds earth. How much “[free will](#)” to seek and obey God does the unbeliever have?

⁷⁸ Eph. 2:2 - of the spirit that is now working in the sons of disobedience: “spirit” is the [Genitive](#) of *pneúma* (4151), used previously in Eph. 1:13 (where it refers to the [Holy Spirit](#)) (see a more extensive note on *pneúma* there); Eph. 1:17 (where it refers to a human spirit of wisdom and revelation); and now in Eph. 2:2 (where it refers to the evil spirit of the [Devil](#) himself).

This evil spirit is said to be the one presently “working” ([Present Neuter Participle](#) of *energēō* (1754)). The [Devil](#) is continually energizing the unregenerate to perform acts of disobedience!

“...the sons of disobedience” (literally, “the sons of the disobedience”) speaks of the people (plural of *huiós*, 5207) who are characterized by “the disobedience” ([Genitive](#) of *apeitheia*, 543), “...obstinate opposition to the divine will” ([Thayer](#)); “in the NT in relation to God *disobedience*; often shown as the result of *apistia* (570),

- D 3 Situated among the sons of disobedience: {3} Among them we too all formerly lived⁷⁹ 2:3a
- E 1 Dominated by the strong desires of the flesh: in the lusts of our flesh,⁸⁰
- E 2 Performing indulgently: indulging the desires
- G 1 of the flesh
- G 2 and of the mind,⁸¹
- D 4 Innately destined for God's wrath: and were by nature children of

unbelief" ([Friberg](#)). Since Paul used the article ("the disobedience"), he was likely looking at the specific human disobedience that spawned all other human disobediences – the opposition of Adam to God's will in the Garden of Eden (Gen. 3:1-7; Rom. 5:12). Unregenerate humans are characterized as being the descendants of "the disobedience" and energized by the [Devil](#) himself! How much [freedom](#) to do good and to choose God do unbelievers possess? *Apeitheia* is used by Paul in Rom. 11:30, 32; Eph. 2:2; 5:6; and by the writer of Hebrews in Heb. 4:6, 11.

⁷⁹ Eph. 2:3 - Among them we too all formerly lived: Paul has been addressing the [Gentiles](#) ("you" plural, Eph. 1:1-2). He has been indicting their destructive lifestyles in which they rebelled against God. Now he includes himself and his Jewish counterparts "we too all." "Among them" refers to the sinful [Gentiles](#). "We too all" includes all Jewish people, who are also sinful. The word "formerly" means "then, at that time" (*poté*, [4218](#)). The word "lived" translates the [Aorist](#) plural [passive](#) voice of *anastréphō* ([390](#)). Used [passively](#) it has a "reflexive sense of turning back and forth in a place *live, stay* (Matt. 17:22); figuratively, of moral conduct *act, behave, live* (1 Tim. 3:15)" ([Friberg](#)). It is in this last figurative, moral sense that Paul uses the verb here. The [Aorist](#) tense is used here as a "Gnomic [Aorist](#)," which has a timeless, summary aspect – summarizing our lives, we (unregenerate Jewish people) also lived the same way as you [Gentiles](#) – we all lived as "the sons of the disobedience," etc.

⁸⁰ Eph. 2:3 - in the lusts of our flesh: This is the fifth nail which Paul drives into the coffin of unregenerate people – we lived our lives dominated by the lusts ([Dative](#) plural of *epithumía*, [1939](#)) [used here "... (3) in a bad sense of unrestrained desire for something forbidden *lust, craving, evil desire* (1 Tim. 6:9)" ([Friberg](#))] of our flesh ([Genitive](#) Singular of *sárx*, [4561](#))." This is a noun with a complex series of meanings ([Friberg](#) assigns eight). It is in this 8th sense that Paul used it here – "(8) in an ethical sense in Paul's epistles (a) as a sinful and sensual power tending toward sin and opposing the Spirit's working *flesh* (Rom. 7:25; Gal. 5:17), opposite *pneûma* ([4151](#)) (*spirit*)" My definition of "flesh" in this sense is "the sin-cursed and dominated aspects of our mortal bodies."

We have already learned that unsaved man is (1) spiritually dead; (2) characteristically living his life committing trespasses and sins; (3) powerfully influenced in the era begun in Genesis 3 by the evil world in which he lives; (4) powerfully influenced by the [Devil](#), the ruler of the authority of the air which surrounds earth; and here (5) conducting his life dominated by the strong, evil desires of his flesh. How much "free will" to seek and obey God does the unbeliever have? If God had not [chosen](#) some to [salvation](#) before the foundation of the world (Eph. 1:4), none would desire God, and none would seek him (Rom. 3:9-18). The term "flesh" here can be considered to be synonymous with our "[Old Sin Nature](#)," with which all, including the virgin Mary, and excluding Jesus, were born.

⁸¹ Eph. 2:3 - indulging the desires of the flesh and of the mind: "indulging" ([Present Participle](#) of *poiëō*, [4160](#)), an exceedingly flexible and basic verb with the broad definition of "do" or "make." Paul uses it ten times in Ephesians, with a variety of translations in the NASB. "Indulging" captures the negative, ongoing tenor of the context here. "Desires" is the [Accusative](#) Plural of *thélēma* ([2307](#)), used 4 X in this letter – Eph. 1:1; 2:3; 5:17; 6:6 – and usually translated "will." "Flesh," once again, is the [Genitive](#) Singular of *sárx*, ([4561](#)), while "mind" is actually the [Genitive](#) Plural of *diánoia* ([1271](#)), which means here the ways of thinking of ungodly people who are spiritually dead and heavily influenced by the [world](#), the flesh, and the [devil](#). By way of example, our American society is presently (2015) beset by [officials in the Obama administration](#) who think they are being compassionate to "transgender" people by allowing them to use any bathroom they feel like. But in reality, these officials, including our President, are flaunting a godless, perverted morality and jamming it down the throats of all American citizens. That is the kind of thinking characteristic of unregenerate people of which Paul writes. "Professing to be wise, they became fools ..." (Rom. 1:22).

wrath,⁸² even as the rest. 2:3b

C 2 God's gracious gift of salvation by means of faith 2:4-10

D 1 The Divine-human circumstances attending this gift 2:4-5a

E 1 God's character: {4} But God, being rich in mercy,⁸³ 2:4

E 2 God's motivation: because of His great love with which He loved us,⁸⁴

⁸² Eph. 2:3 - and were by nature children of wrath, even as the others: “by nature” is the [Dative](#) singular of *phúsis* (5449), [Friberg's](#) meaning #3 – “*natural endowment, native condition* inherited from one’s ancestors (Gal. 2:15; Eph. 2:3).”

“Children ([Nominative](#) plural of *téknon*, 5043) of wrath ([Genitive](#) singular of *orgê*, 3709). In this context “children of wrath” depicts unregenerate humans as those who have inherited from their forebears the spiritual trait of rebellion against God and are thus perpetually the objects of God’s wrath. Similar designations would include “accursed children” (2 Pet. 2:14) (literally, “children of curse”). A related designation is “children of the [devil](#)” (1 John 3:10). A related contrast would be “children of light” (Eph. 5:8).

“Even as the others” – i.e. all of mankind, both Jewish and Gentile.

“Wrath” is *orgê* (3709), and appears, in the case of God, at least, to be a settled state of anger against His enemies for their injustice, opposition, and antipathy. By comparison, “rage” (*thumos*, 2372) is a precipitous flaring up of outrage at injustice or slight. Descriptive examples of *thumos* include the translation “rage” (Luke 4:28; Acts 19:28) and “outbursts of anger” (Gal. 5:20). Elsewhere, unfortunately, both *orgê* and *thumos* are often translated as “wrath” in the NASB, which makes it impossible to distinguish the two in the English text. *Thumos* is frequently translated as “wrath” in the book of Revelation, where it is used ten times, more than in any other NT book. This is instructive, because God’s settled wrath (*orgê*) throughout long ages now, in the book of Revelation, erupts into the more passionate and volatile outrage (*thumos*).

This is the sixth and final nail in the coffin of mankind. We have already learned that unsaved man is (1) spiritually dead; (2) characteristically living his life committing trespasses and sins; (3) powerfully influenced in the era begun in Genesis 3 by the evil world in which he lives; (4) powerfully influenced by the [Devil](#), the ruler of the authority of the air which surrounds earth; (5) conducting his life dominated by the strong, evil desires of his flesh; and finally (6) “children of wrath,” that is people inevitably destined, because of their sinfulness, to experience the wrath of God. How much [freedom](#) does unsaved man have to reach out to God on his own? In my opinion, unless God makes a move on man’s behalf, man is so hopelessly entangled in the dire effects of sin that he will never make a move toward God. The last invitation in Scripture is this: The Spirit and the bride say, “Come.” And let the one who hears say, “Come.” And let the one who is thirsty come; let the one who wishes take the water of life without cost. (Rev. 22:17). That is true. And yet, Jesus clearly said, “No one can come to Me unless the Father who sent Me draws him...” (John 6:44a).

⁸³ Eph. 2:4 - But God, being rich in mercy: “But God” is the only answer for the human dilemma! Though man is hopeless dead spiritually, overpowered by his environment, dominated by his flesh, and destined to experience the wrath of God, BUT GOD – But God is rich in mercy! “Being” is the [Nominative Present Participle](#) of *eimi* (1510). God is *always* rich in mercy. That is his character. That is just the way he is. “Rich” is the [Nominative](#) singular of the adjective *plousios* (4145), “*rich, wealthy, well-to-do*” ([Friberg](#)), here used figuratively of God’s wealth in the spiritual realm. Paul uses it only here in this letter.

In what is God wealthy? – “in mercy” ([Dative](#) of *éleos*, 1656), which is generally, “kindness or good will towards the miserable and the afflicted, joined with a desire to help them” ([Thayer](#)). The word means “mercy, compassion, used of attitudes of both God and man.” It conveys “an attitude and emotion roused by the affliction of another *pity, compassion, sympathy* (Luke 1:78) ...” ([Friberg](#)). Paul uses “mercy” only once in Ephesians. Far more frequently in this letter (12 X) he uses the word “grace” (*châris*, 5485), which signifies, in this context, God’s favorable attitude of goodwill toward sinners who trust in Jesus the Messiah, which grace is extended entirely apart from any works or merit on their part (Rom. 3:24; 4:4, 16; 5:20; 11:6; Eph. 2:7-8).

⁸⁴ Eph. 2:4 - because of His great love with which He loved us: God’s great love ([Accusative](#) of the noun *agápê*, 26) (see more on this word at Eph. 1:4) is that which motivated Him to make us alive in Christ even when we were spiritually dead in our transgressions! It was God’s great love (*agápê*, 26) with which He loved ([Aorist](#) of the verb *agapáō*, 25) us that compelled Him to do whatever it would take to redeem us. The “point action” of the [Aorist](#) tense

- E 3 Man's condition: {5} even when we were dead in our transgressions,⁸⁵ 2:5a
- D 2 The Divine activities attending this gift 2:5b-6
- E 1 God's activity – co-enlivened us: made us alive together with Christ⁸⁶ 2:5b
- E 2 God's motivation: (by grace you have been saved),⁸⁷ 2:5c
- E 3 God's activity – co-resurrected us: {6} and raised us up

here focuses on God's supreme act of love, His sending of His own son to become man (John 1:14) and die to pay for our transgressions (John 3:16). This, and this alone, could secure [forgiveness](#) (Acts 13:38-39) and [eternal life](#) (John 3:16-18; 10:27-29; 11:25-27) for those who trust in Jesus as the [Messiah](#).

⁸⁵ Eph. 2:5 - even when we were dead in our transgressions: God's great love for us humans is all the more remarkable since we were [spiritually dead](#) ([Accusative](#) plural of *nekrós*, [3498](#)) in our transgressions ([Dative](#) plural of *paráptōma*, [3900](#)), deviations from that which God has revealed is the right way to live, *false step, sin, transgression ...*" ([Friberg](#)). This noun is usually translated as "transgression(s)" (16 X) in the NASB. It is translated as "trespass(es)" 4 X – in 2 Cor. 5:19; Gal. 6:1; Eph. 1:7; 2:1. Paul has already spoken of [spiritual death](#) in Eph. 2:1. He speaks of "transgressions" / "trespasses" 3 X in this letter – Eph. 1:7; 2:1, 5.

⁸⁶ Eph. 2:5 - made us alive together with Christ: "made us alive together" translates the [Aorist](#) singular of the verb *sudzōpoiēō* ([4806](#)), used only here and in Col. 2:13 in the NT. Though we were [spiritually dead](#) in our trespasses and sins, the moment we trusted in Jesus, God performed a spiritual "time warp" on us – He raised us up from the dead (spiritually) along with Christ. The believer in Jesus is said to be "in Christ." God identifies us with Christ in His death (Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20) and in His resurrection (Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2:5; Col. 2:13). We believers still await our physical resurrection (1 Cor. 15:50-58; 1 Thess. 4:13-18). Another term for spiritual resurrection along with Christ is "[regeneration](#)" (Tit. 3:5). A nearly identical concept is the "new birth" or being "born again" (John 3:3, 7). Both the Vatican Church and the Lutheran Church believe that water baptism regenerates people. This is not a correct understanding of Scripture. See the Glossary entry on [Regeneration](#). See also the subsequent footnote on Eph. 2:5 "(by grace you have been saved)."

⁸⁷ Eph. 2:5 - (by grace you have been saved): "by grace" is the [Dative](#) of the noun *cháris* ([5485](#)) (see an extensive discussion of this word in the footnote at Eph. 1:2). In this letter, Paul is ecstatic about God's favorable disposition toward sinners who are spiritually dead in their trespasses and sin. Here he has in mind those sinners who have been touched by the grace of God in such a way that they have responded in faith and have been [saved](#) from eternal damnation. The Greek text translated "you have been saved" is instructive. Literally, this entire phrase reads, "by grace you exist, having been saved." My translation "you exist" acknowledges the 2nd Person Plural [Present](#) tense of the simple verb of being, *eimí* ([1510](#)); "having been saved" translates the [Perfect Passive Participle](#) of the verb *sōdzō* ([4982](#)). We who are believers in Jesus as the Messiah (God's Anointed Prophet, Priest, and King) presently exist in a state of having been saved the moment we trusted in Jesus. We are saved by God's grace, not by any works we perform, as Paul will delineate in Eph. 2:8-10. It is [Spirit baptism](#) (Matt. 3:11-12; Rom. 6:1-7; 1 Cor. 12:12-13), not [water baptism](#), contrary to the view of the [Vatican](#) ([1213](#); [1215](#); [1263](#); [1265](#); [1267](#)), that regenerates a believer and places him in the [Body of Christ](#) the moment he believes in Jesus. There are no good works, such as baptism, or rituals of [penance](#), or [sacraments](#), or rites of "[praying for the dead](#)" we can perform which will earn us grace. Grace is unmerited favor, and can never be earned. We are saved completely by grace (and there is nothing we can do to earn grace) and grace alone. We are justified by our works in the sense that they vindicate our faith (James 2:21-25; compare Eph. 2:10), but there is no sense in which we can earn our salvation by any works. Salvation is by grace alone through faith alone, utterly apart from any works (Eph. 2:8-10). Works are the result of our salvation, not the cause of it. Works prove our salvation, but they can never cause it or contribute to it. See also [Four Different Types of Baptism](#).

with Him,⁸⁸ 2:6a

- E 4 God's activity – co-seated us: and seated us with Him⁸⁹ in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus, 2:6b
- D 3 The Divine purpose of this gift: The showcasing of His grace toward us in Christ 2:7
- E 1 The time of the display: {7} so that in the ages to come⁹⁰
- E 2 The spectacle of the display: He might show the surpassing riches of His grace⁹¹

⁸⁸ Eph. 2:6 - raised us up with Him: the 3rd Person [Aorist Indicative](#) of *sunegeirō* (4891), used in the NT only 3 X, and all by Paul – here, and in Col. 2:12; 3:1. This verb means “literally *cause to rise up or wake up with one another*; figuratively, of the believer’s participation in the resurrection life and power of Jesus; (1) active *raise up together* (Eph. 2:6); passive *be raised up with* (Col. 2:12)” ([Friberg](#)). Col. 3:1 is also used in the [Passive](#) voice.

The moment a human believes in Jesus, God performs a marvelous “time warp” with Him. Because the believer in Jesus is, the moment he believes, baptized by the [Holy Spirit](#) into the [body of Christ](#) (1 Cor. 12:12-13), God instantly also takes that believer back spiritually with the Messiah through the same death, resurrection, and ascension which He experienced! What marvelous truths! So Paul will argue, in Col. 3:1-2, “Therefore, if you have been raised up (*sunegeirō*, 4891) with Christ, keep seeking the things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God. Set your mind on things above, not on the things that are on the earth.”

⁸⁹ Eph. 2:6 - seated us with Him: these four English words translate but one in Greek, the 3rd Person Singular [Aorist Indicative](#) of *sugkathizō* (4776), used only here and in Luke 22:55. It means, transitively, “cause to sit down with” or “seat together with” (Eph. 2:6); intransitively, “sit down together with” (Luke 22:55) ([Friberg](#)). Once again, God does an incredible “time warp” with those who believe in Jesus. (1) He crucifies them together with Christ (retroactively) (Rom. 6:6; Gal. 2:20); (2) He raises them together with Christ (retroactively) (Gal. 2:20; Eph. 2:5; Col. 2:13); and (3) He seats them together with Christ (retroactively) at the right hand of God (Eph. 2:6). This happens to all of us believers, not because we have been baptized in water (which only can give us a good conscience – 1 Pet. 3:21), but because we have been baptized into the [body of Christ](#) by means of the [Holy Spirit](#) (1 Cor. 12:12-13). See [Four Different Types of Baptism](#).

⁹⁰ Eph. 2:7 - in the ages to come: literally, “in the ages, the ones coming ...”; “ages” is the [Dative Plural](#) of *aiōn* (165), which Paul uses in this letter in Eph. 1:21; 2:2, 7; 3:9, 11, 21; “to come,” or “coming” is the [Dative Present Plural Participle](#) of *epérchomai* (1904). Paul certainly took a long view of Christianity. God performed acts of mercy on the ones whom He chose, rescuing them from the clutches of sin, death, [Devil](#), flesh, and world so that He might demonstrate the wealth of His mercy toward them throughout the rest of eternity!

⁹¹ Eph. 2:7 - the surpassing riches of His grace: “surpassing” is the [Accusative Singular Neuter Present Participle](#) of *hyperbállō* (5235), literally, throwing over or beyond any thing ([Thayer](#)); “in the NT, as expressing a degree beyond comparison *go beyond, surpass all measure, go beyond all comprehension*” ([Friberg](#)). It is used only by Paul and only as a [Present Participle](#) in 2 Cor. 3:10; 9:14; Eph. 1:19; 2:7; 3:19.

“...riches” translates the [Accusative Singular Neuter](#) of *ploutos* (4149), “wealth.”

“...of His grace” – “grace” is the [Genitive Feminine Singular](#) of *cháris* (5485), used 12 X by Paul in the first four chapters of this letter (beginning at Eph. 1:2, which note see). Here it means the “kindness, grace, favor, helpfulness” ([Friberg](#)) God has exhibited specifically for those whom He has chosen. Note carefully, that God extends His grace toward all people in that Christ died for the entire world (John 1:29, 36; 3:16), not merely for the elect, as some Calvinists maintain. However, in this context, Paul is describing the surpassing wealth of God’s grace He will exert through Jesus Christ throughout the coming ages on behalf of those whom He has redeemed from the clutches of sin, death, the [devil](#), the world, and the flesh (Eph. 2:1-7).

G 1 in kindness ⁹² toward us

G 2 in Christ Jesus.

D 4 The gracious nature of this gift 2:8

E 1 Its basis: {8} For by grace ⁹³

E 2 Its result: you have been saved ⁹⁴

E 3 Its means: through faith; ⁹⁵

⁹² Eph. 2:7 - kindness: [Dative](#) of *chrêstôtês* ([5544](#)), here, as a gracious attitude *goodness, kindness* (Rom. 2:4), opposite *apotomia* ([663](#)), “severity” ([Friberg](#)). It is a synonym for “grace,” but of course, Paul had to use a different word.

⁹³ Eph. 2:8 - For by grace: This sentence begins one of the central passages (Eph. 2:8-10) on grace and faith and salvation and works in the entire Bible. This Scripture teaches us that it is by grace (*châris*, [5485](#)) that we Christians have been saved. “Grace” is used here “as a religious technical term for God’s attitude toward human beings *kindness, grace, favor, helpfulness* (John 1:16, 17; Eph. 2:8)” ([Friberg](#)). Grace is God’s favor toward those who believe in Jesus completely apart from any presumed merit achieved through human good works. There is nothing we humans can *do* to earn grace. The two are antithetical.

Unfortunately, the [Vatican Church](#) (Roman Catholic Church) takes the position that, in some measure grace can be earned by the performance of “external, visible ceremonies.” By this is meant the seven “sacraments” of the Church. Here is a quotation from the [Catholic Encyclopedia](#) under the heading of “The necessity and the nature of the sacramental system” –

But, if it is known that God has appointed external, visible ceremonies as the means by which certain graces are to be conferred on men, then in order to obtain those graces it will be necessary for men to make use of those Divinely appointed means.

By way of further illustration, the [Vatican Church](#), in its Catechism [paragraph 1213](#), states this about the “Sacrament of Baptism” –

Holy Baptism is the basis of the whole Christian life, the gateway to life in the Spirit (*vitae spiritualis ianua*), and the door which gives access to the other sacraments. Through Baptism we are freed from sin and reborn as sons of God; we become members of Christ, are incorporated into the Church and made sharers in her mission: “Baptism is the sacrament of regeneration through water in the word.”

Thus we see that the [Vatican Church](#) believes we can earn grace through obedient participation in the “Sacraments.” That view is antithetical to Paul’s statement here that we are saved by grace apart from any works.

⁹⁴ Eph. 2:8 - you have been saved: These four words in English translate a rather curiously associated two words in Greek. The precise translation does not come out well in English, but I will attempt to explain. The first word is the 2nd Person Plural [Present Indicative Active](#) of *eimi* ([1510](#)), the simple verb of being, “you are;” the second word is the 2nd Person Plural [Nominative Perfect Passive Participle](#) of *sō dzō* ([4982](#)), “ones having been saved.” Putting the entire first clause together, and translating very literally, we read, “For by the grace you exist – ones having been saved through faith.” Which grace? It is the grace of God, the same grace spoken of in Eph. 1:6, 7; 2:7, 8; 3:2, 7, 8; 6:24. What is the status of those concerning whom Paul writes? At some time in their past they were saved by grace through faith [in Jesus], and the results of that [salvation](#) carry forward to this very day, and they emphatically are presently being saved! The particular aspects of that salvation are, presently, [spiritual salvation](#), and, in the long-term, [ultimate salvation](#). Works contribute absolutely nothing to our salvation. As we shall see in a moment, works are the *result* of our salvation, not its *cause*.

⁹⁵ Eph. 2:8 - through faith: *diá* ([1223](#)) *pistis* ([4102](#)), which can mean either “through faith” or “on account of faith.” The article appears before “faith” in the Byzantine text, which could be translated “through the faith,” implying the creedal content of the faith. But strong representatives of the [Alexandrian](#) and [Western](#) text families have no article, and that is the preferred reading (see [NetBible](#) note on the appropriate passage). So it is by grace, God’s undeserved favor, we exist as having been saved through or on account of our faith. Some from the [Reformed](#) faith have tried to insist that the exercise of faith is not the responsibility of man, for it all comes from God. ([Harold Camping](#) comes to mind as an illustration of this belief, although in fairness, Camping left the Christian Reformed Church in 1988.) Otherwise, they fear, faith is a “work.” But that is a flawed understanding of faith. Faith is not a

- E 4 Its source – of God, not man: and that not of yourselves,⁹⁶
- E 5 Its nature – a gift, not an earned reward: *it is* the gift of God;⁹⁷
- D 5 The place of works in this gift 2:9-10
 - E 1 The exclusion of works in gaining salvation – the prevention of boasting 2:9
 - G 1 The total exclusion of works: {9} Not as a result of works,⁹⁸
 - G 2 The total exclusion of self-glorification: so that no one may boast.⁹⁹
 - E 2 The preparation of works resulting from salvation 2:10
 - G 1 Our designation – God's production: {10} For we are His workmanship,¹⁰⁰

work, but is the quality of trust focused upon God in general and upon Christ in particular. Paul will make clear that faith is exercised completely apart from any works (Eph. 2:9).

⁹⁶ Eph. 2:8 - and that not of yourselves: The question needs to be asked, “To what does ‘that,’ or more customarily, ‘this’ (*toûto*, [5124](#)), the [neuter](#) Gender demonstrative pronoun, refer?” Probably not to either “grace” or “faith,” both of which are [feminine](#) in Gender. More likely it is referring to the whole entity of salvation as it is expressed in the first part of Eph. 2:8 (see also [Constable](#)).

⁹⁷ Eph. 2:8 - it is the gift of God: Salvation is a gift from God, not a reward for having worked. This is commensurate with salvation’s being “by grace through faith.”

⁹⁸ Eph. 2:9 - not as a result of works: Salvation is a gift from God, accessed by trust in Christ. God’s salvation is completely divorced from any works which we might perform. There is nothing any man can do to earn God’s salvation. He must entirely trust in Jesus Christ and what He has done.

A portion of [footnote 2](#) in The New American Bible published on the Vatican website acknowledges the following about Eph. 2:8-10:

The terms in Eph 2:8-9 describe salvation in the way Paul elsewhere speaks of justification: by grace, through faith, the gift of God, not from works; cf Gal 2:16-21; Romans 3:24-28. Christians are a newly created people in Christ, fashioned by God for a life of goodness (Eph 2:10).

I have no problem whatever with that statement. But the footnote does not explain how it is Biblical that Catholics maintain that they can have grace conferred upon them through their participation in Rome’s [sacraments](#), contrary to Paul’s statement in Eph. 2:9. Similarly, Lutherans “...call Sacraments rites which have the command of God, and to which the promise of grace has been added” (The Book of Concord: The Confessions of the Lutheran Church. Article XIII. (VII): [Of the Number and Use of Sacraments](#)).

⁹⁹ Eph. 2:9 - so that no one may boast: There will be no braggarts in heaven. Everyone who makes it there will do so because he has trusted in what God has said (OT era) or in what Jesus has done (NT era). Salvation has always been by grace through faith. There is no grounds for boasting when one has been given a gift. James’ statements on the relationship between justification and works must be understood on the basis that good works do not contribute to man’s salvation, but they vindicate the reality and genuineness of his faith (James 2:14-26).

¹⁰⁰ Eph. 2:10 - For we are His workmanship: “workmanship” is *poiêma* ([4161](#)), used only in Rom. 1:20 and Eph. 2:10. It is the little-used noun corresponding to the common verb *poiëō* ([4160](#)), “to do” or “to make.” It could easily be translated here, “His production” – i.e., “that which God has made.”

G 2 Our purpose: created in Christ Jesus¹⁰¹ for good works,¹⁰²

H 1 Their preparation

J 1 The preparer: which God

J 2 The activity: prepared beforehand¹⁰³

H 2 Their performance: so that we would walk in them.¹⁰⁴

B 3 God's Wealthy Graciousness in Synthesizing Believing Gentiles with Believing Israel through Christ into One Body 2:11 - 3:13

C 1 The accomplishment of the synthesis 2:11-22

¹⁰¹ Eph. 2:10 - created in Christ Jesus: literally, “having been created in Christ Jesus” “Having been created” is the [Aorist passive participle](#) of *ktidzō* (2936). This is the verb typically used in the NT for God’s having created food (1 Tim. 4:3), man (Matt. 19:4; 1 Cor. 11:9; Col. 3:10), and all that exists (Eph. 3:9; Col. 1:16; Rev. 4:11; 10:6). The moment one trusts in Jesus the Messiah, he exists as having been created in Jesus the Messiah for the purpose of good works.

¹⁰² Eph. 2:10 - for good works: The Greek text is *epi érgois agathoís*. *Epi* (1909) is a preposition that normally means “on” or “upon.” But used, as it is here, with the [dative](#) case noun *érgois* (works, 2041), modified by the [dative](#) adjective qualifier *agathoís* (good, 18), it takes on the meaning “of aim or purpose – *for the purpose of*” ([Friberg](#)). Paul’s point is that we who have been saved by grace through faith *apart from* any good works have, nonetheless, been created in Christ Jesus *for the purpose of* performing good works. These, of course, are the *result* of our salvation, not the *cause* of it. The comments of James as to the relation of faith and good works must be understood on the basis that good works *vindicate* the *reality* of one’s faith, not that they contribute to man’s *ability to earn* salvation (James 2:14-26).

¹⁰³ Eph. 2:10 - prepared beforehand: These two words in English translate one in Greek – the [Aorist](#) tense (point action in the past) of *proetoimázō* (4282), to “make ready in advance,” “used only of God’s work in the NT” ([Friberg](#)). It is used only twice in the NT – in Rom. 9:23, where God “prepared beforehand for glory” “vessels of mercy” – a reference to the “called” from among both Jews and [Gentiles](#) (i.e. the [Church](#)); and here in Eph. 2:10, where God has prepared beforehand good works in which we, members of the [Church](#), are to walk. It seems to me that, if God has taken the trouble to prepare beforehand good works for us, it is inevitable that we will perform them. That, again, it seems to me, is rather necessary if, in fact, we have “been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will” (Eph. 1:11). Many Christians are taken aback at the statements in the Bible concerning the Sovereignty of God. I am not. I see man’s so-called “free will” as necessarily cooperating with God’s inviolable Sovereignty. To be quite candid, if God did not prepare beforehand good works for us Christians to perform, we never would get around to performing them. The human flesh is that weak. Even in an unfallen state, our first parents elected to disobey God, not obey him (Gen. 2:16-17; 3:1-7). I am not suggesting that human effort is not needed. It always is. And sometime we labor exceedingly hard with groans and tears. But whatever good we achieve is not, ultimately, because we have willed it or exerted effort, but because God has prepared our good works beforehand.

¹⁰⁴ Eph. 2:10 - so that we would walk in them: Paul uses this phrase metaphorically, meaning to “behave” in such a way ([Friberg](#) – comments on Paul’s use of this verb in Eph. 2:10). This is the [Aorist Subjunctive](#) of *peripatéō* (4043). God prepared beforehand good works for us Christians so that we might walk around in them and spend time performing them. “So that” translates *hina* (2443), the conjunction that, used in conjunction with the [Aorist Subjunctive](#), as here, can indicate either purpose or result. I would say that in this context it indicates both. If God has prepared something ahead of time (namely, good works), His purpose is for us to walk in them, and it is inevitable that He will achieve His objective. I cannot imagine God’s objective being thwarted!

- D 1 The reminder of past alienation 2:11-13
- E 1 The identification of the aliens 2:11
- G 1 “The nations”: {11} Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh,¹⁰⁵
- G 2 “Uncircumcision”: who are called “Uncircumcision”¹⁰⁶
- H 1 by the so-called “Circumcision,”¹⁰⁷
- H 2 which is performed in the flesh by human hands—
- E 2 The description of the alienation: {12} remember that you were at that time 2:12
- G 1 separate from Christ,¹⁰⁸

¹⁰⁵ Eph. 2:11 - [Gentiles](#) in the flesh: Paul is writing to his Ephesian readers, whom he carefully refers to as, literally, “the nations in flesh.” “[Gentiles](#),” literally, “nations” ([Nominative](#) Plural [Neuter](#) of *ἔθνος*, [1484](#)), is the term for the non-selected nations of the world in contrast with the one selected nation of [Israel](#). [Israel](#), despite her predominant rejection of Jesus as her Messiah, remains God’s chosen nation because “the gifts and the calling of God are irrevocable” (Rom. 11:28-29). Paul’s [Gentile](#) readers are called “the nations in flesh” ([Dative Feminine](#) Singular of *σάρξ*, [4561](#)) because they characteristically lack the sign of [circumcision](#), prescribed by God for Abraham’s descendants as a mandatory sign of participation in the [Abrahamic Covenant](#) (Gen. 17:1-14). Though [Israelis](#) today are largely “enemies of the [gospel](#)” for the sake of us [Gentiles](#) (Rom. 11:28), one day all [Israel](#) will be saved (Rom. 11:25-27). Throughout eternity, three distinct people groups will remain – the [Church](#) (Rev. 21:9, 14), redeemed [Israel](#) (Rev. 21:2, 10, 12), and redeemed [Gentiles](#) (Isa. 60:1-5; Rev. 21:24-27; 22:2). This recognition of the eternal tri-fold peoples of God is a distinguishing characteristic of Classic (dare I say normative) [Dispensational Premillennialism](#). Eph. 2:11 marks Paul’s first use of the term “[Gentiles](#)” (“nations”) in this letter. He will do so again in Eph. 3:1, 6, 8; 4:17.

¹⁰⁶ Eph. 2:11 - “Uncircumcision”: [Nominative](#) Singular of *akrobustía* ([203](#)), referring to the state of a male whose sexual organ has not had its foreskin cut off – uncircumcision (Acts 11:3) ([Friberg](#)). In broader terms, [Gentiles](#), people of the nations of the world who, by definition, have not been circumcised.

¹⁰⁷ Eph. 2:11 - “Circumcision”: [Genitive](#) Singular of *peritomê* ([4061](#)). This can refer to the “(1)...religious rite signifying covenant participation with God (John 7:22); figuratively, as spiritual circumcision denoting separation from sin and consecration to God in covenant relationship (Rom. 2:29); (2) by metonymy, ... those who are circumcised; literally, the circumcised, i.e. Jews (Rom. 3:30), opposite *akrobustía* (literally, the uncircumcised, i.e. [Gentiles](#)); figuratively, of Christians (Php. 3:3)” ([Friberg](#)). Here, Paul is referring to the people of [Israel](#), who looked down with contempt on uncircumcised [Gentiles](#) because they were excluded from the covenant community.

¹⁰⁸ Eph. 2:12 - separate from Christ: Paul begins to list the horrific disadvantages of his [Gentile](#) readers before they were introduced to faith in the Jewish [Messiah](#). The first disadvantage is that they were separate (the [Genitive](#) of the Preposition *chōris*, [5565](#)) from [Christ](#) ([Genitive](#) of *Christós*, [5547](#)), the one anointed by God with the [Holy Spirit](#) to be [Israel’s](#) (and the world’s) ultimate [Prophet](#), [Priest](#), and [King](#). *Chōris*, is used predominately in the NT “as an improper preposition with the [genitive](#) *apart from, without*” ([Friberg](#)). I like to say that the [Messiah](#) is the answer to all the world’s problems – including my own. The world’s problems include sin and rebellion against God and His [Messiah](#); individual and national alienation; selfishness and greed; power and control; dishonesty; theft; sexual immorality; broken marriages and broken families; idolatry; cruelty; poverty; sickness; death. Jesus, the [Messiah](#), is the only person who can solve all these difficulties. He can solve many of those problems for individuals and families who will trust in Him. But He will not solve problems on an international scale until He returns and sets up His kingdom upon earth. And even then, not all will be permanently solved. That final solution and reconciliation

- G 2 excluded from the commonwealth of Israel,¹⁰⁹
- G 3 and strangers to the covenants of promise,¹¹⁰
- G 4 having no hope¹¹¹
- G 5 and without God in the world.¹¹²

and redemption awaits [New Jerusalem](#) and [New Earth](#). Prior to their [salvation](#), these [Gentile](#) readers were completely separate from the [Messiah](#). Thus, they were without God, and without any hope in this world. I urge each reader to accept Jesus as your King. He will not force anyone to accept Him as [King](#). But a terrible fate awaits those who refuse to submit to Jesus as [King](#) (Matt. 25:31-46).

¹⁰⁹ Eph. 2:12 - excluded from the commonwealth of Israel: “excluded” is the [Nominative](#) 2nd Person Plural [Perfect Passive Participle](#) of *apallotriōō* (526) – used only in the [Passive](#) in the NT – thus, to be “alienated from”, “estranged from”; used only by Paul in Eph. 2:12 (“excluded from ... [Israel](#)”); Eph. 4:18 (“excluded from the life of God”); and Col. 1:21 (“alienated”) – the object is left unstated – presumably from God and/or Christ – both appear in the context. [Gentiles](#) were excluded from citizenship in [Israel](#).

“Commonwealth” is the [Genitive](#) of *politeia* (4174), used “literally, as the civic rights belonging to members of a political entity *citizenship* (Acts 22:28); figuratively, as the privileged religious position of [Israel](#) in God’s plan *people, community* (Eph. 2:12)” ([Friberg](#)). In the present writer’s opinion, both uses can be taken literally, and the word “citizenship” may and should be used in both contexts. These are the only two occurrences in the NT. [Gentiles](#) were excluded from citizenship in [Israel](#).

“[Israel](#)” is the [Genitive](#) of *Israēl* (2474), meaning the State of [Israel](#). In my view there is no Biblical justification for insisting that the [Church](#) becomes the [New Israel](#) (a misreading of Eph. 2:11-22), or that the [Church](#) is incorporated into [Israel](#) (a misreading of Rom. 11:17-24). To the contrary, eternity will consist of the [Church](#) (the [Bride of Christ](#)) (Rev. 21:9-10, 14), redeemed [Israel](#) (Rev. 21:2, 12-13), and redeemed [Gentiles](#) (“nations”) who are part of neither (Rev. 21:24, 26; 22:2). [Replacement Theology](#) does not take into account the whole counsel of God. Paul is stating that, prior to their conversion, the [Gentiles](#), as a class of people, were excluded from citizenship in [Israel](#). Again, there is no Biblical justification for saying that participants in the New Birth (John 3:1-8) are thus incorporated into [Israel](#). However, God has decreed that He will grant “Born in Zion” status to multitudes of [Gentiles](#) (Ps. 87:4-6). This does not, however, abrogate a plethora of promises for a glorious future for the nation of [Israel](#) (for example, selected portions of Isaiah 60-66).

¹¹⁰ Eph. 2:12 - strangers to the covenants of promise: There are essentially three covenants of promise that God made with the [sons of Israel](#). These were unilateral covenants (ultimately dependent on God alone for their fulfillment) and thus, unconditional and [eternal covenants](#). These covenants include the [Abrahamic Covenant](#), the [Davidic Covenant](#), and the [New Covenant](#). [Gentiles](#) are automatically excluded from these covenants. However, [Gentiles](#) could expect an ancillary blessing from the [Abrahamic Covenant](#) in that God had promised Abraham, “And in you all the families of the earth will be blessed” (Gen. 12:3). The [New Covenant](#) was originally made by God “with the house of [Israel](#) and with the house of Judah” (Jer. 31:31; Heb. 8:8). Its benefits were, however, expanded to include [Gentiles](#) who believe in Jesus as the Messiah (1 Cor. 11:25).

¹¹¹ Eph. 2:12 - having no hope: literally, “hope not having.” “Hope” is the [Accusative](#) of *elpis* (1680). This means all [Gentiles](#), having no access to the Messiah or any of the covenants connected with [Israel](#), had no expectation whatever of any good in the long-term future.

Paul used *elpis* in Eph. 1:18; 2:12; 4:4. “Not having” is the negation of the [Nominative](#) case of the [Present Participle](#) of *échō* (2192), used in Eph. 1:7; 2:12, 18; 3:12; 4:28; 5:5, 27. (It is used twice in Eph. 4:28.) In this context, it means “possessing” (no hope), or “devoid” (of any hope). In short, [Gentiles](#) without the Messiah were hopeless.

¹¹² Eph. 2:12 - and without God in this world: “Without God” is the single [Nominative](#), Plural Adjective of *átheos* (112), “strictly *atheistic*; as estrangement from God *godless, without God* (Eph. 2:12)” ([Friberg](#)). [Gentiles](#), prior to their conversion to Christianity, were without God, and thus without any hope whatever. Many among today’s [postmodern](#) thinkers perceive of God as a myth, and believe that society is far better off without God or any of His constraints. They are utterly deluded, and without Him they are on the broad path that leads to eternal destruction (Matt. 7:13).

- E 3 The deliverance from the alienation 2:13
- G 1 The place of the deliverance: {13} But now in Christ Jesus
- G 2 The terminology of the deliverance
- H 1 Far off: you who formerly were far off¹¹³
- H 2 Near: have been brought near¹¹⁴
- G 3 The cost of the deliverance: by the blood of Christ.¹¹⁵
- D 2 The process of unified peace 2:14-18
- E 1 How Christ is our peace (2:14a) 2:14-15a {14} For He Himself is our peace,
- G 1 By making both one: who made both *groups into one*¹¹⁶ 2:14b

¹¹³ Eph. 2:13 - far off: *makrán* (3112), an Adjective used “(1) as an Adverb (originally an [Accusative](#) of extent [from *makrós*, 3117], with *hodós*, 3598 [road] implied); literally, of extent of space *far away, at a distance, far off* (Matt. 8:30); figuratively, of separation from God (Eph. 2:13, 17); ...” ([Friberg](#)). Paul’s Gentile readers used to be (“formerly were”) remote from God.

¹¹⁴ Eph. 2:13 - have been brought near: “have been brought” is the [Aorist Passive Deponent](#) of *ginomai* (1096), which, in the [Aorist Active](#) voice, means, “became,” with a broad range of applications. The verb *ginomai* (1096) is used in this letter in Eph. 2:13; 3:7; 4:32; 5:1, 7, 12, 17; 6:3. Because it is such a common verb, I rarely discuss it. “Have been brought” translates the [Passive](#) voice. The [Aorist](#) tense denotes the time / occasion at which these [Gentiles](#) were brought near – the shedding of the blood of the Messiah. Of course, individually (and perhaps collectively), each of the Ephesians had to avail himself personally of the shed blood of Christ – each had to believe in God’s sacrifice (John 3:16).

“Near” is the Adjective used as an Adverb *eggús* (1451). This word can refer to **proximity of space** “near, close to” (John 3:23), or “neighboring” (John 19:42). It can also refer to **proximity of time** “near, imminent, close” (Matt. 26:18). Figuratively it can refer to **proximity of relationship**, “near, close to,” as it does here in Eph. 2:13, 17 (adapted from [Friberg](#)).

¹¹⁵ Eph. 2:13 - by the blood of Christ: The blood of Christ is the only agent that can bring sinners remote from God into close proximity with Him (Rom. 3:25; Col. 1:20). Water (as in water baptism) cannot possibly bring us near to God. Neither can a communion wafer or wine bring us close to God. None of these have the efficacy of the blood of Christ. There is an old gospel song that states this truth so well, “What can wash away my sin? Nothing but the blood of Jesus.” See the article, [“Is It Necessary to be Baptized in Water in Order to be Saved?”](#)

¹¹⁶ Eph. 2:14 - who made both *groups into one*: [Covenant theologians](#) and other non-dispensationalists cite this statement of Paul as the basis of “[Replacement Theology](#),” also known as “[Supersessionism](#).” Both terms describe the position that the [Church](#) has permanently replaced the people of [Israel](#) as God’s chosen people. That is really missing the mark as far as Paul’s meaning is concerned. What Paul is saying is that in Christ, believing Jews and believing [Gentiles](#) are united and that there is no cause for hostility between the two (see also John 17:20-23). But saying they are united is a far cry from saying that they are the same thing. Unity neither demands nor implies identity.

This is certainly true in the Godhead. Jesus and His Father are one. But they are not the same persons. When Jesus prayed in the Garden of Gethsemane, He was not talking to Himself. We read in Deuteronomy 6:4 the famous “*shema*” – “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!” But that does not rule out three persons of the Godhead, as the New Testament clearly reveals (Matt. 3:16-17; 28:19; 1 Thess. 5:18-19, etc.).

- G 2 By breaking down the barrier of hostility: and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall,¹¹⁷ 2:14c
- G 3 By abolishing the Law: {15} by abolishing¹¹⁸ in His flesh the enmity,¹¹⁹ 2:15a

Similarly, though Jews and Greeks, slave and free, men and women all have the same standing in Christ (Gal. 3:28), they are not the same. Unity neither demands nor implies identity. Husbands and wives still have different identities and different roles as part of the family and part of the [Church](#). So do slaves and masters, or, if you will, in our day, employees, and employers. A Jewish believer today actually possesses dual citizenship: He is a citizen of the [Church](#), and he is a citizen of redeemed [Israel](#). The [Church](#) does not replace [Israel](#) now, nor will it in the future.

Jesus is nothing if not Jewish. When He returns to this earth, He will return as King of [Israel](#). He will set up His throne in Jerusalem and reign from there over [Israel](#) and the entire earth (Psalm 2; 110; Isaiah 2:1-4; 9:6-7; 11:1-16; 60-62; 65-66; Zechariah 14; Rev. 19:11-20:9).

Even in the [New Earth](#), there will be an eternal distinction between redeemed [Israel](#), the [Church](#), and redeemed [Gentiles](#). The city itself is named [New Jerusalem](#) (Rev. 21:2, 10, which is as Jewish as it can be. The twelve gates of the city are named after the twelve [sons of Israel](#) (Rev. 21:12-13). The [Church's](#) presence in [New Jerusalem](#) is revealed in that the city has bridal overtones (Rev. 21:2, 9-10) and in that the twelve foundations of the city's wall are named after the twelve apostles of the Lamb (Rev. 21:14). Redeemed [Gentiles](#) inhabit [New Earth](#), illuminated by the glory of [New Jerusalem](#); and they bring their glory and wealth into the [Eternal City](#), to which they have access day and night (Rev. 21:24-26; 22:2). The people of God are one in the sense that they are unified, and that they have no barriers between them, and that they have equal standing in Christ. But they do not have equal roles. There are three peoples of God, and there always will be. Unity, yes; identity, no. Unity, yes; diversity, yes, also, but identity, no.

¹¹⁷ Eph. 2:14 - and broke down the barrier of the dividing wall: "broke down" is the [Nominative Aorist Participle](#) of *lūō* (3089), a verb with a broad spectrum of applications. It's most basic meaning is "loose." Applied, it means to loose, unbind, or to dissolve anything tied or bound or compacted together ([Thayer](#)). Jesus is the One who, through His death, dissolved the barrier of hostility between believing [Jews](#) and believing [Gentiles](#).

The NASB's alternative reading note at "the barrier of the dividing wall" reads "Lit the dividing wall of the barrier." The first Greek word that appears in this phrase is the [Accusative](#) Singular of the Noun *mesótoichon* (3320), used only here in the NT. It means "a partition wall" ([Thayer](#)), here used figuratively of a barrier or obstacle that separates people from one another ([Friberg](#)). It is probably best not to interpret this barrier, shortly labeled "the enmity," as "the Law of commandments." Rather, the [Law](#) is that which caused this barrier (Harold Hoehner, Eph., [TBKC, NT Vol.](#), p. 626).

The second Greek word appearing in this phrase is the Genitive of *phragmós* (5418). It refers to a fence, hedge, or wall (Matt. 21:33; Mark 12:1 - "wall"; Luke 14:23 - "hedges"). Here in Eph. 2:14 it is used "figuratively, of a divisive element keeping two groups separated wall, what separates" ([Friberg](#)).

¹¹⁸ Eph. 2:15 - by abolishing: the [Aorist Nominative Participle](#) of *katargéō* (2673), more literally, "having abolished".... The basic sense is "cause to be idle or useless ... the term always denotes a nonphysical destruction by means of a superior force coming in to replace the force previously in effect, as, e.g. light destroys darkness (3) as destruction by replacement *abolish, destroy, cause to cease, put and end to* (1 Cor. 2:6; 13:11)" ([Friberg](#)).

In my opinion, the NASB translation is, unfortunately, misleading at this point. According to the Greek syntax, the Greek text does not state that Jesus abolished "the enmity" through his death. Rather, it states that He abolished (or better, rendered inoperative) "the Law of commandments contained in ordinances." The net effect of Jesus rendering the Law inoperative was that He destroyed the barrier of hostility, the enmity that existed between [Jew](#) and [Gentile](#) on account of the [Mosaic Law](#). The superior force that came in and abolished the [Law](#), or made it inoperative, was the [New Covenant](#), ratified by Jesus' blood. The [New Covenant](#) provided for Christ's founding of the "one new man" (Eph. 2:15), which is the [Church](#), composed of both believing [Jewish people](#) and believing [Gentiles](#).

¹¹⁹ Eph. 2:15 - the enmity: the [Accusative](#) – *tên échthran* (2189), is a term used rarely, and in this letter, only in Eph. 2:15, 16. The noun means "enmity, hostility, hatred, both as an inner disposition and objective opposition (Rom. 8:7); plural of hostile feelings and acts *animosities, hostilities, discord, feuds* (Gal. 5:20)" ([Friberg](#)). The word *échthra* (2189), enmity, appears in the NASB in Eph. 2:15, but in the Greek text ([UBS 4](#)) it appears in Eph. 2:14. The enmity, to which Paul had just referred, was "the barrier of the dividing wall" (Eph. 2:14). It is probably not best to identify "the barrier of the dividing wall" and "the enmity" with the [Mosaic Law](#), even though all three appear in the [Accusative Case](#). The syntax seems to suggest that the first two are linked together, but the third element, the

- H 1 *which is* the Law of commandments ¹²⁰
- H 2 contained in ordinances, ¹²¹
- E 2 Why Christ is peace 2:15b-16
- G 1 To create one new man: so that in Himself He might make the two into one new man, ¹²² 2:15b
- G 2 Making peace: thus establishing peace, ¹²³ 2:15c
- G 3 To reconcile both in one body to God: {16} and might reconcile ¹²⁴ them both 2:16

[Law](#), stands on its own as that which Jesus abolished, or better, “nullified” by means of his death. Later on (Eph. 2:16) Paul states that Jesus “killed” (my term) “the enmity.” That is appropriate language if, in fact, Jesus killed the barrier that separates believing [Jew](#) and [Gentile](#). But it seems inappropriate to imply that Jesus “killed” the [Law](#).

¹²⁰ Eph. 2:15 - *which is* the Law of commandments: The NASB implies that “the enmity” is none other than “the Law of commandments,” the [Mosaic Law](#), given to [Israel](#) as a national constitution (Ex. 19:1-24:11). But that is probably not the best translation. I believe the [NetBible](#) here gives a superior translation of Eph. 2:14-15:

2:14 For he is our peace, the one who made both groups into one and who destroyed the middle wall of partition, the hostility, 2:15 when he nullified in his flesh the law of commandments in decrees. He did this to create in himself one new man out of two, thus making peace, “The Law” is the [Accusative](#) Singular of *nómos* (3551), used only here in Ephesians. “Of the commandments” is the [Genitive](#) Plural of *entolē* (1785). “Of the commandments” further defines the individual components and dictates of the [Law](#). “In ordinances” yet further defines the [Law](#) (see the next note). The italicized words *which is* do not appear in the Greek text, but are added by the NASB to facilitate the editors’ interpretation of the Greek text for the English reader. “The Law of Commandments in ordinances,” not “the enmity,” is that which Jesus abolished (or better, nullified) by virtue of his death on the Cross. The [Law](#) is not to be construed as the barrier or the enmity, but as that which, by its terms, erected the barrier / enmity between [Jew](#) and [Gentile](#) (Eph. 2:14-15). The term “the Law” refers to the entire [Mosaic Code](#), not merely the “Ceremonial Law.”

¹²¹ Eph. 2:15 - *contained in* ordinances: “In ordinances” translates the [Dative](#) Plural of *dóγμα* (1378), “decree, command, law, ordinance” (see [Friberg](#)), used only here in Ephesians. The word “contained” does not appear in the Greek text, but was supplied by NASB translators to make more sense in English. “Ordinances” further describes “the Law of commandments.”

¹²² Eph. 2:15 - one new man: This “new man” is the [Church](#), a wholly new entity in the [dispensational](#) (or administrative) out-working of God (Eph. 1:10; 3:9-10). This “new man” is not to be confused with the “new self” of Eph. 4:24; Col. 3:10.

¹²³ Eph. 2:15 - thus establishing peace: Jesus, through His death on the cross, rendered the Law inoperative, thus destroyed the barrier between [Jew](#) and [Gentile](#), in order that He might create two factions into one new man (the Church) in Himself, in the process making ([Nominative Present Participle](#) of *poiéō*, 1460, here, doing, making, or establishing) peace ([Accusative](#) of *eirênē*, 1515, in this instance, tranquility between two hostile groups, [Jewish](#) and [Gentile](#) peoples). Peace was first used in Eph. 1:2 – see the footnote there. It is used 8 X in 7 verses in this letter. Paul used it in Eph. 2:14. He will next use it twice in Eph. 2:17

¹²⁴ Eph. 2:16 - might reconcile: [Aorist Subjunctive](#) of *apokatállassō* (604), used only here in Ephesians, and only twice more in the NT, in Col. 1:20, 22. This verb combines the preposition *apó* (575), “separation away from something or someone” (adapted from [Thayer](#)) and the verb *katállassō* (2644), “as restoring relationship between individuals or between God and man *reconcile, change from enmity to friendship* (2 Cor. 5:18); [passive](#) *be or become reconciled* (Rom. 5:10)” ([Friberg](#)). Thus the *apó* reinforces the basic idea of reconciliation. In Eph. 2:16 it means that Jesus’ goal in His sacrificial death was that He might *completely* reconcile the two factions of Jew and Gentile, estranged from one another, peacefully bringing them together into one body (the [Body of Christ](#)) through the cross, by which Jesus killed (literally) the enmity (i.e., the barrier of hostility) that separated the two factions

- H 1 The medium: in one body ¹²⁵
 - H 2 The goal: to God
 - H 3 The means: through the cross,
 - H 4 The achievement: by it having put to death the enmity. ¹²⁶
- E 3 Why Christ proclaimed the good news of peace 2:17-18
- G 1 The beneficiaries of His proclamation of peace 2:17
 - H 1 The message proclaimed: {17} AND HE CAME AND PREACHED ¹²⁷
 - H 2 Peace to the nations: PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY, ¹²⁸
 - H 3 Peace to Israelis: AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR; ¹²⁹

from one another and from God. The Aorist tense here indicates reconciliation at a point in time – Christ’s death. The Subjunctive mood should not be taken as merely potential (no condition is present here), but as purposeful. Jesus actually achieved that which He purposed to do – the reconciliation of Jew and Gentile into one body through His death.

¹²⁵ Eph. 2:16 - in one body: i.e., the Body of Christ. Not, of course, His physical body, but the spiritual body of believers, the Church, of which Christ is the head (1 Cor. 12:12-27; Eph. 1:22-23; 4:12; Col. 1:18, 24; 2:19).

¹²⁶ Eph. 2:16 - by it having put to death the enmity: “by it” refers back to “the cross,” Genitive of *staurós* (4716), the instrument of capital punishment on which Jesus was put to death. Paul is saying that, by means of the cross, Jesus, “having put to death,” Nominative Aorist Participle of *apokteinō* (615), here, “having killed” or “having put to death” the enmity between Jew and Gentile, was thus able to reconcile believers in both parties in “one body,” His own, the body of Christ.

¹²⁷ Eph. 2:17 - AND HE CAME AND PREACHED: Paul, in Eph. 2:17, is quoting Isaiah 57:19. He also alluded to this OT verse in Eph. 2:14 and, perhaps, to a lesser extent in Rom. 10:14. Peter probably alluded to the same Scripture in his message to the Gentiles at the home of Cornelius (Acts 2:34-36). The word “preached” (Aorist Indicative Middle of *euaggelidzō*, 2097) means generally, to announce or bear good news, to evangelize; or, if I might coin a word, to “good-news-icize”). Through Jesus’ death on the cross, which erased the barrier between Jew and Gentile created by the Law, He was able to proclaim the good news of peace to those who were far away (Gentiles) and to those who were near (the sons of Israel).

¹²⁸ Eph. 2:17 - PEACE TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY: Paul continues to quote Isa. 57:19. “Peace” is the Accusative of *eirênê* (1515), used previously in Eph. 1:2; 2:14, 15. “...to you who were far away” signifies Gentiles. Though there is a sense in which “peace” here refers to tranquility between God and man, the context here is tranquility between Jew and Gentile, mediated and proclaimed by the Messiah through His sacrificial death upon the cross for the sins of all mankind.

“TO YOU WHO WERE FAR AWAY” refers, of course, to Gentiles who now believe, but were formerly alienated from God and from the people of God.

¹²⁹ Eph. 2:17 - AND PEACE TO THOSE WHO WERE NEAR: Paul continues to quote Isa. 57:19. “Peace” is the Accusative of *eirênê* (1515), used previously in Eph. 1:2; 2:14, 15, 17. Paul will use it again in Eph. 4:3. Here it denotes tranquility with God, but also, more specifically, tranquility with believing Gentiles. The phrase reads,

- G 2 The reason He could make His announcement:
{18} for through Him we both have our access in
one Spirit to the Father.¹³⁰ 2:18
- D 3 The results to believing individuals among the nations 2:19-22
- E 1 In political terms 2:19a
- G 1 No longer strangers and temporary residents: {19}
So then you are no longer strangers¹³¹ and aliens,¹³²
- G 2 but you are fellow citizens¹³³ with the saints,¹³⁴
- E 2 In family terms: and are of God's household,¹³⁵ 2:19b

literally, “and peace to the ones near” (the Adverb *eggús*, [1451](#)). Here (as in Eph. 2:13, the only other time this word is used in Ephesians) it denotes [Jewish](#) people as being in close proximity to God by virtue of God's [covenant with Abraham](#), Isaac, and Jacob. See the note at Eph. 2:13 for additional information about this word.

¹³⁰ Eph. 2:18 - for through Him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father: This clause marvelously reveals the workings of the [Trinity](#). Through Jesus (the [Messiah](#), the Executor of God's plans) we both (believing [Jews](#) and believing [Gentiles](#)) have “the access” ([Accusative](#) of *prosagōgē*, [4318](#)) in one [Spirit](#) (the Means by which God accomplishes His plan) to the Father (the Patriarch [Eph. 3:14-15], the Author, the Originator and Founder of all things).

Prosagōgē is used only by Paul, and only in Rom. 5:2; Eph. 2:18; 3:12). It is used in the sense of “...admission into the presence of a person in high position *access, approach, privilege of entrance*” ([Friberg](#)).

¹³¹ Eph. 2:19 - no longer strangers: [Nominative](#) Plural of *xénos* ([3581](#)), “*stranger, foreigner, alien* (Matt. 25:35), opposite *politēs*, [4177](#) (*citizen*)” ([Friberg](#)). In my opinion, “foreigners” would be a better translation. Since Paul's [Gentile](#) readers had trusted in Jesus, who had removed the barrier caused by the [Law](#), and they had been united with believing [Jews](#) into a single entity, the [body of Christ](#), also known as the [Church](#), they were no longer foreigners or aliens, but were full-fledged citizens of the [Church](#). This does not mean that the [Church](#) becomes [spiritual Israel](#). Nor does it mean that all distinctions between [Jew](#) and [Gentile](#) have been obliterated, nor does it mean that there is forevermore only one people group. Throughout eternity, in [New Jerusalem](#) and upon [New Earth](#) there will exist believing [Israel](#), the [Church](#) (consisting of believing [Jews](#) and [Gentiles](#) starting at the [Day of Pentecost](#) and completed at the [Rapture](#)), and redeemed [Gentiles](#) who are part of neither (Rev. 21:12, 14, 24, 26; 22:2). Today's believing [Jewish](#) people are members both of the [Church](#) and of the true [remnant](#) of [Israel](#). They have dual citizenship.

¹³² Eph. 2:19 - aliens: [Nominative](#) Plural of *pároikos* ([3941](#)), used “literally, of a noncitizen or resident alien ...” ([Friberg](#)). This plural adjective is a synonym of the plural of *xénos* ([3581](#)), “foreigners,” used earlier in this verse. Paul's believing [Gentile](#) readers, being part of the trans-national [Church](#), were no longer aliens in God's sight, nor should they be perceived as such by believing [Israelis](#).

¹³³ Eph. 2:19 - fellow citizens: [Nominative](#) Plural of *sumpolitēs* ([4847](#)), used only here in the NT.

¹³⁴ Eph. 2:19 - with the saints: [Genitive](#) Plural of *hágios* ([40](#)), a more or less generic term in regard to the people of God. Notice that Paul did NOT say these [Gentile](#) believers were fellow citizens in the State of [Israel](#)! The [Church](#) neither [replaces Israel](#), nor does it become [Israel](#). By “saints” Paul is here referring to all those who comprise the [Church](#).

¹³⁵ Eph. 2:19 - and are of God's household: more literally, “and are family members of God.” This is a broad term that may well include all the redeemed of all ages. The pronominal Adjective I have translated “family members” is the [Nominative](#) Plural of *oikeios* ([3609](#)), “literally *belonging to or standing in relation to a household ... members of a family, relatives, household* (1 Tim. 5:8) ... figuratively, of the members of God's spiritual family (*God's household* (Eph. 2:19)” ([Friberg](#)). It is used only by Paul, and only 3 X: Gal. 6:10; Eph. 2:19; 1 Tim. 5:8.

E 3 In building terms 2:20-22

- G 1 The foundation: {20} having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets,¹³⁶ 2:20a
- G 2 The cornerstone: Christ Jesus Himself being the corner stone,¹³⁷ 2:20b

¹³⁶ Eph. 2:20 - having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets: Paul has just stated that the believing [Gentiles](#) to whom he is writing are no longer foreigners and resident aliens, but are fellow citizens with the saints, and are family members of God. This newly created entity, which he previously labeled “the [church](#)” (Eph. 1:22), he now describes under an architectural metaphor, that of a building ([Nominative](#) of *oikodomē*, [3619](#), Eph. 2:21), further portrayed as a “holy temple” (Eph. 2:21).

He first identifies his readers as “having been built” ([Nominative](#) Plural [Aorist Passive Participle](#) from *epoikodomēō*, [2026](#)), used only here in Ephesians (but Peter uses a similar metaphor in 1 Pet. 2:5) – upon the foundation ([Dative](#) of *themélios*, [2310](#)) of the [apostles](#) ([Genitive](#) Plural of *apóstolos*, [652](#)) and [prophets](#) ([Genitive](#) Plural of *prophētēs*, [4396](#)).

“[Apostle](#)” indicates “...one who is sent on a mission with full authority *apostle, messenger, envoy* (John 13:16) ...” ([Friberg](#)). There were various levels of [apostles](#) (“sent ones”) in the NT church. For example, Paul referred to certain “brothers” who were “messengers” (lit. “apostles) of the churches” (2 Cor. 8:23). Most of the time, however, this term applies to the original twelve, and, after the demise of Judas, to the original eleven plus Matthias (Acts 1:15-26). Nevertheless, it is my contention that Jesus did not personally choose Matthias, but, rather, personally chose Saul as His twelfth [Apostle](#) (Acts 9:1-18). These twelve men, along with NT [prophets](#) and, of course, Christ, the “cornerstone” (Eph. 2:20) were the foundation of the Church.

The original [apostles](#) were “one-of-a-kind.” Their authority and their status could not be passed on to any others. [Apostolic Succession](#), as defined and practiced by the [Vatican Church](#) and certain other churches, is a myth. The original [Apostles](#) passed along their teaching to their followers, but they could never pass on their authority, for that was not their prerogative. Only Christ Himself could appoint [Apostles](#) with His personal authority. The myth of [Apostolic Succession](#) devolves into church leaders who have unbiblical power and authority. It is a blight upon Christendom.

“[Prophets](#)” here probably speaks of NT [prophets](#), since they are [placed after](#) “[apostles](#)” (Eph. 3:5; 4:11). Some [apostles](#), at least, such as Paul, Peter, Matthew, and John, were also [prophets](#) because they wrote Scripture. Certainly, not all NT [prophets](#) were also [apostles](#).

In what way has the Church been built upon the foundation of the apostles and prophets? Certainly it was upon the *ministry* of these NT era apostles and prophets, but primarily upon their *teaching*. Moreover, and this point is crucial, there is only *one way* we can know with certainty about either their ministry or their teaching – that way is the New Testament Scriptures. It is the Scriptures and the Scriptures alone that are inspired (2 Tim. 3:15-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21). Church tradition is but a fallible witness to the ministry and teaching of the early apostles and prophets. The Bible always trumps church tradition, not the other way around (Acts 17:10-11).

It is my belief that there are today no legitimate [apostles](#), nor have there ever been successors to [apostles](#). These were one-of-a-kind, hand-picked personally by Jesus (Luke 6:13; Acts 9:1-19; 1 Cor. 9:1), and given miraculous powers (2 Cor. 12:12) to identify them and their message as being from God and having the authority of Jesus. There are only twelve [apostles](#)’ names inscribed on the twelve foundations of [New Jerusalem](#) (Rev. 21:14). See the article “[Do Apostles Exist Today?](#)”

It is also my belief that there are no legitimate Biblical [prophets](#) in existence today. Describing someone as a “forth-teller” of truth or as having a “prophetic” ministry does not make him a valid Biblical [prophet](#). The fact that no new Scriptures have been added to the canon of Scripture for nearly 1900 years is silent, but powerful testimony to the non-existence of [prophets](#) after the first century. See the article, “[Do Prophets Exist Today?](#)”

¹³⁷ Eph. 2:20 - Christ Jesus Himself being the corner *stone*: The “corner” ([Genitive](#) of *akrogoniaios*, [204](#)) of this new building / temple that is being built upon the foundation of the [apostles](#) and [prophets](#) is none other than [Christ](#) ([Genitive](#) of *Christós*, [5547](#), “Anointed One”) Jesus ([Genitive](#) of *Iēsoús*, [2424](#), “[Yahweh](#) is Salvation”). (The word “stone” does not appear in the Greek text, but is implied.) The noun “corner” ([Genitive](#) of *akrogoniaios*, [204](#)) means “literally *lying at the extreme angle*” ([Friberg](#)). It can be used to refer to a “corner stone,” which, as part of the foundation, ties two walls together and is the point of reference from which the whole foundation and building is built; or it can be used in reference to a “capstone,” the last stone placed at the top of a building to integrate the entire structure ([Friberg](#)). Here, it is used in the context of a foundation, and is the most important stone of the whole structure. It is used only in Eph. 2:20 and 1 Pet. 2:6, where it appears adjacent the word “stone” ([Accusative](#) of *lithos*, [3037](#)). Jesus [Christ](#) is the most critical part of the foundation, for it is He who authorized the [apostles](#) and

- G 3 The contractor: {21} in whom the whole building,¹³⁸ being fitted together,¹³⁹ 2:21a
- G 4 The design: is growing into a holy temple in the Lord,¹⁴⁰ 2:21b
- G 5 The occupant: {22} in whom you also are being built together¹⁴¹ into a dwelling of God in the

[prophets](#), also part of the foundation upon which the [Church](#) has been built.

¹³⁸ Eph. 2:21 - in whom the whole building: “in whom” = the immediately preceding “Christ Jesus.” “Whole building” (the article “the” does not appear in the Greek text) refers to the as yet unmentioned (until now) edifice having been built (Eph. 2:20) on the foundation of the [apostles](#) and [prophets](#) and [Messiah](#) Jesus, the “corner.” “Whole” is the [Nominative](#) Singular Adjective of *pás* (3956), here used without the article, and indicating completeness and inclusivity – the *entire* building. “Building” is the [Nominative](#) Singular of *oikodomê* (3619), referring to a literal building, but here used metaphorically of the entire [Church](#), the [Universal](#) Body of believers beginning at the [Day of Pentecost](#) and to be completed at the [Rapture](#). Paul uses the word “building” in this letter in Eph. 2:21; 4:12, 16, 29.

¹³⁹ Eph. 2:21 - being fitted together: the [Nominative Present Passive Participle](#) of *sunarmologéō* (4883), used only by Paul and only in this letter. Here he implicitly describes the different building materials as illustrative of the “fellow citizens with the saints” who are “family members of God” (my translation) (Eph. 2:19) all of whom have been built (at a point in time – [Aorist](#) tense) upon the foundation, of which Christ is the “corner” (Eph. 2:20), but all of whom are [presently](#) in the process of “being fitted together or “joined together” (see [Friberg](#)) into the building which is growing into a holy temple in the Lord (Eph. 2:21). Elsewhere, in the only other occurrence of this word, Paul likens believers to the different members of the spiritual body of Christ who are “being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies” (Eph. 4:16). Curiously, in the mind of God, this temple, the [Church](#), is a completed project, yet it is in the process of being refined and fitted together. This is true in other areas of the Christian life. In Romans 8:29-30, we read of a certain group of people whom God foreknew, predestined to be conformed to the image of His Son, called, justified, and glorified. In the mind of God it is all a completed package, even though we believers in Jesus struggle through this life with unglorified bodies, battling sin and encroaching physical death.

¹⁴⁰ Eph. 2:21 - is growing into a holy temple in the Lord: “is growing” is the [Present Indicative](#) of *auxánō* (837), used here intransitively and figuratively of Christians in the [Church Age](#) in the process ([Present](#) tense) of increasing in number and complexity into a holy temple in which the Lord dwells. “Holy” is the [Accusative](#) Singular of *hágios* (40), here referring to that which is set apart from evil to God, “dedicated, sacred, holy” ([Friberg](#)). “Temple” is the [Accusative](#) Singular of *naós* (3485). In the NT, this always refers to the temple proper, including the Holy Place and the Holy of Holies, never the entire temple compound including temple courts and gates. The temple or shrine which Paul has in mind is a most sacred spiritual temple, the residence of God Himself. It is a holy temple “in Lord,” [Dative](#) Singular of *kúrios* (2962), meaning “lord” or “master.” In the NT, when used of Deity, it can refer either to God or to Jesus, the Messiah. It probably here refers to the Lord Jesus. It is in view of our being in the sphere of the Master, Jesus (Eph. 2:21), that we are said to constitute a dwelling place of God in the [Spirit](#) (Eph. 2:22).

¹⁴¹ Eph. 2:22 - in whom you also are being built together: “in whom” = Jesus; “you also” – i.e. you (believing) [Gentiles](#); “are being built together” is the [Present Passive Indicative](#) of *sunoikodoméō* (4925), used only here in the NT. Used “...metaphorically and only passive in the NT, of the community of Christ being formed into a dwelling place for God *be built up together* (Eph. 2:22)” ([Friberg](#)). The [Present](#) tense indicates this is an ongoing process; the [Passive](#) voice indicates an unspecified outside agent is performing this “building together” – presumably God Himself or, more likely, the [Spirit](#) of God.

As before, there is a sense in which the Church has “been built” ([Aorist Tense](#)) “on the foundation of the apostles and prophets” (Eph. 2:20). This initial building remains an accomplished fact in the mind of God. Yet in the progress of time “the whole building” is [presently](#) “being fitted together” (Eph. 2:21), is [presently](#) “growing into a holy temple in the Lord” (Eph. 2:21), and its members are [presently](#) “being built together into a dwelling of God in the [Spirit](#)” (Eph. 2:22).

Spirit.¹⁴² 2:22

C 2 The stewardship of the synthesis 3:1-13

D 1 The nature of Paul's stewardship 3:1-6

- E 1 Its steward: {1} For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus¹⁴³ 3:1
- E 2 Its nature: {2} if indeed you have heard of the stewardship¹⁴⁴ 3:2a
- E 3 Its character – gracious: of God's grace¹⁴⁵ 3:2b

¹⁴² Eph. 2:22 - into a dwelling of God in the Spirit: “dwelling” is the [Accusative](#) of *katoikêtêrion* (2732), a “dwelling place, abode, habitat” ([Friberg](#)); “an abode, a habitation” ([Thayer](#)), used only in Eph. 2:22 and Rev. 18:2, where [Babylon](#) will “become a dwelling place of demons” Here, Gentile believers (along with implied Jewish believers) are “growing into a holy temple in the Lord” (Eph. 2:21) and “being built together” into a spiritual edifice in which God lives “in [Spirit](#),” (*èn pneûmati* – [Dative](#) of *pneûma*, 4151), i.e., by means of His [Spirit](#). (The [Dative](#) case implies instrumentality.)

¹⁴³ Eph. 3:1 - Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus: Paul's identification of himself as “the prisoner” ([Nominative](#) of *dêsmios*, 1198) reveals that he is presently imprisoned. We do not know precisely when or from what place this letter was written, but Paul is probably referring to his circumstances of being imprisoned beginning in Caesarea (Acts 23:23-24) and culminating in Rome (Acts 28:16-30). Using this same word, Paul mentions his prisoner status again in Eph. 4:1; 2 Tim. 1:8; Philemon 1:1, 9. This same word is used in a Pauline context in Acts 16:25, 27; 23:18; 25:14, 27; 28:17.

¹⁴⁴ Eph. 3:2 - stewardship: the [Accusative](#) Singular of *oikonomía* (3622). It refers, literally, to the task of a household steward (*oikonomos*, 3623) in managing the household on behalf of the owner, or master. We should probably understand “stewardship” in this passage on two levels.

On the most basic level, Paul is speaking of his own personal stewardship. I say that because he refers to “the stewardship of God's grace which was given to me for you” (Eph. 3:2). Paul understood that Jesus had given him a special assignment to proclaim to [Gentiles](#) the “[mystery](#)” (Eph. 3:3) concerning the Messiah (Eph. 3:4) now revealed (Eph. 3:5) – “that the [Gentiles](#) are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the [gospel](#)” (Eph. 3:6), of which I was made a minister” (Eph. 3:7). So in this sense, the stewardship to which Paul referred was his own personal assignment to take the good news about Jesus to the [Gentiles](#). You may read about the initial installment of Paul's assignment in Acts 9:1-16.

By implication, however, Paul was also speaking of a broader, more generalized, and yet more specific stewardship. That is the stewardship or [dispensation](#) of [Grace](#). In Paul's words, he speaks of “the stewardship [or administration] of God's [grace](#) in which the [Gentiles](#) are fellow heirs and fellow members of the [body of Christ](#), and fellow partakers in the promise in Christ Jesus through the [gospel](#)” (Eph. 3:2, 6). We also know this particular mode of God's stewardship as the [Church Age](#). Synonyms for “stewardship” are “economy,” “arrangement,” “[dispensation](#),” “model of management,” and “mode of governance.” For further study on this topic see “[God's Ways of Working in the Past, the Present, and the Future](#).” Note that each “[Dispensation](#)” or “Household Arrangement” has a distinct Beginning; a Human Responsibility (Test); Advantages; Human Failure; Divine Judgment; Divine Grace; End of the Dispensation; and Application. The lone exception is the Dispensation of the [Eternal Kingdom](#), in which there is no human failure, no divine judgment, and no termination. The [Dispensations](#), or Stewardships, as I see them include: [Innocence](#); [Conscience](#); [Human Government](#); [Promise](#); [Law](#); [Grace](#); [Tribulation](#); [Millennial Kingdom](#); and [Eternal Kingdom](#). Most [dispensationalists](#) cite fewer than the nine I have listed. But I believe my list is more complete, and thus more accurate. Paul will again use the word *oikonomía* (3622) in Eph. 3:9. The simplest definition of [Dispensationalism](#) is the recognition that God works with different peoples in different ways at different times.

¹⁴⁵ Eph. 3:2 - of God's grace: The particular stewardship (or [dispensation](#), or mode of God's governance) which Paul *implied* here is the [Dispensation of Grace](#), also known as the [Church Age](#).

- E 4 Its primary beneficiaries: which was given to me for you; ¹⁴⁶ 3:2c
- E 5 Its acquisition: {3} that by revelation ¹⁴⁷ there was made known to me 3:3a
- E 6 Its obscure identity: the mystery, ¹⁴⁸ 3:3b-4
- G 1 His past discussion: as I wrote before in brief. 3:3b
- G 2 Their understanding: {4} By referring to this, when you read you can understand my insight 3:4a
- G 3 Its focus: into the mystery of Christ, ¹⁴⁹ 3:4b
- E 7 Its past obscurity: {5} which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, 3:5a
- E 8 Its present disclosure through the apostles and prophets: as it has now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit; ¹⁵⁰ 3:5b

¹⁴⁶ Eph. 3:2 - which was given to me for you: The *immediate* stewardship of which Paul was speaking was his own personal stewardship to convey the [gospel](#) (good news about Jesus) to the [Gentiles](#).

¹⁴⁷ Eph. 3:3 - by revelation: literally, “according to revelation” (*apokálupsis*, [602](#)), “literally, as an action *uncovering, disclosing, revealing*; figuratively in the NT; (1) generally, of what God discloses or makes known *revelation, disclosure*, e.g. his plan of redemption (Eph. 3:3); (2) as an end-time event *revelation, appearing* (Rom. 2:5; 1 Pet. 1:7); (3) of particular forms of disclosure, as through vision (Rev. 1:1 and personal guidance (Gal. 2:2)” ([Friberg](#)). Paul was speaking of meaning #3 here. You may read about the initial installment of his revelation in Acts 9:1-16. He also received other, more specific revelations about his assignment (e.g., Acts 13:1-4; 16:6-10).

¹⁴⁸ Eph. 3:3 - the [mystery](#): [Nominative](#) case of *mustêrion* ([3466](#)), indicating, in general terms, previously undisclosed revelation from God. Paul used this word in Eph. 1:9, where he referred to the [mystery](#) of the culmination of all things in the Messiah. (See Eph. 1:9 for a more detailed explanation of this word.) Paul uses this word six times in this letter, more often than it is used in any other letter (Eph. 1:9; 3:3, 4, 9; 5:32; 6:19). Paul will define his use of the word in the next verse (Eph. 3:4).

¹⁴⁹ Eph. 3:4 - the [mystery](#) of Christ: Paul here begins to spell out what he means by his use of the term “[mystery](#)” in the preceding verse (Eph. 3:3). This [mystery](#) has to do with the Messiah, Jesus. He speaks of his insight, literally, “in the [mystery](#) of the Christ.” “[Mystery](#)” here is the [Dative](#) case of *mustêrion* ([3466](#)). In Eph. 3:5 he will discuss the freshness of this [mystery](#), the revelation that has been given about the Messiah. In Eph. 3:6 he will define the [mystery](#). In Eph. 3:7-9 he will describe his role in explaining this [mystery](#). In Eph. 3:10-11 he will highlight God’s eternal purpose in this [mystery](#). In Eph. 3:12-13 he will make some personal applications about this [mystery](#) for the benefit of his readers. Finally, he will conclude this section with a prayer for his readers based on the theology of this [mystery](#) in Eph. 3:14-21.

¹⁵⁰ Eph. 3:5 - as it as now been revealed to His holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit: “revealed” is the [Aorist Indicative Passive](#) 3P Singular of *apokalúptō* ([601](#)); the root idea is to uncover, reveal, disclose. Frequently, as here, it is used in the NT in a figurative sense of Divine disclosure. The [Aorist](#) tense of “revealed” views the entire process of this particular revelation to the early NT [church](#) as a single event. The *vessels* for the disclosure were His (probably God’s) holy ([Dative](#) plural of *hágios*, [40](#) – “ones set apart for God’s use”) [apostles](#) ([Dative](#) plural of *apóstolos*, [652](#) – “sent ones”) and [prophets](#) ([Dative](#) plural of *prophêtês*, [4396](#), “God’s spokesmen”). Paul recently referred to “the apostles and prophets” in Eph. 2:20 (see the note there). The *means* by which God revealed the substance of this new “[mystery](#)” about the combining of believing Jews and [Gentiles](#) into [one body](#), the [Church](#), is

- E 9 Its content: {6} to be specific, that the Gentiles ¹⁵¹ are 3:6
- G 1 Co-heirs: fellow heirs ¹⁵²
- G 2 Co-body: and fellow members of the body, ¹⁵³
- G 3 Co-sharers of promise in Christ through the [gospel](#): and fellow partakers ¹⁵⁴ of the promise in Christ

God's [Holy Spirit \(Dative Singular of *pneûma*, 4151\)](#).

¹⁵¹ Eph. 3:6 - the [Gentiles](#): Paul is speaking of believers from among the nations ([Gentiles = Accusative Plural Neuter of *êthnos*, 1484](#)). In this letter Paul refers to the [Gentiles](#) in Eph. 2:11; 3:1, 6, 8; 4:17. For further information on this noun, see the appropriate notes at Eph. 2:11; 4:17.

¹⁵² Eph. 3:6 - fellow heirs: [Accusative Plural Neuter of *sugklêronómos* \(4789\)](#), used only 4X in the NT – Rom. 8:17 (Christians are *fellow heirs* with Christ); Eph. 3:6 (believing [Gentiles](#) are *fellow heirs* along with believing [Israelis](#) of the inheritance to be found in Christ); Heb. 11:9 (Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob were *fellow heirs* of the same promise); and 1 Pet. 3:7 (a believing wife is a *fellow heir* along with her believing husband, of the grace of life). The noun speaks “of receiving possessions along with another *inheriting together with*; metaphorically, of the Christian expectation in relation to Christ; substantively *fellow heir with, joint heir, fellow receiver*, followed by the [genitive of person one inherits with](#)” ([Friberg](#)).

In that regard, in Rom. 8:17, the one alongside whom believers are co-heirs, Christ, is indicated in the [Genitive](#). In Heb. 11:9 Isaac and Jacob appear in the [Genitive](#) as those along with whom Abraham was a co-heir. However, in Eph. 3:6, the believing [Israelis](#) do not appear in the immediate context, and so no [Genitive](#) case appears. Likewise, in 1 Pet. 3:7, “You husbands,” the ones alongside whom their feminine ([Dative of *gunaikéios*, 1134](#)) counterparts appear as fellow heirs, appears in the [Vocative](#), not the [Genitive](#). So [Friberg's](#) “[Genitive](#)” assertion is true only in half the cases.

Paul's point here in Eph. 3:6, is, as stated, that believing [Gentiles](#) are *fellow heirs* along with believing [Israelis](#) of the inheritance to be found in Christ. *Not* explicitly stated in this immediate context is the term “inheritance.” (“Inheritance” is mentioned in Eph. 1:11, 14, 18.) Also *not* explicitly stated in this immediate context are the believing [Israelis](#). Paul does refer to them obliquely in a more remote context as being members of the “Circumcision” (Eph. 2:11); as being part of the “commonwealth of [Israel](#)” (Eph. 2:12); and as being part of “those who were near” (Eph. 2:17).

¹⁵³ Eph. 3:6 - fellow members of the body: These five words in English translate but one in Greek, the [Accusative Plural Neuter Adjective *sússômos* \(4954\)](#), used only here in the NT. It means, literally, “belonging to the same body” ([Thayer](#)). Paul's point is that believing [Gentiles](#) belong to the same body of believers composed of believing [Israelis](#) – metaphorically, the [body of Christ](#).

¹⁵⁴ Eph. 3:6 - fellow partakers: the [Accusative Plural Neuter Adjective *summétochos* \(4830\)](#), used in the NT only in Eph. 3:6; 5:7. It means “partaking in jointly, casting ones' lot with; substantively ... partner, sharer (Eph. 5:7)” ([Friberg](#)). Paul's point was that believing [Gentiles](#) were fellow partakers (along with believing [Israelis](#)) “of the promise in Christ Jesus through the [gospel](#)” (Eph. 3:6).

Jesus ¹⁵⁵ through the gospel, ¹⁵⁶

D 2 The service of Paul, the steward 3:7-9

E 1 The origin of Paul's service of the [gospel](#) 3:7

- G 1 The fact of Paul's service: {7} of which I was made a minister, ¹⁵⁷
- G 2 The nature of Paul's service: according to the gift of God's grace ¹⁵⁸
- G 3 The empowerment of Paul's service: which was given to me according to the working of His power. ¹⁵⁹

¹⁵⁵ Eph. 3:6 - of the promise in Christ Jesus: "the promise" ([Genitive](#) Singular of *epaggelia*, 1860), "(1) originally *announcement, declaration*; in later Greek *agreement, promise, assurance* (Acts 23:21); (2) predominately of God's pronouncements that provide assurance to do *promise* (Eph. 6:2); by metonymy *thing promised, what was promised* (Acts 1:4)" ([Friberg](#)). Since Paul used the Singular here, and since he connected the promise "in Christ Jesus" with that which came "through the [gospel](#)," he was probably not thinking of any specific promise, but rather the general promise of hope that comes to every believer in Jesus and to believing society as a whole. This general promise includes such things as forgiveness, [reconciliation](#) with God and with fellow believers, resurrection, our future [inheritance](#), Godly society, Christ's [Millennial Kingdom](#), [New Heaven](#) and [New Earth](#) and the [Eternal Kingdom](#). Tremendous promise, indeed!

¹⁵⁶ Eph. 3:6 - through the [gospel](#): [Genitive](#) of *euaggelion* (2098), "good news; in the NT only of God's message of salvation *gospel, good news*; ... (3) as denoting the content of the message as an offer of salvation *gospel, good news, God's message* (1 Cor. 9:14a)" ([Friberg](#)). Actually, Scripture's use of the term "[gospel](#)" is a little broader than [Friberg](#) has indicated. For example, on three different occasions Jesus spoke of the "[good news of the kingdom](#)" (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 24:14).

As nearly as anyone has done, Paul defined the *content* of the "[gospel](#)" in 1 Cor. 15:1-8 – (1) that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures; (2) that He was buried; (3) that he was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures; (4) and that he afterward appeared to many different people, including Paul himself. Actually, this definition probably appropriately describes his own personal version of the "good news" – which he defined as "[my gospel](#)" (Rom. 2:16; 16:25; Gal. 1:11; 2:2; 2 Tim. 2:8). The word "[gospel](#)" is used four times in this letter – in Eph. 1:13; 3:6; 6:15, 19.

¹⁵⁷ Eph. 3:7 - of which I was made a minister: Literally, "of which I was made a servant." The word translated by the NASB as "minister" (*diákonos*, 1249) is the typical Greek word for a servant (as opposed to a slave, *doúlos*, 1401). Jesus made Paul a servant of the [gospel](#) to proclaim it to as many [Israelis](#), and especially, to as many [Gentiles](#), as he could.

¹⁵⁸ Eph. 3:7 - according to the gift of God's grace: Paul saw his assignment to be a "servant" of the "good news" as a special, unmerited, gracious gift from God. God was doing him a favor by assigning him as a "servant" of the "good news." The term "gift" is the [Accusative](#) Singular of *dōrea* (1431). In the NT it often (but not always) refers to a gift given by God to believers, including the gift of eternal life (John 4:10); the gift of the [Holy Spirit](#) (Acts 2:38); the gift of righteousness (Rom. 5:17); and here, the gift of enabling one for ministry (Eph. 3:7) (adapted from [Friberg](#)). "Gift" is used twice in this letter – in Eph. 3:7; 4:7.

The term "grace" is the [Genitive](#) Singular of *charis* (5485), used 12 X in this letter. It was first used at Eph. 1:2; last used in Eph. 3:2; next used in Eph. 3:8. "Grace" here indicates God's favor upon Paul.

¹⁵⁹ Eph. 3:7 - which was given to me according to the working of his power: "working" is the [Accusative](#) Singular of *enérgeia* (1753). We, of course, derive our English word "energy" from this Greek word. The noun comes from the word for "work" (*érgon*, 2041) plus the preposition "in" (*én*). *Enérgeia* means "function, activity." Most often it is used in the NT "of supernatural activity *energy, operation, working*" (adapted from [Friberg](#)). One

- E 2 The irony of Paul's service 3:8a
- G 1 {8} To me, the very least of all saints, ¹⁶⁰
- G 2 this grace was given, ¹⁶¹
- E 3 The responsibility of Paul's service – To the nations 3:8b-9
- G 1 To "good-news-icize" the wealth of Christ: to preach ¹⁶² to the Gentiles ¹⁶³ the unfathomable riches of Christ, ¹⁶⁴ 3:8b
- G 2 To bring to light to all the stewardship of the [mystery](#): {9} and to bring to light what is the

exception is human effort (Eph. 4:16). In two other cases Satanic working, rather than God's working, is in view (2 Thess. 2:9, 11). This word is used in this letter in Eph. 3:7; 4:16. Paul is the only author who uses this word. Elsewhere, it appears in Php. 3:21; Col. 2:12; 2 Thess. 2:9, 11.

"Power" is the [Genitive](#) Singular of *dúnamis* (1411), that which is "able to produce a strong effect – *power, might, strength*" (adapted from [Friberg](#)). In certain contexts, it refers to miracles (e.g., Matt. 7:22; 11:20, 21, 23; Acts 8:13; 2 Thess. 2:9). This word is used in this letter in Eph. 1:19, 21; 3:7, 16, 20.

The two (Greek) words for "working" and "power" appear in the same verse in this letter in Eph. 1:19; 3:7.

¹⁶⁰ Eph. 3:8 - the very least of all saints: "very least" is the [Dative](#) Singular of the Comparative Adjective *eláchistos* (1646). The word is the superlative of the ancient word *elachús* (short, small, little) used as the superlative of *mikrós* (small) ..." ([Friberg](#)). It can refer to that which is of least importance (Matt. 25:40, 45), or least in size (1 Cor. 6:2; James 3:4). Here in Eph. 3:8 Paul considered himself the least important of all saints. Elsewhere he labeled himself as the least important of all the [apostles](#). He was not given to a pseudo modesty, but rather, was fully aware that he did not even deserve to be called an [apostle](#) because he had persecuted the [church](#) of God (1 Cor. 15:9).

¹⁶¹ Eph. 3:8 - this grace was given: Paul classifies his assignment (1) to "good-news-icize" to the [Gentiles](#) the inscrutable wealth of the [Messiah](#) and (2) to shed light on the [mystery](#) of the inclusion of believing [Gentiles](#) along with [believing Jews](#) into the [Church](#) as "this grace" ([Nominative](#) Singular of *cháris*, 5485), first used in Eph. 1:2; last used in Eph. 3:7, and next used in Eph. 4:7. By "grace" he considers his assignment to be an expression of God's generosity and good will toward him, a gracious gift that he did not earn or deserve because he is "the very least of all saints."

¹⁶² Eph. 3:8 - to preach: [Aorist](#) Middle [Infinitive](#) of *euaggelizō* (2097), to announce or proclaim good news. Literally, and I coin a word, to "good-news-icize." Used in this letter only in Eph. 2:17; 3:8.

¹⁶³ Eph. 3:8 - to the [Gentiles](#): the [Dative](#) Plural [Neuter](#) of *éthnos* (1484), "the nations," used in this letter in Eph. 2:11; 3:1, 6, 8; 4:17. For more information on this noun, see the appropriate notes at Eph. 2:11; 4:17.

¹⁶⁴ Eph. 3:8 - the unfathomable riches of Christ: literally, "the untrackable wealth of the Anointed One." Or, better yet, "the incalculable wealth of the Anointed One" ([JTB](#)). "Unfathomable" is the [Accusative Neuter](#) Singular of *anexichniástos* (421), used only here and in Rom. 11:33. The blessings we enjoy and will enjoy in our relationship with Jesus, the Anointed [Prophet](#), [Priest](#), and [King](#), are beyond our comprehension.

- administration ¹⁶⁵ of the mystery ¹⁶⁶ 3:9
- H 1 which for ages has been hidden in God ¹⁶⁷
- H 2 who created all things;
- D 3 The purpose of Paul's stewardship: {10} so that ¹⁶⁸ the manifold wisdom of God ¹⁶⁹ might now be made known (3:10a) 3:10-12
- E 1 The medium of the knowledge: through the church ¹⁷⁰ 3:10b
- E 2 The targets of the knowledge: to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. ¹⁷¹ 3:10c

¹⁶⁵ Eph. 3:9 - administration: The [Nominative](#) Singular [Feminine](#) of the noun *oikonomia* ([3622](#)), referring here to the special “arrangement of the affairs of the household of God” known as the economy (or [dispensation](#)) [of grace](#). The [dispensation of grace](#) (also known as the [church age](#)) is that plan God has had from eternity past for uniting in one body, the [body of Christ](#), both [believing Jews](#) and believing [Gentiles](#). This plan was hinted at in the OT, but never fully revealed. It was a “[mystery](#),” waiting until the [Church Age](#) for full enlightenment and explanation.

¹⁶⁶ Eph. 3:9 - the [mystery](#): the [Genitive](#) Singular of *mustêrion* ([3466](#)), used in Eph. 1:9; 3:3, 4, 9; 5:32; 6:19. This word refers to a truth unrevealed, or incompletely revealed in the OT and now fully revealed in the NT.

¹⁶⁷ Eph. 3:9 - which for ages has been hidden in God: The [mystery](#) concerning the [Dispensation of Grace](#), also known as the [Church Age](#) has been hidden in God for ages ([Genitive](#) Plural of *aion*, [165](#), in this context, unspecified past eras). This is a superb definition of a [mystery](#). It is a truth that has been hidden in past ages, but now, in the NT era, has been brought to light (Eph. 3:9).

¹⁶⁸ Eph. 3:10 - so that: These two English words translate the single Subordinating Conjunction *hina* ([2443](#)), frequently “...used to introduce clauses that show a purpose or goal *that, in order that, so that ...* predominately with the [present](#) or [aorist subjunctive](#) (John 10:10; Rom. 1:11 ...” ([Friberg](#)). The word that immediately follows *hina* in the Greek text here is the [Aorist Subjunctive](#) Passive 3rd Person of the verb *gnōridzō* ([1107](#)) “...*make known, reveal, declare...*” ([Friberg](#)). The word order of the NASB differs significantly from that of the Greek text of Eph. 3:10, which reads, literally, “in order that might be made known now to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenlies through the church the many-colored wisdom of the God” ([JTB](#)).

So the over-all thought of Paul in Eph. 3:8-10 is that (Eph. 3:8) he was given the grace to proclaim to the [Gentiles](#) the incalculable wealth of Christ, (Eph. 3:9) and to bring to light the [mystery](#) (about the previously unrevealed truth of believing [Gentiles](#) and [Jews](#) united together in the [Church](#), the [Body of Christ](#)) (Eph. 3:10) in order to make known to the angels in the heavenly places through the [church](#) the many-colored wisdom of God.

¹⁶⁹ Eph. 3:10 - the manifold wisdom of God: “manifold” is the [Nominative](#) Singular of the Adjective *polupoikilos* ([4182](#)), which means “much variegated” ([Thayer](#)) or “many-sided, most-varied ...” ([Friberg](#)) or “many-colored” ([JTB](#)). It is used only here in the NT. Paul uses this adjective to describe

The “wisdom” ([Nominative](#) Singular of the Noun *sophia*, [4678](#)), the ability to use varied knowledge for the most correct, strategic, and ethical behavior and outcome for the most people ([JTB](#)). The wisdom of which Paul speaks is the wisdom of God. He is stating that the [Church](#), composed of both believing [Jews](#) and believing [Gentiles](#), is at least one of the supreme examples of the many-colored wisdom of God.

¹⁷⁰ Eph. 3:10 - through the [church](#): [Genitive](#) Singular of the noun *ekklêsia* ([1577](#)), here, the [universal](#) body of believers in Christ starting at [Pentecost](#) and completed with the [Rapture](#) ([JTB](#)).

¹⁷¹ Eph. 3:10 - to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly *places*: “the rulers” – [Dative](#) Plural of *archê* ([746](#)). With the qualification, literally, “in the heavenlies,” this plural noun denotes angelic rulers, or angels, whether good or evil. In this context it is more likely that Paul had in mind that the [Church](#), with its vari-colored and diverse, yet unified constituents, in a most unusual way displays God’s infinite wisdom and sovereignty to good angels. The

- E 3 The focus of the knowledge – the many-colored wisdom of God 3:11-12
- G 1 The eternity of God's wise plan: {11} This was in accordance with the eternal purpose¹⁷² 3:11a
- G 2 The focal point of God's wise plan: which He carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord,¹⁷³ 3:11b
- G 3 The accessibility through Christ 3:12a
- H 1 {12} in whom we have boldness¹⁷⁴
- H 2 and confident access¹⁷⁵
- G 4 The means of access: through faith in Him.¹⁷⁶ 3:12b

angels witnessed the creation of the world and man; wept with God at man's rebellion against his Creator; but marveled at God's ability to reconcile men to one another and to Himself through the sacrificial substitutionary death of Christ on the Cross. God had no plans to redeem fallen angels. But He gave His all to redeem fallen man. That must cause angels to shake their heads in wonder and amazement. Paul will speak later in this letter about "rulers" of darkness and wickedness, also in the heavenlies (Eph. 6:12).

"...and [to] the authorities" is the [Dative](#) Plural of the noun *exousia* (1849), denoting those who have the right and the power to make decisions and to govern ([JTB](#)), adapted from [Friberg](#) and [Thayer](#). Again, with the addition of "in the heavenlies," Paul is thinking of an audience comprised of good angels who view God's many-colored wisdom in the [Church](#). He will speak later in this letter about "authorities" of darkness and wickedness (Eph. 6:12).

"...in the heavenly places" translates the [Dative Neuter](#) Plural of the adjective *epouránios* (2032), used always in the plural in Ephesians – Eph. 1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12. In my opinion, the adjective carries a positive connotation in the first four instances, but a negative one in the last, where, clearly, demonic forces in the heavenlies is the subject of Paul's discussion. Really "the heavenlies" has a neutral aura about it. But obviously demonic forces as well as good angels frequent the heavenlies.

¹⁷² Eph. 3:11 - eternal purpose: Literally, "according to purpose of the ages ..." "Eternal" is the [Genitive](#) Plural of the noun *aiōn* (165), "ages"; "purpose" is the [Accusative](#) Singular of *próthesis* (4286), which, in a secondary sense, indicates "plan, purpose, design" (adapted from [Friberg](#)). God has had a marvelous, intricate plan (Eph. 1:11) to bring good out of evil (Rom. 8:28) from eternity past (Eph. 3:11).

¹⁷³ Eph. 3:11 - in Christ Jesus our Lord: God's marvelous plan focused upon the [Christ](#), Jesus, our Master.

¹⁷⁴ Eph. 3:12 - boldness: Literally, "the boldness" ([Accusative](#) Singular of *parrésia*, 3954) – "confidence, joyful sense of freedom" adapted from [Friberg](#); also, "assurance" ([Thayer](#)). The believer's boldness to come into the presence of God comes from the [Christ](#), Jesus, mankind's only mediator (1 Tim. 2:5).

¹⁷⁵ Eph. 3:12 - and confident access: Literally, "and access in confidence ...;" "access" is the [Accusative](#) Singular of the Noun *prosagōgē* (4318), "as a means of admission into the presence of a person in high position *access, approach, privilege of entrance*" ([Friberg](#)). This noun is used only by Paul – in Rom. 5:2 (where it is translated "introduction"); Eph. 2:18; 3:12.

"...in confidence" is the [Dative](#) Singular of the Noun *pepoithēsis* (4006), "trust, confidence, reliance" ([Thayer](#)). This noun is used only by Paul – in 2 Cor. 1:15; 3:4; 8:22; 10:2; Eph. 3:12; Php. 3:4.

The believer's "access in confidence" to God comes only through Jesus Christ (Eph. 3:11-12; 1 Tim. 2:5). Mary, the mother of Jesus can provide no access to God whatever. To identify her as "[Mediatrice](#)" is a fiction created by the [Vatican Church](#). This fabrication finds no support whatever in Scripture.

¹⁷⁶ Eph. 3:12 - in Him: Literally the text reads, "...through the faith of Him. "The faith" is the [Genitive](#) Singular of *pistis* (4102). In addition, though "...of Him" is the [Genitive](#) of the Pronoun *autós* (846), it is an [Objective Genitive](#) (not a [Subjective Genitive](#)), and the NASB editors have correctly translated, "in Him" (not "by Him" or "of

- D 4 The request of Paul the steward (from the perspective of God's wise plan) 3:13
 - E 1 The content of the request: {13} Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf,
 - E 2 The alternative of the request: for they are your glory.

B 4 Prayer for Enablement, Comprehension and Filling 3:14-21

- C 1 The grounds for the request 3:14-16a
 - D 1 The object of the request: {14} For this reason I bow my knees before the Father,¹⁷⁷ 3:14
 - D 2 The significance of the Father: {15} from whom every family¹⁷⁸ in heaven and on earth derives its name, 3:15
 - D 3 The resources behind the request: {16} that He would grant you, according to the riches of His glory,¹⁷⁹ 3:16a
- C 2 The content of the request 3:16b-19
 - D 1 The gift from God 3:16b-17
 - E 1 Their strengthening 3:16b
 - G 1 The means of strengthening: to be strengthened

Him,” both of which would inaccurately state that Paul had *Jesus’* faith in mind, not the *Christians’* faith). It is the particular faith that rests upon Christ that gives these believers “boldness and confident access.”

¹⁷⁷ Eph. 3:14 - the Father: [Accusative](#) of the noun *patêr* (3962), generally, the immediate male ancestor; here, metaphorically, in reference to God, the Progenitor of all that exists, and especially, of all families.

¹⁷⁸ Eph. 3:15 - from whom every family in heaven and on earth derives its name: “...family” is the [Nominative](#) of *patriá* (3965), a collection of individuals associated by a common ancestor, i.e., father (*patêr*, 3962). Paul here is looking beyond merely human families. He is looking at every association, even celestial, or angelic. Modern Western society has mounted an assault against fathers and families under the guise of political correctness and adherence to the anti-patriarchal dogma of feminism. Western society’s assault is really an assault against God, one which has no hope whatever of surviving in the long run.

¹⁷⁹ Eph. 3:16 - according to the riches of His glory: literally, “according to the wealth ([Accusative](#) Singular of *plou̓tos*, 4149) of His glory ([Genitive](#) Singular of *dóxa*, 1391). *Plou̓tos* appears 5X in this letter – in Eph. 1:7, 18; 2:7; 3:8, 16, signifying “spiritual abundance or prosperity” (Friberg). Since *plou̓tos* appears in the NT only in the Singular, “wealth” is universally a better translation than “riches.”

Dóxa appears 8X in this letter – in Eph. 1:6, 12, 14, 17, 18; 3:13, 16, and probably signifies both of the following definitions “(1) as a manifestation of light *radiance, brightness, splendor* (Acts 22:11); (2) as a manifestation of God’s excellent power *glory, majesty* (Rom. 9:23) ...” (Friberg).

Paul is asking God that He would answer his prayer on behalf of his readers – according to the wealth of God’s glory – that they would be strengthened with power through God’s Spirit in their inner man, etc.

with power through His Spirit ¹⁸⁰

- G 2 The area of strengthening: in the inner man,
- E 2 Christ's residence: 3:17
- G 1 The object of residence: {17} so that Christ may dwell in your hearts ¹⁸¹
- G 2 The means of residence: through faith; ¹⁸²
- G 3 The subsoil of residence: and that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸³

¹⁸⁰ Eph. 3:16 - to be strengthened with power through His Spirit: “to be strengthened” is the [Aorist Passive Infinitive](#) of *krataiōō* (2901), a little-used verb applied to John the Baptist in Luke 1:80; to the child Jesus in Luke 2:40; commanded of Paul’s readers in 1 Cor. 16:13; and prayed in Paul’s prayer for his readers here in Eph. 3:16. In the [active](#) voice it means “make strong, strengthen”; in the passive voice, as here and in the other occurrences in the NT, it means “become strong, grow strong, be strengthened” ([Friberg](#)).

“...with power” is the [Dative](#) Singular of the noun *dūnamis* (1411), here, meaning #1 of [Friberg](#), “as able to produce a strong effect *power, might, strength* (Acts 1:8), opposite *asthēneia (weakness)*” [769].

“...through His Spirit” – God’s Spirit ([Genitive](#) Singular of *pneūma*, 4151), is the means by which He appears to operate and accomplish His will. This statement does not in any sense imply that the [Holy Spirit](#) is merely a force without personality, nor that He is in any sense inferior as a member of the Triune Godhead.

¹⁸¹ Eph. 3:17 - so that Christ may dwell in your hearts: “...may dwell” is the [Aorist Active Infinitive](#) of *katoikēō* (2730) “(1) intransitively; (a) literally, of a geographical place *live or dwell in, settle down in* (Matt. 2:23) [Acts 1:19]; (b) figuratively, of the possession of human beings by God, supernatural beings [Luke 11:26], religious virtues, etc. *indwell, live or dwell in* (Eph. 3:17; 2 Pet. 3:13)” ([Friberg](#)). Christ is within every believer (Col. 1:27). So Paul’s intent here must be something more special and intimate than that. He is asking that Christ (1) may “settle down and be at home” (2) “in the hearts ([Dative](#) Plural of *kardia*, 2588) of you.”

¹⁸² Eph. 3:17 - through faith: literally, “through the faith” ([Genitive](#) Singular of *pístis*, 4102). “The faith” in “the Anointed One (Christ)” is the means by which the Christ may dwell in their hearts. “The faith” (with the article, “the”) refers back to their “faith in the Lord Jesus” (Eph. 1:19) and “the faith in Him” that grants the readers “boldness and confident access” (Eph. 3:12). It is this particular faith that is the means by which Christ may dwell in their hearts.

However, “the faith,” with the article, is also code for the content of the [Gospel](#), and even more, the content of the entire New Testament, which Jesus pre-authorized. Our trust in Jesus must be according to the content of the truth which He pre-authorized. This content was imparted to the apostles (including Paul) by means of the [Holy Spirit](#) which Jesus had promised (John 14:16-17, 26; 15:26-27; 16:7-15), and who descended initially upon the fledgling [Church](#) at [Pentecost](#) (Acts 2:1-46).

¹⁸³ Eph. 3:17 - that you, being rooted and grounded in love: The entire phrase reads, literally, “in love having been rooted and having been founded.”

“Being rooted” (NASB) is, literally, “having been rooted,” (the 2nd Person Plural [Nominative Perfect Passive Participle](#) of *hridzōō*, 4492). It means “literally, *cause to take root; passive be rooted, take root*; figuratively and only passive in the NT, of spiritual stability *be firmly established, be strengthened* (Col. 2:7)” ([Friberg](#)). This verbal form appears only here in the NT and in its “parallel” passage, Col. 2:7.

“And grounded” is, literally, “[in love] ... and foundation-having-been-laid-for-you.” The single word is the 2nd Person Plural [Nominative Perfect Passive Participle](#) of *themeliōō* (2311). This verb is used in the Pluperfect [Indicative Passive](#) in Matt. 7:25 – “for it had been *founded* on the rock”; as a [Perfect Passive Participle](#) in Eph. 3:17 “grounded [better, “founded”] in love”; likewise in Col. 1:23 “firmly established”; as an [Aorist Indicative Active](#) in Heb. 1:10 “*laid the foundation* of the earth”; and in 1 Pet. 5:10 as a Future [Indicative Active](#) “*will ... establish you*.” Together, the two verbs describe the readers as *having been rooted* in love and as *having been founded* upon love. The love spoken of is the love God has for the believers (Eph. 2:4). At the same time, the believers ought to exhibit this same love for one another (Eph. 1:15; 4:2, 15, 16; 5:2) and for a lost and dying world (Rom. 13:10).

- D 2 Their resultant strengthening 3:18-19b
- E 1 Appropriate comprehension: {18} may be able to comprehend with all the saints
 - E 2 The dimensions of Christ's love: what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 3:18
 - E 3 The experiential knowledge of Christ's love: {19} and to know the love of Christ¹⁸⁴ 3:19a
 - E 4 The transcendence of Christ's love: which surpasses knowledge, 3:19b
- D 3 Their resultant filling to all God's fulness: that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.¹⁸⁵ 3:19c
- C 3 The doxology of the request 3:20-21
- D 1 The ascription of power 3:20
- E 1 The superlative of His power: {20} Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly¹⁸⁶
 - E 2 The limitlessness of His power: beyond all that we ask or think,

¹⁸⁴ Eph. 3:19 - and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge: "to know" is the [Aorist Active Infinitive](#) of [ginōskō \(1097\)](#), which speaks "(1) of intelligent comprehension *know, come to understand, ascertain* (Luke 8:10) ... (3) as learning something through sense perception *learn of, become aware of, find out, perceive* (Mark 5:29); ... (6) of certainty gained through experience *know, come to know, be sure*; (a) of a thing (John 8:32); (b) of a person (John 2:24; 1 John 2:3)" (excerpted from [Friberg](#)). So the Greek verb [ginōskō \(1097\)](#) seems, at least in part, to be connected with *experiential* rather than *intuitive* knowledge. The latter would be exemplified more by the Greek verb [oīda \(6063\)](#). It is ironic that Paul desires for his readers to know by experience the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge (the [Genitive](#) Singular of [gnōsis, 1108](#)), "basically, as the possession of information *what is known, knowledge ...*" (excerpted from [Friberg](#)).

In the phrase "love of Christ" (literally, "love of the Christ"), "love" appears in the [Accusative](#) case of [agápē \(26\)](#). (See the appropriate footnote at Eph. 1:4 for more detailed information about this noun.) In the phrase "of the Christ," "the Christ" appears in the [Genitive](#) of [Christós \(5547\)](#). It is to be taken as a [Subjective Genitive](#), meaning that it is Christ's love for us which Paul has in view, not our love for Christ. Christ's love for us passes comprehension. Our love for Him does not.

It is imperative in our Christian lives that we come to understand how much Jesus, the Messiah loves and is committed to us believers. It is really far beyond our ability to comprehend, but we should be growing in the security of that knowledge.

¹⁸⁵ Eph. 3:19 - that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God: This is Paul's goal for his readers, and it should be our goal for ourselves and for one another. Realistically, in my opinion, this request of Paul's will not and cannot be fully realized in this life. It will grow during Christ's [millennial](#) reign, and it will grow throughout eternity. But because God is infinite, we will never fully arrive there. It is a work in progress.

¹⁸⁶ Eph. 3:20 - Now to Him who is able to do far more abundantly: Literally, "Now to Him who is able, beyond all things, to do 'superabundantly'...." The person addressed is God. The last word is the adverb [huperekeperissou' \(6087\)](#), used here "as the highest form of comparison imaginable (immeasurably more than) (Eph. 3:20)" ([Friberg](#)). Paul was the only one to use this word, and he did so three times – Eph. 3:20; 1 Thess. 3:10; 5:13.

- E 3 The proximity of His power: according to the power that works within us,
 - D 2 The ascription of glory 3:21
 - E 1 The recipient of glory: {21} to Him be the glory ¹⁸⁷
 - E 2 The arena of glory
 - G 1 In the assembly: in the church ¹⁸⁸
 - G 2 In the Messiah, Jesus: and in Christ Jesus
 - E 3 The extent of glory: to all generations ¹⁸⁹
 - E 4 The duration of glory: forever and ever. ¹⁹⁰
 - D 3 The affirmation: Amen. ¹⁹¹
- A 2 THE WALK OF BELIEVERS 4 - 6**
- B 1 Walk Worthy of Your Calling 4:1-16**
- C 1 In unity 4:1-6
 - D 1 The urgency of a worthy walk 4:1
 - E 1 Paul's status: {1} Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, ¹⁹²

¹⁸⁷ Eph. 3:21 - to Him be the glory: "Him" is God; "glory" ([Nominative](#) of *dóxa*, [1391](#)), here meaning ascription of praise and honor to God, who is worthy of all such from all His intelligent created beings.

¹⁸⁸ Eph. 3:21 - in the church: The [Church](#) ([Dative](#) Singular of *ekklésia*, [1577](#)), the assembly of those called out into the community of the believers in Christ in [this age](#). This noun appears in this letter 9X – in Eph. 1:22; 3:10, 21; 5:23, 24, 25, 27, 29, 32. The [Church](#) and Jesus Christ, its founder, are twin foci of God's glory throughout eternity! Lest we present day Christians become conceited, let us also acknowledge that redeemed [Israel](#) is also a focus of God's glory throughout eternity. (See, for example Isa. 4:5; 24:23; 35:2; 58:8; 60:1-3; Rev. 21:11, 23, 24, 26.)

¹⁸⁹ Eph. 3:21 - to all generations: [Accusative](#) Plural of *geneá* ([1074](#)), i.e., to all successive waves of descendants, age by age.

¹⁹⁰ Eph. 3:21 - forever and ever: literally, "of the age of the ages." "Age" and "ages" are, respectively, the singular and plural of the noun *aiō'n* ([165](#)), used by Paul in this letter in Eph 1:21; 2:2, 7; 3:9, 11, and twice here in Eph. 3:21. "Age" or "era" speaks of a fairly fluid time span. For example, in Eph. 1:21, Paul spoke of "this age" but also of "the one coming." In that context, the present age would include at least the [Church Age](#) (if not even prior to that time). The coming (age) would include, I should think, both Christ's [Millennial Kingdom](#) and even the remainder of [eternity](#).

¹⁹¹ Eph. 3:21 - Amen: A word transliterated from Hebrew into Greek, *amên* ([281](#)), meaning "truly, so be it."

¹⁹² Eph. 4:1 - prisoner of the Lord: The word order of the literal Greek text is as follows: "I implore, therefore, you – I, the prisoner in Lord, worthily to walk (with respect to) the calling with which you were called." "Prisoner" is the [Nominative](#) Singular of *désmios* ([1198](#)), universally translated "prisoner(s)" in the NASB. Paul identified himself

E 2 Paul's urgency: implore you ¹⁹³

E 3 Paul's prescription: to walk ¹⁹⁴ in a manner worthy ¹⁹⁵ of the calling ¹⁹⁶ with which you have been called, ¹⁹⁷

D 2 The signs of a worthy walk 4:2-3

as “the prisoner (*děsmios*) of Christ Jesus for the sake of you [Gentiles](#)” (Eph. 3:1). Here he identifies himself as “the prisoner of the Lord” (Eph. 4:1). These are proofs that Paul was in prison when he wrote his letter to the Ephesians. See the introduction for more information on this subject.

¹⁹³ Eph. 4:1 - implore: The 1st Person [Present Indicative Active](#) of *parakalēō* ([3870](#)), the most basic meaning of which is to call someone alongside oneself (see [Friberg](#)). The extended meaning here is to call out to someone to urge or beg or implore him to a course of action. Here, Paul commenced his *application* of the *Wealth* of the believer which he described in Eph. 1-3. In so doing, he begged his readers to engage in a *Walk* appropriate to the *Wealth* with which they have been blessed. Eph. 4-6 constitutes the *Walk* of the Believer. Paul used the same word in exactly the same parsing in Rom. 12:1, “Therefore *I urge* (*parakalēō*, [3870](#)) you, brethren, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies a living and holy sacrifice”

¹⁹⁴ Eph. 4:1 - to walk: [Aorist Active Infinitive](#) of *peripatēō* ([4043](#)), literally, to walk around “with a connotation of spending some time in a place ... figuratively of how one conducts one’s daily life *behave, live* (Col. 1:10)” ([Friberg](#)); here with the adverb *axiōs* ([516](#)), Paul is imploring his readers to walk worthily of their calling (by God). The [Aorist](#) tense indicates they are to walk (*peripatēō*) worthily of their calling as a customary way of life, looking at their Christians’ lives as a single event. This verb has appeared in Eph. 2:2 (in a negative, pre-Christian description of their ungodly lives); it appeared in Eph. 2:10 in a positive sense – God has created us in Christ for the purpose of good works so that we should *walk* in them; he uses it here (Eph. 4:1) in a positive sense. He will use it again twice in Eph. 4:17 – his readers are no longer to *walk* the way the [Gentiles](#) walk; his readers are to *walk* in love (Eph. 5:2); and they are to *walk* carefully as wise people (Eph. 5:15). Eph. 1-3 detailed the *Wealth* (blessings) of the readers; Eph. 4-6 describes the appropriate *Walk* of these (spiritually) Wealthy believers.

¹⁹⁵ Eph. 4:1 - in a manner worthy: This English phrase translates the single Greek adverb *axiōs* ([516](#)), “worthily,” used mostly by Paul, and only here in this letter.

¹⁹⁶ Eph. 4:1 - of the calling: “calling” is the [Genitive](#) of *klēsis* ([2821](#)), God’s calling or invitation to people to enter the [kingdom](#) of His [anointed](#) King, Jesus. This noun is used 11X in the NT, and with one exception (1 Cor. 7:20), it refers to God’s successful invitation of certain people into the kingdom. This calling of God is irrevocable (Rom. 11:29). Paul uses this word in this letter 3X – in Eph. 1:18 (see the extended note there); here in Eph. 4:1, and again in Eph. 4:4. In both Eph. 1:18; 4:4 this calling is linked with hope (*elpis*, [1680](#)).

¹⁹⁷ Eph. 4:1 - with which you have been called: This 6-word phrase in English translates but two words in Greek, the [Genitive](#) Singular of the Relative Pronoun *hōs* ([3739](#)) “with which”; along with the 2nd Person Plural [Aorist Indicative Passive](#) of *kalēō* ([2564](#)), “you have been called.” This verb, *kalēō* ([2564](#)), is used far more frequently than is its corresponding noun *klēsis* ([2821](#)), “calling.” It is often used in the verbal sense of “call,” or “name” as in “and you shall *call* His name Jesus” (Matt. 1:21, 25), but also in the sense of “*summoned*” (Matt. 2:7, 15; 4:21; 9:13; 20:8). Matt. 22:3 has two different nuances of the same verb. Jesus likened the kingdom of the heavens to a man who was a king, and who made a wedding feast for his son (Matt. 22:1-2). He sent his slaves to *summon* ([Aorist Infinitive](#) of *kalēō*, [2564](#)) the ones having been *invited* ([Perfect Passive Participle](#) of *kalēō*, [2564](#)) to the wedding feast (Matt. 22:3). There is a group of people whom God has *called* ([Aorist Indicative](#) of *kalēō*, [2564](#)) who will inevitably be justified and glorified because they have been foreknown and predestined (Rom. 8:29-30). For those of us who believe in Jesus, God’s *calling* of us gives us hope (Eph. 1:18; 4:4) because His calling of us is certain, and will inevitably achieve His objective. The verb *kalēō* is used twice in this letter – in Eph. 4:1, 4.

Paul used this verb in 1 Thess. 2:12 to urge the Thessalonian Christians to “walk in a manner worthy of the God who *calls* you into His own kingdom and glory.” Paul wrote to Timothy that he had been “*called*” to “eternal life” (1 Tim. 6:12). The writer to the Hebrews spoke of “those who have been *called*” as receiving “the promise of the eternal inheritance” (Heb. 9:15). Peter wrote that God had “*called*” his readers “out of darkness into His marvelous light” (1 Pet. 2:9). John was instructed, “Write, ‘Blessed are those who are *invited* to the marriage supper of the Lamb’” (Rev. 19:9).

- E 1 Humble, loving tolerance of one another 4:2
- G 1 Humble gentleness
- H 1 Humility: {2} with all humility ¹⁹⁸
- H 2 Gentleness: and gentleness, ¹⁹⁹
- G 2 Longsuffering, loving endurance
- H 1 Longsuffering: with patience, ²⁰⁰
- H 2 Mutual endurance: showing tolerance ²⁰¹ for one another
- H 3 Love: in love, ²⁰²
- E 2 Resultant preservation of unity in peace 4:3
- G 1 Unity: {3} being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit ²⁰³

¹⁹⁸ Eph. 4:2 - humility: the [Genitive](#) Singular of *tapeinophrosinê* (5012), “as a quality of voluntary submission and unselfishness *humility, self-effacement* (Acts 20:19)” ([Friberg](#)); “having a humble opinion of oneself ... modesty, humility, lowliness of mind” ([Thayer](#)). Paul uses this noun in a good sense to describe himself in Acts 20:19 (“humility”). He uses it in a good sense in Eph. 4:2 (“humility”) and in Php. 2:3 (“humility of mind”); and in a good sense in Col. 3:12 (“humility”). Peter uses it in a good sense in 1 Pet. 5:5 (“humility”). Paul uses it twice in the bad sense of “self-abasement” in Col. 2:18, 23. Humility is the first step in walking worthily of our calling.

¹⁹⁹ Eph. 4:2 - gentleness: the [Genitive](#) Singular of *praûtês* (4240), “mildness of disposition, gentleness of spirit, meekness” ([Thayer](#)), used 11X in the NT, chiefly by Paul, and only here in Ephesians. Eight of those eleven times it is translated “gentleness.” Gentleness is the second step in walking worthily of our calling.

²⁰⁰ Eph. 4:2 - patience: the [Genitive](#) Singular of *makrothumia* (3115), combining two words, *makrôs* (3117), meaning “long” and *thumôs* (2372), meaning “wrath.” It has the idea of waiting a long time before one permits his wrath to boil over. If we had such a word, “long-tempered” would be a good translation, as opposite “short-tempered.” A good synonym would be “long-fused,” or possessing a “long fuse.” In the NASB, this noun is translated “patience” each of the 14 times it is used. According to [Friberg](#), this noun is used “as a state of emotional quietness in the face of unfavorable circumstances *patience, long-suffering*; (1) as patience under trial *endurance, steadfastness* (Heb. 6:12); (2) as constraint exercised toward others *forbearance, patience* (2 Cor. 6:6); (3) as God’s constraint of His wrath *longsuffering, forbearance* (Rom. 2:4).”

²⁰¹ Eph. 4:2 - showing tolerance: the 2nd Person Plural [Nominative Present Middle Participle](#) (used as an [Imperative](#)) of *anéchō* (430), used only in the [Middle Voice](#) in the NT; “(1) as exercising self-restraint and tolerance *endure (patiently), put up with, bear with* (Eph. 4:2); (2) *accept* as valid, *listen to* (2 Tim. 4:3; Heb. 13:22)” ([Friberg](#)).

²⁰² Eph. 4:2 - in love: [Dative](#) Singular of *agápê* (26), used 10X in Ephesians, last used in Eph. 3:19, next used in Eph. 4:15. See the appropriate note at Eph. 1:4 for more information on this noun. Paul’s point here is that love is the basis upon which we are to exhibit tolerance toward one another.

²⁰³ Eph. 4:3 - being diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace: “being diligent” is the 2nd Person Plural [Present Active Nominative Participle](#) (used with [Imperative](#) force) of *spoudázō* (4704), used only here in Ephesians. It is used “intransitively; (1) with an infinitive following to show the area of urgency *make haste to, hurry to, do your best to* (2 Tim. 4:9); (2) with an infinitive following to show the area of concern be *eager to*,

- G 2 Peace: in the bond of peace.²⁰⁴
- D 3 The necessity of unity in a worthy walk: the reflection of the unity of God and His works 4:4-6
- E 1 Attributes associated with the [Holy Spirit](#) 4:4
- G 1 One [body of Christ](#): {4} *There is one body*²⁰⁵
- G 2 One [Holy Spirit](#): and one Spirit,²⁰⁶

make every effort to, try hard to (Heb. 4:11)” ([Friberg](#)). Here Paul is using aspect #2.

“To preserve” is the [Present Active Infinitive](#) of *têréō* (5083). Its basic meaning is “to keep.”

“Unity” is the [Accusative](#) Singular of *henótēs* (1775), used only twice in the NT – here and in Eph. 4:13. It means “oneness, unity, unison” ([Friberg](#)).

“Of the Spirit” is the [Genitive](#) Singular of *pneûma* (4151), referring here to the [Holy Spirit](#). See the appropriate note at Eph. 1:13.

The entire [Church](#) of Jesus Christ, and individual [local churches](#) intrinsically possess the unity of the [Spirit](#). Paul urged the Christians at Ephesus to preserve the unity that was already there. By application we today are continually to be making every effort to preserve the unity of the [Spirit](#) in the bond of peace. This fits in well with Jesus’ prayer that those who believe in Him “may all be one” (John 17:21, 22, 23).

Doctrinal diversity is an impediment to Biblical unity. There are those who emphasize Christ’s appeal for unity, but they appear, at the same time, to ignore His appeals to truth. It is Jesus who spoke to God about His disciples, “I have given them Your word ...” (John 17:14). It is Jesus who prayed, “Sanctify them in the truth; Your word is truth” (John 17:17). He continued, “For their sakes I sanctify Myself, that they themselves also may be sanctified in truth” (John 17:19).

There can be unity with those brothers who disagree with us in negotiable matters of opinion (Rom. 14:1-15:7). But there can be no unity with those who proclaim another [gospel](#) or disbelieve the [gospel](#) (2 Cor. 11:4; Gal. 1:6-7; Col. 1:23; 2 Thess. 1:8; 1 Pet. 4:17). In this regard, John MacArthur has written an excellent critique in an article entitled, “[Evangelicals and Catholics Together](#).”

²⁰⁴ Eph. 4:3 - in the bond of peace: “bond” is [Dative](#) Singular of *sündesmos* (4886) “(1) literally, as the middle item that joins two or more things together *link, joint, bond*; of the body *sinew, ligament, muscle* (Col. 2:19); (2) figuratively; (a) in a positive sense of spiritual forces that unite people *bond, what ties together* (Col. 3:14); (b) in a negative sense, of unspiritual forces that enslave people *bondage, fetter, what causes to be under control* (Acts 8:23)” ([Friberg](#)). Paul here, of course, uses “bond” in a good sense, a good connotation.

“Of peace” is literally, “of the peace.” “Peace” is the [Genitive](#) Singular of *eirênê* (1515) (see the appropriate note on Eph. 1:2). “The peace” is the bond that, together with the unity of the Spirit binds all Christians together and melds Christians in a [local church](#) together. Jesus is peace personified (Eph. 2:14), and through His sacrificial death, He established peace between Jew and Gentile (Eph. 2:15). He, through the [Holy Spirit](#), on account of our faith, establishes peace between man and God (Rom. 5:1). We believers are to preserve unity and peace (Rom. 14:19; Eph. 4:3; 6:23).

Once again, doctrinal defection destroys unity and peace (Acts 20:28-32; 2 Cor. 11:13-15; Gal. 1:7; 2:4; Tit. 1:10-16; 2 Pet. 2:1-3; Jude 1:3-4, 8, 10-13, 16-19).

²⁰⁵ Eph. 4:4 - one body: The Greek text has no “there is.” The text of this verse begins abruptly, “One body.” “Body” is the [Nominative](#) Singular of *sōma* (4983), literally, the physical body, whether of man (Matt. 6:25) or animal (James 3:3); but here metaphorically, as the spiritual [body of Christ](#), the union of believers, of which Christ is the head (Rom. 12:5; Eph. 4:12; 5:23, 30). This is a reference to the [universal church](#). Paul details seven elements, each of which contributes to the unity of God and of His works. Eph. 4:4 focuses on elements connected with the [Holy Spirit](#); Eph. 4:5, on elements connected with the Lord Jesus Christ; and Eph. 4:6, on elements connected with God the Father. The “one body” is related to the “one Spirit” inasmuch as it is “by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body” (1 Cor. 12:13).

²⁰⁶ Eph. 4:4 - one Spirit: “Spirit” is the [Nominative](#) Singular of *pneûma* (4151), a reference to the [Holy Spirit](#). See the appropriate footnote at Eph. 1:13 for more information. John the Immerser predicted Jesus would immerse by means of the [Holy Spirit](#) and Fire (Matt. 3:11-12; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16-17; John 1:33). Thus, the [Holy Spirit](#) is an integral part of Jesus’ ministry. It should be no surprise that Jesus would use the Spirit to immerse those who believe

- G 3 One hope associated with our invitation: just as also you were called²⁰⁷ in one hope²⁰⁸ of your calling;²⁰⁹
- E 2 Attributes associated with Jesus, our Master 4:5
- G 1 One Master: {5} one Lord,²¹⁰
- G 2 One faith: one faith,²¹¹
- G 3 One baptism: one baptism,²¹²

in Jesus into the Body of Christ (1 Cor. 12:13). Nor should it be any surprise that in the process of our being immersed into the Body of Christ, we believers are also given the [Holy Spirit](#), who indwells us (Rom. 8:9; 1 Cor. 3:16; 6:19; 12:13; Gal. 4:6; 2 Tim. 1:14; 1 John 4:13).

²⁰⁷ Eph. 4:4 - you were called: 2nd Person Plural [Aorist Indicative Passive](#) of *kaléō* ([2564](#)), used previously in Eph. 4:1, where see the appropriate note. This is God's effective call to salvation. They (corporately) were called at some point in the eternal counsel of God.

²⁰⁸ Eph. 4:4 - in one hope: "hope" is the [Dative](#) Singular of *elpis* ([1680](#)), the expectation and anticipation of a good outcome. (See the appropriate note at Eph. 1:18.) Our "one hope" is specifically related to our calling (see the next footnote). But, though we have "one hope of our calling," our "one hope" as members of the corporate [Church](#) is multi-faceted – anticipation of the [Rapture](#) including [reunion](#) with Christ and believing loved ones, along with a resurrection or a transformation without dying (1 Thess. 4:13-18); a perpetual existence as the [Bride of Christ](#) in [New Jerusalem](#); reigning with Christ (Matt. 5:5; Rev. 2:26-27; 22:5) over a [New Earth](#) in which only righteousness and righteous people exist (2 Pet. 3:13); and above all, eternal fellowship with God and the Lamb in an environment in which all the deleterious effects of sin have been removed (Rev. 21:1-4; 22:1-5).

²⁰⁹ Eph. 4:4 - of your calling: "calling" is the [Genitive](#) Singular of *klêsis* ([2821](#)), used previously in Eph. 1:18 (see the appropriate note there) and Eph. 4:1 (see the appropriate note there). God's calling is selective, effective, based on grace, and irrevocable. See also the Glossary Item, [Calling](#). It should be noted that the [Church](#) is made up of "called out ones" (*ekklesia*, [1577](#)). Ultimately, our calling is an effective calling to participate in the eternal [Kingdom of God](#).

²¹⁰ Eph. 4:5 - one Lord: Beginning in this verse, Paul omits the word "and" (*kai*, [2532](#)), which he had used in Eph. 4:4 between the first ("body") and second ("Spirit") elements of his list, and between the second ("Spirit") and third ("hope") elements. In his second use of *kai*, Paul employed it as an adjective, meaning "also." But in Eph. 4:5, Paul's pace picks up and he omits any conjunctions. He is very economical, simply listing "One Lord, one faith, one baptism."

"One Lord" ([Nominative](#) Singular of *kúrios*, [2962](#)) is a reference to the Lord, or Master, Jesus the Messiah. Paul uses *kúrios* 26X in 25 verses in Ephesians, first, in Ephesians 1:2. See the appropriate footnote there for more information on this important word, used 717X in the NT. Though there may be many "lords" or "masters" in this life, the "one Lord" that distinguishes Christianity is the Lord Jesus, also entitled the "Christ" or "Messiah."

²¹¹ Eph. 4:5 - one faith: The noun "faith" is the [Nominative](#) Singular of *pístis* ([4102](#)), used 8X in this letter (Eph. 1:15; 2:8; 3:12, 17; 4:4, 13; 6:16, 23). The "one faith" refers to the aggregate teaching of Christ as passed on to and expanded by the [apostles](#) and [prophets](#) pre-authorized by Christ (John 14:25-26; 15:26-27; 16:12-14; Eph. 2:20; 3:5; 4:11). This NT truth was based upon the solid foundation of the OT literature. The [Vatican Church](#) defines "one faith" as [Scripture + Church Tradition](#), but that is manifestly untrue, [unprovable from Scripture](#). According to Jude, there was a corpus of the faith once entrusted to the saints (Jude 1:3). We cannot keep adding to that faith. Man's opinions and additions are merely that – opinions and additions – not normative or binding truth.

²¹² Eph. 4:5 - one baptism: Literally, "one immersion." The noun "baptism" is the [Nominative](#) Singular of *báptisma* ([908](#)). Though many interpreters identify this as "water baptism," that is by no means certain. After all, Jesus' [immersing by means of the Spirit](#) was, from the very beginning of the Gospel narratives, and even into the opening chapter of Acts, portrayed to be a far superior immersion to water immersion (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:26-27, 29-33; Acts 1:4-5). The rite of water immersion is merely the external signifier of the primary

E 3 Attributes associated with God, our Father 4:6

G 1 One Supreme Progenitor

H 1 One Supreme Being: {6} one God ²¹³H 2 His identity as Ultimate Patriarch: and Father of all ²¹⁴

immersion – immersion by means of the [Holy Spirit](#).

One of the chief arguments for taking this immersion as meaning water immersion is the observation that in Eph. 4:4-6, there appear to be elements of association. The [Holy Spirit](#) seems to be the key to elements listed in Eph. 4:4; Jesus Christ seems to be the key to elements listed in Eph. 4:5; and God the Father seems to be the focus of Eph. 4:6. Since immersion appears in Eph. 4:5, and not in Eph. 4:4, it is argued, water immersion, which indicates faith in Christ, is probably what Paul had in mind here, rather than [Spirit immersion](#).

I believe, however, that this comes from a misunderstanding of, or perhaps better, a mischaracterization of “[Spirit Baptism](#).” Actually, properly defined, “[Spirit Baptism](#)” is that act where by Jesus Christ uses the [Holy Spirit](#) to immerse believers into the Body of Christ. In other words, what we usually term “[Spirit Baptism](#)” is, properly understood, *Christ’s baptizing by means of the Holy Spirit* (Matt. 3:11; Mark 1:8; Luke 3:16; John 1:26-27, 29-33; Acts 1:4-5; 1 Cor. 12:12-13). So my response to those who object that Eph. 4:5 must refer to water immersion, not [Spirit Immersion](#) because it appears along with the elements associated with Christ, is that they have misrepresented the nature of “[Spirit Immersion](#).” It is entirely appropriate that [Jesus’ immersion by means of the Holy Spirit](#) would be listed in a triad of elements referencing the “One Lord.” See an excellent off-site article on this subject entitled [One Baptism in Ephesians 4:5](#). See also the article, “[Four Different Types of Baptism](#).”

²¹³ Eph. 4:6 - one God: the [Nominative](#) Singular of *theós* ([2316](#)), used 31X in this letter. The seventh and final element of unity is “one God,” further identified as “Father.” No further occurrences of the cardinal numeral “one” appear, but God’s essence is depicted as unifying all things. The foundational OT passage undergirding the “one God” is Deut. 6:4, “Hear, O Israel! The LORD is our God, the LORD is one!”

²¹⁴ Eph. 4:6 - and Father of all: It is striking that, from a NT perspective, God’s most notable characteristic is that He is “Father” ([Nominative](#) Singular of *patēr*, [3962](#)). (See the appropriate notes at Eph. 1:17; 3:14, 15.) In the qualifying designation “of all,” (“all” appears as the [Genitive](#) Plural [Masculine](#) – probably not [Neuter](#) – of *pás*, [3956](#), although the adjective legitimately can be declined either way). The question arises, “What is meant by “of all”? All *believers*? Or all *people*? Stated another way, there are two possible ways to take the “Fatherhood” of God – (1) He is Father of only believers; or (2) He is Father of all people. There are pros and cons for each position. Let’s look at these options in order.

(1) God is the Father of all believers. [a] He is first identified as the Father of believers in Eph. 1:2, where He is identified as “our Father.” [b] He is the Father of both believing Jews and believing [Gentiles](#) in Eph. 2:18. [c] The statement about God’s being “the Father of all” (Eph. 4:6) appears in a context in which the importance of preserving the “unity of the Spirit” is discussed (Eph. 4:3-6). Paul refers to the “one body” of Christ, that is, the Church (Eph. 4:4), the “one hope” of their “calling” (Eph. 4:4), “one Lord, one faith, one baptism” (Eph. 4:5). It would be strange then, if, when stating that there is “one God and Father of all” (Eph. 4:6), Paul would suddenly switch from talking about the unity of all believers to talking about the unity of the human race under the Creator.

(2) God is the Father of all people. This means that God is the Father of all people in the sense that He created all people – that is, all people have descended from the first couple that God created, Adam and Eve. The arguments in favor of taking God as the Father of *all people*, without restriction, are as follows: [a] The text does not explicitly state that God is the Father *only* of all Christians. Rather, without qualification, it states that God is the Father of all. [b] In just a few verses, Paul will state unequivocally that “every family in heaven and on earth derives its name” from “the Father” (Eph. 4:14-15). It is exceedingly unlikely that Paul was there referring only to Christian families. So we have a precedent in this same letter for the universal Fatherhood of God. [c] Paul used the word “all” four times in Eph. 4:6. He said that there is “One God and Father of *all* who is over *all* and through *all* and in *all*. The first three are the [Genitive](#) Plural of *pás* ([3956](#)), while the last is the [Dative](#) Plural of the same word. Each of the four can be parsed grammatically as either [Masculine](#) or [Neuter](#) in gender, although contextually, grammarians have labeled the first occurrence as [Masculine](#), assuming the reference is to God’s being the Father of all (people), as opposed to all (things). It would seem rather strange for the first “all” to be only a *partial* all (all Christians), while the second, third and fourth occurrences are *complete*, or *total* “alls” (“all things and/or people”). [d] If one employs restrictive consistency – that each “all” is [Masculine](#) in gender and refers only to Christians (see, for example, [Tom Constable’s view on Eph. 4:6](#), viewed Aug. 15, 2016), then, in my opinion, we are arbitrarily restricting what Paul is

- G 2 His Supreme Sovereignty
 - H 1 Over all things: who is over all ²¹⁵
 - H 2 Through all things: and through all ²¹⁶
 - H 3 In all things: and in all. ²¹⁷
- C 2 In gifted edification (upbuilding) 4:7-16
 - D 1 The giving of gifts 4:7-11
 - E 1 The statement of the giving 4:7
 - G 1 The universality of distribution: {7} But to each one of us ²¹⁸

really saying here, that God is Sovereign over all things as well as all people; that he works through all things as well as all people; and that He exerts His will in all things as well as in all people. [e] Last, if we say that “all” doesn’t really mean all, but only means part of the all, we are making the same mistake that Calvinists make – that God didn’t really love the entire world of people, for (in their view) He only loved the world of the elect (John 3:16). (This is the doctrine of [Limited Atonement](#) – that Christ died only for the elect. This cannot be supported Biblically.) Personally, I think the arguments for this second view are stronger than the arguments for the first view. It makes sense to say that the first *all* is [Masculine](#) in gender – God is the Father of all *people* by virtue of His having created the first parents (Gen. 1:26-28). But since there is ambiguity in the gender of “all” (grammatically, it can be taken as either [Masculine](#) or [Neuter](#)), it makes sense to understand that God is the Father of all people (Gen. 1:26-28) and all things (Gen. 1:1-31), for He created all.

If one takes this second view, that God is literally the Father of the entire human race, Paul’s comment here cannot be taken as an argument for [Universalism](#). That would not square with the rest of Scripture (e.g., John 3:18; Rev 20:11-15). Rather the statement is an accurate one, acknowledging that God the Father of all (things and people) is Sovereign *over* all (things and people) and *through* all (things and people) and is working *in* all (things and people).

²¹⁵ Eph. 4:6 - who is over all: literally, “the One over all.” “...over” is the [Genitive](#) of the Preposition *epi* ([1909](#)). “All” is the [Genitive](#) Plural either [Masculine](#) or [Neuter](#) of *pās*, [3956](#), and it probably should be taken as meaning that God, as Father, has precedence and dominance and sovereignty *over* all people and all things.

²¹⁶ Eph. 4:6 - and through all: “through” is the [Genitive](#) of the Preposition *diá* ([1223](#)); “all” is the [Genitive](#) Plural either [Masculine](#) or [Neuter](#) of *pās*, [3956](#), and it probably should be taken as meaning that God, as Father, and thus Originator, is the One who works *through* all things and all people. Without implying in any sense that God is responsible for or culpable of evil, He nevertheless has so much power and wisdom that He works *through* all things and people, regardless of whether they are good things or not, or good people or not. Somehow, for example, “...God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose” (Rom. 8:28).

²¹⁷ Eph. 4:6 - and in all: “in” is the [Dative](#) of the Preposition *en* ([1722](#)); “all” is the [Dative](#) Plural [Masculine](#) or [Neuter](#) of the Pronominal Adjective *pās* ([3956](#)). Thus it could mean either “all things” or “all people.” In my opinion, the ambiguity of the parsing in this instance indicates both. In other words, God is the One who is working *within* all things and all people.

²¹⁸ Eph. 4:7 - But to each of us: The context (Eph. 4:12-16) makes it clear that Paul is here speaking of “each” Christian.

- G 2 The graciousness of distribution: grace was given²¹⁹
- G 3 The apportioner in distribution – Christ: according to the measure of Christ's gift.²²⁰
- E 2 The prediction of the giving 4:8-10
 - G 1 The documentation from Scripture (apparently quoting Ps. 68:18)²²¹ 4:8
 - H 1 Yahweh's ascension to Mount Zion: {8} Therefore it says, "WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH,²²²

²¹⁹ Eph. 4:7 - grace was given: Literally, “the grace” ([Nominative](#) Singular of *cháris*, [5485](#)). This use of “grace” should be taken as a special favor from God to serve Him with that which we Christians term a “[Spiritual Gift](#).” Each Christian is graced with a [Spiritual Gift](#) (Eph. 4:7; 1 Cor. 12:7-11).

²²⁰ Eph. 4:7 - according to the measure of Christ's gift: Literally, “according to the measure of the gift of the Christ.” The expositor must decide if “of the [Christ](#)” (Genitive of *Christós*, [5547](#)) constitutes an [Objective Genitive](#) (the gift which God gave – the [Christ](#)) or a [Subjective Genitive](#) (the [gift](#) which [Christ](#) gave, i.e., [Christ](#) gave men as gifts to the [Church](#) – see comments on Eph. 4:8). The following context (Eph. 4:8-11) makes it abundantly clear that it is the latter Paul has in mind. So the NASB editors have here translated correctly. There is no disharmony between the fact that here [Christ](#) is said to be the giver of [spiritual gifts](#) whereas elsewhere (1 Cor. 12:4-11), the [Spirit](#) is said to be the giver. Just as with the [Baptism of the Spirit](#), there is a dual agency. In the one case, Jesus uses the [Holy Spirit](#) to [baptize](#) believers into the [Body of Christ](#). In the other, Jesus uses the [Holy Spirit](#) to distribute [spiritual gifts](#), or, in this case, [spiritually gifted](#) men.

²²¹ Eph. 4:8 title - apparently quoting Ps. 68:18: By all appearances, Paul is quoting Ps. 68:18. However, he makes some fairly significant changes. The late Harold Hoehner's comment ([TBKC](#)) below is worth noting:

Ephesians 4:8 includes a quotation from the Old Testament, which confirms God's giving of gifts. Most think it quotes Psalm 68:18 with five minor and two major changes. The two major variations are the change from the second to the third person, and the change of direction from having received gifts from men to the giving of gifts to men. However, it is better to think that Paul was not quoting one particular verse of the psalm but rather that he was summarizing all of Psalm 68, which has many words similar to those in Psalm 68:18. The essence of the psalm is that a military victor has the right to give gifts to those who are identified with him. [Christ](#), having captivated sinful people by redeeming them, is Victor and gives them as gifts to the church. Whereas Romans 12 and 1 Corinthians 12 speak of gifts given to believers, Ephesians 4:7 speaks more of gifted believers given to the church (cf. v. 11).

I essentially agree with Hoehner. However, I disagree that the author of Hebrews was quoting selectively from Psalm 68. It makes more sense to say that he was quoting from Psalm 68:18. In fact, Allen P. Ross, author of the commentary on Psalms in [TBKC](#), states that Paul was following the Jewish Targum interpretation of this text and applying it to [Christ](#). (See the appropriate footnotes at Ps. 68:18 in the author's [Annotated Outline of Psalm 68](#).) In the Providence of God, guided by the [Holy Spirit](#), Paul gave a fuller meaning to Psalm 68:18 than the readers of the psalm could have known (apart from the Targum). Paul's interpretation does not, however, invalidate the original meaning of Psalm 68:18, which applied to Yahweh's victorious ascension up into the temple upon [Mount Zion](#), Yahweh's perpetual home. Let us extrapolate further and say that eternal [Mount Zion](#) will always exist in its elevated glory in [New Jerusalem](#), the eternal capital city of [Israel](#) and the [Church](#), along with the [Gentiles](#) living upon [New Earth](#) (Rev. 21:1-22:5).

²²² Eph 4:8 - WHEN HE ASCENDED ON HIGH: In Ps. 68:18 the meaning is that Yahweh ascended to [Mt. Zion](#) in Jerusalem. Paul, with his NT perspective, understands this as a prediction of [Christ's](#) ascension to Heavenly [Mt. Zion](#), presently situated in heaven. This ascension is recorded in Luke 24:50-53 and Acts 1:9-11 and confirmed in such passages as Mark 16:19; Luke 22:69; Acts 2:33; 5:31; 7:55-56; Rom. 8:34; Col. 3:1; Heb. 10:12; 12:2; 1 Pet. 3:22.

- H 2 Yahweh's victory: HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES,²²³
- H 3 Yahweh's distribution of spoil: AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN."²²⁴
- G 2 The inferences from Scripture 4:9-10
- H 1 The inference of victory over sin through death and burial: {9} (Now this *expression*, "He ascended," what does it mean except that He also had descended into the lower parts of the earth?²²⁵ 4:9
- H 2 The inference of the ascended victor prepared to fill all things through His gifts: {10} He who descended is Himself also He who ascended²²⁶ 4:10
- J 1 The place of ascension: far above all the heavens,²²⁷

²²³ Eph. 4:8 - HE LED CAPTIVE A HOST OF CAPTIVES: In OT times, kings paraded captives in a victory procession in their capital city. Many of these were subsequently put to death or forced into slavery at the whim of the king. In Ps. 68:18 the emphasis is on the peoples conquered by [Israel](#) as Yahweh marched into Jerusalem into the tabernacle David had prepared there. (The temple had not yet been built.) From Paul's point of view, Jesus led a host of demons captive by virtue of His having paid for man's sin and delivering man (through faith in the Messiah) from death and hell and eternal captivity to Satan and his hordes.

[Thomas Constable](#), following Harold Hoehner ([TBKC](#)), states that Christ's victory over captives amounted to His victory over sinful people and giving them as gifts back to the Church. I lean more to my interpretation than theirs (following, for example, [John Gill](#).) The actual words Paul used are, "Having ascended into height, he lead captive ([Aorist](#) of [aichmalōteúō](#), [162](#)) captivity ([Accusative](#) of the noun [aichmalōsia](#), [161](#))." The verb is used only here in the NT, while the noun is used but twice, in Eph. 4:8 and in Rev. 13:10. The singular "captivity" appears to be a collective noun signifying all the demonic forces of evil as opposed to the less accurate plural, "host of captives," which might lend itself more to the interpretation of Christ rescuing a host of sinful people, redeeming them, and setting them free as gifts to the church.

²²⁴ Eph. 4:8 - AND HE GAVE GIFTS TO MEN: In Ps. 68:18 God is seen as *receiving* gifts from men. Following the Targum, Paul changes that to *giving* gifts to men, and applies it to [Christ](#). [Christ](#), as the conquering warrior, gives gifts, booty, if you will, to His faithful followers. As Paul lays it out in Eph. 4:11, [Christ](#) actually gave gifted men to the [Church](#). There is no dichotomy here between [Christ's](#) giving gifts and the [Holy Spirit's](#) giving of gifts. See the appropriate footnote at Eph. 4:7.

²²⁵ Eph. 4:9 - the lower parts of the earth: Harold Hoehner ([TBKC](#)) takes this as a [Genitive of Possession](#), meaning "the lower parts which belong to the earth." He takes this as a reference to [Christ's](#) death and burial in the grave. This is that which paid for man's sins and redeemed those who would be given as gifts to the [Church](#).

²²⁶ Eph. 4:10 - ascended: Literally, "the one having ascended," the [Nominative](#) Singular [Aorist Active Participle](#) of [anabainō](#) ([305](#)). This ascension is recorded in Luke 24:50-53 and Acts 1:9-11 and confirmed in such passages as Mark 16:19; Luke 22:69; Acts 2:33; 5:31; 7:55-56; Rom. 8:34; Col. 3:1; Heb. 10:12; 12:2; 1 Pet. 3:22.

²²⁷ Eph. 4:10 - far above all the heavens: Presumably, Paul means above the heaven in which the birds fly, and above the heaven in which the stars travel. The abode of God is the third heaven. If the throne of God, on which Jesus is also seated (Rom. 8:34; Col. 3:1; Heb. 10:12; 12:2; 1 Pet. 3:22; Rev.3:21; 7:17; 12:5; 22:1; 22:3), is at the topmost portion of the third heaven, Paul's statement would include all three heavens. Admittedly, there is a great

- J 2 The purpose of ascension: so that He might fill all things.)²²⁸
- E 3 The inference of giving: {11} And He gave some 4:11
- G 1 As “sent ones”: *as* apostles,²²⁹
- G 2 As spokesmen: and some *as* prophets,²³⁰
- G 3 As good newsicizers: and some *as* evangelists,²³¹

deal about the nature of the heavens that we simply do not know.

²²⁸ Eph. 4:10 - so that He might fill all things: “fill” is the [Aorist Subjunctive Active](#) of *plêrōō* (4137). In a literal, material sense, this verb means that a substance completely eliminates any emptiness in a confined space or vessel. For example, “Every ravine will be *filled*” (Luke 3:5). In the Gospels, the verb is often used to mean that an event in space/time/history occurred which brought about the predicted intentions of a prophetic Scripture. For example, Jesus said, “... that all things which are written about Me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be *fulfilled*” (Luke 24:44). In Eph. 4:10, the idea is that God’s purpose is that Christ and His authority will invade every empty spot and every vacuum in all of heaven and all of the created universe. He will be the supreme person. He will benevolently, but righteously invade and control all that exists. All created beings and all entities will submit to Him. This word is used four times in this letter – in Eph. 1:23; 3:19; 4:10; 5:18.

²²⁹ Eph. 4:11 - And He gave some *as* apostles: The word “as” does not appear in the Greek text. Literally, “And He gave first the apostles ...” (JTB). The word I have translated “first” [instead of the NASB “some”] is the Intensive Particle *mên* (3303), which is here “used to start a list in order to distinguish one thought from another in a series” (meaning (3) in [Friberg](#)).

“...the [apostles](#)” is the [Accusative Masculine](#) Plural of *apóstolos* (652), literally, “sent ones,” and refers to Christ’s hand-picked emissaries including Paul (Act 9:1-19) and excluding Matthias, who was hand-picked by the Eleven, but not by Christ Himself (Acts 1:15-26). Notice that the noun “[apostles](#)” is preceded by the [Accusative Masculine](#) Plural of the Article *hó* (3588), “the,” as in “the [apostles](#).” So Paul had in mind here “the particular [Apostles](#) chosen by Jesus. Notice also that in this list “the [apostles](#)” come first. These were the foremost in the list of spiritually gifted men that [Christ](#) gave to the [Church](#). [Apostles](#) are mentioned in this letter in Eph. 1:1; 2:20; 3:5; 4:11. There are [no Apostles in existence today](#). [Apostolic Succession](#), as held by certain elements of Christianity, is an unfounded myth, unproven in Scripture.

²³⁰ Eph. 4:11 - and some *as* [prophets](#): Literally, “moreover, the [prophets](#)” (JTB). The word I have translated “moreover” is the Coordinating Conjunction *dé* (1161), here used to identify another item in the series.

“...the [prophets](#)” is the [Accusative Masculine](#) Plural of *prophētēs* (4396), indicating those who, along with the [apostles](#), served as the foundation of the early [Church](#) (Eph. 2:20), Christ Himself being the corner *stone*. [Prophets](#) received revelation *directly* from God, which they passed on to people, unlike teachers, who receive(d) revelation *indirectly* from God through Scripture (written by [prophets](#)), and pass on their teachings to people. Biblical [prophets](#) were infallible (when they were prophesying), whereas teachers are never said to be infallible. In my opinion, all [apostles](#) were also [prophets](#), but obviously not all [prophets](#) were also [apostles](#). I believe the gift of [prophecy](#) has ceased for the [Church](#) (1 Cor. 13:8-12), just as has the gift of apostleship. If there are, indeed, [prophets](#) today, why has there been no Scripture written for 1900 years? That would be unprecedented in the annals of Biblical history. For further study, see “[Do Prophets Exist Today?](#)” See also “[Do Apostles Exist Today?](#)” According to the Bible, [prophets](#) will again exist and perform their ministry in the [Tribulation](#) period (Rev. 11:3-6).

²³¹ Eph. 4:11 - and some *as* evangelists: Literally, “moreover, the evangelists” (JTB). The word I have translated “moreover” is the Coordinating Conjunction *dé* (1161), here used to identify the next item in the series.

“...the evangelists” is the [Accusative Masculine](#) Plural of *euaggelistēs* (2099), “one who brings or *announces good news* ...” ([Friberg](#)). This noun is used but three times in the NT, referring to Philip the *evangelist* (Acts 21:8); to Paul’s statement that Jesus “gave some ... *as evangelists*” (Eph. 4:11); and to Paul’s urging Timothy to “do the work of an *evangelist*” (2 Tim. 4:5).

Those who are evangelists have a special gift from God to tell the [Good News](#) about Jesus to others. I once worked with a senior pastor, Ian Dunn, who had the gift of evangelism. He may not have been the worlds’ greatest Bible scholar or preacher, but he had a warm personality that made unbelievers feel at home. He had the ability to

- G 4 As shepherds-and-teachers: and some *as* pastors
and teachers,²³²
- D 2 The goal of the gifts 4:12-17
- E 1 The statement of the goal 4:12
- G 1 For the purpose of the perfecting of the saints: {12}
for the equipping of the saints²³³

explain and live the [Good News](#) about Jesus in such a way that unbelievers felt drawn to place their trust in Jesus as Savior and Messiah. Evangelists are the third level of importance of gifted men in the [Church](#) following [Apostles](#) and [Prophets](#). It is probably safe to say that, on a certain level, each of the original [Apostles](#) were not only [Apostles](#), but were also [Prophets](#), and were also Evangelists, to one degree or another.

²³² Eph. 4:11 - and some *as* pastors and teachers: Literally, “moreover, the shepherds-and-teachers” ([JTB](#)). The word I have translated “moreover” is the Coordinating Conjunction *dé* (1161), here used to identify the final two items in the series. I have placed hyphens between “shepherds-and-teachers” because grammatically, they appear to refer to two sides of the same coin, i.e. one person serves as both a shepherd and a teacher.

Pastors and teachers are listed together because they are governed by one article (“the” occurs before “pastors” but not before “teachers”) and because the word “and” (*kai*) differs from the other “and’s” (*de*) in the verse. This may imply that these are two kinds of gifted people whose ministries are among settled congregations (rather than itinerant ministries like those of the apostles and evangelists). More likely, they refer to two characteristics of the same person who is pastoring believers (by comforting and guiding) while at the same time instructing them in God’s ways (overseers or elders are to be able to teach; 1 Tim. 3:2; Titus 1:9). Harold Hoehner, [TBKC](#), p. 635.

The noun translated by NASB as “pastors” is the [Accusative Plural Masculine](#) of *poimên* (4166). Literally, this word refers to one who takes care of a group of animals, such as goats or sheep – a shepherd, or sheep-herder; figuratively, it refers to one who takes care of a group of people, for example, as an elder of a church (adapted from [Friberg](#)). The word “pastor” comes from the Latin and refers to a shepherd. Why the NASB does not employ the English word “shepherds” instead of the Latin word “pastors” here is beyond my comprehension. Interestingly enough, this Eph. 4:11 occurrence is the *only* time the NASB translates this word as “pastors” instead of as “shepherds.” In my view that is a mistake. In my study of the concept of shepherding the flock of God, there are three primary responsibilities of a shepherd – to *feed* the flock; to *guard* the flock; and to *guide* the flock. Notice the “shepherding” terminology of Peter’s instructions to elders (1 Pet. 5:1-4). See the article, “[Biblical Eldership](#).”

The second word in this pairing is the [Accusative Plural Masculine](#) of the noun *didáskalos* (1320), “teacher,” the Greek equivalent to “rabbi.” The 1st Person Singular of the corresponding verb *didáskō* (1321) means, “I teach.” The teaching aspect of the “shepherds-and-teachers” of the church is equivalent to “feeding” the flock. In my own personal experience, I believe I have been gifted by Christ through the [Holy Spirit](#) as a “shepherd/teacher.” I have not been gifted as an [Apostle](#), nor as a [Prophet](#), nor as an Evangelist (“Good-News-iciser”). I have often attempted to lead unbelievers to faith in Christ, but have rarely been successful.

²³³ Eph. 4:12 - for the equipping of the saints: “for” is the [Accusative](#) form of the Preposition *prós* (4314), used here in [Friberg’s](#) meaning III (5) (b) “to introduce a near purpose in relation to an ultimate goal *for the purpose of, with a view to* (Eph. 4:12; 1 Pet. 4:12).” In other words, God gave gifted people to the church for the purpose of equipping the saints, and etc. ... (see the next phrases).

“... the equipping” is the [Accusative Masculine Singular](#) of *katartismós* (2677), used only here in the NT “as a process of adjustment that results in a complete preparedness *equipping, perfecting, making adequate* (Eph. 4:12)” ([Friberg](#)). In extra-biblical literature it is used for the settling (sic) of a limb ([Liddell-Scott-Jones](#)); of “the things for the furnishing of the guest chamber;” and for “a preparation of woof and warp for a cloak worth 18 silver dr.” ([Vocabulary of the Greek NT](#)).

“... of the saints” is the [Genitive Masculine Plural](#) of the Adjective *hágios* (40), “holy ones,” here referring to all genuine believers in Christ in the [Church Universal](#). See the appropriate footnote at Eph. 1:1 for more information on this word, used 15X in this letter. It was last used at Eph. 3:18; next used at Eph. 4:30.

Paul’s point is that Christ gave gifted people to the church in order to equip the saints “for the work of service.” Paul does not envision any saint being unequipped.

- H 1 Unto work of ministry: for the work of service,²³⁴
- J 1 Unto upbuilding Christ's body: to the building up of the body of Christ;²³⁵
- E 2 The measurement of the goal (i.e., by achieving certain objectives) 4:13-16
- G 1 The points of arrival ("until we all arrive"): {13} until we all attain 4:13
- H 1 Unified belief system: to the unity of the faith,²³⁶

²³⁴ Eph. 4:12 - for the work of service: literally, “for work of service” – there is no article in front of “work.” Paul is not looking at a particular work, but at work as a general category.

“for” is the [Accusative](#) of the Preposition *eis* (1519). It has here [Friberg's](#) meaning “(5) logically; (a) to indicate purpose in order to, with a view to, for the purpose of (Matt. 26:28) ...”

“...work” is the [Accusative Neuter](#) Singular of *érgon* (2041), used 4X in this letter – we are not saved by *works* (Eph. 2:9); we are God’s workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good *works* (Eph. 2:10); gifted people equip the saints for *work* of service (Eph. 4:12); and Christians are forbidden to participate in the unfruitful *deeds* of darkness (Eph. 5:11). Work here means “act” or “deed” – any expenditure of energy for the purpose of serving others.

“...of service” is the [Genitive](#) Singular of the [Feminine](#) noun *diakonia* (1248). Technically, this word refers to the various deeds performed by a household servant (*diákonos*, 1249) on behalf of his master, or lord. However, it is never used in that sense in the NT. It is rather used frequently in reference to an act of service to people on behalf of God. Thus it is frequently translated “ministry” (19X) or “service” (7X) in the NASB. Paul’s point is that gifted people are given to the Church to better equip members of the [Body of Christ](#) to serve God by serving others in a variety of capacities.

²³⁵ Eph. 4:12 - to the building up of the body of Christ: Literally, “for building up of the body of the Christ” ([JTB](#)); “to” (NASB) is once again the [Accusative](#) of the Preposition *eis* (1519). It has here [Friberg's](#) meaning “(5) logically; (a) to indicate purpose in order to, with a view to, for the purpose of (Matt. 26:28) ...”

“...building up” is the [Accusative](#) Singular of the [Feminine](#) Noun *oikodomê* (3619). [Friberg](#) defines this word “(1) as an action; (a) literally, *building, construction*; (b) figuratively, of spiritual encouragement *making more able, edifying, building up* (1 Cor. 14:12; 2 Cor. 13:10), opposite *kathairesis* [2506] (weakening) and *katastrôphê* [2692] (leading astray) ...” Obviously, Paul is using the word here in the figurative sense – Meaning (1) (b).

“... of the [body](#) of the [Christ](#)” – Paul is stating that [Christ](#) has given gifted people to the [Church](#) for the purpose of equipping the saints of serving one another to facilitate the spiritual improvement and growth and well-being of the [Body of Christ](#).

²³⁶ Eph. 4:13 - to the unity of the faith: Paul’s goal, and Christ’s, is for all of us Christians to attain to the unity or oneness of the faith – the body of teaching. Even Paul admitted that there would be disagreements between Christians that would necessitate our maintaining our own personal beliefs in such matters as “holy” days and proper food (Rom. 14:1-15:7). Those issues were divisive in the days of the early church. There can be differences in matters such as these without transgressing the strictures of orthodoxy. But when the [Vatican Church](#) argues that the Pope and bishops in communion with him are the sole interpreters of Scripture, that the [Vatican Church](#) is the only true Church, that the work of observing sacraments dispenses grace, that water baptism regenerates us, that [Vatican Church](#) tradition is just as authoritative as Scripture, that Peter was the first Pope, that there is Papal infallibility, that there is Apostolic Succession, that Mary is a mediatrix and co-redemptrix, that praying to deceased believers is an acceptable form of worship – then I do not see how I personally can have the unity of the faith along with the [Vatican Church](#). To me, the [Vatican Church](#) either preaches another gospel, or is perilously close to doing so (Gal. 1:6-9). Neither are acceptable. Jude felt the necessity to write his letter to appeal to his readers that we should “contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints” (Jude 1:3). I believe that the [Vatican Church](#), for one, has far exceeded those limitations. I believe it is impossible to arrive at “the unity of the faith” with adherents of the [Vatican Church](#). That is sad. I prefer to go by the authority of the Word of God (Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21), not the flawed tradition of any church. I believe that true believers will all get

- H 2 Full knowledge of God's Son: and of the knowledge of the Son of God,²³⁷
- H 3 A complete man: to a mature man,²³⁸
- H 4 To measurable maturity commensurate with the fullness of Christ: to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ.²³⁹
- G 2 The point of departure – no longer... 4:14
- H 1 Infantile: {14} As a result, we are no longer

our doctrine straightened out in heaven. But I don't see that coming close to happening this side of Christ's return. I think we will have a much better chance of attaining the unity of the faith here on earth when Christ Himself is present and giving lectures in the Temple in Jerusalem (Isa. 2:1-4). I, for one, plan on taking Remedial Theology 101, 102, 103, 104, 105". Will you join me?

²³⁷ Eph. 4:13 - and of the knowledge of the Son of God: literally, "and of the full knowledge of the Son of God" ([JTB](#)); "knowledge" is the [Genitive](#) Singular of the [Feminine](#) Noun *epignōsis* (1922), used in this letter in Eph. 1:17; 4:13. See the appropriate note at Eph. 1:17 for more info on this word. Paul is saying that the measurement of the "building up" of the [Body of Christ](#) includes the unity of the faith and also a full, complete knowledge of Jesus, the Son of God.

"God is not trying to produce successful Christian business people who can impress the world with their money and influence. He is not trying to fashion successful church leaders who can influence people with their organizational and administrative skills. Nor is He trying to fashion great orators who can move people with persuasive words. He wants to reproduce in His followers the character of His son—His love, His kindness, His compassion, His holiness, His humility, His unselfishness, His servant attitude, His willingness to suffer wrongfully, His ability to forgive, and so much more that characterized His life on earth." ([Richard Strauss](#), quoted by [Tom Constable](#), viewed Aug. 27, 2016).

It is my belief that a great deal of the content of Jesus' being the Son of God is that this is a Messianic term. God predicted to David that He would have a Father/Son relationship with David's royal descendants (2 Sam. 7:14). Jesus is the ultimate manifestation of that relationship (John 1:49). So for Paul to set a goal for maturity of the [Church](#) in terms of the full knowledge of the Son of God is for him to say that we need to have a complete knowledge of Jesus as the [Messiah](#).

²³⁸ Eph. 4:13 - to a mature man: "mature" is the [Accusative](#) Singular of the [Masculine](#) Adjective *téleios* (5046), which has the basic meaning of "complete," "... with its chief component as totality, as opposed to partial or limited ... in all its meanings *téleios* carries the component of a purpose that has been achieved" (excerpted from [Friberg](#)).

"...man" is the [Accusative](#) Singular [Masculine](#) of the noun *anēr* (435), specifically referring, in this context, to an adult male as opposed to a mere boy. Paul is emphasizing the aspect of adult maturity. He wants the whole [Church](#) to become as mature as an adult male in contrast with a childish, immature boy or even teenager. Later in this letter Paul will use this same word in the sense of "husband" (Eph. 5:22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 33).

²³⁹ Eph. 4:13 - to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ: "stature" ([Genitive Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *ēlikia*, 2244) is used only here in Ephesians. It can refer to physical (linear) stature (Luke 2:52; 19:3), but more often refers to life span (Matt. 6:27; Luke 12:25; John 9:21, 23; Heb. 11:11). It probably has the latter meaning here. It could be translated "to the measure of the life-span (i.e. maturity) which belongs to the fullness of Christ." In other words, the [Church's](#) maturity should equal that of the "fullness" or "full contents" of the essence of the [Messiah](#).

"Fullness" is the [Genitive](#) Singular [Neuter](#) of *plērōma* (4138), used previously in Eph. 1:10, 23; 3:19, and last, in Eph. 4:13. The [Church's](#) maturity should equal the "full contents" of the [Messiah](#), or [Christ](#), God's Supreme Ruler over all. The [Messiah](#) is God's ultimate, or fullest revelation to mankind (Heb. 1:1-4). The [Church](#) should reflect that measure of fullness in its maturity. See the appropriate footnote at Eph. 1:10 for more information on the word *plērōma*.

to be children,²⁴⁰

H 2 Wave-tossed: tossed here and there by waves²⁴¹

H 3 Wind-driven by false teaching: and carried about by every wind of doctrine,²⁴²

H 4 Exploited by men: by the trickery of men,²⁴³

²⁴⁰ Eph. 4:14 - As a result, we are no longer to be children: Paul has told us what we *should* be. Here he begins telling us what we *should not* be. First, we as a maturing [Church](#) should no longer be merely children, the [Nominative Masculine](#) Plural of the Adjective *nēpios* ([3516](#)), most often in the NASB translated as “infants” (Matt. 11:25; 21:16; Luke 10:21; 1 Cor. 3:1; Heb. 5:13); also “immature” (Rom. 2:20); multiple times as “child” or “children” (1 Cor. 13:11; Gal. 4:1, 3; Eph. 4:14); once as “childish” (1 Cor. 13:11); once as “immature” (Rom. 2:20). As the [Church](#) grows in maturity in [Christ](#), we should act as mature adult males, not as mere infants or small children who are completely lacking in maturity. Paul will, in the next few clauses, give us examples of immature Christians, like which we should *not* behave.

²⁴¹ Eph. 4:14 - tossed here and there by waves: This entire phrase in English translates but one word in Greek, the [Nominative](#) Plural [Present Participle](#) Middle/Passive [Deponent](#) Voice of *kludōnidzomai* ([2831](#)), used only here in the NT, and meaning “tossed by waves.” This is a very apt description of immature Christians who are easily deceived by the latest faddish Christian teaching that gets promoted in the Christian marketplace. This is a sign of immaturity. The wave-tossed Christian is helpless. He is not anchored to the Scriptures, which alone are the ground of truth. The people of the synagogue of Berea were more noble than those in Thessalonica, because they received Paul’s teaching with eagerness, but they checked out what he was saying by what the OT Scriptures said (Acts 17:11).

²⁴² Eph. 4:14 - and carried about by every wind of doctrine: This completes the thought of the preceding phrase, “tossed here and there by waves.” There are people who call themselves Christian teachers all over Christendom who are spewing out their particular “wind” ([Dative](#) Singular [Masculine](#) of the Noun *ánemos*, [417](#)), a strong gust or gale of wind (Matt. 7:24, 27; 14:24; Mark 4:37; 6:48; Luke 8:23, 24, 25; John 6:18; Acts 27:4, 7, 14, 15; James 3:4; Jude 1:12; Rev. 6:13) of doctrine or teaching (the word here is the [Genitive Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *didaskalia*, [1319](#)). This word is defined in [Friberg](#) as (1) active *instruction, act of teaching* (Rom. 12:7); (2) passive *what is taught, teaching, doctrine* (Eph. 4:14).” I have seen Christians that I have taken to be mature and godly believers slowly, over a long period of time subtly changed in their understanding of Christian doctrine to such a point that they have embraced positions and denominations that are unbiblical. For example, I once witnessed a Christian that I took to be a mature believer won over to embrace the [King James Only](#) position. About the same time I witnessed a Christian whom I had considered to be well-taught depart from Protestantism and embrace the [Vatican Church](#), many teachings of which simply [cannot be supported by Scripture](#). At about the same time, I witnessed a woman leave the church she was attending with her family, and seek to embrace the teachings of the [Apostolic Christian Church](#), contrary to the advice and counsel of her husband. She later divorced him. At the time each of these three people (and in some cases, their families) made their decision, they were convinced that they were more biblical, and that those of us who didn’t agree were less spiritual, and in at least one case, deceived by the [Devil](#). I take exactly the opposite view, that they were blown about by a wind of teaching that does not square with the Scriptures. The [Devil](#) is very cunning. Those who have been blinded and deceived by him do not know they have been deceived. Each of these three, at the time they made their decision, would have concluded, at least inwardly, that I was the one who was deceived by the [devil](#). I on the other hand, think it is they who have been deceived. We cannot both be right. One of us is wrong. The Lord will, of necessity, sort that out on the [Day of Judgment](#).

²⁴³ Eph. 4:14 - by the trickery of men: I believe there are men (and some women) in organized churches who deliberately are seeking to gain personal fulfillment by having as many people follow them as they possibly can (Acts 20:28-32). They are power brokers, but to their ardent followers, they are God’s gift to mankind. They are loved, embraced, and empowered, sometimes by huge sums of money given to them by their admirers. But these men are charlatans. They use deceit and stratagems to deceive people. And they claim to be devout followers of God. It is not my task to judge who are truly believers and who are not. Only the Lord Himself knows that. But to some of them, Christ will at the [Day of Judgment](#), regretfully utter the words, “I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness” (Matt. 7:23). The Bible does not speak kindly of these people (2 Cor. 11:12-15; Gal. 1:6-9;

- H 5 Victimized by crafty techniques: by craftiness²⁴⁴ in deceitful²⁴⁵ scheming;²⁴⁶
- G 3 The climax of growth ("in Him in all things") 4:15
- H 1 Communication – “truthing” in love: {15} but speaking the truth in love,²⁴⁷
- H 2 Characterized by growth – growing into Christ in all things: we are to grow up in all *aspects* into Him
- H 3 The parameters of growth: who is the head,²⁴⁸ *even* Christ,
- E 3 The achievement of the goal 4:16
- G 1 The contribution of the head (the source of growth): {16} from whom

Philippians 3:2; Jude 1:3-16; 2 Pet. 2:1-22). Unfortunately, those who have been deceived by them are blinded to the fact that they have been deceived. It is only the Word of God that can cast the light of God’s perspective and free us up to follow Jesus (Acts 17:10-11; 20:28-32; 2 Tim. 3:13-17; 2 Pet. 1:19-21).

²⁴⁴ Eph. 4:14 - by craftiness in deceitful scheming: “craftiness” is the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *panourgía* (3834), “strictly *capability for every work*; in the NT in a negative sense *cunning, craftiness, trickery*” ([Friberg](#)). Jesus detected the trickery (Luke 20:23) of the scribes and chief priests who were out to trap Him (Luke 20:19-26). The serpent deceived Eve by his craftiness (2 Cor. 11:3). Some disreputable Bible teachers and preachers use craftiness to deceive their followers (Eph. 4:14). Paul himself renounced craftiness, refusing to adulterate the Word of God (2 Cor. 4:2). Fortunately, God snares the wise in their own craftiness (1 Cor. 3:19).

²⁴⁵ Eph. 4:14 - deceitful: Literally, the text reads, “in craftiness by means of the method of *misleading*” ([JTB](#)). The word I have translated as “misleading” (NASB, deceitful) is an accurate rendering of the [Genitive Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *plánê* (4106). Its sister verb is *planâō* (4105), which means “to lead astray.” Astronomers named planets in our solar system with this word because they thought their orbits wandered astray across the night sky. Satan, from the beginning, used the scheme of deceitfulness. So do false teachers.

²⁴⁶ Eph. 4:14 - scheming: the [Accusative Feminine](#) Singular of *methodeia* (3180), “method, procedure; in the NT in a bad sense, as scheming to deceive *craftiness, cunning, deception* (Eph. 4:14); plural *stratagems, cunning attacks, tricks* (Eph. 6:11)” ([Friberg](#)).

²⁴⁷ Eph. 4:15 - but speaking the truth in love: Literally, “truthing in love” ([JTB](#)). The word I have translated “truthing” is the [Nominative Masculine](#) 1st Person Plural [Present Active Participle](#) of the verb *alêtheúō* (226), used only by Paul, in Gal. 4:16; Eph. 4:15.

“...in love” is the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of *agápê* (26), self-sacrificial love, used 10X in this letter. See the appropriate footnote at Eph. 1:4 for more information. This noun was last used in Eph. 4:2. It will next be used in Eph. 4:16.

²⁴⁸ Eph. 4:15 - head: the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *kephalê* (2776), used here metaphorically of [Christ](#) as being the “head” or most prominent entity of the entire body of believers, called in the NT, the [Body of Christ](#).

- G 2 The total inclusion: the whole body,²⁴⁹
- G 3 The contribution of each ligament
 - H 1 Individual contribution: being fitted and held together by what every joint supplies,
 - H 2 Gifted contribution: according to the proper working of each individual part,
- G 4 The goal of the corporate body – building up of itself in love
 - H 1 The mechanics of growth: causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself
 - H 2 The atmosphere of growth: in love.²⁵⁰

B 2 Walk No Longer as the Nations Walk 4:17-32

- C 1 The analysis of the Gentile lifestyle 4:17-19
 - D 1 The prohibition of Gentile lifestyle 4:17a
 - E 1 The source of the prohibition
 - G 1 Paul himself: {17} So this I say,
 - G 2 The Lord Jesus: and affirm together with the Lord,
 - E 2 The substance of the prohibition: that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk,²⁵¹

²⁴⁹ Eph. 4:16 - body: the [Nominative](#) Singular [Neuter](#) of the noun *sōma* (4983), used here metaphorically of the entire body or spiritually organic collection of believers in Christ during the [Church Age](#). This group of believers, some of whom are in heaven now, together comprise the [Body of Christ](#) and the [Bride of Christ](#). Many theologians insist there is only one people of God throughout all the ages. But that simply does not square with the details of Scripture. My best evidence is that in eternity, there will continue to exist the [Church](#) (Rev. 21:14) and the redeemed of [Israel](#) (Rev. 21:12) populating [New Jerusalem](#), with redeemed [Gentiles](#) (Rev. 21:24) populating [New Earth](#), yet having perpetual access to [New Jerusalem](#) (Rev. 21:25-26; 22:1-2).

²⁵⁰ Eph. 4:16 - in love: Self-sacrificial love (the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of *agápē*, 26) is the crucial environment for the flourishing of the [Body of Christ](#) with respect to itself (1 Cor. 13:1-13; John 15:12-13) and also with respect to a watching world (John 13:34-35).

²⁵¹ Eph. 4:17 - walk no longer just as the [Gentiles](#) also walk: The first “walk” is the [Present Active Infinitive](#) of the verb *peripatéō* (4043); the second “walk” is the [Present Indicative Active](#) 3rd Person Singular of *peripatéō* (4043). Both of these instances indicate a settled lifestyle. Christians are forbidden to duplicate the continual way of life (“walking”) of the godless [Gentiles](#) (or nations) of the earth. This verse marks the beginning of a second applicational section in the “Walk” of the spiritually “Wealthy” believers. They are, first of all, to “Walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which” they “have been called” (Eph. 4:1-16) (see the appropriate section in the [Ephesians outline](#)). Now, they are told to “Walk no longer as the nations walk” (Eph. 4:17-32).

“[Gentiles](#),” of course, refers to the nations of the earth, in contrast to the chosen nation of [Israel](#). The various nations of the world are Godless (Eph. 2:12; 1 Thess. 4:5), living lives of debauchery (1 Thess. 4:5) and futility

D 2 The characteristics of Gentile lifestyle 4:17b-19

- E 1 As to their thinking processes – futile, darkened thinking 4:17b-18a
- G 1 Mindless thinking: in the futility of their mind, ²⁵² 4:17b
- G 2 Darkened intellect {18} being darkened in their understanding, ²⁵³ 4:18a
- E 2 As to their relation to God: excluded from the life of God 4:18b
- G 1 Through ignorance: because of the ignorance that is in them,
- G 2 Through hard-heartedness: because of the hardness of their heart;
- E 3 As to their attitude – they have ceased to care, calloused: {19} and they, having become callous, 4:19a
- E 4 As to their activities: have given themselves over to 4:19b

(Eph. 4:17) and devoid of hope (Eph. 2:12). “[Gentiles](#)” here is the [Nominative Neuter](#) Plural of *éthnos* ([1484](#)). This noun is used 5X in this letter – in Eph. 2:11; 3:1, 6, 8; 4:17. For more information on this noun, see the appropriate footnote at Eph. 2:11.

²⁵² Eph. 4:17 - in the futility of their mind: “futility” is *mataiótēs* ([3153](#)), which means, strictly speaking, “nonsense, nothingness, emptiness (2 Pet. 2:18); as a characteristic state of something *futility, frustration, purposelessness* (Rom. 8:20)” ([Friberg](#)). Futility is characteristic of the lifestyle of [Gentiles](#)., earth’s nations.

²⁵³ Eph. 4:18 - being darkened in their understanding: Paul continues to describe the characteristics of earth’s nations ([Gentiles](#)). They presently exist in a state of “having been darkened” ([Nominative Masculine](#) Plural of the [Perfect Passive Participle](#) of *skotóō*, [4656](#)) in their mind. This verb is used only 3X and only in the [Passive](#) in the NT. Literally, it refers to the obscuring of light (Rev. 9:2; 16:10). Figuratively, it refers to “the lack of religious and moral perception *be darkened*, i.e. *unable to understand* (Eph. 4:18)” ([Friberg](#)). To put it in other terms, the peoples of the earth have been blinded in their minds to such a degree that they cannot perceive the reality of their true moral and spiritual condition. Part of this is the result of the Sin Nature each of us has inherited from our first parents, Adam and Eve. But a great deal of it caused by God’s arch-enemy, Satan, who has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so they are unable to see the light of the Good News of the glory of the Messiah (2 Cor. 4:4). Satan is the greatest liar and deceiver in the entire universe (John 8:44). His lies are best illustrated in his diabolical and successful tempting of Eve (Gen. 3:1-24) along with his yet future tempting of millions of people on the [Millennial](#) Earth to revolt against King Jesus (Rev. 20:1-10). This latter event will prove to be his eternal undoing.

The word here translated “understanding” is the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *diánoia* ([1271](#)). It is typically translated “mind” or “minds” in the NASB. It could just as well have been translated “mind” here.

It is not difficult for me to perceive the darkened minds of a great many people in America, especially among those who would classify themselves as “Progressives.” Though America was built on a Judaeo-Christian foundation, they are doing everything in their power to sabotage that foundation and remake America into a godless, Marxist, multi-cultural, anti-Christian, pro-Muslim, anti-Israel state with no moral boundaries and no physical borders. Their minds are so darkened that they think this new America is a thing of greatness. But the very philosophies and policies they espouse will ultimately prove to be their own undoing (Rev. 13:1-18; 14:9-11). See also [The Identity of Babylon the Great Prostitute](#).

- G 1 Lustful, moral looseness: sensuality²⁵⁴
 - G 2 Moral uncleanness: for the practice of every kind of impurity²⁵⁵
 - G 3 Avarice: with greediness.²⁵⁶
- C 2 The analysis of the Christ-taught lifestyle 4:20-24
- D 1 The (Ephesian Christians) had not learned Christ that way 4:20-21
 - E 1 Stated negatively: {20} But you did not learn Christ in this way, 4:20
 - E 2 Surely they heard Him: {21} if indeed you have heard Him 4:21a
 - E 3 Surely they were taught by Him: and have been taught in Him, 4:21b
 - E 4 Jesus is the ground of truth: just as truth is in Jesus, 4:21c
 - D 2 The procedures of the teaching in Christ 4:22-24
 - E 1 Take off the old man (characterized by): {22} that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the

²⁵⁴ Eph. 4:19 - sensuality: the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of *asélgeia* (766), used 10X in the NT, and only here in Ephesians. In the NASB, it is always translated “sensuality” (once, “sensual”), except in Jude 1:4, where it is translated “licentiousness.” Twice it appears in a list of vices that give no connotation as to precise meaning (Mark 7:22; 1 Pet. 4:3). At other times it appears in a context that, again, gives no connotation as to precise meaning (2 Pet. 2:2, 18; Jude 1:4). At other times, however, it clearly appears in a context of sexual misconduct (Rom. 13:13; 2 Cor. 12:21; Gal. 5:19; Eph. 4:19; 2 Pet. 2:7). [Friberg](#) defines the term as follows: “as living without any moral restraint *licentiousness, sensuality, lustful indulgence* (2 Cor. 12:21); especially as indecent and outrageous sexual behavior *debauchery, indecency, flagrant immorality* (Rom. 13:13).” [Thayer’s](#) definition (see 766): “unbridled lust, excess, licentiousness, lasciviousness, wantonness, outrageousness, shamelessness, insolence.” Paul’s point here is that the world of the nations, who are, by definition characterized as pagan, are typically people who live without moral restraint in the area of sexuality. Their motto: “If it feels good, and you can get away with it, why not?” Paul’s objective, furthermore, is that Christians are no longer to walk the way these [Gentiles](#) walk (Eph. 4:17).

²⁵⁵ Eph. 4:19 - impurity: the [Genitive Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *akatharsía* (167), translated by the NASB 9X as “impurity” and once as “uncleanness.” It means “literally *worthless material, waste; of graves decayed flesh*, causing ceremonial *uncleanness, defilement* (Matt. 23:27); figuratively, moral *uncleanness, impurity* (1 Thess. 2:3), opposite *hagiasmós* [38] (*holy living*); of sexual vice *immorality, indecency, sexual impurity* (Rom. 1:24)” ([Friberg](#)). The connotation here in Eph. 4:19 is one of sexual impurity. Paul will use this word again in Eph. 5:3, “But immorality (*porneía*, 4202) or any impurity or greed must not even be named among you, as is proper among saints.” Paul’s point is that [Gentiles](#) typically indulge in every kind of sexual impurity. Christians are not to do so.

²⁵⁶ Eph. 4:19 - with greediness: the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of *pleonexía* (4124) “as bad behavior, a disposition to have more than one’s share *greed, covetousness, avarice* (Luke 2:15); ... *as a matter of being compelled to, as what is grudgingly given* (2 Cor. 9:5)” ([Friberg](#)). NASB translates the noun as “greed” 7X; “greediness” 1X; “deeds of coveting” 1X; “covetousness” 1X. Paul’s point is that the nations’ proclivity for sexual immorality is fueled by narcissistic and unbridled greed and lust.

- old self, ²⁵⁷ 4:22
- G 1 Continual corruption: which is being corrupted
- G 2 Based on the strong desires of deception: in accordance with the lusts of deceit,
- E 2 Be renewed: {23} and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind, 4:23
- E 3 Put on the new man (characterized by): {24} and put on the new self, 4:24
- G 1 Like God: which in *the likeness of God*
- G 2 Created with God's attributes: has been created in
- H 1 Rectitude: righteousness ²⁵⁸
- H 2 Piety toward God: and holiness
- H 3 Truth: of the truth.
- C 3 Specific applications of taking off and putting on 4:25-32
- D 1 With regard to deceit and truthfulness 4:25
- E 1 Divestiture of "the lie": {25} Therefore, laying aside falsehood, ²⁵⁹

²⁵⁷ Eph. 4:22 - the old self: literally, "the old man" ([Accusative Masculine](#) Singular of *ánthrōpos*, [444](#)). This noun refers to a human being, whether male or female. Man can thus be distinguished from animals and plants, and from spirit beings, such as God, Christ, and angels. Christ, of course, is the unique God/man hybrid. Furthermore, though angels are God's spirit messengers, they often appear as men and are called men. However, the term used in Luke 24:4 referring to two men as angels is the [Nominative Masculine](#) Plural of the noun *anēr* ([435](#)). So also, for example, is Cornelius' reference to a man (*anēr*) who stood before him in shining garments (Acts 10:30). Paul here is using *ánthrōpos* in an unusual way, as referring to the former unredeemed man or self – the unregenerate man dominated by sin. We are to put aside that old man and put on the new, redeemed man insofar as our lifestyle is concerned. Of course, everyone who trusts in Jesus becomes a new creation (2 Cor. 5:17). But our walk needs to match our wealth!

²⁵⁸ Eph. 4:24 - righteousness: "...righteousness" – the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *dikaíosunê* ([1343](#)), translated by NASB as "righteousness" 91X and as "right" 1X (Acts 10:35). "Righteousness" is the quality of being morally and spiritually upright, virtuous, and characterized by integrity before God and man. Righteousness is a characteristic possessed by God (Rom. 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22). God's righteousness can be credited to the one who trusts in Jesus and His substitutionary blood (Ro. 3:21-26). In the present context, righteousness is that quality of holiness coming from God and credited to the account of one who trusts in Jesus. "Righteousness" is used 3X in this letter, Eph. 4:24; 5:9; 6:14.

²⁵⁹ Eph. 4:25 - falsehood: If we are to take off the old man and put on the new, one of the things we must take off is, literally, "the lie," which is the [Accusative Neuter](#) Singular of *pseûdos* ([5579](#)) plus the article. [Constable](#) notes that this and each of the following directives contains a triad that consists of a prohibition, a positive alternative, and a reason. [Thayer](#) notes that one definition of *pseûdos* is conscious and intentional falsehood. Satan is a perpetual *liar* (John 8:44). The pagan world reaches a stage where they exchange the truth of God for a *lie* (Rom. 1:25). Christians

- E 2 Reciprocal truthfulness: SPEAK TRUTH²⁶⁰ EACH ONE *of you* WITH HIS NEIGHBOR,²⁶¹
- E 3 Reflecting mutuality: for we are members of one another.²⁶²
- D 2 With regard to sustained wrath and cooling down 4:26-27
- E 1 The command to be wrathful in a non-sinning way 4:26
- G 1 Brevity in anger: {26} BE ANGRY, AND *yet* DO NOT SIN;²⁶³

are to lay aside *falsehood* and speak the truth (Eph. 4:25). The “man of lawlessness” will arrive on the world scene performing miracles operating out of *falsehood* (2 Thess. 2:9). He will eminently succeed, because people of the world will believe that which is *false* (2 Thess. 2:11). John informs his readers that no *lie* comes from the truth (1 John 2:21). The anointing which we believers have received is true, and is not a *lie* (1 John 2:27). Of the 144,000 sealed, it says that no *lie* was found in their mouths (Rev. 4:5). No one who is *false* (Rev. 21:27), and no one who loves and practices *lying* will ever find his way into [New Jerusalem](#) (Rev. 22:15). This directive is the negative of the first triad.

²⁶⁰ Eph. 4:25 - SPEAK TRUTH: “speak” is the 2nd Person Plural [Present Active Imperative](#) of the verb *lalēō* (2980), a fairly vanilla word for speaking. Each Christian is to be speaking truth – the [Accusative](#) Singular [Feminine](#) of *alētheia* (225), used in Eph. 1:13; 4:21, 24, 25; 5:9; 6:14. Truth here is that which corresponds with reality. See the appropriate note in Eph. 1:13 for more information on this word. Instead of telling lies, the obedient Christian will perpetually be telling the truth to his neighbor. This brief phrase in small caps is a quotation from Zech. 8:16. Paul previously exhorted his readers to be “speaking the truth in love” (Eph. 4:15). A very similar directive to Eph. 4:25 is given in Col. 3:9. This directive is the positive of the first triad.

²⁶¹ Eph. 4:25 - EACH ONE *of you* WITH HIS NEIGHBOR: each Christian is obliged continually to speak truth with his neighbor, literally, “with the near of him” ([JTB](#)). “Neighbor” is the Adverbial Adjective *plēsion*, [4139](#), “(near, close); (1) as an adverb; (a) *near, close by*; (b) substantivally *ho plēsion* [as here in Eph. 4:25] *the neighbor, the one near by, fellow man* (Matt. 5:43); with the meaning supplied from the context; *fellow countryman* (Acts 7:27); *fellow believer* (Rom. 15:2); (2) as an improper preposition with the genitive *near, close to something* (John 4:5)” ([Friberg](#)). The meaning Paul employed is (1) (b), and since the context is unity in the Body of Christ, by “neighbor” Paul probably was referring to fellow believers in particular. That is not to suggest, of course, that it is legitimate to lie to unbelievers.

²⁶² Eph. 4:25 - for we are members of one another: This constitutes the reason for the directive in the first triad – we must not lie to each other and must speak truth to one another because we are members of one another – the [Body of Christ](#). “Members” is the [Nominative Neuter](#) Plural of *mēlos* (3196) “literally, as part of the human body *member, limb, part* (Rom. 12:4a); figuratively, of one who belongs to the Christian community as the body of Christ *member* (1 Cor. 6:15)” ([Friberg](#)). If one wishes to be technical, there is a case to be made that the only church membership known in the NT is believers’ membership in the [Body of Christ](#), the [Church Universal](#). Membership in a local church may be convenient for organizational and legal purposes, but it is a modern day construct, not a biblical standard.

²⁶³ Eph. 4:26 - BE ANGRY, AND *yet* DO NOT SIN: This is the first negative of the second triad. “Be angry” is the 2nd Person Plural [Present](#) Middle/Passive [Deponent Imperative](#) of the verb *orgízō* (3710) “only passive in the NT, only of human and satanic anger *be or become angry, be or become furious, be or become enraged*” ([Friberg](#)).

“The second exhortation is to avoid sinning when angry, and to deal with sin quickly if it does accompany anger (Ps. 4:4). The emotion of anger is not sinful in itself (cf. John 2:13-16). There is such a thing as righteous indignation” (cf. Eph. 5:6; Mark 3:5.” ([Thomas Constable](#) quoting Daniel B. Wallace). “Do not sin” is the 2nd Person Plural [Present Imperative Active](#) of the verb *hamartánō* (264), used relative sparingly in the NT, and only here in Ephesians. It means “literally *miss the mark, be in error*; figuratively, of offending against God, religious or moral law *sin, do wrong, transgress*, opposite *agathapoiēō* [[15](#)] (*do what is right*)” ([Friberg](#)).

- G 2 Repairing breeches quickly: do not let the sun go down on your anger,²⁶⁴
- E 2 The motivation – the danger of giving place to the devil: {27} and do not give the devil an opportunity.²⁶⁵ 4:27
- D 3 Theft and working 4:28
- E 1 The command to cease from theft: {28} He who steals must steal no longer;²⁶⁶
- E 2 The command to work hard: but rather he must labor,²⁶⁷
- E 3 The stipulation of self-sufficiency: performing with his own hands what is good,
- E 4 The motivation – to be able to share with the needy: so that he will have *something* to share with one who has need.²⁶⁸

²⁶⁴ Eph. 4:26 - do not let the sun go down on your anger: This is the second element of the second triad – it explains how one can be angry and yet not sin – he must resolve his anger quickly. “Anger” is the [Dative Masculine](#) Singular of the noun *parorgismós* (3950), “in the passive sense, as a state of provocation to anger *angry mood, exasperation, anger* (Eph. 4:26)” ([Friberg](#)). This noun is used only here in the NT.

²⁶⁵ Eph. 4:27 - and do not give the [devil](#) an opportunity: Literally, the text reads, “neither be giving place to the [devil](#)” (JTB). I have so translated because “give” (NASB) is the 2nd Person Plural [Present Active Imperative](#) of *didōmi* (1325). It has here the idea of transferring control and opportunity to another, in this case, the [devil](#), who only wants to ruin a Christian’s life and testimony, not benefit him.

“...opportunity” (literally, “place”) is the [Accusative Masculine](#) Singular of the Noun *tópos* (5117). It is used here in a figurative sense “(7) figuratively, to refer to an opportunity, occasion, chance (Acts 25:16)” ([Friberg](#)).

“...to the [devil](#)” translates the [Dative Masculine](#) Singular of the Adjective *diábolos* (1228), here used substantively along with the article. *Diábolos* means “slandering (2 Tim. 3:3); substantively [with the article]... *the slanderer*; predominantly, as a specific name for Satan as the accuser *the devil* (Matt. 4:1)” ([Friberg](#)). *Diábolos* is used 37X in the NT. In this letter it is used in Eph. 4:27; 6:11.

If one harbors his anger, it turns into resentment and bitterness, which is a cancer not only on one’s own soul, but upon his relationships with others. Bitterness is able to defile many people (Heb. 12:15).

²⁶⁶ Eph. 4:28 - He who steals must steal no longer: “He who steals,” literally, “the one stealing,” translates *ho kléptōn*, the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular [Present Active Participle](#) of the verb *kléptō* (2813) “*steal, take away something secretly, without the owner’s permission*” ([Friberg](#)).

“...must steal no longer” *mékēti klepētō*. *Mékēti* is an adverb of time that means “no longer, no more ...” ([Friberg](#)). *Klepētō* is the 3rd Person Singular, [Present Imperative Active](#) of the verb *kléptō* (2813). Literally, the text reads, “The one stealing, no longer must he steal” (JTB). This is the first (and negative) statement of this third triad.

²⁶⁷ Eph. 4:28 - he must labor: the [Present Active Imperative](#) 3rd Person Singular of *kopiáō* (2872), referring to hard, diligent physical labor (Luke 5:5; Acts 20:35) or ministry (Luke 16:6, 12; 1 Tim. 5:17) to the point of weariness (John 4:6). Hard physical work is the Biblical alternative to theft in any form. This is the second (and positive) statement of this third triad.

²⁶⁸ Eph. 4:28 - so that he will have *something* to share with one who has need: This is the third component of the third triad. It gives the reason why the one stealing should no longer steal but should labor diligently with his own hands – so that instead of taking from others who have plenty, he will share with the one who has a physical, or financial need. The Biblical Christian life is not about taking from others who have plenty (the evil doctrine of Marxism); it is about working hard enough and being self-supporting (Capitalism) to such a degree that one has the wherewithal to share voluntarily with those who are needy.

D 4 Degrading and upbuilding speech 4:29-30

- E 1 The prohibition of every rotten word: {29} Let no unwholesome²⁶⁹ word proceed²⁷⁰ from your mouth, 4:29a
- E 2 The command to employ good words: but only such *a word* as is 4:29b
- G 1 That build up: good for edification²⁷¹
- G 2 That meet needs: according to the need *of the moment*,²⁷²
- G 3 That give grace: so that it will give grace to those who hear.²⁷³

²⁶⁹ Eph. 4:29 - unwholesome: the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular of the Adjective *saprós* (4550), which means “decayed, rotting, rotten; literally, of decaying fish or fruit no longer useful for food; more generally, *useless, of no value, unfit* (Matt. 7:17); [neuter](#) as a substantive *tá saprá the unusable ones* (Matt. 13:48); figuratively, of unedifying speech *harmful, bad, unprofitable* (Eph. 4:29)” ([Friberg](#)). “Let no unwholesome word proceed from your mouth” is the first (negative) prohibition of the fourth triad. It helps to take a literal meaning here, “Let no rotten, decaying word (or speech) proceed from your mouth.” The world uses “popular” language that is often crude. Christians get sucked into that lifestyle to identify with the world. We should not be doing that. Christian speech should be the model of diplomacy and politeness. To imitate the speech found out a local bar or uttered on the typical playground does not befit obedient Christians. And each of us must be careful how we speak about another person who is not present. As I write this, it is election season here in the U.S. Jesus told us we will be forced to give an account of every careless word we speak in the day of judgment (Matt. 12:36).

²⁷⁰ Eph. 4:29 - proceed: 3rd Person Singular [Present](#) Middle/Passive [Deponent Imperative](#) of *ekporeúomai* (1607), used only here in Ephesians. It means, “(1) literally ... *go from or out of* a place, *depart from* (Mark 6:11); *go out* (Acts 9:28);” ... but here “(1) figuratively; (a) of words or thoughts *proceed from, go or come out of* the mouth, i.e. *be spoken* (Matt. 15:11); ...” ([Friberg](#)). Paul is warning his readers, “Let no rotten word be proceeding from your mouth”

²⁷¹ Eph. 4:29 - edification: the [Accusative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *oikodomê* (3619), again here used in the figurative sense of building up, making more useful. See the appropriate note on this word at Eph. 2:21; 4:12 for more information. This word appears in this letter at Eph. 2:21; 4:12, 16, 29. Obedient Christians are to use words that build others up, not tear them down. Unfortunately, we fallen humans take a perverse delight in tearing someone else down because it makes us feel better because we are better than they are. But Paul’s standard is that we are to build up others.

²⁷² Eph. 4:29 - according to the need *of the moment*: The NASB footnote for this phrase reads “*Lit of the need*”. The phrase in the NASB text translates but two words in the Greek text, *tês chreías* (the [Genitive Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *chreía*, 5532) “(1) *need, lack, necessity*; ... (2) abstractly *what is needed, what is useful* (Eph. 4:29 ...)” ([Friberg](#)). This noun is used twice in this letter – in Eph. 4:28, 29. Our speech is to be governed by that which detects a particular need in another person’s life. We then speak in such a way as to meet that need, and in the process, build up the other person.

By way of illustration, the health-conscious person will eat nutrition-rich foods that improve and maintain his body’s over-all health. He will eat to complement the needs of his body. He won’t use drugs that give a temporary sense of euphoria, but actually damage his body. Similarly, our speech ought to benefit the needs of fellow members of the [Body of Christ](#). If we don’t we are tearing down the [Body](#) of which we are a part. That is transparently counter-productive!

²⁷³ Eph. 4:29 - so that it will give grace to those who hear: Literally, “in order that it might give grace to the ones hearing”(JTB). “Grace” is the [Accusative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *cháris* (5485). Here, “grace” means that speaker is communicating in such a way that the person hearing is actually benefitted, and senses the “good will” of

- E 3 The motivation for wholesome speech 4:30
- G 1 Not injuring the [Holy Spirit](#): {30} Do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God,²⁷⁴
- G 2 Your guarantee of redemption: by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption.²⁷⁵
- D 5 Antagonism and kindness 4:31-32
- E 1 The identification of vices 4:31a
- G 1 Resentment: {31} Let all bitterness²⁷⁶

the speaker. God's character is that He extends grace toward those who do not deserve it. In our speech, we Christians ought to do the same – extend grace toward those who may not necessarily deserve it. “Grace” is used 12X in this letter. It was last used in Eph. 4:7. Its final usage will be as a benediction in Eph. 6:24. For more information on this word, see the appropriate note at Eph. 1:2.

“...to those who hear” translates *tois akouousin*, the [Dative Masculine](#) Plural of the [Present Active Participle](#) of the verb *akouō* ([191](#)) plus the article, literally, “the ones hearing” or “the ones listening” ([JTB](#)).

²⁷⁴ Eph. 4:30 - Do not grieve the [Holy Spirit](#) of God: literally, “and do not be grieving the [Holy Spirit](#) of God ...” NASB, unfortunately does not translate the Coordinating Conjunction “and” (*kai*, [2532](#)), for this conjunction links the grieving with the “rotten” speech forbidden in Eph. 4:29.

“Do not grieve” translates the 2nd Person Plural [Present Active Imperative](#) of *lupéō* ([3076](#)), here used in the [active](#) sense, to “... (cause) pain, grieve, make sad (Eph. 4:30); ...” ([Friberg](#)). When we use “rotten” speech toward one another instead of “upbuilding” speech, it makes the [Holy Spirit](#) sad because He has [sealed](#) each one of us believers for the day of redemption! He has made an irrevocable commitment to each one of us. So why would we use abusive speech against someone whom the [Holy Spirit](#) has [sealed](#)?!

²⁷⁵ Eph. 4:30 - by whom you were sealed for the day of redemption: The [Holy Spirit](#) is the One, literally, “in (*en*, [1722](#)) whom” ([Dative](#) Singular of the Relative Pronoun *hós*, [3739](#)) Paul's readers (and we believers today also) were [sealed](#) (2nd Person Plural [Aorist Indicative Passive](#) of *sphragízō*, [4972](#)), used in Eph. 1:13; 4:30. This sealing takes place at a moment in time, the moment of our salvation through faith in Jesus, when Jesus uses the [Holy Spirit](#) to baptize us believers into the [Body of Christ](#). See the appropriate footnote at Eph. 1:13 for more information about this verb.

“...for the day of [redemption](#)” looks forward to the [Rapture](#) (1 Thess. 4:13-17), when not only our souls (a present reality, Eph. 1:7), but also our bodies (a future certainty, Rom. 8:23) will be [redeemed](#) forever from the sordid effects of sin and death. The noun “[redemption](#)” here is the [Genitive Feminine](#) Singular of *apolútrōsis* ([629](#)), used in this letter in Eph. 1:7, 14; 4:30. See the appropriate note on this word at Eph. 1:7 for more information. The [Holy Spirit](#) is irrevocably committed to us believers in Jesus! Why should we, then, abuse one another with our speech?

²⁷⁶ Eph. 4:31 - all bitterness: “bitterness” is the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of *pikria* ([4088](#)), used only in Acts 8:23; Rom. 3:14; Eph. 4:31; Heb. 12:15, and is translated as “bitterness” in each instance. According to [Friberg](#), the word means “bitterness; literally, of plants that produce inedible or poisonous fruit *hridza pikrias root that bears bitter fruit*; used metaphorically of a person whose influence or actions become harmful to a community *one who causes trouble* (Heb. 12:15; cf. Deut. 29:18-19); figuratively, as a hostile attitude (*angry*) *resentment, animosity* (Eph. 4:31).” Peter perceived that Simon, the former magician, was filled with bitterness (Acts 8:23). Quoting the OT, Paul characterized [Gentiles](#) as having a mouth “full of cursing and bitterness” (Rom. 3:14). Obedient Christians must put aside every instance of bitterness (Eph. 4:31). Christians who don't avail themselves fully of the grace of God are liable to have a “root of bitterness” spring up in their lives, where it will cause trouble and lead to the defilement of many (Heb. 12:15). “Resentment” or “animosity” are good synonyms.

- G 2 Rage: and wrath ²⁷⁷
- G 3 Anger: and anger ²⁷⁸
- G 4 Shouting: and clamor ²⁷⁹
- G 5 Blasphemy: and slander ²⁸⁰
- E 2 The imperative of removal: be put away from you, ²⁸¹ 4:31b
- E 3 The additional identification: along with all malice. ²⁸²
4:31c

²⁷⁷ Eph. 4:31 - wrath: the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular of the noun *thumós* (2372) “from *thúō* (*move violently, rush along*); (1) as a strong passion of soul or mind *wrath, rage*; ... (2) in contrast with *orgê* [3709] as settled indignation, *thumós* is used of anger that boils up and subsides again, *swelling up of anger, hot temper, angry outburst* (2 Cor. 12:20); ...” (Friberg). Since “wrath” is not a commonly used English word, I prefer to translate *thumós* as “rage” or “fury,” both of which suggests a passionate and violent outburst of anger.

²⁷⁸ Eph. 4:31 - anger: the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of *orgê* (3709), used in this letter in Eph. 2:3; 4:31; 5:6. It is used 36X in the NT and is translated by the NASB as “wrath” 30X and as “anger” 6X. It is probably translated as “anger” here in Eph. 4:31 to distinguish it from *thumós* (2372), which the NASB has already translated as “wrath” in this verse. As the previous footnote states, quoting Friberg, *orgê* (3709) is settled *indignation*. See the note on this word in Eph. 2:13. Since the translation “wrath” is rarely used in modern English, I believe plain “anger” is a better translation of *orgê* than the more archaic term, “wrath.”

²⁷⁹ Eph. 4:31 - clamor: [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *kraugê* (2906), “(1) as several voices speaking loudly at the same time *outcry, clamor, shouting* (Matt. 25:6); (2) as the loud sound of one voice (*loud*) *cry, shout* (Luke 1:42); (3) as the loud sound accompanying weeping *crying, wailing* (Rev. 21:4)” (Friberg). The idea here is that obedient Christians should not be noisy, argumentative troublemakers in their speech. Someone who is a shouter is probably not a humble, cooperative person. A Christian who has to be at center stage, who interrupts others, who won’t stop talking long enough to listen to and understand another’s point of view is probably guilty of clamor.

²⁸⁰ Eph. 4:31 - slander: the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *blasphêmia* (988) “(1) generally *harmful, abusive speech* against someone’s reputation; *slander, reviling, evil speaking* (Col. 3:8); (2) predominately of speech that is against the nature and power of God *blasphemy, insult, outrage* (Matt. 26:65)” (Friberg). In Col. 3:8 this noun appears adjacent the phrase, “and abusive speech out of your mouth.” It should be noted that the English word “blasphemy” is a transliteration of the Greek word, not a translation. Jesus was repeatedly falsely accused of “blasphemy” against God (Matt. 26:65; Mark 14:64; Luke 5:21; John 10:33). Satan and his evil human pawns are repeatedly accused of blasphemy (Rev. 13:1, 5, 6; 17:3). The untranslated word “blasphemy” is appropriate in these contexts. This noun appears but once in this letter – in Eph. 4:31. “Slander” is an acceptable translation. A bit more descriptive phrase would be “harmful, abusive speech.”

²⁸¹ Eph. 4:31 - be put away from you: “be put away” is the 3rd Person Singular [Aorist Passive Imperative](#) of *airō* (142). This verb here conveys the sense of “removing” or “carrying off” or “taking away” (adapted from Friberg). The [Aorist](#) indicates this action is to take place at a point in time. The singular number indicates that *each* Christian has a responsibility to obey. “... from you” (2nd Person Plural [Genitive](#) of the pronoun *sú*, 4771) indicates that the Ephesian Church *corporately* carried the responsibility of removing each of these vices.

²⁸² Eph. 4:31 - along with all malice: “malice” is *kakía* (2549). It is not uniformly translated in the NASB: malice (5X); evil (3X); wickedness (2X); trouble (1X). It has the quality of *kakós* (2556) (*evil, bad*) *evil, badness*; (1) morally, it refers to *depravity, vice, wickedness* (James 1:21), opposite *aretê* (703), (*virtue*), [NASB or *moral excellence*]; (2) behaviorally it refers to *dislike, ill will, hatefulness* (Tit. 3:3), opposite *koinōnia* (2842), (*fellowship*); (3) as adverse circumstances *evil, trouble, misfortune* (Matt. 6:34) (adapted from Friberg). In my estimation Paul was here speaking out against the relational qualities described in definition #2 – *dislike, ill will, hatefulness*.

- E 4 The commandment of kindness 4:32
- G 1 Kindness: {32} Be kind to one another, ²⁸³
- G 2 Tender-heartedness: tender-hearted, ²⁸⁴
- G 3 Forgiveness: forgiving each other, ²⁸⁵
- E 5 The standard: just as God in Christ also has forgiven you. ²⁸⁶

²⁸³ Eph. 4:32 - Be kind to one another: Literally, “Be becoming to one another kind,” etc. “Be” is the 2nd Personal Plural [Present Middle/Passive Deponent Imperative](#) of the Verb *ginomai* (1096), “become,” used in this letter in Eph. 2:13; 3:7; 4:32; 5:1, 7, 12, 17; 6:3. See also the discussion in the appropriate footnote at Eph. 2:13. My translation, “Be becoming” reflects the [Present](#) tense of this command. It is a command, and it is a perpetual process. “...to one another” translates *eis* (1519) [allêlous](#) (2nd Person Plural [Masculine Accusative](#) of the Pronoun *allêlôn*, 204). This prepositional phrase requires a perpetual reciprocal action of kindness toward one another.

“...kind” translates the [Nominative Masculine](#) Plural of the Adjective *chrêstós* (5543), used only here in this letter. It is used “with a basic meaning *being well adapted to fulfill a purpose*, i.e. *useful, suitable, excellent*; (1) of things *good, easy, pleasant*; ... (2) of persons *kind, obliging, benevolent* (Eph. 4:32); ...” ([Friberg](#)). It is meaning (2) Paul has in mind here.

²⁸⁴ Eph. 4:32 - tender-hearted: the [Nominative Masculine](#) Plural of the Adjective *eúspiangchnos* (2155), meaning, literally, “having healthy bowels;” metaphorically, “compassionate, tenderhearted.” This adjective is used only in Eph. 4:32 and in 1 Pet. 3:8, where it is translated by NASB as “kindhearted.” It is governed by the initial [Present](#) tense, [Imperative](#) verb in this sentence, *ginomai* (1096), and thus may be translated, literally, “Be becoming to one another ... tenderhearted.” Once again, this is a perpetual, reciprocal obligation among believers.

²⁸⁵ Eph. 4:32 - forgiving each other: “forgiving” is the 2nd Person [Masculine](#) Plural [Present Nominative](#) Middle/Passive [Deponent Participle](#) (with [Imperative](#) force) of the Verb *charízomai* (5483), used only in this verse in Ephesians, but used twice here.

According to [Friberg](#), it is “from a basic meaning give, with the translation suited to the context; (1) *give freely* or *graciously, grant as a favor* (Luke 7:21; Acts 27:24; possibly Gal. 3:18); (2) (a) of a debt that is owed to someone *cancel, do away with* (Luke 7:42); (b) figuratively, as a religious technical term, of a wrong that has been done to someone *give pardon, forgive* (Col. 2:13); ...”

NASB translates this verb variously “forgiven” 4X; “granted” 4X; “forgive” 3X; “forgave” 2X; “forgiving” 2X; “hand” 2X; “bestowed” 1X; “freely give” 1X; “gave” 1X; “given” 1X; “graciously forgave” 1X; “things freely given” 1X.

Related words are *cháris* (5485), translated by NASB as “grace” 122X; “gracious work” 3X; “gracious” 2X. The second highest occurrence (outside some form of “grace”) is the translation “favor,” a mere 11X by comparison. Another related word is *chárisma* (5486), which appears frequently in the subject of “spiritual gifts” (Rom. 12:6; 1 Cor. 12:4, 9, 28, 30, 31; 1 Tim. 4:14; 2 Tim. 1:6; 1 Pet 4:10).

Putting all these concepts together, in Eph. 4:32 believers are exhorted continually to be “*giving grace*” to each other. That is a beautiful definition of “*forgiving each other*.”

“...each other” translates the 2nd Person Plural [Masculine Dative](#) of the reflexive pronoun *heautoú* (1438), which refers action in a verb back to its own subject ([Friberg](#)). A more technically correct translation would be “forgiving yourselves, except that Paul clearly meant his readers were to “be giving grace” to “*one another*.” However, he has already used that word (*allêlôn*, 204) earlier in Eph. 4:32. NASB editors correctly altered the translation to “forgiving each other” (*heautoú*, 1438).

Once again, we believers are constantly to be *giving grace* to each other. If we perceive a slight, let us give the other person grace. Perhaps he had a bad day and was taking it out on us. If someone seemed to ignore us, let us give grace. Perhaps she was distracted. Often we take offense because we know neither the circumstances nor the motive behind someone else’s action or reaction.

²⁸⁶ Eph. 4:32 - just as God in Christ also has forgiven you: “...has forgiven” is the 3rd Person Singular [Aorist Indicative Middle Deponent](#) of the verb *charízomai* (5483). With the [Aorist](#) tense, it is better translated here, “*forgave*.” We Christians are constantly to be giving grace to each other mindful that, in Christ’s substitutionary death on the cross, God Himself gave grace in a superlative fashion to us sinful, rebellious humans. We are reminded of Jesus’ words, “For if you forgive others for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you”

B 3 Walk in Love 5:1-7

C 1 The command to imitate God 5:1.

D 1 The imperative: {1} Therefore be imitators of God,²⁸⁷D 2 The analogy: as beloved children;²⁸⁸

C 2 The command to walk in love 5:2.

D 1 The imperative: {2} and walk in love,²⁸⁹

(Matt. 6:14). [In full disclosure, the word in Matt. 6:14 twice translated “forgive” is the synonym *aphîēmi* (863).]

²⁸⁷ Eph. 5:1 - Therefore be imitators of God: Having exhorted his readers to be kind and tender-hearted to one another, giving grace to each other just as God in Christ had given grace to them (Eph. 4:32), Paul now exhorts his readers to be becoming imitators of God as children beloved (*agapētós*, 27) (Eph. 5:1). They will do this by continually walking in love (*agápê*, 26), just as the Christ also loved (*agapáō*, 25) them (“us”) (Eph. 5:2).

The Walk of Believers (Eph. 4:1-6:24), the second and concluding major section of Ephesians, began with (1) “Walk Worthy of Your Calling” (Eph. 4:1-16). It was followed by (2) “Walk No Longer as the Nations Walk” (Eph. 4:17-32). This is now the third sub-section, (3) “Walk in Love” (Eph. 5:1-7). It will be followed by (4) “Walk as Children of Light” (Eph. 5:8-14). Three more sub-sections will follow. For a visualization of the thematic topics of this letter, see the author’s “[Analysis of Ephesians](#).”

“Therefore” (the Conjunction *oûn*, 3767), links the preceding section with the present one, as explained in the first paragraph of this note.

“...be,” literally, “be becoming,” translates the 2nd Person Plural [Present Imperative](#) Middle/Passive [Deponent](#) of *gínomai* (1096). Becoming imitators of God is obligatory, and it is a process.

“...imitators” is the [Nominative Masculine](#) Plural of *mimêtês* (3402), “one who follows another’s example imitator, follower” ([Friberg](#)). If we are “mimics” of God, we will be continually “giving grace” to each other (Eph. 4:32) and “walking around” – living a lifestyle – of love (Eph. 5:2).

²⁸⁸ Eph. 5:1 - as beloved children: literally, “as children beloved.” “...children” is the [Nominative Neuter](#) Plural of the noun *téknon* (5043). Paul’s idea is that, since we have received Jesus (John 1:12) as the ultimate Message of God (John 1:1-3), we are, in a spiritual sense, God’s children (John 1:12-13; 11:52), having been adopted (Eph. 1:5) through Jesus Christ into the family of our heavenly Father. The noun is not specific as to the sex of the child. The age of the child is not necessarily inherent in the term. Sometimes small children are in view (Matt. 2:18), and sometimes a child is an adult (see Matt. 9:2, where Jesus addresses the paralytic, literally, as “child” as a term of endearment). Other references to “children of God” include John 1:12; 11:52; Rom. 8:16, 17, 21; Php. 2:15; 1 John 3:1, 2, 10; 5:2. In this letter, Paul states that unbelievers are children of wrath (Eph. 2:3); believers are to be mimics of God as beloved children (Eph. 5:1); believers are to walk as children of light (Eph. 5:8); literal children are to obey their parents (Eph. 6:1); and fathers are not to provoke their own (literal) children to anger, but rather bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord (Eph. 6:4).

Not only are we as believers commanded to be mimics of God as God’s children, but we are to be mimics of Him as children who are beloved by Him (Eph. 5:1). The word “beloved” is the [Nominative](#) Plural [Neuter](#) of the adjective *agapêtós* (27), indicating those who are “beloved, dear, very much loved (Acts 15:25; possibly 1 Tim. 6:2); ...” ([Friberg](#)). It should be natural for children who are loved by their Father to imitate Him.

²⁸⁹ Eph. 5:2 - and walk in love: The best way for children of God, who are loved (*agapêtós*, 27) by their heavenly Father, to be mimics of Him is constantly to be “walking around” in a lifestyle of love ([Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *agápê*, 26) toward others. This kind of love is a self-sacrificial love which seeks the good of the one loved. This noun is used 10X in this letter. See the appropriate note at Eph. 1:4 for more information. It was last used in Eph. 4:16, and will be used for the final time in Eph. 6:23.

“...walk” is the 2nd Person Plural [Present Active Imperative](#) of the verb *peripatéō* (4043), and it means, literally, to “walk around.” With the [Present](#) tense, it means that believers are constantly to be “walking around” in love. That should be a characteristic of their lives. For more information on this verb, see the appropriate footnote at Eph. 2:2. This verb is used 8X in this letter: Eph. 2:2, 10; 4:1, 17, 17; 5:2, 8, 15. Each of those occurrences are discussed in a context-specific manner. This verb was last used twice in Eph. 4:17, and will be used again in Eph. 5:8.

“...in love” is the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *agápê* (26), which mandates here a conscious and

- D 2 The analogy
 - E 1 The love of Christ: just as Christ also loved you
 - E 2 The self-sacrifice of Christ: and gave Himself up for us,
 - G 1 The terminology
 - H 1 an offering
 - H 2 and a sacrifice
 - G 2 The beneficiary: to God
 - G 3 The benefit: as a fragrant aroma.
- C 3 The applications to walking in love 5:3-4
 - D 1 The antithesis 5:3-4a
 - E 1 The unmentionables 5:3
 - G 1 Fornication: {3} But immorality ²⁹⁰
 - G 2 Uncleaness: or any impurity ²⁹¹
 - G 3 Greed: or greed ²⁹² must not even be named among

continual seeking of the good for other believers. This noun is used in Eph. 1:4, 15; 2:4; 3:17, 19; 4:2, 15, 16; 5:2; 6:23.

²⁹⁰ Eph. 5:3 - immorality: the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of *porneia* (4202). This refers to “1. illicit sexual intercourse a. adultery, fornication, homosexuality, lesbianism, intercourse with animals etc. b. sexual intercourse with close relatives; Lev. 18 c. sexual intercourse with a divorced man or woman; Mark 10:11, 2. metaph. the worship of idols a. of the defilement of idolatry, as incurred by eating the sacrifices offered to idols” ([Thayer](#)). Here, Paul is literal, not metaphorical, immorality.

²⁹¹ Eph. 5:3 - impurity: the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *akatharsia* (167), used previously in Eph. 4:19, here used, “...figuratively, moral *uncleaness, impurity* (1 Thess. 2:3)”... (excerpted from [Friberg](#)). Here it is used in a context of sexual immorality (*porneia*, 4202), and that is undoubtedly its flavor here. See the appropriate footnote at Eph. 4:19 for more information on this word.

²⁹² Eph. 5:3 - greed: the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *pleonexia* (4124), used in this letter only in Eph. 4:19; 5:3. It means “...bad behavior, a disposition to have more than one’s share *greed, covetousness, avarice* (Luke 2:15)” (excerpted from [Friberg](#)). See the note on Eph. 4:19 for more information on this word. In Eph. 4:19 Paul indicated that sexual immorality is closely linked with greed. The same is true here. The person who indulges in sexual immorality is selfishly greedy. He (or she) is not looking out for the good either of himself or the other person. He is consumed with satisfying his bodily appetite no matter the consequences. It is no wonder that a woman who has sex with a man who is not her husband feels “used.” Tragically, many self-centered men who are interested only in self-gratification greedily use a woman sexually. It is no wonder that she feels “used,” for she has been. Shame on him for using her. And shame on her for allowing herself to be used by someone who does not really love her. (If he did love her, he would control himself and wait until *after* they were formally committed to one another at the wedding ceremony.) A Spirit-filled Christian will not allow himself to be controlled by greed. Sadly, the philosophy of many (even so-called Christian) men is this: “If the milk is free, why bother buying the cow?” Sex

- you,
- G 4 The standard: as is proper among saints; ²⁹³
 - E 2 The forbidden 5:4a
 - G 1 Indecency. {4} and *there must be no filthiness* ²⁹⁴
 - G 2 Foolish talk: and silly talk, ²⁹⁵
 - G 3 Vulgar jokes: or coarse jesting, ²⁹⁶
 - G 4 The impropriety: which are not fitting, ²⁹⁷
 - D 2 The much-preferred: but rather giving of thanks. 5:4b
 - C 4 The incentive to walking in love 3:5-7
 - D 1 Violators cannot inherit the kingdom 5:5.

outside of marriage always brings disastrous, injurious consequences. Tragically, the precious children born out of that uncommitted tryst are, long term, the ones who suffer the most. I have seen it happen.

²⁹³ Eph. 5:3 - saints: [Dative Masculine](#) Plural of the Adjective *hágios* (40), here in the plural, “holy ones” or “set-apart ones” i.e. those persons who are set apart through faith in Christ for God’s purpose and use – believers. It is presumed that these will live lives that are morally and spiritually set apart from the world’s standards and practices. This word is used 15X in this letter – in Eph. 1:1, 4, 13, 15, 18; 2:19, 21; 3:5, 8, 18; 4:12, 30; 5:3, 27; 6:18. See the appropriate footnotes at Eph. 1:1, 4 for more information on this word. “...as is proper among saints” indicates that there is a standard to which Christians are held, and up to which they ought to measure. The implication is that believers do not always live the way they ought. Nevertheless, Paul upholds the norm here.

²⁹⁴ Eph. 5:4 - filthiness: the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *aischrótês* (151), used only here in the NT. Literally, it means “literally *ugliness*; figuratively *indecenty*; in a concrete sense, equivalent to *aischrología* [148] ...” ([Friberg](#)), “foul speaking, low and obscene speech” ([Thayer](#)).

²⁹⁵ Eph. 5:4 - silly talk: the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *mōrología* (3473), used only here in the NT. It means “foolish or *idle talk, useless or silly speech*” (Eph. 5:4) ([Friberg](#)).

²⁹⁶ Eph. 5:4 - coarse jesting: the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *eutrapelia* (2160), used only here in the NT. “From *eú* (*easily*) and *trépō* (*turn*); (1) in a good sense *pleasantry, wittiness, urbanity*; (2) in a bad sense *coarse joking, clowning around, vulgar talk* (Eph. 5:4)” ([Friberg](#)). The literal translation “easily turn” suggests a [double entendre](#), that which we could call “dirty speech,” or “blue speech,” or sexually suggestive speech.

²⁹⁷ Eph. 5:4 - not fitting: “fitting” is the 3rd Person Singular [Imperfect Indicative Active](#) of the Verb *anêkō* (433), used only in Eph. 5:4; Col. 3:18; Philemon 1:8. It is translated “fitting” in the first two instances; “proper” in the third. A synonym would be “not appropriate.” Christians should not venture into the realm of impropriety in their speech. [Thomas Constable](#) has given a sad example of speech that is not fitting (inappropriate), not to mention, behavior that is inappropriate:

I once attended a wedding at which all the guests were decked out in their best suits and dresses. I introduced myself to a very attractive couple that I had not met before. We discussed how beautiful the wedding had been. The wife then explained that her claim to fame was that she was the first person who had gotten the groom drunk—on a previous occasion. That disgusting bit of information threw a cloud over the whole occasion for me. I recall it as an example of how inappropriate speech can ruin something beautiful. Such speech should never characterize a Christian.

- E 1 The certainty: {5} For this you know with certainty,
- E 2 Those excluded
- G 1 Every fornicator: that no immoral ²⁹⁸
- G 2 Or morally impure person: or impure person ²⁹⁹
- G 3 Or greedy person: or covetous man, ³⁰⁰
- G 4 Also defined as an idolater: who is an idolater, ³⁰¹
- E 3 That from which they are excluded: has an inheritance in the kingdom ³⁰²

²⁹⁸ Eph. 5:5 - immoral: the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular of the Noun *pórnos* (4205), “in the NT a man who has sexual intercourse with a prostitute *fornicator, sexually immoral person* (1 Cor. 5:9); distinguished from *moichós* [3432] (*adulterer*) in 1 Cor. 6:9 and *arsenokoítês* [733] (*sodomite or homosexual*) in 1 Tim. 1:10 [and 1 Cor. 6:9] ([Friberg](#)). No sexually immoral person possesses an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

²⁹⁹ Eph. 5:5 - impure person: the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular of the Adjective *akáthartos* (169), translated as some variety of “unclean” on each of the 32X it is used, except this time. The word means “unclean; (1) in religious observance, of what is ritually not acceptable *defiled, unclean* (Acts 10:14); especially used of everything related to idolatry (2 Cor. 6:17); (2) morally, of vices *indecent, filthy*; (3) of demons *pneúma akátharton evil spirit, spirit that causes one to be unclean* (Matt. 10:1); substantively *what is unclean* translated according to the context (Rev. 17:4)” ([Friberg](#)). This is the only occurrence in this letter. “Impure person” in this context has overtones of sexual immorality, but must be broader than that. No impure or unclean person possesses an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

³⁰⁰ Eph. 5:5 - covetous man: the word “man” does not appear in the Greek text. A more literal translation is simply “covetous”, the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular of the Noun *pleonéktês* (4123), always, as here, used as an Adjective in English. It refers to “...one who wants more than his share, especially of material possessions *covetous, greedy or grasping person* (1 Cor. 5:10; Eph. 5:5)” ([Friberg](#)). It appears 4X in the NT, and is used only by Paul. It is translated simply as “covetous” in 1 Cor. 5:10, 11; 6:10; and as “covetous man” in Eph. 5:5. No greedy person has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

³⁰¹ Eph. 5:5 - who is an idolater: A covetous or greedy person is characterized as one “who is ([Present](#) tense) an idolater”, the transliteration of the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular of the Noun *eidōlolátrês* (1496). This compound Greek word comes from *eidos* (1491), “that which is seen or perceived” and the base of *latreuō* (3000) in the sense of “to worship.” So an idolater (the word comes across untranslated from Greek) is one who worships that which is seen. Usually an idolater worships an image or likeness that is seen. Paul here tweaks the normal meaning to apply to someone who is greedy or covetous, who, in effect, worships gold or money or other assets, all of which are seen. A greedy or covetous person, who is at heart idolatrous of wealth, has no inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God. This word appears only here in this letter. Elsewhere it appears in 1 Cor. 5:10, 11; 6:9; 10:7; Rev. 21:8; 22:15. It is universally translated in the NASB as “idolater” or “idolaters.” Elsewhere, Paul reaffirms that idolaters will not inherit the kingdom of God (1 Cor. 6:9-10). The fate of idolaters is the [Lake of Fire and Brimstone](#) (Rev. 21:8), excluded from the [Eternal City](#) (Rev. 22:14-15).

³⁰² Eph. 5:5 - has an inheritance in the kingdom: “has” is the 3rd Person Singular, [Present Indicative Active](#) of the common verb *échō* (2192), which means here “possess.” Paul is saying that no fornicator or impure person or greedy person (who is also an idolater) [presently](#) possesses an inheritance in the eternal [kingdom](#). Paul is not saying a Christian can lose his salvation. But the person who calls himself or herself a Christian who is dabbling in any of these sins should find jolting motivation to quit immediately!

“...inheritance” is the [Accusative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *klêronomía* (2817), used in this letter in Eph. 1:14, 18; 5:5. See the footnotes at the earlier two references for more information on this word. Paul is using “inheritance” here as God’s bequeathal of participation in and enjoyment of the rights and privileges of belonging to the kingdom of God and Christ. An inheritance is awarded on the basis of death. It is the death of Jesus that ratifies

- G 1 of Christ
- G 2 and God.
- D 2 Violators inherit God's wrath 5:6.
- E 1 The warning not to be deceived: {6} Let no one deceive you with empty words,
- E 2 These activities earn God's wrath
- G 1 The offending practices: for because of these things
- G 2 The inevitable reaction of God: the wrath of God comes³⁰³
- G 3 The targets of His disfavor: upon the sons of disobedience.³⁰⁴

the [New Covenant](#) and thus grants all who believe in Jesus citizenship in the Eternal [Kingdom](#).

"...in the kingdom of God and Christ: "kingdom" – the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *basileia* (932), used only here in this letter. It is used far and away the most often in the gospels of Matthew (55X in 54 verses) and Luke (46X in 44 verses). The kingdom (*basileia*) of God has always existed. He has reigned as King over all His created beings, including angels and man. But God has decreed that the Second Person of the Trinity shall rule as King upon earth from [Mount Zion](#) (Psalm 2:1-12). Jesus offered the Kingdom to [Israel](#), but [Israel](#) rejected Him as King and had him executed. Right now the King is serving as Priest after the order of Melchizedek at the right hand of God (Psa. 110:4; Heb. 5:6, 10; 6:20; 7:17). He is awaiting orders to return to earth to set up His kingdom (Psa. 110:1-3, 5-7). The Kingdom of Messiah awaits His return to earth to rule for a thousand years (Rev. 19:11-20:6). We call this the [Millennium](#). After the quelling of the final revolt and the annihilation of the existing universe and the creation of New Heaven and New Earth, the capital city of the Kingdom of God and Christ will descend to orbit (I believe) New Earth. As Co-Regents, God and Christ will rule from their throne located in New Jerusalem for the remainder of eternity (Rev. 22:3-5). This, ultimately, is the Kingdom of God and Christ, the anointed King of [Israel](#).

Many protest that we are already in the kingdom. It is true that all believers are already in the kingdom of God, for He has always ruled. But we are not yet in the Kingdom of the Messiah, for He is absent from the Earth. We can all sit in the stadium where the football game begins, but that game will not begin until the opening kickoff. Jesus has not yet "kicked off" His kingdom. That awaits His [Second Coming](#) to rule and reign in triumph here upon the earth from Mount Zion, Jerusalem, [Israel](#). Absent the king, the kingdom of Christ has not yet begun.

³⁰³ Eph. 5:6 - the wrath of God comes: the literal word order is "for on account of these things comes the anger of God" "Comes" is the 3rd Person Singular [Present Indicative](#) Middle/Passive [Deponent](#) of *érchomai* (2064), meaning here, "is continually coming"

"...wrath" appears here with the article. It is the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *orgê* (3709). The [Nominative](#) case shows this noun is the subject of the clause. See the note on this word in Eph. 2:13. This noun is usually translated "wrath" in the NASB. However, since the translation "wrath" is rarely used in modern English, I believe plain "anger" is a better translation of *orgê* than the more archaic term, "wrath." Paul is saying that God's settled anger is perpetually going forth upon those who characteristically disobey Him. Why would Christians want to engage in an activity that continually invites the settled anger of God?

³⁰⁴ Eph. 5:6 - upon the sons of disobedience: Literally, "upon the sons of the disobedience." Paul is using Hebrew language. In Hebrew thought a son partakes of the essence and characteristics of his father. "Sons of the disobedience" are people who are characterized by disobedience against God. This phrase "sons of disobedience" is used only three times in the NT, and only by Paul: Eph. 2:2; 5:6; Col. 3:6.

"...sons" is the [Accusative Masculine](#) Plural of the noun *huiós* (5207).

"...disobedience" is literally "the disobedience," for "disobedience" (the [Genitive Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *apeitheia*, 543) is preceded by the article. *Apeitheia* is characterized by [Thayer](#) as "obstinacy, obstinate opposition to the Divine will." "The particular disobedience to which Paul was referring was likely the deliberate disobedience of Adam, from which all sin has spawned. See additional comments in the appropriate note at Eph. 2:2. People who

D 3 The dramatic conclusion – so do not share in their evil! 5:7. {7}
Therefore do not be partakers with them;³⁰⁵

B 4 Walk as Children of Light 5:8-14

C 1 The command to walk as children of light 5:8

D 1 Their former state – darkness: {8} for you were formerly
darkness,³⁰⁶

D 2 Their present state – Light: but now you are Light³⁰⁷ in the Lord;

D 3 Their present obligation: walk as children of Light³⁰⁸

practice the three sins mentioned in Eph. 5:5 have no inheritance in the kingdom of God and Christ, and they are perpetually experience God’s settled anger upon them for duplicating Adam’s deliberate disobedience. Why would Christians want to do these things?

³⁰⁵ Eph. 5:7 - partakers: the [Nominative Masculine](#) Plural of the Adjective *summétochos* (4830), used only by Paul and only in this letter – Eph. 3:6, where it is translated “fellow partakers” and here in Eph. 5:7. It means, literally, “sharing with.” [Thayer](#): “partaking together with one, a joint partaker” Since the anger of God is continually coming upon the sons of the disobedience, Christians are forbidden to be becoming partners with them in their destructive vices.

³⁰⁶ Eph. 5:8 - darkness: the [Nominative Neuter](#) Singular of the Noun *skótos* (4655) “(1) literally as an enveloping sphere where light (*phōs* [5457]) is absent *darkness, gloom, obscurity* (Matt. 27:45); ... metaphorically as [participating in] the domain under the authority of the [devil](#) and demons realm of evil, evil world (Luke 22:53; Eph. 6:12)” (adapted from [Friberg](#)) [and participating in the evil that is characteristic of that domain.] [Elements in brackets are my additions.] The believers in Ephesus to whom Paul is writing used to belong to the realm of darkness and its coordinate evil. But they no longer do. They should live like that which they are, not like that which they used to be!

³⁰⁷ Eph. 5:8 - but now you are light in the Lord: “light” is the [Nominative Neuter](#) Singular of the Noun *phōs* (5457). This noun is used twice in Eph. 5:8; once in Eph. 5:9; and twice in Eph. 5:13. On a literal level, it refers to the brightness emanating from light-bearers, whether artificial, as from a fire (Mark 14:54; Luke 22:56), or from lamps (Luke 8:16; Acts 16:29; Rev. 18:23; 22:5), or natural, as from the sun (Rev. 22:5).

More often than not, in the NT, “light” is used on a metaphorical level, often referring to God and Jesus as the source of moral, ethical, and spiritual light in contrast with the darkness of sin, disease, hopelessness, death, decay and judgment. In these instances “Light” often appears in the NASB text as capitalized. God is seen as the personification of Light (1 John 1:5), and the One who dwells in unapproachable light (1 Tim. 6:16). God is called “the Father of lights” (James 1:17), as possessing “marvelous light” (1 Pet. 2:9), and as existing “in the Light” (1 John 1:7). Jesus is characterized as being Light (Matt. 4:16; Luke 2:32; John 1:5, 9; 3:19-21). He characterized Himself as being “the Light of the world” (John 8:12; 9:5; 12:35, 36, 46).

Similarly, believers are described as being “the light of the world” (Matt. 5:14) who are to let their “light shine before men in such a way that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father who is in heaven” (Matt. 5:16). Believers are called “the sons of light” (Luke 16:8; John 12:36; 1 Thess. 5:5) and “children of Light” (Eph. 5:8). Christians are to “walk in the Light” (1 John 1:7). “The one who loves his brother abides in the Light” (1 John 2:10). The inheritance of the saints exists in Light (Col. 1:12).

³⁰⁸ Eph. 5:8 - walk as children of Light: literally, “as children of light continue walking.”

“...walk” is the 2nd Person Plural [Present Active Imperative](#) of *peripatéō* (4043), and it means, literally, to “walk around.” With the [Present](#) tense, it means that believers are constantly to be “walking around” or be living a lifestyle as being children of Light. That should be a characteristic of their lives. For more information on this verb, see the appropriate footnote at Eph. 2:2. This verb is used 8X in this letter: Eph. 2:2, 10; 4:1, 17, 17; 5:2, 8, 15. It will be used for the last time in Eph. 5:15.

“...children” is the [Nominative](#) Plural [Neuter](#) of *téknon* (5043), used in Eph. 2:3; 5:1, 8; 6:1, 4.

“...children of Light” (“of Light” is the [Genitive Neuter](#) Singular of the noun *phōs* (5457) indicates that

- C 2 The description of the by-products of light: {9} (for the fruit of the Light³⁰⁹ *consists* in 5:9
- D 1 all goodness³¹⁰
- D 2 and righteousness
- D 3 and truth),
- C 3 Their concomitant obligation: continually testing that which is well-pleasing to the Lord: {10} trying to learn what is pleasing to the Lord. 5:10
- C 4 The command to avoid fellowship with unfruitful works of darkness: {11} Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness³¹¹ 5:11a

Christians are commanded to be characteristically living their lives as being descendants of a parent (God) who is characterized by light (moral and spiritual goodness), not by darkness (moral and spiritual evil). See additional information on “children” in the appropriate footnote at Eph. 5:1.

Jesus claimed to be the life-giving Light of the world (John 8:12; 9:5; 12:46). Believers are said to be “sons of light” (Luke 16:8). Paul here exhorts them to “walk as children of Light (Eph. 5:8). For more information on “light” (*phōs*, [5457](#)), see the preceding footnote.

³⁰⁹ Eph. 5:9 - fruit of the Light: “fruit” is the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular of *karpós* ([2590](#)), literally, the edible product of trees (Matt. 3:10), vines, etc.; metaphorically, as here, “that which is produced by;” or “the tangible byproduct of;” or “fruit” (Matt. 3:8). Paul is saying that the metaphorical Light emanating from God and Jesus results in the byproducts of goodness, righteousness, and truth. Believers in Christ should reflect His light, and their lives ought to be characterized by goodness, righteousness, and truth.

“...of the Light” (there is an article here) is the [Genitive Neuter](#) Singular of the noun *phōs* ([5457](#)), used twice in Eph. 5:8; once in Eph. 5:9; and twice in Eph. 5:13. For more information on “light” see the appropriate footnote at Eph. 5:8.

³¹⁰ Eph. 5:9 - all goodness and righteousness and truth: These ought to be the characteristics of believers who are walking in the Light, not in the darkness.

“Goodness” is the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of *agathōsúnē* ([19](#)), “uprightness of heart and life, goodness, kindness” ([Thayer](#)); “(1) as a quality of moral excellence *being good, goodness, uprightness* (Rom. 15:14); (2) as a quality of relationship with others *willingness to give or share, generosity, goodness* (Gal. 5:22)” ([Friberg](#)). Used only by Paul – Rom. 15:14; Gal. 5:22; Eph. 5:9; 2 Thess. 1:11.

“...righteousness” is the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *dikaíosúnē* ([1343](#)), translated by NASB as “righteousness” 91X and as “right” 1X (Acts 10:35). “Righteousness” is the quality of being morally and spiritually upright, virtuous, and characterized by integrity before God and man. In the present context, righteousness is right living. Righteousness is a characteristic possessed by God (Rom. 1:17; 3:5, 21, 22). God’s righteousness can be credited to the one who trusts in Jesus and His substitutionary blood (Ro. 3:21-26). “Righteousness” is used 3X in this letter, Eph. 4:24; 5:9; 6:14. Believers who walk in the Light are characterized by righteousness.

“...truth” is the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *alētheia* ([225](#)), that which corresponds to reality, a characteristic possessed by God (Rom. 1:25; 3:4, 7; 15:8; Tit. 1:2; Heb. 6:18) and by Jesus (John 1:14, 17; 14:6). God’s word is truth (John 17:17). Believers in Jesus are obligated to live a life characterized by truth (Eph. 4:24, 25; 5:9; 6:14).

³¹¹ Eph. 5:11 - Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness: “...participate” is the 2nd Person Plural [Present Active Imperative](#) of the verb *sugkoinōnēō* ([4790](#)), “*share together in, associate with, participate with in* something (Eph. 5:11); with a sympathetic attitude *share with* Php. 4:14)” ([Friberg](#)). This verb is used only in Eph. 5:11; Php. 4:14; Rev. 18:4.

“...unfruitful” is the [Dative Neuter](#) Plural of the Adjective *ákarpos* ([175](#)), the negative of the noun *karpós* ([2590](#)), “fruitful,” used in Eph. 5:9. It means “literally *unfruitful, without fruit, barren*; figuratively, of moral, mental, or spiritual barrenness *useless, unproductive* (1 Cor. 14:14; Eph. 5:11) ([Friberg](#)).

“...darkness” is, literally, “the darkness.” It is the [Genitive Neuter](#) Singular of the Noun *skótos* ([4655](#)). See the

- C 5 The command rather to reprove them: but instead even expose them;³¹²
(5:11b) 5:11b-14
- D 1 Because of their shamefulfulness: {12} for it is disgraceful even to
speak of the things which are done by them in secret. 5:12
- D 2 Because light is revealing 5:13
- E 1 {13} But all things become visible³¹³ when they are
exposed by the light,³¹⁴

explanation under the appropriate note at Eph. 5:8. This noun is used in Eph. 5:8, 11; 6:12 in this letter.

Paul commands Christians to avoid partnering with unbelievers in practicing the works of darkness, which always have a deadly harvest of destruction, alienation, and dysfunction.

³¹² Eph. 5:11 - but instead even expose them: literally, “but instead, even expose.” (There is no pronoun “them.”) “Expose” is the 2nd Person Plural [Present Active Imperative](#) of the verb *elégchō* (1651), used twice in this letter, in Eph. 5:11, 13. This verb means “(1) in the NT, generally as showing someone that he has done something wrong and summoning him to repent *bring to light, expose* (John 3:20); *convince, convict* (James 2:9); (2) in the sense of setting right *reprove, correct* (1 Tim. 5:20); in an intensified sense *rebuke, discipline, punish* (Heb. 12:5)” ([Friberg](#)). The [Present Imperative](#) means that this is an ongoing command in the life of the believer. There is no object attached to this verb. So what is it that believers are commanded to expose? The only possible answer in the immediately preceding text is “the unfruitful deeds of darkness.” In the initial portion of Eph. 5:11, believers are forbidden to “participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness;” and, in fact, instead of participating in them, rather, we are to expose these deeds for what they really are – unproductive deeds of darkness.

[Constable](#) takes the position that believers are to “reprove (“expose”) believers who do them” i.e. the unfruitful deeds of darkness. That may, at times, be what Christians need to do (Matt. 18:15; 1 Tim. 5:20; 2 Tim. 4:2; Tit. 1:9, 13; 2:15), but that does not seem to be Paul’s emphasis here. Here we are commanded to expose deeds of darkness, not people. How do we expose these deeds? First of all, we do so by not participating in them. We live holy lives that are different from the unbelievers around us. Second, in our conversation, and in our public preaching and teaching, there are times when we are called upon to expose sin for what it really is.

Our culture here in America, in what used to be a “Christian country,” has grown increasingly coarse. Laws and regulations and “politically correct” ideas are forced upon us that call evil good and good evil. For example, in our culture now, at least among the academically, politically, and socially elite, it is noble and to be applauded to label the practice of homosexuality as good and beautiful. At the same time, they say, it is despicable, evil judgmentalism to call it immorality and a defiance of God’s order. So in our culture it is a great sin to decry homosexuality, but it is noble and good to practice homosexuality. But in our conversation amongst ourselves, and, where the occasion arises, even among unbelievers, we must call sin sin. That is exposing the unfruitful deeds of darkness. That will rarely be well-received, but we are called upon to be truthful. We must remember, of course, that the believer’s standard is always “speaking the truth in love” (Eph. 4:15).

³¹³ Eph. 5:13 - But all things become visible: The Greek text reads, literally, as follows: “But all things, having been exposed by the light, are being made visible.” We will take the English word order: “become visible” is the 3rd Person Singular, [Present Indicative Passive](#) of *phanerōō* (5319), meaning, in the passive, “*become visible, be revealed, become known* (Mark 4:22; John 3:21)”... ([Friberg](#)). In Mark 4:22 (NASB) it is translated “be revealed.” In John 3:21 (NASB) it is translated “may be manifested.” Here, as I have translated, it means “are being made visible.”

³¹⁴ Eph. 5:13 - when they are exposed by the light: The entire clause reads, literally, “Moreover, all things, having been exposed by the light, are being made visible” ([JTB](#)). “Having been exposed” (NASB = “when they are exposed”) translates the [Nominative Neuter Plural Present Passive Participle](#) of the verb *elégchō* (1651). (See the definition for this verb in the appropriate note in Eph. 5:11.) Remember that Paul has just urged his readers not to participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead, even to expose them *elégchō* (1651) (Eph. 5:11). His reference to things having been exposed by the light (Eph. 5:13), must necessarily therefore refer to what happens when Christians expose the unfruitful deeds of darkness – they become visible for what they really are. I might add that there is always a cost to exposing the unfruitful deeds of darkness. There will be a backlash from those who deliberately choose to participate in them.

- E 2 for everything that becomes visible is light.³¹⁵
- C 6 The two commands and the result 5:14
- D 1 The documentation: {14} For this reason it says,³¹⁶
- D 2 The two commands to the somnolent
- E 1 Awake: “Awake, sleeper,³¹⁷
- E 2 Arise: And arise from the dead,³¹⁸

³¹⁵ Eph. 5:13 - for everything that becomes visible is light: The United Bible Societies’ Greek Text Version 4 (UBS4) has this clause as the first clause of Eph. 5:14. “...that becomes visible” translates *tò phaneroúmenon*, the [Nominative Neuter](#) Singular [Present Passive Participle](#) of the verb *phanerōō* (5319), meaning, in the [passive](#), “become visible, be revealed, become known (Mark 4:22; John 3:21)”... (Friberg). In Mark 4:22 (NASB) it is translated “be revealed.” In John 3:21 (NASB) it is translated “may be manifested.” Here, in the [Present Passive](#), I would translate it, along with the article, “that is being made visible.”

“...is light” – “is” is the 3rd Person Singular [Present Indicative Active](#) of the verb *eimi* (1510); “light” is the [Nominative Neuter](#) Singular of the Noun *phōs* (5457), used twice in Eph. 5:8; once in Eph. 5:9; and twice in Eph. 5:13. For more information on “light” see the appropriate footnote at Eph. 5:8. “Light” here is metaphorical, meaning “partaking of the moral and spiritual characteristics of God – namely, “all goodness and righteousness and truth” (Eph. 5:9).

It is difficult to know precisely what Paul meant here. My conjecture is that he meant that when we expose the unfruitful deeds of darkness, we purify or remove the darkness. Obviously, in our human experience, we have all experienced that a (relatively) few people become receptive when darkness is exposed. God works in their hearts, and they repent and become more Christlike. But as a whole, the world rejects (spiritual) light and plunges into greater darkness (John 3:19-21). That is certainly happening in America at this writing (October of 2016). America is becoming increasingly decadent. Both presidential candidates are seriously flawed morally and ethically. And worldwide, radical Islam is making more and more inroads. As we read our Bibles, matters will grow vastly worse before Christ returns to rule Earth in a kingdom of righteousness and peace.

Ultimately, God, who is Light personified, will shine His light of holiness upon the entire earth and universe, and all will be consumed in fire. Then He will create [New Heaven](#) and [New Earth](#). On [New Earth](#) only righteousness and righteous people will exist (2 Pet. 3:10-13; Rev. 21:1-8). So ultimately, God’s Light will triumph, and all will be light. For a similar view, see [Thomas Constable](#).

By way of illustration, we own a small rental home. When some residents left after a long tenure, there was a noticeable odor. We purchased an air purifier and left it running in the home for several days. It ionized the particles in the air, and after a period of time, the house no longer smelled. Similarly, the light of God’s holiness will, after a period of time destroy all the evil and remove the evil people from the environment of [New Earth](#) and [New Jerusalem](#). What a relief that will be! Light is good. Darkness is evil.

³¹⁶ Eph. 5:14 - For this reason it says: In the [UBS4](#) text, this clause is the second clause of Eph. 5:14, not the first. Usually these words indicate a quotation from the OT, but we can identify no such OT passage, unless it is a combination of passages such as Isa. 26:19; 51:17; 52:1; 60:1. It is possible Paul was quoting from a well-known Christian hymn (Hoehner, [TBKC](#)).

³¹⁷ Eph. 5:14 - Awake, sleeper: “Awake” is the 2nd Person Singular [Present Active Imperative](#) of the verb *egeirō* (1453), which could just as easily be translated, “Arise!” or “Get up!” (Check the translations under 1453.)

“...sleeper” is, literally, “the one sleeping” (2nd Person [Masculine](#) Singular [Vocative Present Active Participle](#) of the verb *katheúdō*, 2518), here used to describe “...an attitude of spiritual laziness or indifference *sleep, pay no attention* (Eph. 5:14)” (excerpted from [Friberg](#)). Together, these words can be translated, literally, “Get up, the one sleeping!”

Why did Paul challenge his readers, “Awake, sleeper!?” Evidently Paul wanted to jar his readers from their lethargy. Perhaps he sensed, from conversations he had heard about them, that they needed to wake up.

³¹⁸ Eph. 5:14 - And arise from the dead: “arise” is the 2nd Person Singular [Aorist Active Imperative](#) of the verb *anistēmi* (450), used only here in this letter. Typically, this verb refers to someone who “gets up” or “rises up” from a sitting position (Matt. 9:9; 26:62) or prone position (Mark 5:42). Depending on the context, as here, it refers to

D 3 The result: And Christ will shine on you.”³¹⁹

B 5 Walk Carefully 5:15 - 6:9

C 1 The command to walk carefully: {15} Therefore be careful how you walk,³²⁰ 5:15a

C 2 Wisely: not as unwise men but as wise,³²¹ 5:15b

someone “rising up” from among dead people (Mark 9:9; 12:25).

“...from the dead” literally, “out from the dead ones.” “...out from” translates the [Genitive](#) of the Preposition *ek* (1537); “the dead ones” (there is a plural article here) translates the [Genitive Masculine Plural](#) of the Adjective *nekros* (3498), here referring on a metaphorical level to those who are, though physically alive, spiritually dead – the unregenerate, who are alienated from God and headed for eternal death in the [Lake of Fire](#) unless they are rescued before physical death.

Why does Paul use this metaphorical language? The reason he did so is that he is attempting to jar his somnolent readers from dabbling in sin. They are children of light – they need to walk in the Light (Eph. 5:8), a lifestyle that consists of all goodness, righteousness, and truth (Eph. 5:9).

³¹⁹ Eph. 5:14 - And Christ will shine on you: in literal word order, “and will shine on you – the Christ.” “...will shine” is the 3rd Person Singular [Future Indicative Active](#) of the verb *epiphauskō* (2017), used only here in the NT. It means “shine on, give light to, figuratively, of spiritual enlightenment *cause to understand* (Eph. 5:14)” ([Friberg](#)).

What did Paul mean by these three hymn-like lines, “Awake, sleeper, and arise from the dead, and Christ will shine on you”? He was attempting to jar his readers from their complacency. Wake up! Be resurrected from among the spiritually dead pagans among whom you live. If you do your part, the risen [Messiah](#) will enlighten you, and He will empower you to “walk as children of Light” (Eph. 5:8), not as “sons of disobedience” (Eph. 5:6). Jesus will shine on you and His light will burn out the dross in your lives. As the Apostle John wrote, “but if we walk in the Light as He Himself is in the Light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus His Son cleanses us from all sin” (1 John 1:7). This closing hymnic statement (Eph. 5:14) is a fitting transition into Paul’s next “walking” thematic admonition, “**Therefore be careful how you walk**, not as unwise men but as wise, making the most of your time, because the days are evil” (Eph. 5:15-16).

³²⁰ Eph. 5:15 - Therefore be careful how you walk: This is the final occurrence of the verb *peripateō* (4043), here appearing as a 2nd Person Plural [Present Indicative Active](#). References to all 8 instances of this verb in this letter include the following: Eph. 2:2, 10; 4:1, 17, 17; 5:2, 8, 15. Here is a summary of the eight occurrences, my translation: (1) As [Gentiles](#), you formerly walked around in your trespasses and sins according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air ...” (Eph. 2:2, [JTB](#)). (2) We (Christians) are God’s production, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God has prepared in advance in order that in them we should be walking around (Eph. 2:10, [JTB](#)). (3) I urge you, therefore, I the prisoner in the Lord, that you walk around worthy of the calling with which you have been called (Eph. 4:1, [JTB](#)). (4, 5) This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should no longer walk around as also the nations are walking around – in the futility of their minds (Eph. 4:17, [JTB](#)). (6) And be walking around in love, just as also the Anointed One loved us ... (Eph. 5:2, [JTB](#)). (7) For you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Continually walk around as children of light (Eph. 5:8). (8) Watch carefully, therefore, how you keep walking around – not as unwise (people), but as wise (people) (Eph. 5:15, [JTB](#)).

³²¹ Eph. 5:15 - not as unwise men, but as wise: the text reads, literally, “not as unwise, but as wise.” “...unwise” is the [Nominative Masculine Plural](#) of the adjective *ásophos* (781), meaning “without wisdom, foolish, unwise” (Eph. 5:15)” ([Friberg](#)). This adjective is used only here in the entire NT. It is used here as a contrast to its complete opposite, “wise.” The word “men” does not appear in the Greek text. The adjective is plural, so “men” or “people” is allowable.

“...wise” is the [Nominative Masculine Plural](#) of the adjective *sophós* (4680), the direct opposite of “unwise.” It is used only here in this letter. It is used 20X in 19 verses in the NT, most often in 1 Corinthians. It means “wise; (1) generally of acquired intelligence characterized by the ability to use knowledge for correct behavior (1 Cor. 6:5) or human skill (1 Cor. 3:10) *wise, skillful, clever, learned*, opposite *anóētos* [453] (*without understanding, foolish*); substantively *ó sophós wise person, philosopher* (1 Cor. 1:20); (2) of conduct and action governed by divinely given insight and moral integrity *wise, understanding* (1 Cor. 3:18), opposite *mōros* [3474] (*foolish, stupid*);...” ([Friberg](#)). Here, as we have said, it is used opposite *ásophos* (781), meaning “without wisdom, foolish, unwise.” “Wise” is to

C 3 Timely 5:16

D 1 {16} Redeeming the time: making the most of your time,³²²D 2 The evil character of the times: because the days are evil.³²³

C 4 Knowingly 5:17

D 1 The command not to be foolish: {17} So then do not be foolish,³²⁴

D 2 The command to comprehend the Lord's will: but understand what

be taken in the sense of [Friberg's](#) meaning (2) – of action governed by God's insight, characterized by moral and ethical integrity. Wise living, as opposed to unwise living, is the characteristic of a Christian who is looking to walk carefully. "Wise" here, as also "unwise," appears in the plural. The word "men" does not appear anywhere in the Greek text. NASB editors have supplied it in the first instance, "not as unwise men" for stylistic reasons. For that reason they have excluded after the second member, "but as wise." A wooden literalism would translate either as "not as unwise, but as wise." A consistent (but not stylistic) rendering would be "not as unwise men, but as wise men."

³²² Eph. 5:16 - making the most of your time: "making the most of" is really a paraphrase of a single Greek word, the 2nd Person [Masculine](#) Plural [Nominative](#) of the [Present Middle Participle](#) of the verb *exagorázō* (1805), which means, in simplest terms, "buy up." A more literal translation is "buying up for yourselves the time." This verb means, from its etymology, to "purchase out of the marketplace (*agorá*, 58). Paul is the only NT writer who used this verb, and he used it 4X. In Gal. 3:13 he used it in the sense that "Christ has *redeemed* us from the curse of the Law" In Gal. 4:5, he used it of God, who "sent forth His Son, ... born under the Law, (Gal. 4:4) so that He might *redeem* those who were under the Law ..." (Gal. 4:5). In Eph. 5:16 he used it in relation to time, "*making the most of your time*" He did the same in Col. 4:5, "...*making the most of the opportunity*." The [Present](#) tense indicates "*buying up the time*" should be a continual pursuit. The [Middle](#) voice indicates we should be "*buying up the time for ourselves*."

"...of your time" is actually simply "the time" (*tòn kairón*), the latter word being the [Accusative Masculine](#) Singular of the noun *kairós* (2540), here, meaning a non-specific measure of time at one's disposal. In light of the succeeding clause, Paul meant that we should use wisely for ourselves the time at our disposal to serve Him because the days in which we live our filled with evil. We should not be side-tracked by lesser pursuits in these evil days. That is part of living wisely. (Why the NASB translated the same noun *kairós* (2540) as "time" in Eph. 5:16, but as "opportunity" in Col. 4:5 is beyond my comprehension. Both translations are possible, but why not, then, be consistent in an identical context and translate them both the same way?)

³²³ Eph. 5:16 - because the days are evil: "days" is the [Nominative Feminine](#) Plural of the noun *hêméra* (2250), here meaning a non-specific measure of the times in which he and his readers lived. Frankly, since the fall of man in Gen. 3, the days have *always* been evil. There have been times when the evilness of the days has reached a critical mass. The first was during the days of Noah, when God was forced to inundate the entire earth of evil people and start over with Noah and his family (Gen. 6-8). Another, yet future, time will be the days of the [Tribulation](#), also known as "the day of the Lord" ('s judgment), preceded by "the apostasy" and the unveiling of the "man of lawlessness," the evil, miracle-working, Satanically-empowered, deceiving world ruler (2 Thess. 2:2-13).

"...evil" is the [Nominative Feminine](#) Plural of the adjective *ponêros* (4190), here meaning that the days or times in which Paul and his readers lived were morally, spiritually, and ethically defective. Since we also live in evil days, we too need to be buying up for ourselves our available time. There is a lost world out there. There are people who desperately need our help. Let us not be guilty of perpetually wasting our time in playing video games or mindlessly pursuing trivial matters. Let us constantly be buying back for ourselves the time with which we have been allotted.

³²⁴ Eph. 5:17 - So then do not be foolish: "on account of this" – the necessity of buying back for ourselves the time because the days in which we live are evil – Paul commands his readers not to be becoming (2nd Person Plural [Present Imperative](#) Middle/Passive [Deponent](#) of the verb *ginomai*, 1096) foolish (the [Nominative Masculine](#) Plural of the adjective *áphrōn*, 878), meaning "as not using common sense *foolish, senseless, silly* (Rom. 2:20), opposite *phrónimos* [5429] (*wise, sensible*); substantivally *foolish person, fool* (Luke 11:40)" ([Friberg](#)). Paul is urging his readers (and us) not to be foolish in our use of time. He commands us, rather, to be understanding what the Lord's will is in regard to the proper use of time. (See the succeeding clause.)

the will of the Lord is.³²⁵

C 5 Spiritually – not drunkenly, but filled with the Spirit 5:18 - 6:9

D 1 The commands contrasting control with spirits and control by the [Holy Spirit](#) 5:18

E 1 The command of prohibition: {18} And do not get drunk with wine,³²⁶

E 2 The description: for that is dissipation,³²⁷

E 3 The alternative positive command: but be filled with the Spirit,³²⁸

³²⁵ Eph. 5:17 - but understand what the will of the Lord is: “understand” is the 2nd Person Plural [Present Active Imperative](#) of the verb *sunîemi* (4920), used 26X in 25 vv in the NT. NASB translates this verb on each occasion with some form of the English word “understand” with the exception of Mark 6:52, where it is translated “gained any insight.” This verb has the “...basic meaning *bring together*; with the attitude affecting ability to comprehend *understand (thoroughly), perceive clearly, gain insight into* (Mark 6:52)” ([Friberg](#)). More literally, “but be understanding what is the will of the Lord.”

“...the will” (*tò thélêma*) ([Nominative Neuter](#) Singular of *thélêma*, 2307) reflects, in this instance, not the *determined* will of God (Eph. 1:11), but the *desired* will of God (2 Pet. 3:9). In my judgment, the only 100% reliable indicator of God’s desired will is Scripture (Acts 17:11; 2 Tim. 3:15-17; 2 Pet. 1:20-21). The view that church tradition ([82](#)) and an elite group of interpreters ([100](#)) are 100% reliable indicators of God’s will is an illusion.

³²⁶ Eph. 5:18 - And do not get drunk with wine: “get drunk” is the 2nd Person Plural [Present Passive Imperative](#) of the verb *methúskō* (3182), “...*cause to become intoxicated*; only passive in the NT *be drunk, get drunk, become intoxicated* (Luke 12:45); *drink freely* (John 2:10); figuratively, of unrestrained and orgiastic cult activity *give oneself over* to something (Rev. 17:2)” ([Friberg](#)). Christians are forbidden to be becoming intoxicated.

“...with wine” translates the [Dative Masculine](#) Singular of the noun *oinos* (3631), the fermented juice of grapes (John 2:3, 10). I have run across a teetotaling Baptist who wished to argue that the drink Jesus created at the wedding of Cana of Galilee was not fermented, but that interpretation simply cannot be justified either etymologically or contextually. Wine is wine. The NT does not forbid the appropriate use of wine. It everywhere forbids drunkenness. If teetotaling Christians wish to abstain from the moderate use of wine, they may do so, but they may not impose their convictions on others if they wish to be Biblical (Romans 14:1-12). On the other hand, those who voluntarily associate with teetotaling Christians may wish voluntarily to abstain from wine in order to avoid offending their weaker brethren (Rom. 14:13-23; 15:1-7).

This passage forbids indulgence to the point of drunkenness. However, no Christian is permitted to violate his own conscience (Rom. 14:22-23).

³²⁷ Eph. 5:18 - for that is dissipation: As translated, this clause appears as a reason given for not getting drunk. However, the Greek text is more descriptive than it is logical (in the sense of giving a formal reason as to why one should not get drunk). A more literal rendering is, “in which is nonsafety,” Of course, that which is descriptive is, in and of itself, sufficient motivation to avoid drunkenness. “Dissipation” is the NASB translation of *asōtia* ([810](#)), [defined](#) as a “dissolute way of living, especially excessive drinking of liquor; intemperance.” In physics, or mechanics, dissipation is [defined](#) as “a process in which energy is used or lost without accomplishing useful work, as friction causing loss of mechanical energy.” According to [Friberg](#) the noun *asōtia* is the disposition of one who is *ásōtos* (not used in the Greek NT) (“having no hope of safety); the act of one who has abandoned himself to reckless immoral behavior *debauchery, dissipation, incorrigibility*.”

³²⁸ Eph. 5:18 - but be filled with the Spirit: “be filled” is the 2nd Person Plural [Present Passive Imperative](#) of the verb *plêróō* (4137), here, to be continually filled up completely with the [Holy Spirit](#); “with the Spirit” is the [Dative Neuter](#) Singular of the noun *pneûma* (4151), a reference to the [Holy Spirit](#). See the appropriate footnote at Eph. 1:13 for more information. At face value, the contrast between being intoxicated with wine and being constantly filled up with the [Holy Spirit](#) seems almost bizarre. However, the parallel is transparent. One who is intoxicated with wine is controlled by the wine. That never results in good behavior. On the other hand, he who is constantly controlled by

- D 2 Speaking to yourselves {19} speaking to one another 5:19a
- E 1 in psalms ³²⁹
- E 2 and hymns ³³⁰
- E 3 and spiritual songs, ³³¹
- D 3 Singing and psalming with your heart to the Lord 5:19b
- E 1 singing ³³²

the [Holy Spirit](#) is continually doing that which is good and beneficial. The following phrases indicate the results of being filled with the [Holy Spirit](#). Being controlled by the [Holy Spirit](#) is not optional for Christians. It is a command.

³²⁹ Eph. 5:19 - psalms: the [Dative Masculine](#) Plural of the noun *psalmós* (5568), an “(Old Testament) psalm (Luke 20:42); as used among believers *song of praise, sacred song* (1 Cor. 14:26)” ([Friberg](#)). This noun specifically references the book of Psalms or a specific psalm therein in Luke 20:42; 24:44; Acts 1:20; 13:33. It is used generically with regard to a psalm or psalms presumably drawn from the Hebrew psalter in the (largely [Gentile](#)) NT churches in 1 Cor. 14:26; Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16. In today’s parlance, these songs would be “Traditional Music” (i.e. hymns) as opposed to contemporary music. On the other hand, I have heard of churches with a Presbyterian background who actually sing psalms put to music. I do not know of any churches that actually sing the psalms as the ancient Hebrews did. I am not saying there are none. I just do not know of any.

³³⁰ Eph. 5:19 - hymns: the [Dative Masculine](#) Plural of the noun *húmnos* (5215), “... hymn, sacred song, song of praise to God, especially used to express thanksgiving” ([Friberg](#)). In secular Greek literature, a song in praise of gods, heroes, and conquerors (adapted from [Thayer](#)). Christians adapted this type of music to their own sacred worship of God and Christ.

³³¹ Eph. 5:19 - spiritual songs: in Greek word order, “...and songs, spiritual” “...spiritual” is the [Dative Feminine](#) Plural of the adjective *pneumatikós* (4152), meaning of, or pertaining to the realm of the (Holy) [Spirit](#), opposite that which is *sarkikós* (4559) (fleshly or carnal) and that which is *sárkinos* (4560) (worldly or earthly) (adapted from [Friberg](#)).

“...songs” is the [Dative Feminine](#) Plural of the noun *ōdē'* (5603), a “song, lay, ode” appearing in secular Greek literature (see [Thayer](#)), but “...in the NT a religious song sung by a community gathered for worship (Eph. 5:19)” ([Friberg](#)). These songs are qualified as “spiritual songs” in both Eph. 5:19 and Col. 3:16. In the book of Revelation, John uses it in reference to a “new song” sung in heaven by the 24 elders surrounding the throne of God, accompanied by 24 harps (Rev. 5:9). The lyrics of their “new song” are quoted in Rev. 5:9-10.

John also hears 144,000 celibate [Israeli](#) men, 12,000 from each [Israeli](#) tribe (Rev. 7:3-8) also identified as “slaves of our God” who had been sealed on their foreheads (Rev. 7:3) standing with the Lamb on Mount Zion up in heaven singing a “new song” before the throne, the four living creatures, and the elders (Rev. 14:1-3). This was a unique “new song” which only the 144,000 could sing (Rev. 14:3).

John also heard the singing up in heaven of “those who had been victorious over the beast and his image and the number of his name, standing on the sea of glass, holding harps of God” (Rev. 15:2). They sang the “song” of Moses and the “song” of the Lamb (Rev. 15:3). The lyrics are recorded in Rev. 15:3-4.

Without exception, in each of these occurrences of the noun “song(s)” (Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; Rev. 5:9; 14:3; 5:3), the verb “sing” *ádō* (103) is also used.

In my opinion, absent actual recordings of these early church spiritual songs, hymns, and psalms, it is impossible to duplicate their singing precisely. We may come closest to doing so in heaven?

³³² Eph. 5:19 - singing: The 2nd Person [Masculine](#) Plural [Nominative Present Active Participle](#) (with [Imperative](#) force) of the verb *ádō* (103). This verb means “sing, produce musical sounds or *notes with the voice*” ([Friberg](#)). It is used by Paul in Eph. 5:19; Col. 3:16; and by John in Rev. 5:9; 14:3; 15:3. It is used only in those verses. And, without exception, the noun “song(s)” *ōdē'* (5603) is also used in each of these same verses, in two of the references, twice.

- E 2 and making melody ³³³
- G 1 with your heart ³³⁴
- G 2 to the Lord; ³³⁵
- D 4 Giving thanks: {20} always giving thanks 5:20
- E 1 The scope: for all things ³³⁶
- E 2 The access to God: in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ

³³³ Eph. 5:19 - and making melody: This phrase is actually the plural, [present](#) tense, [participle](#) mood (with [imperative](#) force) of *psállō* ([5567](#)), which, transliterated, would be, “psalming.” This, of course is the verbal form corresponding to the noun “psalms” in the first part of Eph. 5:19. The verb *psállō* means, “strictly *strike the strings of an instrument*; hence *sing to the accompaniment of a harp*; in the NT *sing praises*” ([Friberg](#)). Harps were hand-held in Paul’s day. In our day, harps are bulky, large, and typically only played in a symphony orchestra. The modern day equivalent of a harp is the guitar. So if one wants to be technical, singing accompanied by a guitar fits more into the culture of the early [church](#) than does singing accompanied by a piano, or especially an organ! So a fairly literal, culturally adapted translation of Eph. 5:19 would read something like this, “speaking to yourselves with psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and strumming in your (plural) heart (singular) to the Lord.” The implied meaning of “strumming” would be “strumming (your guitar) in your heart to the Lord.” However, since pianos also strike the strings, they might be included, but not, of course, in the first century. So in the music culture wars that are waged in some [churches](#), strumming a guitar is certainly more biblical than an electric keyboard or an organ, and slightly more biblical than a piano!

³³⁴ Eph. 5:19 - with your heart: “heart” is the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *kardia* ([2588](#)), here meaning, not the physical organ that pumps blood, but “...the innermost self, the source and seat of functions of soul and spirit ...” (excerpted from [Friberg](#)) used in the true and genuine worship of God and Christ (Matt. 22:37; Mark 12:30, 33; Luke 10:27; Acts 13:22; Rom. 2:29; 10:9, 10; 2 Cor. 1:22; 4:6; Gal. 4:6; Eph. 1:18; 3:17; 5:19; 6:5; Col. 3:16, 22; 2 Tim. 2:22; Heb. 8:10; 10:16, 22; James 4:8; 1 Pet. 3:15). (See also John 4:24 – “God is spirit, and those who worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth.”).

³³⁵ Eph. 5:19 - to the Lord: “Lord” is the [Dative Masculine](#) Singular of the noun *kúrios* ([2962](#)), meaning the “Master” or “Lord” or “Owner” of the believer. Since Paul does not specify here “the Lord Jesus Christ,” he probably mean “Lord” to apply to both God the Father and to Jesus, the [Messiah](#). The title “Lord” appears 26X in 25 verses in Ephesians. Instances in which Jesus, or Jesus Christ are specified as “Lord” in this letter include Eph. 1:2, 3, 15, 17; 3:11; 5:20; 6:23, 24.

³³⁶ Eph. 5:20 - always giving thanks for all things: literally, “giving thanks always with reference to all things” “...giving thanks” is the 2nd Person Plural [Nominative Masculine Present Active Participle](#) (with [Imperative](#) force) of the verb *eucharistéō* ([2168](#)), used twice in this letter, in Eph. 1:16; 5:20. It means here continually expressing gratitude to God for each and every circumstance encountered in life. This kind of attitude presupposes complete faith in God and His sovereign ability to tailor circumstances in life to achieve both His own plan and a good plan in the life of each individual believer (Rom. 8:28).

“...always” is the adverb *pántote* ([3842](#)), an “adverb of time *at all times, always, ever(more)*” ([Friberg](#)).

“...for” is the [Genitive](#) of the preposition *hupér* ([5228](#)), which is used here [[Friberg](#) definition (1) (f)] “...(1) with the genitive ... (f) to mark general content *with reference to, about, concerning* (equivalent to *peri* [[4012](#)]) (John 1:30; Rom. 9:27)”

“...all things” is the [Genitive](#) Plural [Neuter](#) of the Adjectival pronoun *pás* ([3956](#)), here indicating a totality in the available universe of circumstances.

The upshot is that there is no circumstance in which a believer in Christ is not expected (and implicitly commanded) to adopt a stance of gratefulness to God. A believer empowered by the [Holy Spirit](#) (Eph. 5:18) and obeying Scripture will inevitably be grateful to God for all circumstances encountered. This requires living with a disposition of faith in God and His sovereign operation, no matter how alarming or distasteful that circumstance may seem.

- E 3 The object of our thanks: to God,
- E 4 The description of God: even the Father;
- D 5 Submitting to one another in the fear of Christ 5:21 - 6:9
 - E 1 One to another: {21} and be subject ³³⁷ 5:21
 - G 1 The reciprocation: to one another
 - G 2 The attitude: in the fear of Christ. ³³⁸
 - E 2 Wives to husbands 5:22-33
 - G 1 The submission of the wife (as illustrating the submission of the church to Christ) 5:22-24
 - H 1 The command: Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands, ³³⁹ 5:22a

³³⁷ Eph. 5:21 - be subject: the 2nd Person [Masculine](#) Plural [Nominative Present Passive Participle](#) of the Verb *hupotássō* ([5293](#)), here used with [Imperative](#) force. Here in the [Present Passive](#), it carries the idea that Christians are continually to be permitting themselves to be ranked under one another. This was a Greek military term meaning to arrange troop divisions under the command of a leader. In non-military use it conveyed a voluntary attitude of giving in to one another and cooperating with one another (adapted from [Thayer](#)). More literally, the text reads, “being subjected to one another”

³³⁸ Eph. 5:21 - in the fear of Christ: literally, “in fear of Christ.” “Fear” is the [Dative Masculine](#) Singular of the noun *phōbos* ([5401](#)) “(1) active *causing fear, source of fear, terror* (Rom. 13:3; probably 1 Pet. 3:14); (2) passive; (a) in a negative sense fear, dread, alarm (2 Cor. 7:5; possibly 1 Pet. 3:14); (b) in a positive sense *respect, reverence, awe, (wholesome) fear* (Rom. 3:18); *respect* for those in authority (Eph. 6:5)” ([Friberg](#)). This noun is used twice in this letter, in Eph. 5:21, speaking of all Christians in respect to their attitude to Christ as affecting their willingness to subordinate themselves to one another; and in Eph. 6:5, speaking of the deportment of slaves with respect to their masters. The related verb, *phobéō* ([5399](#)), will appear in Eph. 5:33 (the only time in this letter), speaking of the deportment of wives with respect to their husbands. In Eph. 5:21, believers’ fear of Christ should motivate them voluntarily to live in subordination to one another. I suspect most of us Christians do not fear Christ sufficiently. When the Apostle John saw the risen Christ in all His glory, he was so stunned he fell at Christ’s feet like a dead man (Rev. 1:17). I am confident the day is coming when each of us will have the same experience. That may be what it will take to place a healthy fear of Christ within us. For now, let us take that coming day by faith, and let us live appropriately in the present.

³³⁹ Eph. 5:22 - Wives, *be subject* to your own husbands: “Wives” (literally, “the wives”) is the [Vocative Feminine](#) Plural of the Noun *gunē* ([1135](#)). The word means “woman” “(1) as distinct from a male *female, woman* (Acts 5:14); (2) as a married woman *wife* (Luke 1:5); ... (3) as a bride or fiancée legally considered as a wife (Matt. 1:20)” (adapted from [Friberg](#)). The context must determine whether *gunē* means “woman” or “wife.” Here, in the plural, coupled with “husbands,” it clearly means “wives.”

The word “be subject” does not appear in the Greek text. Economically, in good Greek idiom, the verb is borrowed (in the writer’s and the readers’ minds) from Ephesians 5:21. All Christians are to be allowing themselves to be ranked underneath other Christians. Paul now begins a series of relationships where this policy must be observed. The first is in the marriage relationship. Christian wives are to be allowing themselves continually to be being ranked underneath their own husbands. It is worth noting that, sadly, some wives are quite happy to allow themselves to be ranked underneath someone else’s husband, but not underneath their own. That is a clear violation of God’s Word, a violation which cannot contribute to a happy and fulfilling marriage.

“...your own” translates the [Dative Masculine](#) Plural of *idios* ([2398](#)), here meaning the male (meaning husband) belonging to the wife, in contrast to the husband belonging to another wife (adapted from [Friberg](#)).

“...husbands” is the [Dative Masculine](#) Plural of *anēr* [[435](#)], “man; (1) in contrast to a woman *man, male* (Mark

- H 2 The motive: as to the Lord ³⁴⁰ 5:22b
- H 3 The reason – headship: {23} For the husband is the head of the wife, ³⁴¹ 5:23a
- H 4 The comparison to Christ 5:23b
- J 1 Head of the church: as Christ also is the head of the church, ³⁴²

6:44); (2) as distinct from a boy (*adult*) man (1 Cor. 13:33); (3) in a marital context, whenever *gunê* (1135) (*woman, wife*) is present or implied in the passage *husband* (1 Cor. 7:3); (4) in a general sense, as equivalent to *tis* [5101] *someone, a person* (John 1:30); calling attention to an individual *anêr tis a certain man* (Luke 8:27)” (Friberg). Here, in Eph. 5:22, with “wives” *gunê* (1135) in the immediate context, Paul is clearly speaking about “husbands.”

³⁴⁰ Eph. 5:22 - as to the Lord: What might seem like an onerous prospect to some wives will be facilitated enormously if they take the attitude that they are submitting to their own husbands as a way of serving Jesus. All wives need to take this perspective. “Lord” is the **Dative Masculine** Singular of *kúrios* (2962), a reference to the Lord, Jesus the **Messiah**. Paul uses *kúrios* 26X in 25 verses in Ephesians, first, in Ephesians 1:2. See the appropriate footnote there for more information on this important word, used 717X in the NT. Though there may be many “lords” or “masters” in this life, the “one Lord” that distinguishes Christianity is the Lord Jesus, also entitled the “**Christ**” or “**Messiah**.” Wives who allow themselves to be ranked under their husbands are engaging in the ultimate service – serving the Master of the Universe. There can be no higher calling!

³⁴¹ Eph. 5:23 - For the husband is the head of the wife: literally, “because man is head of the woman ...” There are no articles in front of either “man” (translated “husband”) or “head.” There is an article in front of “the wife.” “...husband” is NASB’s correct translation of the **Nominative Masculine** Singular of the Noun *anêr* (435), used 7X in this letter. In a less restrictive setting *anêr* means simply, “man.” In its first appearance in this letter it refers to a “mature” man (Eph. 4:13). Thereafter, in this passage on marriage (Eph. 5:22-33), each of the remaining six times it is correctly translated as “*husband(s)*” – Eph 5:22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 33, since “woman” (*gunê*, 1135) as wife appears 9X in this same passage – Eph. 5:22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 28, 31, 33, 33.

The verb “is” is the 3rd Person Singular **Present Indicative Active** of the Verb *eimí* (1510), the most basic verb of “being,” “to be, to exist, to happen, to be present” (Thayer). The implication of the **Present** tense is that a husband is presently and continuously head of the wife in a marriage relationship.

“...head” is the **Nominative Feminine** Singular of the Noun *kephalê* (2776), which refers, on a **literal** level, to the physical head of an animal (Rev. 12:3; 13:1) or a human (Matt. 8:20; 14:8). On a **figurative** level, it refers (1) to Christ as the head of His spiritual body, the Church (Eph. 1:22; 4:15); (2) to Christ as the head over all authority and rule (Col. 2:10); (3) to the husband as head, or leader, of his wife (Eph. 5:23); (4) to man as head of woman generically by virtue of the order and plan of God in creation (1 Cor. 11:3); (5) to a stone as head of the corner in a building (Matt. 21:42; 1 Pet. 2:7). Here the husband is, by God’s design, head, or leader of his wife. We are told that God created man as male first, and woman as female second, from man (Gen. 2:18-25). God created woman to be man’s companion and helper (Gen. 2:18) as well as co-reproducer (Gen. 1:28). The order of creation is significant, not only in the home (Eph. 5:22-33), but also in the local church (1 Cor. 11:1-16; 1 Tim. 2:9-13).

“...the wife” is the **Genitive Feminine** Singular of the Noun *gunê* (1135), “woman,” appearing throughout this chapter as “wife” in connection with *anêr* (435), “man” as husband. The noun *gunê* appears 9X in this passage – Eph. 5:22, 23, 24, 25, 28, 28, 31, 33, 33.

³⁴² Eph. 5:23 - as Christ also is the head of the church: literally, the text reads, “as also the **Christ** head of the assembly.” (The verb “is” is assumed, in Greek idiom, borrowed in thought from the preceding clause. See the preceding note, and the paragraph on the verb “is.”)

“...as” is the Subordinating Conjunction *hōs* (5613), here meaning, “in the same manner.” Paul’s use of *hōs* here conveys the idea that there is a one-to-one correspondence in the manner in which a husband is head of his wife and the **Messiah** is head of the assembly, i.e. the **Universal Church**. It is impossible (in our modern [or any] culture) to dilute the reality that a husband is head of his wife without at the same time diluting the reality that **Christ** is head of the **Church**. Paul uses the conjunction *hōs* 16X in this letter: in Eph. 2:3; 3:5; 5:1, 8, 15, 15, 22, 23, 24, 28, 33; 6:5, 6, 6, 7, 20.

“Christ” (literally, “the **Christ**” – Paul used the article “the”) is the **Nominative Masculine** Singular of the titular noun *Christós* (5547), the Anointed One of **Israel**, anointed to be the Ultimate **Prophet**, **Priest**, and **King** who will one

J 2 Savior of the body: He Himself
being the Savior of the body.³⁴³

H 5 The degree 5:24

J 1 The church's subjection to Christ:
{24} But as the church is subject to
Christ,³⁴⁴

J 2 The wives' subjection to their
husbands: so also the wives *ought to*

day rule the world. See the WordExplain glossary item, [Christ](#).

"...head" is the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *kephalē* (2776), used in this letter in Eph. 1:11; 4:15; and twice in Eph. 5:23. See the previous footnote in this verse for a more extensive coverage of the noun *kephalē*. Here, [Christ](#) is "head" of the [Church](#), meaning that He occupies the most important role as leader and organizer and protector of the Assembly, the [Church Universal](#).

"...church" is the [Genitive Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *ekklēsia* (1577), used 9X in this letter. See the appropriate note at Eph. 1:22 for more information on this noun. Here, it refers to the [Universal Church](#) as the [Body of Christ](#). These are [Christ's](#) "called out ones."

Paul's point in this verse is that a husband is head of his wife in the same manner in which [Christ](#) is head of His [Church](#). The two are linked. So wives ought to beware. If a wife minimizes her husband's headship she is minimizing [Christ's](#) headship. The two are inseparably linked.

³⁴³ Eph. 5:23 - He Himself *being* the Savior of the body: "[Savior](#)" is the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular of the Noun *sōtēr* (4990), speaking of "...the agent of salvation or deliverance *savior, deliverer, rescuer*; (1) used of God as the source of salvation *Savior* (Luke 1:47; 1 Tim. 1:1; 2:3; 4:10; Tit. 1:3; 2:10; 3:4; Jude 1:25); used of Jesus [Christ](#) as the agent sent by God to bring deliverance to mankind *Savior* (Luke 2:11; John 4:42; Acts 5:31; 13:23; Eph. 5:23; Php. 3:20; 2 Tim. 1:10; Tit. 1:4; 2:13; 3:6; 2 Pet. 1:1, 11; 2:20; 3:2, 18; 1 John 4:14)" (adapted from [Friberg](#)).

"...body" is the [Genitive Neuter](#) Singular of the Noun *sōma* (4983), used 9X in 8 verses in Ephesians, last used twice in Eph. 4:16, next used in Eph. 5:28. "Body" here refers to the [Body of Christ](#), the [Universal Church](#) of Jesus [Christ](#). Jesus [Christ](#) is the [Savior](#) of the [Church](#), His [Body](#), in that He died to procure forgiveness on behalf of all who would place their trust in Him; moreover He faithfully intercedes on their behalf as the great High Priest (Heb. 7:25); He provides eternal life for all who trust Him (John 3:16; 10:27-28) along with bodily resurrection (John 11:25-27).

By way of application, Paul here is setting up [Christ's](#) saving demeanor on behalf of the [Church](#) of which He is head as an excellent model on which a husband is to conduct his own headship of his wife. [Christ](#) did not and does not use His headship of the [Church](#) to bully her or use her or take advantage of her. He uses His headship to save the [Church](#) in every possible sense. A husband who follows Jesus will do the same. He will use his headship to save his wife in every sense of the word. She will always sense he has her best interests at heart. There can be no rogue heads of wives in the realm of obedient Christendom.

³⁴⁴ Eph. 5:24 - But as the church is subject to Christ: literally, "But as the [church](#) is being ranked under the [Christ](#)" Once again, Paul is making a comparison. He again uses the Subordinating Conjunction *hōs* (5613), which means here, "in the same manner." For more information on this word, see the appropriate footnote at Eph. 5:23. The point Paul will make is this: "In the same manner in which the [church](#) is being ranked under the [Christ](#), just so also the wives [are to be ranked under] to their husbands in everything."

"...the [church](#)" is the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of *ekklēsia* (1577), used 9X in this letter. See the appropriate note at Eph. 1:22 for more information on this noun. Here, it refers to the [Universal Church](#) as the [Body of Christ](#). These are [Christ's](#) "called out ones."

"...is subject" is the 3rd Person Singular [Present Indicative Passive](#) of the Verb *hupotássō* (5293), used 3X in this letter – in Eph. 1:22; 5:21, 24. Here in the [Present Passive](#), Paul asserts the idea that the [church](#) is continually being ranked under Jesus, the [Messiah](#), its head. For more information on this verb see the appropriate footnotes at Eph. 5:21.

"...to the Christ" (a literal translation) translates the [Dative Masculine](#) Singular of the Noun that is a title, *Christós* (5547), "the [Christ](#)," the Anointed One – anointed as [Prophet](#), [Priest](#), and [King](#).

be to their husbands in everything.³⁴⁵

- G 2 The love of the husband (illustrated by the sacrifice of Christ for the church) 5:25-30
- H 1 The command: {25} Husbands, love your wives,³⁴⁶ 5:25a
- H 2 The example – Christ's love for the church: just as Christ also loved the church³⁴⁷ (5:25b) 5:25b-27
- J 1 His action: and gave Himself up for her³⁴⁸ 5:25c

³⁴⁵ Eph. 5:24 - so also the wives *ought to be* to their husbands in everything: “so” translates the Adverb *hoútōs* (3779), which means “in this manner, thus, so” (Thayer).

“...the wives” is the [Vocative Feminine](#) Plural of the noun *gunê* (1135), and “the husbands” is the [Dative Masculine](#) Plural of *anêr* (435).

“...in everything” correctly translates the [Dative Neuter](#) Singular of the Pronoun *pâs* (3956), here having a “distributive” meaning, indicating, in the [Neuter](#), each individual possibility in the universe of possible situations.

By way of application, Paul is asserting wives need to rank themselves under the leadership of their heads, their husbands, in every conceivable situation, without exception. Of course, this would amount to absolute tyranny if the husband were self-serving. Obedient Christian husbands, however, as has already been noted, will use [Christ's](#) model of being the “savior” of the body of believers (the [Body of Christ](#), the [Church](#)) as a model for the way in which they lead their wives. They will be alert to be the “savior” of their wives, not the tyrant of their wives.

³⁴⁶ Eph. 5:25 - Husbands, love your wives: literally, “The men (husbands), be loving the women (wives)” “The husbands” (there is a plural article here) is the [Vocative Masculine](#) Plural of the Noun *anêr* (435), “man” as male, in this context, “husbands.” The [Vocative](#) tells us Paul is specifically addressing the husbands in his epistolary audience.

“...be loving” is the 2nd Person Plural [Present Active Imperative](#) of the Verb *agapâō* (25), to act sacrificially and loyally on behalf of another’s best interests. This verb is used 10X in 7 verses in this letter: Eph. 1:6; 2:4; 5:2, 25, 25, 28, 28, 33; 6:24. In the Biblical world, love is not a warm response to an engaging personality or a pretty face. It is an action of the will, a decision to be loyal to and supportive of one’s wife as an act of obedience to a command given by an [Apostle](#) under the direction of the [Holy Spirit](#). Love is an obligation.

“...the wives” (there is a plural article here) (NASB = “your wives”) – “wives” is the [Accusative Feminine](#) Plural of *gunê* (1135), woman, and, in the context of *anêr* (435), “wife.”

³⁴⁷ Eph. 5:25 - just as Christ also loved the church: “just as” translates the Subordinating Conjunction *kathōs* (2531), “just as” or “according as” or “in the same manner as” Husbands are commanded to be loving ([Present](#) tense) their wives in the same manner as [Christ](#) also loved ([Aorist](#) tense) the [Church](#). That is a *high* standard of love, indeed!

“...loved” is the 3rd Person Singular [Aorist Indicative Active](#) of the Verb *agapâō* (25), to act sacrificially and loyally on behalf of another’s best interests. The point of the [Aorist](#) is that Paul was referring to the [Messiah's](#) ultimate act of love for the [Church](#) when He died on the cross for her. What a matchless standard of love for husbands!

“...the church” (there is an article here) is the [Accusative Feminine](#) Singular of the Noun *ekklêsia* (1577), [Christ's](#) “called out” ones who constitute the [Church Universal](#).

³⁴⁸ Eph. 5:25 - and gave Himself up for her: “gave up” is the 3rd Person Singular [Aorist Indicative Active](#) of the Verb *paradídōmi* (3860), in this context meaning that Christ “delivered Himself over” to the authorities to be executed on behalf of the [Church](#). This act at a point in time describes the content of Christ’s singular act of love (*agapâō*, 25) for the [Church](#). The verb *paradídōmi* is used 3X in this letter. It is used in a negative sense in Eph. 4:19, describing the [Gentiles'](#) having given themselves over to sensuality for the practice of every kind of impurity. It is used in a positive sense in Eph. 5:2, 25, describing Christ’s intentional, sacrificial death on our behalf.

- J 2 His reason: {26} so that He might sanctify her,³⁴⁹ 5:26a
- J 3 His accomplishment: having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word³⁵⁰ 5:26b
- J 4 His goal: {27} that He might present to Himself the church 5:27
- K1 Her radiance: in all her glory,³⁵¹

³⁴⁹ Eph. 5:26 - so that He might sanctify her: “He might sanctify” translates the 3rd Person Singular [Aorist Subjunctive Active](#) of the verb *hagiádzō* (37), used only here in Ephesians. Christ’s purpose in dying on behalf of the Church was not merely to pay for her sins, but that He might set her apart from sin and to Himself in moral and spiritual, and ultimately, bodily purity through the miracle of resurrection.

³⁵⁰ Eph. 5:26 - having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word: “having cleansed” is the [Nominative Masculine Singular Aorist Active Participle](#) of the verb *katharádzō* (2511), used only here in Ephesians. It means, in a literal sense, “to make clean, cleanse”; in a figurative sense, “to purify from the defilement of sin and guilt and any sort of evil” (adapted from [Thayer](#)).

“...by the washing of water with the word” (literally, “with word” – there is no article before “word”). What does this mean? The [Vatican Church](#), for example, interprets this phrase as meaning water baptism (1213, 1227, 1228, see footnote 32) which, in the view of the [Vatican](#), “purifies, justifies, and sanctifies” (1227) the one who has been baptized. But the [Vatican Church](#) confuses [Spirit Baptism](#) (which alone can produce eternal changes in a believer) with [Water Baptism](#), which can only *symbolize* spiritual realities, and never *causes* spiritual realities. Paul cannot here be referring to [water baptism](#), for he qualifies the “washing of water” as being, literally, “in word (the [Dative Neuter Singular](#) of the noun *hrēma*, 4487),” meaning, “in the sphere of word – that which has specifically been spoken or uttered (adapted from [Friberg](#)). Concerning which “word, or communication” is Paul speaking? Undoubtedly, the word of God. Notice that Paul will use this same noun in Eph. 6:17, where he likens the “Sword of the Spirit” to “the word (*hrēma*, 4487) of God.” Though Jesus used the word *lógos* (3056) in John 17:17, He used exceedingly similar language, “Sanctify (2nd Person Singular, [Aorist Imperative Active](#) of *hagiádzō*, 37) them in the truth; Your word (*lógos*, 3056) is truth.”

By way of application, husbands ought always to be using speech toward their wives which will help set apart their wives from sin and to God and His work. Husbands should have it as their goal, gently and lovingly, to help their wives become more Christlike. That is a tall order.

³⁵¹ Eph. 5:27 - in all her glory: These four words in English translate the single Greek word, the [Accusative Feminine Singular](#) of the adjective *éndoxos* (1741), used only 4X in the Greek NT. (The [Feminine](#) gender of *éndoxos* (1741) (“in all her glory”) matches the [Feminine](#) gender of *ekklēsia* (1577) “church.”) This adjective refers to those who are “splendidly” clothed (Luke 7:25); it refers to the “glorious things” (i.e. miracles) being performed by Jesus (Luke 17:13); it refers to the Corinthians as being “distinguished” (1 Cor. 4:10); and in Eph. 5:27 it refers to Christ presenting to Himself the [Church](#) as His [bride](#) “in all her glory.”

By this is meant both spiritual and physical glory. This will happen at the Marriage of the Lamb. The [Marriage Supper](#) of the Lamb is mentioned in Rev. 19:7-9. We are not told precisely when the Marriage of the Lamb will take place, but in my understanding it will take place after the [Rapture](#), and after the [Judgment Seat of Christ](#), at which Christ will cleanse His bride from all her impurities. The Marriage itself evidently takes place up in [New Jerusalem](#) in heaven (a thousand years before the city descends permanently to [New Earth](#), and prior to Christ’s descent to Earth to rule for a thousand years).

The [Marriage Supper](#) or Marriage Feast will take place on this present earth at the [Second Coming](#) of Christ in power and great glory (not the [Rapture](#)). I presume it will take place after the [Judgment of all Survivors of the Tribulation](#). It will be a very public event, but only believers in the Messiah (who are not also part of the [Church](#)) will be invited to attend the [Marriage Supper](#) (Feast) (Rev. 19:7; Matt. 25:1-10; Matt. 8:11). This will take place, perhaps, as a huge inauguration of Christ’s [Millennial Kingdom](#) (Rev. 20:1-6). Of course Christ and His [Bride](#) will also be in attendance at the [Marriage Feast](#).

The future glory of the [Church](#) as the [Bride of Christ](#) is also seen in the home Jesus will have prepared for her (John 14:1-3), which is, in my opinion, [New Jerusalem](#). [New Jerusalem](#) is described in terms of being “made ready as a bride adorned for her husband” (Rev. 21:3). This eternal Capital City of both the [Church](#) and redeemed [Israel](#)

- K2 Her perfection: having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing;
- K3 Her purity: but that she would be holy and blameless.³⁵²
- H 3 The analogy: {28} So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies.³⁵³ (5:28a) 5:28-30
- J 1 The implication: He who loves his own wife loves himself³⁵⁴ 5:28b

will possess the visible glory of God (Rev. 21:10-11). (See also Rev. 21:12 - 22:5.)

³⁵² Eph. 5:27 - holy and blameless: “holy” is the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of the adjective *hágios* (40), here meaning “set apart in moral, ethical, and spiritual purity for the purposes of the Messiah, Jesus as His [Bride](#).” See the footnote on “saints” in Eph. 1:2 for an extensive explanation of the meaning of *hágios* and Paul’s use of the word in this letter.

“...blameless” is the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of the adjective *ámōmos* (299), used in Eph. 1:4; 5:27; Phil. 2:15; Col. 1:22; Heb. 9:14; 1 Pet. 1:19; Jude 1:24; Rev. 14:5. It is used, “(1) literally, of the absence of defects in sacrificial animals; *unblemished*; used metaphorically of Christ as God’s sacrificial lamb (Heb. 9:14); in a religious and moral sense *blameless, without fault* (Eph. 1:4)” ([Friberg](#)).

Both of these terms reflect Christ’s vision for, and program of sanctification of, His [Bride](#), the [Church](#). At the same time, this practice of Christ should be the model practice for a Christian husband and his wife.

³⁵³ Eph. 5:28 - So husbands ought also to love their own wives as their own bodies: The whole point of Paul’s discussion of Christ and the Church is to use Christ’s practice as a model for how Christian husbands are to live with their wives. The summary of Christ’s interaction with His Bride is the verb “love.” That love included self-sacrifice to the point of death for the betterment of Christ’s bride. But it didn’t stop there. Christ continually works with His bride to sanctify her and make her ever more holy and blameless. A loving husband will work for the spiritual betterment of his own wife in holiness and blamelessness. A husband ought to have as a working goal for his wife her spiritual betterment.

“...husbands” is the [Nominative Masculine](#) Plural of the noun *anēr* (435).

“...love” is the [Present Active Infinitive](#) of the verb *agapáō* (25). Jesus’ love for His bride was most obviously manifested in His death on her behalf. This is frequently reflected by the use of the [Aorist](#) tense in relation to Christ’s love for His Bride (Eph. 5:2,25). But here, the emphasis is on a constant, consistent [Present](#) tense love of a human husband for his wife. Few husbands will be asked to die on behalf of their wives. But all will be confronted with the necessity of daily, ongoing sacrificial love for their wives. This verb is used in this letter 10X – in Eph. 1:6; 2:4; 5:2; 5:25; 5:28; 5:28; 5:28; 5:33; 6:24.

“...their own wives” – tragically, there are times when an inconsiderate husband will find it easier to be kind to someone else’s wife than he will to his own. The essence of love in a marriage is loyalty and commitment to one’s own wife. “Wives” here is the [Accusative Feminine](#) Plural of the noun *gunē* (1135). See the note on “wives” at Eph. 5:22 for more information about this noun.

“...as their own bodies” – Men take very good care of their bodies, grooming them, keeping them physically fit, feeding them, and clothing them. Tragically, a great many men take better care of their bodies than they do of their own wives. “...bodies” is the [Accusative Neuter](#) Plural of the noun *sōma* (4983). This word is used 9X in 8 verses in this letter. It is most often used metaphorically of the [Church](#) as being Christ’s [spiritual body](#). Here it is used literally in reference to men’s own physical bodies. This is the final use of this noun in this letter. The complete list of uses: Eph. 1:23; 2:16; 4:4, 16, 16; 5:23, 28.

³⁵⁴ Eph. 5:28 - He who loves his own wife loves himself: Literally, “The one loving his own wife loves himself.” “The one loving” is the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular [Present Active Participle](#) of the verb *agapáō* (25). Paul envisions here a husband who continually acts in the best interests of his wife. See the previous footnote for a listing of the uses of this verb. It is used with reference to a husband loving his wife in Eph. 5:25, 28, 33, in some instances multiple times in a verse.

- J 2 The logic: {29} for no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes³⁵⁵ and cherishes³⁵⁶ it, 5:29a
- J 3 The comparison to Christ: just as Christ also *does* the church,³⁵⁷ 5:29b
- J 4 The spiritual reality: {30} because we are members of His body.³⁵⁸ 5:30
- G 3 The union of marriage (reflecting the union of Christ and the church) 5:31-32
- H 1 The initiative of the man: {31} FOR THIS REASON³⁵⁹ A MAN 5:31a

“...loves himself” incorporates the 3rd Person Singular [Present Indicative Active](#) of the verb *agapáō* (25). Paul is saying that a man who lives his life in the best interests of his wife is actually living in his own best interests. His reasoning is the unity of husband and wife as expressed in Eph. 5:31, “and the two shall become one flesh.”

³⁵⁵ Eph. 5:29 - nourishes: the 3rd Person Singular [Present Indicative Active](#) of the verb *ektréphō* (1625), used “(1) of the body *nourish, feed ...*; (2) of children *rear, bring up, educate* (Eph. 6:4)” (excerpted from [Friberg](#)). Paul’s point is that every man feeds himself. Since his wife is integrally united with him, he will be doing himself a great favor if he loves his wife as Christ loved the [Church](#).

³⁵⁶ Eph. 5:29 - cherishes: 3rd Person Singular [Present Indicative Active](#) of *thálpō* (2282), used only twice in the NT – here and in 1 Thess. 2:7. It means “strictly *impart warmth*; hence *cherish, comfort, tenderly care for* (1 Thess. 2:7)” ([Friberg](#)). Paul’s point here is that every man both feeds and tenderly takes care of his own flesh – his own body. The Christian husband is urged to take care of his own wife in the same tender and solicitous way with which he takes care of his own body.

³⁵⁷ Eph. 5:29 - just as Christ also *does* the church: The way a man feeds and takes care of his own body is an illustration of how [Christ](#) takes care of the [Church](#). He does so (Eph. 5:30) “because we are [members of His body](#).” “[Christ](#)” here (literally, “the [Christ](#)”) is the [Nominative Singular Masculine](#) of the titular noun *Christós* (5547), the Anointed One, anointed by the [Holy Spirit](#) to be [Israel’s](#) greatest [Prophet, Priest, and King](#). As King of [Israel](#) he is acquiring the (largely) [Gentile Church](#) as His [bride](#).

“...church” is the [Accusative Feminine Singular](#) of the noun *ekklêsía* (1577). It means the assembly, or more literally, the “called out” ones. See more information on the [Church](#).

³⁵⁸ Eph. 5:30 - because we are members of His body: Paul continues to describe how the relationship between a husband and his wife ought to mirror the relationship between [Christ](#) and His [Church](#). We as individual Christians are members of [Christ’s body](#). He will go on to document this close relationship from OT Scripture (Eph. 5:31, quoting from Gen. 2:24), “...and the two shall become one flesh.” It would almost appear that, according to Pauline interpretation, we Christians are members of the [body of Christ](#) because the [Church](#) is Christ’s [bride](#)!

“...members” is the [Nominative Neuter Plural](#) of the noun *mélos* (3196) “literally as any part of the human body *member, limb, part* (Rom. 12:4a); figuratively, of one who belongs to the Christian community as the [body of Christ member](#) (1 Cor. 6:15)” ([Friberg](#)). Paul uses this noun twice in this letter – Eph. 4:25; 5:30. No NT author uses this word more frequently than Paul in his letters.

“...body” is the [Genitive Neuter Singular](#) of the noun *sōma* (4983), here referring to the spiritual [body of Christ](#), of which all believers are members. This is Paul’s final use of this noun. He uses it 9X in 8 verses. With the exception of Eph. 5:28, each time he uses it, he does so in reference to the spiritual [body of Christ](#). The occurrences in this letter include Eph. 1:23; 2:16; 4:4, 12, 16, 16; 5:23, 28, 30.

³⁵⁹ Eph. 5:31 - FOR THIS REASON: Paul here quotes from Gen. 2:24 as a Biblical justification for his thesis that, as human marriage constitutes a “one flesh” relationship, so [Christ’s](#) pending marriage to His [bride](#), the [Church](#), (Rev. 19:7-9) constitutes a “one flesh” relationship between [Christ](#) and the [Church](#). We are members of His spiritual [body](#).

- H 2 His leaving his parents: SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER ³⁶⁰ 5:31b
- H 3 His joining himself to his wife: AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE, ³⁶¹ 5:31c
- H 4 They two becoming "one flesh": AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH. ³⁶² 5:31d
- H 5 The comparison to Christ and the church – "a great mystery" 5:32

³⁶⁰ Eph. 5:31 - A MAN SHALL LEAVE HIS FATHER AND MOTHER: Quoting from Gen. 2:24, Paul through Moses underlines some marriage principles here. (1) A man is to break out from the leadership and oversight of his own parents. (2) He is no longer under the jurisdiction of his parents. (3) He is to set up a new family unit.

³⁶¹ Eph. 5:31 - AND SHALL BE JOINED TO HIS WIFE: Paul continues to quote Gen. 2:24. More marriage principles: (4) Marriage exists only between a man and a woman. (5) The initiative in marriage rests with the male. (6) He is to seek out the female of his choice. (7) There is a joining to his wife that involves a commitment to her. The verb "shall be joined to" translates the 3rd Person Singular Future Indicative Passive of the verb *proskollāō* (4347), which means, on a literal level in the passive, to be stuck to or glued to (adapted from Thayer); on a metaphorical level, "figuratively and only passive in the NT, of the attachment of a husband to his wife *be joined to, cleave to, be united with* (Mark 10:7)" (Friberg). That which most often is missing in a marriage that fails is the element of commitment. The burden of the proof in a marriage falls upon the husband. A good husband will make sure that his wife knows that he is irrevocably committed to her. This verb appears in the NT (in the UBS4 Greek text) only in Mark 10:7 and Eph. 5:31.

The Future tense is not a command. It is a prediction. In other words, this is the way God designed marriage. Husbands who follow God's design will be joined to their wives. The passive voice indicates that another, outside person or force does the joining. Judging by Jesus' comments in Matthew 19:6, it is God who does the joining together. "What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate." (For the record, the verb "has joined together" in Matt. 19:6 is the 3rd Person Singular Aorist Indicative Active of the verb *sudzeúgnumi* (4801), used only in Matt. 19:6; Mark 10:9.) The verb there means "literally *yoke together, pair together, figuratively join together, unite, especially in marriage*" (Friberg).

We may, therefore, advance two more marriage principles. (8) In marriage it is God who joins together a man and a woman. (9) What, therefore, God has joined together, let no man separate.

³⁶² Eph. 5:31 - AND THE TWO SHALL BECOME ONE FLESH: Paul is still quoting from Genesis 2:24. "...shall become is the 3rd Person Plural Future Indicative Middle Deponent of the verb *eimi* (1510), "be" or "is." This is not a command, but a prediction.

"...one flesh" translates the Accusative Feminine Singular of the Cardinal number one, *eís* (1520), plus the Accusative Feminine Singular of the noun *sárx* (4561). A quick scan through each of the 9 uses in this letter reveals a variety of connotations for *sárx*. Here, in this phrase, "and the two shall become one flesh," only one meaning exists, that of conjugal marriage union. This union can be bastardized with a prostitute (1 Cor. 6:16). But here in this passage it refers to the most intimate of human relationships in the context of a husband who loves his wife as Christ loves the church and a woman who submits to her husband as the church does to Christ. This intimacy is to be an illustration of the spiritual intimacy between the Church and Christ (Eph 5:32).

We arrive, then, at some additional marriage principles: (10) Marriage as designed by God constitutes the most intimate human relationship upon earth. (11) A biblical marriage prohibits bigamy or any type of polygamy. (12) A Biblical marriage prohibits divorce and remarriage.

[Note: There are other passages in the Bible that discuss divorce and remarriage. But God designed the first marriage to be a life-long commitment between one man and one woman. Any departure from that norm is a departure from the way God designed marriage. I might add that when Pharisees came to Jesus asking Him whether it was lawful for a man to divorce his wife for any reason at all, He went back to the original standard for marriage (Matt. 19:3-6). And He concluded, "What therefore God has joined together, let no man separate" (Matt. 19:6). That was his best answer. Any departure from that ideal was seen as evidence of a hard heart (Matt. 19:8). Anecdotally, I have seen this time and time again. When someone files for divorce, he or she has a hard heart towards his spouse.]

- J1 The greatness of the [mystery](#): {32}
This mystery is great;³⁶³
- J2 The defining of the [mystery](#): but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church.³⁶⁴ 5:32
- G 4 The summary statement 5:33
- H 1 The command to each husband to love his own wife: {33} Nevertheless, each individual among you also is to love³⁶⁵ his own wife even as himself,
- H 2 The command to the wife to be afraid of (defying) her husband: and the wife must *see to it* that she respects³⁶⁶ her husband.
- E 3 Children to parents 6:1-4
- G 1 The responsibility of children 6:1-3
- H 1 Obedience: {1} Children, obey your parents³⁶⁷ 6:1

³⁶³ Eph. 5:32 - This mystery is great: The term “mystery” is the [Nominative Neuter](#) Singular of the noun *mustêrion* (3466). This refers to information unrevealed in the OT, but freshly revealed in the NT. See the Glossary entry on [Mystery](#). Momentarily, Paul will write about the content of this “[mystery](#).” This word is used 6X in this letter – in Eph. 1:9; 3:3, 4, 9; 5:32; 6:19.

³⁶⁴ Eph. 5:32 - but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the church: Paul explains that when he uses the term “[mystery](#)” he is not speaking about the marriage relationship between husband and wife. That is old information. Rather, he is speaking with reference to the incredible relationship that exists between [Christ](#) and His [Bride](#), the [Church](#). Marriage principle (13): Marriage between a Christian husband and his wife should mirror the relationship between [Christ](#) and His [Bride](#), the [Church](#).

³⁶⁵ Eph. 5:33 - love: The 3rd Person Singular [Present Imperative Active](#) of the verb *agapáō* (25). Marriage principle (14): A husband is obligated to love his wife continually with the same care with which he treats himself.

³⁶⁶ Eph. 5:33 - respects: This is an acceptable nuance, but the reader must be aware that the verb in question is the [present](#) tense, [subjunctive](#) mood, [passive](#) voice of *phobéō* (5399), which, in its [active](#) voice means to “fear,” and in its [passive](#) voice, “be frightened” or “be afraid of.” (It is a hortatory [subjunctive](#), which carries [imperative](#) force.) That is why I have retained the element of fearfulness in my outline heading – “The command to the wife to be afraid of (defying) her husband.” Too many wives disrespect and manipulate and micromanage their husbands. They are not afraid to defy him and circumvent him. According to this Scripture, they *ought* to be afraid of doing so. If wives follow the instruction here in this verse, and in this passage, they give their husbands a far superior environment in which to flourish as a Godly leader. Marriage principle (15): Wives are to be afraid of disrespecting their husband in any way.

³⁶⁷ Eph. 6:1 - Children, obey your parents: Literally, “The children” – *Tà tékna* – both the article and its associated noun appear in the [Vocative Neuter](#) Plural. The noun *tékna* is from *téknon* (5043), which appears 5X in this letter. In Eph. 2:3 it was used metaphorically of adults as being “by nature children of wrath” – i.e. disobedient humans destined because of their sinfulness to partake of the wrath or anger of God. In Eph. 5:1 Christians are urged to be “imitators of God, as beloved children” – a case in which adults are viewed on a spiritual, metaphorical level as

J 1 The sphere: in the Lord,³⁶⁸

J 2 The reason: for this is right.

H 2 Honor: {2} Honor your father and mother³⁶⁹

children of God. Similarly, there is another metaphorical use in Eph. 5:8, where adult believers are urged to “walk as children of light” – i.e., characterized by deeds of righteousness, goodness, and truth, as opposed to “the unfruitful deeds of darkness” (Eph. 5:11). Here, “children” are viewed as literal believing children of believing parents. In this case, they are “...viewed from the standpoint of origin and without reference to sex distinction ...” (Friberg). “The children” includes all the children represented by parents who would be attending the local church at Ephesus. The Vocative case indicates Paul presupposed that children would be in attendance at the church service, and he addressed them specifically.

“...obey” is the 2nd Person Plural Present Active Imperative of the verb *hupakoúō* (5219), used only twice in this letter, here, of children, and in Eph. 6:5, of slaves. Both the Vocative of the noun (children) and the Imperative of the verb (obey) mean that believing children have a moral and spiritual obligation to obey their parents, and that they will be held accountable by Christ at the Judgment Seat of Christ as to whether or not they have obeyed their parents. The Present tense indicates that, as long as children are living in the home under the jurisdiction of their parents, and until they are old enough to be responsible adults living on their own, they have a perpetual, ongoing responsibility to obey their parents.

³⁶⁸ Eph. 6:1 - in the Lord: Literally, “in Lord.” There is a bit of a textual problem here. Some notable mss omit this phrase, among them Vaticanus (dating to the 4th century AD); Bezae (5th century AD); Boernerianus (9th century); the Old Italian (Itala or it) versions (3rd century AD); and the “Church Fathers” Marcion (2nd century) and Tertullian (3rd century). These sources can be identified on the table “...Principal Manuscript Evidence...” UBS4 includes “in Lord” in the main text but places it in brackets [] to indicate there is a degree of uncertainty about its authenticity. In other words, it is possible that the words could have been added by a well-meaning but overzealous copyist.

Assuming the words [*en* (1722) *kuríō* (2962)] are original, the meaning is probably two-fold: (1) Children are to obey their parents as though they are obeying the Lord Jesus. (2) Children are to obey their parents so long as their parents are not asking them to violate the commands of God. Paul’s greater emphasis would have been meaning (1).

It is also possible that scribes may have deleted the words, fearing the phrase might be regarded as a qualifier for the kind of parents a child was required to obey. In this view, he would only have been required to obey Christian parents, but not non-Christian parents. In the view of the editors of the NetBible, it is more likely that the phrase would have been deleted than added. Thus it is genuine. See footnote 2 on Eph. 6:1.

Keeping one’s children under control is a necessary qualification for an overseer (1 Tim.3:4-5) and for deacons (1 Tim. 3:12). The same can be said for elders (the more typical term for overseers) (Tit. 1:6).

³⁶⁹ Eph. 6:2 - HONOR YOUR FATHER AND MOTHER: Paul here quotes the Fifth Commandment (Ex. 20:12) from the Decalogue. The Biblical assumption is that the most basic family unit consists of a committed, married husband and wife (male and female) who together give birth to their own biological children. Any breakage of that norm (whether through natural means such as the death of one of the spouses / parents; or through unnatural means such as the divorce and remarriage of one or both of the parents; or worse yet through the deliberate absence of a father) results in untold heartache and most often, in dysfunction that perpetuates itself in the next generation.

In that vein, see an article published by the National Fatherhood Initiative entitled, “The Father Factor,” detailing “The Father crisis in America.” According to the author, Ryan Sanders, if a child grows up in a home in which the father is absent, that child is (1) 4X more likely to live in poverty; (2) More likely to suffer emotional and behavior problems; (3) Has two times a greater risk of infant mortality; (4) Is more likely to go to prison; (5) Is more likely to commit crime; (6) Is 7X more likely to become pregnant as a teen; (7) Is more likely to face abuse and neglect; (8) Is more likely to abuse drugs and alcohol; (9) Is 2X more likely to suffer obesity; and (10) Is 2X more likely to drop out of high school.

In the preceding two paragraphs we have highlighted the failures of parents. But the emphasis in this passage, frankly, highlights the responsibility of children. No matter what age, children are commanded and obligated to honor both their father and their mother.

“Honor” is the 2nd Person Singular Present Imperative Active of the verb *timáō* (5091). The meaning here has to do with “...ascribing worth to someone *honor, revere, respect* (Matt. 15:4) ...” (Friberg). Other Scriptures which echo this theme include Deut. 5:16; Lev. 19:3; Deut. 27:16; Prov. 1:8; 6:20; 10:1; 15:20; 19:26; 20:20; 23:22, 25; 28:24; 30:11, 17; Matt. 15:4; 19:19; Mark 7:10; 10:19; Luke 18:20; Col. 3:20.

Honoring one’s father and mother and obeying them is the most basic area of submission in the home and in all

(6:2a) 6:2-3

J 1 Observation: (which is the first commandment with a promise), 6:2b

J 2 Motivation: 6:3

K1 Success: {3} so that it may be well with you,³⁷⁰

K2 Longevity: and that you may live long on the earth.³⁷¹

G 2 The responsibility of fathers 6:4

H 1 Avoid exasperating: {4} Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger,³⁷²

of society. Children who obey their parents and honor their parents are going to be the most productive and stable members of any society, of any nation. Children who are not taught to obey their parents, and who fail to honor their parents, become non-productive and even harmful elements in a society. They are more likely to be the drug dealers, the drug users, the gang elements, the thieves, the wife-abusers, the child-abusers, the law-breakers, the societal rebels who run afoul of the law and cause heartache and financial cost to themselves and to society in general.

Both the verbs “obey” and “honor” appear in the [Imperative](#) Mood. It is incumbent upon children to obey the command of God to obey their parents and to honor their parents.

³⁷⁰ Eph. 6:3 - so that it may be well with you: If children obey their parents, in the long run, life will go better with them. They will learn to submit to the authorities in their lives. They will be far less likely to get in trouble with the law, to spend time in prison, to get involved in crime and get killed. I once had a classmate in a Christian high school. He had a volatile temper, and once almost came to blows with our Bible teacher. In the end, he died prematurely, killed in a gunfight in his twenties. To me he was a silent, dark testimony of the truth of this verse.

³⁷¹ Eph. 6:3 - and that you may live long on the earth: Paul continues to quote from Exod. 20:12. In my opinion, the implication in this promise attached to the 5th Commandment is the understanding that if children honor their parents, they will, in turn honor and obey God. It is a matter of the will and respectful subordination of self to that which is right. If the [sons of Israel](#) honored God, He would send them prosperity along with success in battles. But if the people began to forsake the teaching of their parents and forefathers, they would soon embrace idolatry. When they did that God would have no other choice but to send enemy nations in to conquer them, subdue them, kill them, and take them captive into a foreign country. If they honored their parents, they would honor God, and they would live much longer on the land without being killed by enemy subversives. That principle holds true today. Those who honor their parents honor God, and God will bless them. His discipline will not need to include killing them and taking them home prematurely to heaven, presuming they are Christians, or sending them to [Hades](#) and ultimately to the [Lake of Fire](#) if they are not. Obedient people who follow God’s rules live longer.

³⁷² Eph. 6:4 - Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger: literally, “And the fathers” “Fathers” is the Vocative [Masculine](#) Plural of the noun *patēr* (3962). Paul continues to address the general area of submission, which he began back in Eph. 5:21. Having addressed the need for submission of wives to husbands, along with the corresponding need for men to love their wives, Paul then addressed the need for children to submit to their parents. Here he balances that need with two commands to fathers, first indicating, negatively, how not to bring up children; then positively, the proper way to bring up children.

The first thing one notices is that, after charging children both to obey and to honor both their parents, Paul speaks to the parental responsibility in rearing children. Much to the surprise of most people in American culture, at least, he does not even address the responsibility of mothers. He charges father how not to and how to rear children! In modern American society, that is almost unthinkable. With the arrival of the more sinister aspects of the doctrine of feminism, introduced by Satan in the garden of Eden, men and fathers are routinely mocked and stigmatized and marginalized in America. And absentee fathers are part of what is destroying our country.

But Paul didn’t go there. He went right to the responsibility of fathers to be good fathers to their children. Good

H 2 Accentuate nurture: but bring them up ³⁷³J 1 Child-training: in the discipline ³⁷⁴

fathers constitute a huge missing ingredient in our country, and sadly, also in many churches. Let us examine what wise counsel Paul gave the early church and continues to give to us today.

First, Paul forbids the fathers, whom he is now addressing, to “provoke your children to anger” “...provoke to anger” translates the 2nd Person plural [Present Active Imperative](#) of the verb *parorgízō* (3949), used elsewhere only in Rom. 10:19, where God predicts through Moses that He will *anger Israel* and make the nation jealous by that which is not a nation, a nation without understanding. This is a legitimate use of the verb. The only other time this verb is used is here in Eph. 6:4, where fathers are forbidden to *provoke to anger*, or to *exasperate* their children.

“...children” is the [Accusative Neuter](#) Plural of *téknon* (5043), here referring to biological offspring. See the footnote at Eph. 6:1 on “children” for more information.

How do fathers exasperate their children? The appropriate answer is probably multi-dimensional. (1) I believe fathers exasperate their children when they have such high expectations for behavior and production that their children do not feel loved or accepted by their father. (2) I believe fathers exasperate their children when they cross the line with physical discipline. (3) I believe fathers exasperate their children by absenteeism. This is a quieter, but still potentially lethal provocation. Sometimes fathers are so absorbed in their work that they neglect their children. Sometimes fathers get along so poorly with their wives that they stay absent to avoid confrontations from the female “tornado” at home. But as they minimize conflict with their abrasive wives, they maximize conflict with their children, who finally conclude that their father doesn’t really love them. (4) Finally, I believe fathers exasperate their children by being uncommitted to their children’s or child’s mother. There are certain communities in which men see their primary function as participating in sex with any woman who will indulge them. But engaging in sexual intercourse is designed by God to produce children. When a man refuses to marry the woman with whom he is engaging in sexual intercourse, he is uncommitted to her. If he were committed to her, he would marry her. But he is uncommitted to her, and therefore he remains, by definition, uncommitted to the children he and she will inevitably produce. This whole impregnation business by absentee, “accidental” fathers is a blight upon the family and a blight upon the nation. Fatherless boys grow up thinking that is a normal family. They say, “I have the right, just like my dad, to go out and have sex with anyone who will have me. If there is pregnancy, bad luck for her and bad luck for the kid. It is just not my problem.” That is a disaster for the family and a disaster for the nation.

Several years ago I heard about Wilt Chamberlain, formerly an NBA star. He once boasted of having bedded perhaps 20,000 women. Shame on him, and shame on them. What a disaster! How can you possibly be a good father? All you are is a stallion, not a father. A good father is committed to his children’s mother in marriage!

On the other side of the spectrum, I was intrigued to listen to Brett Favre’s speech upon being inducted into the NFL Hall of Fame. Irv Favre was a very committed, present father, actively involved in his son’s life. But, as so many fathers, and perhaps, coaches, he was short on praise. Brett’s recollection seemed to be that he could never really please his father. There was always something he could have done better. To me it was saddening to hear Brett end his Hall of Fame speech wistfully and tearfully, speaking to his now deceased father, “Dad, I’ve given it my best. I hope you’re satisfied.” To me that was a great tragedy. One of the greatest NFL quarterbacks of all time, being inducted into the hall of fame, was not sure that he ever met his father’s expectations. Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, even if it is a subdued, quiet sort of anger that haunts your children the rest of their days.

³⁷³ Eph. 6:4 - bring them up: This phrase is the 2nd Person Plural [Present Active Imperative](#) of the verb *ektréphō* (1625), used only twice in the NT. In Eph. 5:29 it was used of a man who “*nourishes*” his own flesh (body). Here in Eph. 6:4 it is used of a father’s responsibility to “bring them up” (his children) in a Godly manner. In the first instance it is talking about “*nourishing*” or “*feeding*” the body. In the second instance it is used in the sense of “*rearing*”, “*bringing up*”, or “*educating*” children (adapted from [Friberg](#)).

Fathers, instead of provoking their children to anger, or exasperating them, are commanded to bring up their children, to rear them, to train them “in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.” This speaks of God’s plan that a father be the primary child-rearer. He is commanded to be the spiritual nurturer and educator of his children (Deut. 6:1-25). This is a far cry from the world’s understanding that the mother is the primary care-giver. I understand that to be true insofar as the child’s physical care and feeding is concerned. But as far as the spiritual, philosophical, and “wisdom-living” of the child is concerned, the father is the primary care-giver. He is the one whom Christ will hold responsible for how his children turn out (see 1 Tim. 3:4-5, 12; Tit. 1:6).

³⁷⁴ Eph. 6:4 - discipline: the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *paideía* (3809). This noun is used in regard to “...rearing and guiding a child toward maturity *training, instruction, discipline* (Heb. 12:11); as including Christian discipline and instruction (Eph. 6:4); as God’s fatherly discipline of all believers *discipline, punishment, correction* (Heb. 12:5) ...” ([Friberg](#)). This noun comes from the verb *paideuō* (3811), which means “to train children” ([Thayer](#)), which in turn stems from the noun *país* (3816), “child.” A good translation, therefore, is “child-training.” Paul

J 2 Correction: and instruction ³⁷⁵H 3 Perspective: of the Lord. ³⁷⁶

E 4 Slaves to masters 6:5-9

G 1 The responsibility of slaves 6:5-8

H 1 The command: {5} Slaves, ³⁷⁷ be

qualifies this “child-training” – it is “child-training of the Lord.” In other words, when a Christian father trains his child, he must always do so from a perspective that honors Jesus, the [Messiah](#), and His standards.

This noun is used 6X in the NT – in Eph. 6:4; 2 Tim. 3:16; and most often in the book of Hebrews – Heb. 12:5, 7, 8, 11. In all cases it is translated “discipline,” except in 2 Tim. 3:16, where it is translated “training.”

³⁷⁵ Eph. 6:4 - instruction: the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *nouthesia* (3559), defined by [Friberg](#) as “teaching, admonition, warning, ethical instruction in regard to belief or behavior.” [Thayer’s](#) brief definition is “admonition, exhortation.” This noun is used but three times in the NT – in 1 Cor. 10:11; Eph. 6:4; Tit. 3:10. It is translated “instruction” in the first two instances, and “warning” in the third. “Instruction” is a good translation in this context. But like the “child-training” mentioned previously, this “instruction” must be “of the Lord.” The primary and most critical component of child-training and instruction consistent with the Lord’s viewpoint is the Christian father. It is to be assumed that mothers will do their part. But the most important component is the input of the father. This is consistent with Moses’ teaching in Deut. 6:1-25.

³⁷⁶ Eph. 6:4 - of the Lord: literally, “of Lord” – there is no article here. “Lord” is the [Genitive Masculine](#) Singular of the noun *kúrios* (2962), meaning “lord”, “master.” This is probably here a reference to Jesus, the [Messiah](#), more than it is to God, the Father. The Lord, Jesus, appeared here upon earth as the Anointed One, of course, but He was anointed to be [Prophet](#), [Priest](#), and [King](#). His primary function here upon earth was as God’s Supreme [Prophet](#). He properly interpreted the OT and left many discourses and sermons to teach all His followers. Moreover, He appointed apostles who would, guided by God’s [Spirit](#), pass on His teachings to subsequent followers. So “child-training” and “instruction” conducted by fathers must be in accordance with the values and the teachings of the Lord Jesus [Christ](#) as perpetuated in the New Testament. See also the following articles: [Jesus Christ as Prophet](#); [Jesus Christ as Priest](#); [Jesus Christ as King](#).

³⁷⁷ Eph. 6:5 - Slaves: literally, “The slaves” (*Hoi doúloi*), the latter being the [Vocative Masculine](#) Plural of the noun *doúlos* (1401), referring to one who, whether by birth (Gen. 15:3), by conquest (2 Kings 5:2-3), or by virtue of financial servitude (Deut. 15:12-18), has no personal freedom and is the property of another. This word is very common in the NT, appearing 126 times. NASB almost universally translates this word as “slave(s)” in the Gospels, occasionally as “bond-slave(s).” Unfortunately, apparently when referring to Christians, the editors decline to use the correct word “slave” but use instead the word “bond-servant(s).” To me that is an unfortunate editorial decision. See Luke 2:29; Acts 4:29; 16:17; 2 Cor. 4:5; Gal. 1:10; Php. 1:1; 2:7; 2 Tim. 2:24; Tit. 1:1; James 1:1; 2 Pet. 1:1; Jude 1:1; Rev. 1:1; 2:20; 7:3; 10:7; 11:18; 15:3; 19:2, 5; 22:3, 6. Paul considered himself a common slave of the Lord (Php. 1:1), and Jesus took the form of a common slave (Php. 2:7). Let us not dilute the word.

It is quite interesting (in view of today’s stance) that Paul never advanced the notion of political or cultural reform in regard to slavery. He simply commanded slaves here in this letter to obey their lords or masters “according to the flesh.” Moreover, he commanded them to obey their masters “with fear and trembling,” “in the sincerity of your heart,” “as to Christ” (Eph. 6:5), “not by way of eye-service, as men-pleasers,” “but as slaves of Christ” (Eph. 6:6). And Paul doesn’t finish there. He keeps on going! But that awaits another footnote.

When Paul corresponded with Philemon about his runaway slave Onesimus, he urged him to take Onesimus back “no longer as a slave, but more than a slave, a beloved brother” (Philemon 1:15-16). As Russell Jones, a Bible lecturer at my Bible college, stated, Paul did not advocate the abolition of slavery. But if everyone followed his instructions, slavery would disappear. To a large degree that is true, at least in a Christian context. Most of our world, however, is not Christian, and so slavery continues to exist.

In his letter to the Corinthians Paul gave counsel to slaves. “Were you called [to salvation] while a slave? Do not worry about it; but if you are able also to become free, rather do that” (1 Cor. 7:21). He urged the same perspective there that he urges upon the Ephesians, “For he who was called in the Lord while a slave, is the Lord’s freedman; likewise he who was called while free, is Christ’s slave” (1 Cor. 7:22). He continued on, “You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men” (1 Cor. 7:23). The point is that in all things, we are slaves of Christ, and ought

obedient³⁷⁸ to those who are your masters³⁷⁹
according to the flesh,³⁸⁰ 6:5a

H 2 The attitude 6:5b

J 1 with fear³⁸¹ and trembling,³⁸²

to serve Him, regardless of our outward status, whether slave or free.

In present day, western contexts, whatever Paul said to slaves can be applied directly to employees. Employees are to obey their human masters with fear and trembling.

³⁷⁸ Eph. 6:5 - be obedient: the 2nd Person Plural [Present Active Imperative](#) of the verb *hupakouō* (5219), “from a basic meaning *listen to*; (1) with the [dative](#) of person [as is the case here] *obey, submit to, be subject to* (Eph. 6:1) ...” ([Friberg](#)). This is an ongoing command. It could be translated, “be obeying” or “continually obey.” This verb is used by Paul in this letter only twice, here with regard to the responsibility of slaves to their owners, and in Eph. 6:1, with regard to the responsibility of children to their parents. The direct object which completes this verb is the plural of the noun *kúrios* (2962), “lords” or “masters.”

³⁷⁹ Eph. 6:5 - masters: the [Dative Masculine](#) Plural of the noun *kúrios* (2962). It appears here in the [Dative](#) case as completing the action of the preceding verb, “be obedient” (*hupakouō*, 5219). *Kúrios* is used 26X in this letter, frequently referring to the Lord Jesus or Lord Jesus Christ (Eph. 1:2, 3, 15, 17; 3:11; 5:20; 6:23, 24). More often it refers to Deity, without specific regard to whether Christ is meant, or God the Father, or perhaps both (Eph. 2:21; 4:1, 5, 17; 5:8, 10, 17, 19, 22; 6:1, 4, 7, 8, 9, 10, 21). In two instances, Paul is referring to a human “master” or “lord” (Eph. 6:5, 9). He will qualify the “masters” or “lords” to whom he is referring in the next phrase.

³⁸⁰ Eph. 6:5 - according to the flesh: Literally, the clause reads, “You masters, be obedient to the according-to-flesh masters”

“...according to” translates the [Accusative](#) case of the preposition *katá* (2596). Here the meaning is [Friberg’s](#) definition “II. with the accusative ... (7) to denote relationship to something; (a) *in respect to, in relation to* (Rom. 1:3, 4); (b) with the *katá* phrase qualifying like an adjective (Eph. 6:5)” Paul’s purpose here is to distinguish the human aspect of “Lord” or “master” from the more typical (in the NT) Deity aspect of the term. In other words, he is speaking of human masters, not the Divine masters, Jesus, the [Messiah](#), or God the Father.

“...flesh” is the [Accusative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *sárx* (4561). This word refers, on a literal level, to the soft tissue that covers the bones of a human or animal (Luke 24:39). By [synechdoche](#), here it refers to humanity as opposed to Deity. Since “Lord” usually, in Paul’s thinking, refers to the Lord Jesus or God the Father, here he carefully qualifies the term as meaning “human masters,” not Divine Masters. He is talking about human slave-owners, a concept utterly repugnant to modern Western Civilization, but accepted as a matter of fact in First Century Roman civilization. It might be unfortunate for the slave, but there was nothing he could do about his situation, in most instances. Paul orders human slaves to obey their human masters. Today we would apply this command to employees. However, there are still Christians living as slaves in third world countries today. As long as they are not asked to do anything immoral or unethical, literal slaves today are commanded to obey their masters. Certainly, if slaves were able to better their condition, they should do so (1 Cor. 7:21). Absent that, however, slaves are commanded to obey their human masters.

³⁸¹ Eph. 6:5 - with fear: The word “fear” is the [Genitive Masculine](#) Singular of the noun *phóbos* (5401), used here “...in a positive sense *respect, reverence, awe, (wholesome) fear* (Rom. 3:18); *respect* for those in authority (Eph. 6:5)” ([Friberg](#)). It was used in this letter previously in Eph. 5:21, wherein Paul urged Christians to “be subject to one another in the **fear** of Christ.” Paul’s meaning is that slaves are to fear defying or disobeying their earthly masters.

³⁸² Eph. 6:5 - and trembling: the [Genitive Masculine](#) Singular of the noun *trómos* (5156), used in the NT only in Mark 16:8; 1 Cor. 2:3; 2 Cor. 7:15; Eph. 6:15; Php. 2:12. It means “trembling, shaking, as an outward sign of fear or of being seized with great awe (1 Cor. 2:3). The associated verb is *trémō* (5141). It is used of the woman with the issue of blood who touched Jesus to be healed (Mark 5:25-34). When He realized power had gone forth from Him, He asked who touched Him. The woman came *trembling* to Jesus to confess she was the guilty party (Mark 5:33). This noun *trómos* represents the depth of the respect for owners slaves were to exhibit. They were to be utterly fearful of disobeying.

- J 2 in the sincerity of your heart,³⁸³
- J 3 as to Christ;³⁸⁴
- H 3 The prohibited motivation 6:6a
- J 1 {6} not by way of eyeservice,³⁸⁵
- J 2 as men-pleasers,
- H 4 The positive motivation 6:6b-7
- J 1 As Christ's slaves: but as slaves of Christ,³⁸⁶ 6:6b
- J 2 Heartfelt performance of God's will: doing the will of God from the heart.³⁸⁷ 6:6c

³⁸³ Eph. 6:5 - in the sincerity of your heart: "sincerity" is the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *haplôtês* (572), which means "(1) simplicity; as a moral trait *purity of motive, sincerity, integrity* (Eph. 6:5); (2) as an openness and sincerity in sharing with others *generosity, liberality* (Rom. 12:8)" ([Friberg](#)). Paul is saying that slaves should have an honest and sincere and open heart (attitude) in serving their masters. They shouldn't be phonies. Employees need to serve their employers in the same, sincere manner.

³⁸⁴ Eph. 6:5 - as to Christ: This is the secret of living in relationships that may, at times, prove to be onerous. Slaves were to submit to their slave-owner as they would if Christ were the owner. If we do things for Jesus, they become far more palatable.

³⁸⁵ Eph. 6:6 - not by way of eyeservice, as men-pleasers: "eyeservice" translates the [Accusative Feminine](#) Singular of *ophthalmodoulia* (3787). This word is used only twice in the NT, both times by Paul – in Eph. 6:6 and in Col. 3:22. [Friberg](#) defines it "as service rendered without dedication or a sense of inner obligation but mainly to attract attention *eyeservice*." An example today would be of an employee who is paid by the hour who works very hard when his boss is in the office, but when the boss is gone, he slacks off, takes long breaks, and does a lot of visiting. As soon as the boss comes back, he goes back to working hard.

"...men-pleasers" translates the [Nominative Masculine](#) Plural of the adjective *anthrōpáreskos* (441), used only in Eph. 6:6; Col. 3:22. It means "desiring to please people; substantively, one who sacrifices principle to please someone of superior authority *people-pleaser* (Eph. 6:6)" ([Friberg](#)). An example would be deliberately falsifying a document or a record in order to please one's boss. Another example might be a truck-driver who drives too many hours to meet the demands of his dispatcher, but falsifies his driver's log book in order to meet the regulations of the Department of Transportation.

³⁸⁶ Eph. 6:5 - but as slaves of Christ: "...slaves" is the [Nominative Masculine](#) Plural of the noun *doûlos* (1401), describing someone who is the property of another. Not only are literal slaves to consider themselves as slaves of Christ, but so are we all. A slave has no rights, and is completely committed to doing the will of his master. That should be the status that each of us chooses! Paul, for example, considered himself to be a slave of Christ (Rom. 1:1; 2 Cor. 4:5; Gal. 1:10; Php. 1:1) and of God (Tit. 1:1). Jesus took upon Himself the form of a slave (Php. 2:7). We are not greater than either of these, are we??? [The reader should be alerted to the fact that, despite the NASB's translation of "bond-servant(s)", all references given here are the same word "slave" (*doûlos*, 1401).]

³⁸⁷ Eph. 6:6 - from the heart: Literally, "from soul" (*psuchê'* 5590), "a many-sided word with the meaning derived from the context." (1) It can mean the "life-principle, physical life, breath" of any living creature. (2) It can refer to "earthly existence as opposed to supernatural existence." (3) It can refer to "the nonmaterial inner life of human beings for which the body serves as a dwelling place." (4) In certain contexts it is linked with words describing the loss of life. (Definitions adapted from [Friberg](#).) The third meaning is probably that which occurs here.

- J 3 With good will: {7} With good will render service,³⁸⁸ 6:7a
- J 4 For the Messiah: as to the Lord, and not to men,³⁸⁹ 6:7b
- H 5 The anticipated reward 6:8
- J 1 The good performed: {8} knowing that whatever good thing each one does,³⁹⁰
- J 2 The Messianic reward: this he will receive back from the Lord,³⁹¹

³⁸⁸ Eph. 6:7 - With good will render service: Literally, “With good will slaving away,” where “slaving away” is the [present](#) plural [participle](#) (with [imperative](#) force) of *douleuō* (1398), the common verb for “doing the work of a slave.”

“...good will” is the [Genitive Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *eúnoia* (2133), used only here in the NT. It means “...goodwill, wholehearted zeal, good attitude (Eph. 6:7)” ([Friberg](#)). Slaves are to serve their masters with earnestness, zeal, and with a good attitude. Everything that is required of slaves is also, by way of application, required of employees.

³⁸⁹ Eph. 6:7 - as to the Lord, and not to men: Whom is Paul referencing by “the Lord?” – God or Christ? Since he has just spoken of slaves obeying “as to the Christ” in Eph. 6:5, and told them they were to do “the will of God” “as slaves of Christ” in Eph. 6:6, it appears from the context that by “the Lord”, Paul had in mind here the [Messiah](#), Jesus.

“Lord” is the [Dative Masculine](#) Singular of the titular noun *kúrios* (2962), used 717X in the [UBS4](#) text. It is used 26X in 25 verses in Ephesians, first in Eph. 1:2. See the appropriate footnote in Eph. 1:2 for more information about *kúrios*. See the appropriate footnote at Eph. 6:5 for an explanation of Paul’s use of *kúrios* in Ephesians. As just mentioned, in Eph. 6:7 by *kúrios* Paul means the [Messiah](#), or [Christ](#), Jesus. Slaves are to be doing their work as to the Lord, Jesus the [Messiah](#), and not merely for men. The same applies today to employees and self-employed people. We are serving the Master of the Universe. Let us not put out shoddy work!

“...men” is the [Dative Masculine](#) Plural of the noun *ánthrōpos* (444), which here refers to generic mankind, as opposed to Deity. It is used 9X in this letter: Eph. 2:15; 3:5, 16; 4:8, 14, 22, 24; 5:31; 6:7. For more information on the meaning of this word, see the appropriate note at Eph. 4:22. Paul’s point here is that Christian slaves are to do their work for the [Messiah](#), not for a mere man. Employees and self-employed people should do the same. Excellence should be our trademark!

The name Stradivarius is synonymous with fine violins. This is true because Antonius Stradivarius insisted that no instrument constructed in his shop be sold until it was as near perfection as human care and skill could make it. Stradivarius observed, “God needs violins to send His music into the world, and if any violins are defective God’s music will be spoiled.” His work philosophy was summed up in one sentence: “Other men will make other violins, but no man shall make a better one.”

[Our Daily Bread](#), January 25, 1993.

³⁹⁰ Eph. 6:8 - whatever good thing each one does: That is, in a nutshell, what our mission in life as Christians is – to do good things in life for the benefit of Jesus, the [Messiah](#), and the people He has created, whether believers or unbelievers.

³⁹¹ Eph. 6:8 - this he will receive back from the Lord: We have this assurance, that anything of worth we do in this life will come back to bless us. The Lord Jesus will reward us, will compensate us for our service. What is true of slaves and their reward is true for all of us. There are qualifiers in that equation, of course, to which Paul has already alluded. They, and we, must serve sincerely, as to [Christ](#) (Eph. 6:5); not by way of eyeservice, as pleasing men, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart (Eph. 6:6); slaving away with good will, as to the Lord, not to men (Eph. 6:7); expecting compensation for every good thing done (Eph. 6:8).

As a young Christian, I was taught, and fully believed, that we will be rewarded with crowns. I had in mind a golden crown, such as kings wear. The Bible does indeed speak of crowns for the believer, but these are inevitably

J 3 The disregard for socioeconomic class: whether slave or free.³⁹²

G 2 The responsibility of masters 6:9

H 1 Even-handed treatment: {9} And masters, do the same things to them,³⁹³

not metal crowns, but crowns of non-material quality. See 1 Cor. 9:25 (imperishable wreath [or crown]); 2 Tim. 4:8 (crown of righteousness); James 1:12 (crown of life); 1 Peter 5:4 (unfading crown of glory); Rev. 2:10 (crown of life); Rev. 3:11 (crown). And, I was told we would cast these crowns at the feet of Jesus (Rev. 4:10). A closer examination reveals that I was wrong on the second count because I was wrong on the first count.

These passages on crowns reveal that we ordinary believers will not be given crowns of metal at all. To the contrary, our crowns will consist of intangible qualities, such as righteousness, life, and glory. We will have no golden crowns to cast at Jesus' feet. There are individuals who have golden crowns, but these are exceptional people, not ordinary, run-of-the-mill Christians. John saw 24 elders up in heaven, each one clothed in white garments, and wearing golden crowns on their heads (Rev. 4:4-5). Those crowns do not represent rewards for service. Rather, they represent ruling authority underneath the King. It is my belief, by the way, that twelve elders represent [Israel](#), and twelve represent the [Church](#). John continued, "And when the living creatures give glory and thanks to Him who sits on the throne, to Him who lives forever and ever, the twenty-four elders will fall down before Him who sits on the throne, and will worship Him who lives forever and ever, and will cast their crowns before the throne, saying, 'Worthy are You, our Lord and our God, to receive glory and honor and power; for You created all things, and because of Your will they existed, and were created'" (Rev. 4:9-10). Why did these elders cast their crowns before the throne? They are acknowledging their authority and rulership has been given to them by God. Their authority and their power come from God, and they are simply acknowledging the obvious. Though the text does not say so, it is not beyond the realm of my thinking that at some point, after the praise ends, the elders will retrieve the crowns that had been granted to them by God in the first place, and will resume their rule with their crowns on their head.

One other thing. There are a couple of parables that suggest that the reward for faithful service is authority to rule in Christ's coming kingdom. One of them is recorded in Luke 19:11-27. A nobleman left for a distant country to receive his kingdom. In the meantime he assigned his slaves to invest his money. One slave gained a ten-fold increase in his allotted money. The second engineered a five-fold increase. The returning king evaluated the first slave as having been faithful in a small thing. Therefore he gave him authority to rule over ten cities, a much greater responsibility. The second slave was given authority to rule over five cities, a commensurately greater responsibility. The parallel parable is recorded in Matt. 25:14-30.

I believe that our faithfulness in serving Jesus in this life will grant us a proportionately greater privilege of ruling underneath Jesus in the next life (Rev. 22:5). Exactly what that turns out to be remains to be seen. But the point is this: Faithfulness in serving Jesus in this life will result in greater responsibility to serve Jesus in His coming Kingdom in the next life. If you want to be significant in the next life, you had better be faithful in serving Jesus in this life. The King will notice!

³⁹² Eph. 6:8 - whether slave or free: Literally, "whether slave, whether free." "...whether ... whether" translates, in each case *eite* ([1535](#)), used 65X in the NT, characteristically only by Paul, and elsewhere only twice by Peter in 1 Pet. 2:13, 14. It is "a conditional disjunctive conjunction bringing together two objects in one's thoughts while keeping them distinct from each other *if, whether* (1 Cor. 12:26); *eite ... eite if... if* (Rom. 12:6-8); *whether ... or* (1 Cor. 3:22)" ([Friberg](#)). I have translated "whether ... whether" to demonstrate to the reader that the word is used twice. However, the NASB translation is to be preferred in a translation properly styled in English – "whether ... or."

"...slave" translates the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular of *doûlos* ([1401](#)), used 3X by Paul in this letter: Eph. 6:5, 6, 8. It identifies a slave, someone who has no rights of his own, but is the property of another.

"...free" translates the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular of the Adjective *eleútheros* ([1658](#)), which speaks here of one who is politically and socially free, "allowing for self-determination *free, independent, not bound* (John 8:33); substantively ... [with the article] *the freeman* (1 Cor. 7:22), opposite [as here] *doûlos* [[1401](#)] (slave, servant)" (adapted from [Friberg](#)).

Paul's point here is that every worker, regardless of whether he is a slave or he is a free man, should do his work heartily as to the Lord, knowing that the Lord will properly compensate each one, *regardless* of his socioeconomic condition. Jesus is an equal opportunity employer.

³⁹³ Eph. 6:9 - And masters, do the same things to them: Literally, "And the masters, the same things be doing to them ..." (an article appears before "masters"). "Masters" is the [Vocative Masculine](#) Plural of the noun *kúrios* ([2962](#)), here referring to the slave-owners, or foremen over slaves – "masters" or "lords." Though slave-owners,

- H 2 Speak with respect: and give up threatening,³⁹⁴
- H 3 Behavior-changing knowledge: knowing
- J 1 Both are accountable to the same Master: that both their Master and yours is in heaven,³⁹⁵
- J 2 He is impartial: and there is no partiality with Him.³⁹⁶

from a socio-economic, legal, and political point of view, enjoyed a huge advantage over their lowly slaves, they are commanded to treat them carefully – to treat them the way Jesus would treat them! – The reason? Because one day *they* too will have to stand next to their slaves before Jesus, their Master, and give an accounting of how *they* have treated their slaves! A compelling reason to be a good and fair and generous slave-master!

³⁹⁴ Eph. 6:9 - and give up threatening: more literally, “giving up the threatening ...” (the article appears before “threatening”).

“...giving up” is the 2nd Person Plural [Nominative Masculine Present Active Participle](#) of the verb *aniēmi* (447), used here with [Imperative](#) force. The verb is used “...basically, of relaxation of tension; (1) of chains *loose, unfasten* (Acts 16:26); (2) with a person as object *abandon, desert* (Heb. 13:5); (3) with an activity as object [as here] *give up, cease from* (Eph. 6:9)” ([Friberg](#)). This verb is used 4X in the NT – in Acts 16:26; 27:40; Eph. 6:9; Heb. 13:5.

“...the threatening” – the latter word is the [Accusative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *apheilē* (547), used in Acts 4:29; 9:1; Eph. 6:9. The word means “threat, threatening” ([Friberg, Thayer](#)). The word refers to verbal intimidation with the implication of physical punishment such as beating if the slave does not comply.

Paul is saying that “masters” or “lords” over slaves must constantly be foregoing verbal threatening, verbal manipulation. The reason is that the Ultimate Master (*kúrios*) of both slave and slave-master is up in heaven observing everything. He will judge both slave and slave-master without partiality. The slave-master will not get away with abusive talk just because he is a slave-master. Slaves are to speak civilly to their master, and masters are to speak civilly to their slaves.

By way of application, the same kind of equanimity ought to be observed by both employees and employers. There ought to be no abusive threatening or talk of retaliation. The Ultimate Master will call each to account for his verbal interaction. The same standard will be applied to each. Employers will not be judged on a more favorable standard than employees.

³⁹⁵ Eph. 6:9 - knowing that both their Master and yours is in heaven: Slave masters are constantly to be aware that the slave’s Master ([Nominative Masculine](#) Singular of the noun *kúrios*, 2962) is also the slave-master’s Master. He is up in heaven viewing and evaluating the deportment of both. The reader of the NASB should be alerted that the word translated “Lord” in Eph. 6:8 and the word translated “Master” in Eph. 6:9 is the identical Greek word, *kúrios* (2962). Since the term “[Christ](#)” appears twice in the immediate context, the referent of “Master” here is probably the Lord, Jesus.

³⁹⁶ Eph. 6:9 - and there is no partiality with Him: “partiality” is the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *prosōpōlēm̄psia* (4382), used only in Rom. 2:11; Eph. 6:9; Col. 3:25; James 2:1. In the first three passages, it is translated in the NASB as “partiality”; in the last instance, “personal favoritism.” [Friberg](#) translates it “partiality, favoritism, prejudice.” Paul’s point is that Jesus will not use a harsher standard in his evaluation of slaves than he uses in evaluation of their earthly masters. He will use an equally fair standard. This evaluation will most likely take place at the [Judgment Seat of Christ](#).

In American politics, we are presently (November of 2016) going through the most acrimonious campaign for President in my memory (and I was born in 1947). It is clear that Hillary Clinton, the Democratic Party candidate, illegally used a private server for emails when she was Secretary of State. That is a violation of federal law. In an FBI investigation, FBI Director James Comey concluded that no reasonable prosecutor would press charges, and he declined to do so himself. It became clear to me that if someone has power and prestige as a candidate for the Democratic party, he enjoys immunity. A common person would find himself being prosecuted by the US Dept of Justice, and could expect to find himself wearing an orange jump suit in a Federal prison. Jesus will employ no double standard when He evaluates slaves and their earthly masters. Socio-economic status on earth will not be given special consideration up in heaven.

B 6 Protection in Walking 6:10-20

C 1 The command to be strong: {10} Finally, ³⁹⁷ be strong 6:10

D 1 in the Lord ³⁹⁸

D 2 and in the strength of His might. ³⁹⁹

C 2 The command to put on God's full armor 6:11

D 1 The command: {11} Put on the full armor of God, ⁴⁰⁰

³⁹⁷ Eph. 6:10 - Finally: The Greek text reads *Toû loipoû*, literally, "The rest" A stylized paraphrase might read, "As to the rest" Paul began writing about the importance of the walk of the believer in Eph. 4:1. There he urged his readers "to walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called." In Eph. 4:17 he urged them, "...walk no longer as the [Gentiles](#) walk" In Eph. 5:2 he urged them to "walk in love" In Eph. 5:8 he urged them to "walk as children of light" And in Eph. 5:15, he urged them, "Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men, but as wise". Careful walking included buying back the time, understanding the will of the Lord, being controlled by the Spirit (including Spirit-filled worship), and being subject to one another in the fear of Christ (Eph. 5:15-21).

Walking carefully includes, therefore, the concept of mutual submission. At that point Paul began to proceed through human relations where submission was necessary – wives to husbands (Eph. 5:22-33); children to parents (Eph. 6:1-4), and slaves to their earthly masters (Eph. 6:5-9). In each of these three sections, Paul gave a balancing perspective to the authorities in those human relationships – to husbands (Eph. 5:25-33); to fathers (Eph. 6:4); and to slave masters (Eph. 6:9).

Now Paul comes to the final matter ("The rest") about which he wishes to write them. It is the final step in "walking carefully," begun at Eph. 5:15. It is the matter of spiritual warfare and the complete armor believers must use in their encounter with the supernatural (Eph. 6:10-20).

Loipoû is the [Genitive Neuter](#) Singular of the adjective *loipós* (3062). It is defined by [Thayer](#) as meaning "remaining, the rest." It is used here in the "...[neuter](#) as a substantive *tâ loipá the rest (of the things), other things* (Mark 4:19) ..." ([Friberg](#)). Paul uses "The rest" here in the singular, so he really only has one matter he wishes to discuss before his concluding personal notes (in Eph. 6:21-24). That topic, again, is spiritual warfare and the complete armor of God.

³⁹⁸ Eph. 6:10 - be strong in the Lord: the 2nd Person Plural [Present Passive Imperative](#) of the verb *endunamóō* (1743), meaning, in the active sense, "enable." [Thayer](#), in an active sense "1. to be strong, endue with strength, strengthen"; in a passive sense "2. to receive strength, be strengthened, increase in strength" It is in this last, [passive](#) sense that Paul used this verb. A slightly more accurate translation would be, "be strengthened in the Lord." This is a command, not an option. This begins Paul's final, concluding lecture on walking carefully – it is necessary to be strengthened in the Lord as we face spiritual warfare. "The Lord" refers to Jesus, the [Messiah](#).

³⁹⁹ Eph. 6:10 - and in the strength of His might: "strength" is the [Dative Neuter](#) Singular of the noun *krátos* (2904), "denoting the possession of force or strength that afford supremacy or control; (1) of God *sovereignty, power, might, dominion* (1 Tim. 6:16); of the [devil](#) *power, control* (Heb. 2:14); (3) concretely *mighty deed, miracle* (Luke 1:51)" ([Friberg](#)). This word is translated by the NASB as "mighty deeds" (Luke 1:51); "mightily" (Acts 19:20); "strength" (Eph. 1:19; 6:10); "might" (Col. 1:11); "power" (Heb. 2:14); and "dominion" (1 Tim. 6:16; 1 Pet. 4:11; 5:11; Jude 1:25; Rev. 1:6; 5:13).

"...might" is the [Genitive Feminine](#) Singular of *ischús* (2479). This word is a fairly close synonym of the noun *krátos*. It means "strength, power, might; used of the ability of human beings (Mark 12:30), of angelic power (2 Pet. 2:11), and as an attribute of God (Rev. 5:12)" ([Friberg](#)). It is translated in the NASB as "strength" (Mark 12:30, 33; Luke 10:27; 1 Pet. 4:11); "might" (Eph. 1:19; 6:10; 2 Pet. 2:11; Rev. 5:12; 7:12); and "power" (2 Thess. 1:9).

Those who are going to defeat the power of the demonic hordes can only do so in the strength and might of Jesus.

⁴⁰⁰ Eph. 6:11 - Put on the full armor of God: "Put on" is the 2nd Person Plural [Aorist Middle Imperative](#) of the verb *endiúō* (1746). In a literal sense, this is the typical verb for putting on clothes (see Matt. 22:11; 27:31). However, it is also used in a metaphorical sense of putting on [Christ](#) (Rom. 13:14) or having clothed oneself with [Christ](#) (Gal. 3:27). Here, the believer is charged with the obligation of putting on for himself, at a point in time, the

- D 2 The reason: so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil.⁴⁰¹
- C 3 The nature of the conflict 6:12
- D 1 Not against mere humans: {12} For our struggle is not against flesh and blood,⁴⁰²
- D 2 But against demonic spiritual forces

complete armor of God. Paul does not present this as an optional extra. It is a command. Nor is it something others can do for us. We must do it for ourselves. Nor is it an ongoing process. He portrays this as a decisive act at a point in time. He used this verb, also in the [Aorist Middle](#), in Eph. 4:24, where he urged his readers decisively to put on for themselves the “new man” (literally). He uses it here, commanding us to put on for ourselves the complete armor of God (Eph. 6:11). He will use it a final time in Eph. 6:14, where he speaks of “having put on for ourselves the breastplate of righteousness” ([JTB](#)), again, an [Aorist Middle](#).

“...full armor” is the [Accusative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *panoplia* ([3833](#)), which means, “literally, the full preparation of a foot soldier for offense and defense *full armor, weapons and armor, complete suit of armor* (Luke 11:22); metaphorically of the spiritual characteristics of a believer for Christian warfare against evil” ([Friberg](#)). This word is used but 3X in the NT, the afore-mentioned literal use (Luke 11:22), and the two metaphorical uses by Paul in Eph. 6:11, 13. The Christian is urged to put on for himself the complete armor of God, as outlined in the text below. Any single component missing makes the sloppy believer that much more vulnerable to falling prey to the diabolical schemes of the [devil](#).

⁴⁰¹ Eph. 6:11 - the schemes of the [devil](#): “schemes” is the [Accusative Feminine](#) Plural of the noun *methodeia* ([3180](#)), used only by Paul in the NT, and only in this letter (Eph. 4:14). As the English reader can discern, there is nothing negative in the term “method.” It is used in extra-biblical literature as a certain “method” for collecting rents. We would use the term “methodical,” an orderly procedure.

But in the NT, Paul only uses it, twice, and in very negative contexts (Eph. 4:14; 6:11). Eph. 4:14: As a result, we are no longer to be children, tossed here and there by waves and carried about by every wind of doctrine, by the trickery of men, by craftiness in deceitful *scheming*,” where “scheming” translates *methodeia*. In Eph. 6:11, he uses it in the negative context of “the *schemes* of the [devil](#).”

“...[devil](#)” is the [Genitive Masculine](#) Singular of the adjective *diabolos* ([1228](#)) “slandering,” here used substantivally as “*the slanderer*,” (appearing with the article), used “predominately, as a specific name for Satan as the accuser *the devil* (Matt. 4:1)” ([Friberg](#)). The word means, literally, “overthrower.” If you slander someone you are trying to overthrow his character.

We have seen a lot of slandering in the current American presidential election (summer and autumn of 2016). Both Donald Trump and Hillary Clinton have done everything they can to slander the character of his/her opponent and overthrow him/her in the presidential race. Likewise, we have seen the mainstream news media do everything in their power to overthrow Donald Trump, the Republican candidate. They do so by overlooking or minimizing negative facts about Hillary Clinton and by pounding on the negative aspects of Donald Trump. In fact I would say that the mainstream news media consist of Democratic Party operatives masquerading as journalists. They are diabolical (pun intended).

⁴⁰² Eph. 6:12 - For our struggle is not against flesh and blood: literally, “the struggle by us ...”, where “struggle” is the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *pâlê* ([3823](#)), literally, “wrestling (a contest between two in which each endeavors to throw the other, and is decided when the victor is able to hold his opponent down with his hand upon his neck)” ([Thayer](#)). This term is used only once in Scripture, here, wherein Paul uses the term “figuratively, of the believer’s struggle against evil forces *conflict, struggle, fight* (Eph. 6:12)” ([Friberg](#)).

“...is not against flesh and blood” – literally, “is not against blood and flesh,” wherein “blood” is the [Accusative Neuter](#) Singular of the noun *haima* ([129](#)), “blood,” and “flesh” is the [Accusative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *sârx* ([4561](#)), “flesh.” Together, the two nouns are used together metaphorically to describe those who are in the class of humans as opposed to those beings who exist in the spiritual realm, in this case, the evil spiritual realm. Paul is cautioning us to remember that humans are not our enemies. The real enemies are [Satan](#) and his hordes of [demons](#). Ours is a wrestling against the demons, not against people.

- E 1 but against the rulers,⁴⁰³
- E 2 against the powers,⁴⁰⁴
- E 3 against the world forces of this darkness,⁴⁰⁵
- E 4 against the spiritual forces of wickedness⁴⁰⁶ in the heavenly

⁴⁰³ Eph. 6:12 - but against the rulers: “rulers” is the [Accusative Feminine](#) Plural of the noun *archê* (746), strictly, “beginning” or “...*primacy*; (1) in relation to place *corner* of a cloth (Acts 10:11); (2) in relation to time *beginning* of anything (Matt. 24:8) ... (3) in relation to rank (*position of*) *power, rule, domain* (Eph. 1:21); as a person with authority or a supernatural being *ruler, authority* (Rom. 8:38)” ([Friberg](#)). Paul here is saying that the combat we Christians are involved in is not against people, but against [Satan](#) and his hordes of [demons](#). Perhaps Paul used the word *archê* here because angels were among the first created beings, and they were delegated powers. Unfortunately these particular “first beings” (angels) were deceived by Satan to revolt with him against God and follow his regime. These were non-elect angels. The angels who remained true to God are the “elect” or “chosen” angels (1 Tim. 5:21). Apparently there were a third of the angels who rebelled against God and followed Satan (Rev. 12:4). These are the ones to whom Paul is here referring.

⁴⁰⁴ Eph. 6:12 - against the powers: “powers” is the [Accusative Feminine](#) Plural of the noun *exousía* (1849), the most basic meaning of which is “authority.” According to [Friberg](#), the meaning is authority, right, power” In this context, those to whom Paul is referring are the demonic authorities – those spirit beings who follow the leading of God’s Arch Enemy, [Satan](#). These beings are called, in the NT, variously [demons](#), [unclean spirits](#), or [fallen angels](#). Personally, I would have translated this word as “authorities,” rather than the NASB’s “powers.”

⁴⁰⁵ Eph. 6:12 - against the world forces of this darkness: “...world forces” is the [Accusative Masculine](#) Plural of the noun *kosmokrátōr* (2888), which means “one holding power over the world; plural in the NT, for devilish forces, spirit beings who control parts of the world system *world rulers* (Eph. 6:12)” ([Friberg](#)). Satan is “the god of this world” who “has blinded the minds of the unbelieving so that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God” (2 Cor. 4:4). He and his demons are, corporately, “the world forces of this darkness.” This word appears only here in the NT.

“...of this darkness” – “darkness” is the [Genitive](#) Neuter Singular of the noun *skótos* (4655), used here, metaphorically, as the domain under the authority of the [devil](#) and demons *realm of evil, evil world* (Luke 22:53; Eph. 6:12)” ([Friberg](#)). Paul used this term three times in this letter – in Eph. 5:8, 11; 6:12. He used it in this metaphorical sense on each of the occasions.

So what Paul is saying is this: as Christians, we are not wrestling against human beings. We are wrestling against a global onslaught of [demons](#). Their evil agenda will climax with a charismatic, appealing, persuasive, suave global leader who will ultimately manipulate which people are able to survive financially (Rev. 13:16-18). He will be [Satan’s](#) version of the [Messiah](#) – the [Antichrist](#). He was portrayed to both Daniel and John as an evil, ferocious beast (Dan. 7:7-8; Rev. 13:1-18).

⁴⁰⁶ Eph. 6:12 - against the spiritual forces of wickedness: “spiritual forces” translates the [Accusative Neuter](#) Plural of the adjective *pneumatikós* (4152), referring generally to that which is “spiritual, pertaining to the spirit, opposite *sarkikós* [4559] (*fleshly, carnal*) and *sárkinos* [4560] (*worldly, earthly*) ...” ([Friberg](#)). This word, *pneumatikós*, appears 26X in the NT, and is used almost exclusively by Paul. Peter uses it twice in 1 Pet. 2:5. The context must determine whether this word is used in a positive or a negative context. It is used almost universally in a positive context, with the lone exception being this occurrence (Eph. 6:12). Here it is qualified as, literally, “the spiritual [forces] of the evil.” Note that the word “forces” does not, technically, appear in the Greek text. NASB editors have supplied it (correctly, I believe) to convey Paul’s meaning. [Friberg](#) identifies this usage here “(4) as an adjective denoting relationship to satanic forces; neuter plural *tà pneumatikà tēs ponērias* as a substantive *spiritual forces of evil, supernatural evil powers* (Eph. 6:12).” [Satan](#) and his [demons](#) are evil, of course, and Paul is piling synonym on top of synonym in this passage to describe the diabolical and evil spirit nature of our battle as Christians. We are wrestling against evil spirits, not against humans. Paul uses this word twice elsewhere in this letter, referring to “every spiritual blessing” in Eph. 1:3, and to “spiritual songs” in Eph. 5:19.

“...of wickedness” is actually “of the wickedness” or “of the evil.” “Wickedness” translates the [Genitive Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *ponēria* (4189). This word is used but 7X in the NT, and is everywhere translated in the NASB as some form of “wickedness” except in Matt. 22:18, where it is translated as “malice.” According to [Friberg](#) it is used “only in a moral and ethical sense in the NT, of intentionally practiced ill will *evil, wickedness*,

places.⁴⁰⁷

C 4 The employment of full armor 6:13-20

D 1 The command: {13} Therefore, take up the full armor of God,⁴⁰⁸

malice (Luke 11:39); plural, for various expressions of evil-mindedness *wicked ways, evil doings, malicious deeds* (Acts 3:26).” Paul is specific here, using the article, “*the wickedness,*” or “*the evil.*” “The evil” is singular, and it encompasses all the specific evil begun by [Satan](#) and perpetuated in his [demons](#) and in humans, and afflicting all of creation. Human beings must be redeemed from this evil by grace through faith in Jesus (Eph. 2:8-9). Our spirits can be redeemed from evil in this life, but our bodies only through the process of death and / or resurrection (1 Thess. 4:13-18). Animals are afflicted by man’s evil (they die), but are not redeemed. This world cannot be redeemed, either. It is to be destroyed by fire. God will create a new universe wherein will dwell only righteousness, righteous angels, righteous beings, and righteous humans (2 Pet. 3:10-13). Animals and other intelligent beings apparently exist in the heavenly, spiritual realm (Rev. 4:6-8; 5:14; 19:11, 14). There is no redemption program for evil angels. Only righteous angels exist in the heavenly realm and in New Jerusalem (Rev. 8:2; 16:1; 21:9, 12). All evil and all evil people will be excluded from the [Eternal State](#) (Matt. 25:41; 2 Pet. 3:13; 21:8).

⁴⁰⁷ Eph. 6:12 - in the heavenly places: literally, “in the heavenlies” (the word “places” does not exist in the Greek text). “...heavenly places” translates the [Dative](#) Neuter Plural of the adjective *epouránios* ([2032](#)), used 19X in 17 verses in the NT, and always in the plural in Ephesians (Eph. 1:3, 20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12). It is a compound word, originating from the preposition *epí* ([1909](#)), upon, on, over, and the noun *ouranós* ([3772](#)) heaven(s), used 273X in the NT (90X in the plural; 183X in the singular). *ouranós* is used 4X in Ephesians – Eph. 1:10; 3:15; 4:10; 6:9; and always in the plural. Paul’s use of *epouránios* ([2032](#)) in this letter reveals a mostly positive context – that God has blessed us up in the heavenlies in [Christ](#) (Eph. 1:3); that God seated the risen [Christ](#) at His own right hand up in the heavenlies (Eph. 1:20); that He (positionally) raised us believers up with [Christ](#) and seated us with Jesus in the heavenlies in [Christ](#) Jesus (Eph. 2:6); that God, through the [Church](#), made His wisdom known to the good angels in the heavenlies (Eph. 3:10); and finally, that our wrestling as believers is not against humans, but against the demonic forces up in the heavenlies (Eph. 6:12). In my opinion, the adjective carries a positive connotation in the first four instances of Paul’s use of the word here in Ephesians, but a negative one in the last instance, where, clearly, demonic forces in the heavenlies is the subject of Paul’s discussion. Really “the heavenlies” has a neutral aura about it. But obviously demonic forces as well as good angels frequent the heavenlies.

It is interesting that Paul, in Eph. 2:2, designates Satan as “the prince (*archōn*, [758](#)) of the power (*exousia*, [1849](#)) of the air (*aēr*, [109](#)).” The “air” seems to refer to the lower portion of the heavens, that is the heaven in which birds fly. But evidently demons have access to the more remote heavenlies. Satan, for example, was asked to give an account of his whereabouts, presenting himself before the Lord along with the good angels (Job 1:6-7; 2:1-2). We gather, then, that there are occasions when Satan, and, perhaps, his demons, have access, in a respectful way, to God up in the third heaven. The location of this reporting tribunal in Job 1, 2 is not stated, however. There is a most curious description in Daniel 10:1-14 of an angel appearing to Daniel after the latter had been praying and fasting for three entire weeks. The angel reported that he had been despatched immediately as soon as Daniel’s prayer had been heard, but that “the prince of the kingdom of Persia” (modern-day Iran) had withstood him for 21 days. It was not until Michael, “one of the chief princes,” had come to his aid that he was able to escape the battle with “the kings of Persia.” So we conclude that demonic forces, as well as good angels traffic between the abode of God and the earth below. Sometimes there are raging battles in the heavenlies of which we know nothing. Prayer is important, and God hears, but sometimes evil angels detain good angels before they can finally come to our support. There will come a time when Satan and his demonic angels will mount an all-out assault upon “the heaven,” apparently the abode of God (Rev. 12:7-9). But Michael and his angels will prove to be stronger than the [devil](#) and his angels, and will expel them from heaven. The text states, literally, “and no place was found for them in the heaven” (Rev. 12:8). There are forces at work in the heavenly realms concerning which we have no idea.

⁴⁰⁸ Eph. 6:13 - Therefore, take up the full armor of God: “Therefore” translates two words in Greek, *dià toûto*, literally, “on account of this.” The first word, *dià*, is the [Accusative](#) case of the preposition *dià* ([1223](#)), which, with the [Accusative](#), is used ([Friberg’s](#) definition) II. (4) “in answers giving reason and inferences *dià toûto therefore, for this reason* (Mark 11:24).” The second of the two words is *toûto*, which is the [Accusative Neuter](#) Singular of the demonstrative pronoun *hoûtos* ([3778](#)). This is a special use of the [Neuter](#) *toûto* this [[Friberg](#) (5)]; “(a) to refer to what preceded.” Paul has made his case in Eph. 6:11-12 that we believers are constantly in a wrestling match, not with humans, but with the demonic forces of evil. It is *on account of this reason* that we need to take up the full armor of God.

“...take up” is the 2nd Person Plural [Aorist Imperative Active](#) of the verb *analambánō* ([353](#)), used here for the

6:13a

- D 2 The reasons 6:13b
- E 1 To resist: so that you will be able to resist⁴⁰⁹ in the evil day,⁴¹⁰
- E 2 To stand: and having done everything, to stand firm.⁴¹¹
- D 3 The command to stand: {14} Stand firm therefore,⁴¹² 6:14a
- D 4 The pieces of armor 6:14-20

first time in this letter, and used here in reference to taking up “the full armor of God.” Paul will use the verb one more time in Ephesians in reference to taking up “the shield of faith” (Eph. 6:16). Interestingly, this seldom-used verb (13X in the NT) is frequently used in reference to the risen [Christ’s](#) being “received up” or “taken up” into heaven (Mark 16:19; Acts 1:2, 11, 22; 1 Tim. 3:16). It is a combination of the preposition *aná* (303), which, when used, as here, as a prefix to verbs, means “up, back, again” ([Friberg](#)); and the common verb *lambánō* (2983), “take” or “receive.” The [Imperative](#) indicates this is a command to Christians; the [Aorist](#) indicates a decisive action at a point in time without reference to the frequency of occurrence.

“...full armor” is the [Accusative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *panoplia* (3833), used previously in Eph. 6:11. A literal listing of “full armor” “includes shield, sword, lance, helmet, greaves, and breastplate” ([Thayer](#)). Here, of course, Paul uses the term in a metaphorical sense to describe the qualities Christians must use in achieving victory in, or in simply surviving, spiritual warfare.

⁴⁰⁹ Eph. 6:13 - to resist: the [Aorist Active Infinitive](#) of the verb *anthístēmi* (436), used here “...as taking a firm stand *stand firm, stand one’s ground* (Eph. 6:13) ([Friberg](#)). The Christian is never to “give in” to evil. We are resolutely to do everything in our power to oppose the demonic forces of evil in our own personal lives. This requires the knowledgeable and skillful use of every piece of spiritual armor at our disposal.

⁴¹⁰ Eph. 6:13 - in the evil day: literally, “in the day, the evil (one).” “...evil” is the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the adjective *ponēros* (4190), used by Paul in this letter in Eph. 5:16; 6:13, 16. In the first instance he stated that “the days are evil;” in the second, he referred to the specific “evil day;” in the third, he identified “the evil one,” i.e. [Satan](#). “Evil” is to be thought of as that which is unrighteous, malicious, unrighteous, morally and spiritually repugnant, and thus harmful.

“...the evil day” (“day” is the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *hēméra*, 2250) does not here refer to a literal 24-hour period of time, but to a “day” or “occasion” in which the evil forces of darkness tempt the believer to yield to evil practice. In that sense, “the evil day” may potentially occur on any and every day. Or it could refer to an occasion of emergency through some crisis which presents itself to the believer. Paul used the word “day” 3X in this letter – in a good sense in Eph. 4:30, “the day of redemption;” and in a negative sense in Eph. 5:16, “the days are evil,” and also in Eph. 6:13, “in the evil day.”

Paul’s point here is that unless we take advantage of the full armor of God, we will not be successful in withstanding and resisting temptation on the day in which opportunity to commit evil and unrighteousness presents itself.

⁴¹¹ Eph. 6:13 - to stand firm: the [Aorist Active Infinitive](#) of the verb *histēmi* (2476). This common verb, used 155X in the NT, is here used in the sense of “stand up to,” “offer resistance to” ([Friberg](#)). Paul uses it 3X in this letter, in Eph. Eph. 6:11, “stand firm against the schemes of the [devil](#);” in Eph. 6:13, “having done everything (in spiritual warfare), to stand firm;” and in Eph. 6:14, “Stand firm therefore, having girded your loins with truth.” All three instances occur in the context of spiritual warfare. We Christians are not to yield, or give in to temptation. We are to resist it, oppose it.

⁴¹² Eph. 6:14 - Stand firm: the 2nd Person Plural [Aorist Active Imperative](#) of the verb *histēmi* (2476). Christians are commanded decisively to offer resistance to evil, to stand up to it. See the appropriate footnote on this verb in Eph. 6:13 for more information.

- E 1 Truth: HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH, ⁴¹³ 6:14a
- E 2 Righteousness: and HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS, ⁴¹⁴ 6:14b
- E 3 Preparedness to proclaim the Good News: {15} and having SHOD YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF

⁴¹³ Eph. 6:14 - HAVING GIRDED YOUR LOINS WITH TRUTH: Paul is using the imagery of a Roman soldier. But it is likely he also adapted his description here from Isa. 11:4-5, which depicts the [Messiah](#) as a fair and impartial King/Judge. It is particularly the two lines in Isa. 11:5 that Paul adapts here in Ephesians, equating the phrase “having girded your loins” in Eph. 6:14 with the phrases “belt about his loins” and “belt about his waist” in Isa. 11:5. He also speaks of “truth” in Eph. 6:14 as an outgrowth of “righteousness” and “faithfulness” in Isa. 11:5 as follows:

4 But with righteousness He will judge the poor, And decide with fairness for the afflicted of the earth; And He will strike the earth with the rod of His mouth, And with the breath of His lips He will slay the wicked. 5 Also righteousness will be the belt about His loins, And faithfulness the belt about His waist. (Isaiah 11:4-5).

“...having girded” is the 2nd Person [Masculine](#) Plural [Nominative Aorist Middle Participle](#) (with [Imperative](#) force) of the verb *peridzō nnumi* (4024). The [Middle](#) Voice means “gird oneself, bind about oneself.” “...idomatically *peridzō nnunai tēn sophūn* literally *tighten the belt around the waist, i.e. get ready, prepare oneself* (Eph. 6:14)” ([Friberg](#)).

“...your loins,” literally, “the loins of you,” where “loins” is the [Accusative Feminine](#) Singular of *osphūs* (3751), which in this context means, simply, “waist,” as it is so translated by NASB in Matt. 3:4 and Mark 1:6. “Waist” would be a better translation here, for “loins” is too archaic for modern English.

“...truth” is the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *alētheia* (225). This noun is used in this letter as that which corresponds with the gospel (Eph. 1:13); with Jesus (Eph. 4:21); with God, righteousness, and holiness (Eph. 4:24); as that which shuns falsehood (Eph. 4:25); as that which corresponds with light, goodness, and righteousness (Eph. 5:9); with righteousness, the gospel, faith, salvation, the [Holy Spirit](#), and the word of God; and as that which is antagonistic to the values of Satan (Eph. 6:14-17).

Paul’s point is interesting. Since the [Messiah](#) will rule and judge with faithfulness as a belt around His waist, it is entirely appropriate that the [Messiah’s](#) followers gird themselves around their waists with the belt of truth.

⁴¹⁴ Eph. 6:14 - HAVING PUT ON THE BREASTPLATE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS: Paul here quotes the first line of Isa. 59:17, which is a fascinating passage. The theme of Isaiah is “Yahweh Is Salvation” (see the author’s [Analytical Outline of Isaiah](#) to reference this and the following comments in this paragraph). The broader section of Isaiah 49-59 is “The Salvation of the Servant (the [Messiah](#)).” Chapters 58-59 of Isaiah detail “The Criteria for Blessing.” Isaiah 59 itself discusses the criterion of “Dealing with Sin.” The subsets under that heading include (1) “Judah’s depravity detailed” (Isa. 59:1-8); (2) “Judah’s blind groping as a result of sin” (Isa. 59:9-12); (3) “Isaiah’s confession of sin on behalf of the nation” (Isa. 59:13-15a); (4) “Yahweh’s own provision of an intercessor (the [Messiah](#)) to bring salvation to [Israel](#) forever and justice to the world (during the [Millennium](#) and beyond)” (Isa. 59:15b-21). So the One who “put on righteousness like a breastplate” in Isa. 59:17 is none other than Yahweh Himself (Isa. 59:15b) in the Person of the [Messiah](#) (called a “Redeemer” in Isa. 59:20), who “will come to Zion, and to those who turn from transgression in Jacob” (Isa. 59:20). The basis for this deliverance is Yahweh’s [\(New\) Covenant](#), in which He promises to place His [Spirit](#) upon them, and in which He promises to place His words in the mouths of them and their offspring forever! (Isa. 59:21).

“...BREASTPLATE” is the [Accusative Masculine](#) Singular of the noun *thō’rax* (2382): “a breastplate or corset consisting of two parts and protecting the body on both sides from the neck to the middle” ([Thayer](#)). In the NT it is used figuratively of the breastplate of *righteousness* in Eph. 6:14 and of the breastplate of *faith and love* in 1 Thess. 5:8. It is used in a descriptive sense of the breastplates possessed by a plague of terrible locusts in Rev. 9:9. It is used in a literal sense to describe the breastplates of an army of two hundred million cavalry riders in Rev. 9:17.

“...RIGHTEOUSNESS” is the [Genitive Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *dikaïosunē* (1343), used in this letter in Eph. 4:24; 5:9; 6:14. It is used “(4) of the right behavior God requires of persons *righteousness, good behavior, uprightness* (Matt. 5:20), opposite *adikia* [93] (*unrighteousness, wrongdoing*)” ([Friberg](#)). So the breastplate of the Christian “warrior” is a breastplate of righteousness, not a breastplate of iron or titanium. It is an ethical breastplate for spiritual battle, not a metal breastplate for mere physical battle.

What Paul is saying is that, just as vital as a breastplate was in battle for a Roman soldier, just so, living a life of integrity and compliance with God’s standards of rectitude and appropriate behavior is equally as vital to our spiritual lives in wrestling against the [devil](#) and his demons. Obedience and doing the right thing is a tremendous means of warding off the deceitful stratagems of the [devil](#).

PEACE; ⁴¹⁵ 6:15

⁴¹⁵ Eph. 6:15 - and having shod YOUR FEET WITH THE PREPARATION OF THE GOSPEL OF PEACE: Paul borrows here from the text of Isaiah 52:7, “How lovely on the mountains are the feet of him who brings good news, who announces peace and brings good news of happiness, who announces salvation, and says to Zion, ‘Your God reigns!’” The following quotation in reference to the “good news” alluded to in Isa. 52:7-10 is captured in the author’s footnote on that section in his [Annotated Analysis of Isaiah](#).

52:7-10 title - good news: Though the initial fulfillment in view here is the good news of [Israel’s](#) release from Babylon to return to the Promised Land, the ultimate fulfillment is Jesus’ reign in [Zion](#), seated on David’s throne during His [Millennial Kingdom](#). Isaiah reveals more about the [Millennium](#) than any other prophet. The only instance in which the duration of His [Millennial](#) reign is given is in Revelation 20:1-7. Oftentimes what is true of the [Millennium](#) is also true of the [Eternal State](#). Jesus will reign from [Zion](#) in both instances. This good news proclamation is applied by the [Apostle](#) Paul to [Christ's first advent](#) (Rom. 10:15)!

Paul’s application of this quotation here in Eph. 6:15 is noticeably different from either Isaiah’s original use or Paul’s own application in Rom. 10:15. Here, here he applies it to the Christian’s preparedness in understanding and being able to share with others at a moment’s notice (1 Pet. 3:15) his understanding of the entire Christian message of the good news of [salvation](#) that brings the peace of God to him personally and to all who believe in Jesus, the [Messiah](#). This preparedness gives the believer a good footing so he can stand firm and resist [Satan’s](#) demonic attacks against truth in the life-long battle in which we Christians find ourselves.

“...having shod” is the 2nd Person [Nominative Masculine](#) Plural [Aorist Middle Participle](#) of the verb *hupodēō* (5265), used only in Mark 6:9; Acts 12:8; and Eph. 6:15 in the NT. The action anticipated here is that the believer will only be able to “stand firm” (Eph. 6:14) against demonic onslaughts if he has already “put on” for himself upon his own feet the traction-providing, nail-studded sandals (of the Roman soldier) of his own personal preparation to understand and convey the good news about the peace God provides through the substitutionary death and resurrection of Jesus the [Messiah](#).

“...your feet” is literally, “the feet.” “...feet” is the [Accusative Masculine](#) Plural of the noun *pous* (4228), used only twice in this letter, in Eph. 1:22 and 6:15. It is almost always, in the NT, as here, used in reference to the human appendages used for walking.

“...with the preparation” is literally, “with preparation,” where “preparation” is the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *etoimasia* (2091), which means “the act of preparing” or “the condition of a person or thing so far forth as prepared, preparedness, readiness” ([Thayer](#)) or “as a quality, *readiness, preparedness, preparation* (Eph. 6:15)” ([Friberg](#)). This word is used only here in the entire NT.

“...of the gospel” is the [Genitive Neuter](#) Singular of the noun *euaggelion* (2098), which means, simply, “good news.” The Old English translation of “good news” was originally “godspel,” wherein “god” meant “good” and “spel” meant “news.” Unfortunately, this archaic spelling has been retained in virtually all English translations, and the simple meaning “good news” is obscured. In my view “good news” would be a far better translation of the Greek *euaggelion* than the obscure and archaic “gospel.”

The content of the “good news” must be learned from the context. For example, in Matthew, Jesus is portrayed as proclaiming and referring to “the good news of the kingdom” (Matt. 4:23; 9:35; 24:14). Paul refers, in his writings, to “the good news of God” (Rom. 1:1; 15:16); the “good news” of God’s Son (Rom. 1:9); “the good news of Christ” (Rom. 15:19); and even “my good news” (Rom. 16:25; see also 1 Cor. 15:1). In the letter to the Ephesians, Paul used the noun 4X, speaking of “the good news of your salvation” (Eph. 1:13); of “the promise in Christ Jesus through the good news” (Eph. 3:6); of “the preparation of the good news of peace” (Eph. 6:15); and of “the mystery of the good news” (Eph. 6:19). In a fuller sense, Paul, in Eph. 6:15, is speaking of the “good news” from God about Jesus the [Messiah](#), in which the latter is God’s anointed [Prophet](#), [Priest](#), and [King](#), who, as God/Man, allowed Himself to be offered on the cross in payment for the sins of the world, and who is presently the Great High Priest (Heb. 4:14), and who is coming back to be King of [Israel](#) (Zech. 9:9, 16-17; Matt. 21:5; Luke 1:26-33; John 1:49; 12:13) and of the entire world (Zech. 14:9). Trusting in Jesus, the ultimate Anointed One, assures one of forgiveness of sins (Acts 13:38-39), of eternal life (John 3:16-18, 36; John 11:25-27), and of participation with Jesus in His kingdom (Luke 23:39-43).

“...of peace” is literally, “of the peace.” “Peace” is here the [Genitive Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *eirē nē* (1515), the state of tranquility between two otherwise adversarial parties, resulting in a condition of well-being and freedom from anxiety as a result of that conflict. Of what particular “peace” is Paul speaking here? I believe he is speaking of the peace between God and man that comes to each person who places his trust in Jesus as the [Christ](#), the [Messiah](#), God’s Ultimate Anointed One – anointed to be God’s ultimate [Prophet](#), ultimate [Priest](#), and ultimate [King](#). Paul spoke of this peace in Rom. 5:1, “Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” In this world, however, there will always be conflict between the believer and [Satan](#) and his forces (as this passage, Eph. 6:10-18, underscores), and between the believer and the world, propagandized by, deceived by, and controlled by [Satan](#) (John 16:33; 1 John 2:15-17). Nevertheless, the believer, though experiencing

- E 4 The faith: {16} in addition to all, taking up the shield ⁴¹⁶
6:16
- G 1 The nature of the shield: of faith ⁴¹⁷
- G 2 The benefit of the shield: with which you will be
able to extinguish all the flaming arrows ⁴¹⁸ of the

conflict in this world, is to trust in God and in [Christ](#), being freed from anxiety, and experiencing inner peace from God (Php. 4:6-7).

⁴¹⁶ Eph. 6:16 - taking up the shield: better, “having taken up,” which is the 2nd Person [Nominative Masculine Plural Aorist Active Participle](#) of the verb *analambánō* (353), used in this letter only in Eph. 6:13, 16. See the appropriate footnote at Eph. 6:13 for more information on this verb.

“...the shield,” where “shield” is the [Accusative Masculine Singular](#) of *thureós* (2375), used only here in the NT. The Roman shield was a large, oblong, four-cornered shield ([Thayer](#)). It was covered with leather, the better to extinguish flaming arrows. In that case, it was dipped in water, the better to act as a flame retardant. The believer’s shield is not a wooden one covered with leather, but rather, a metaphorical shield consisting of “the faith.” (See the next footnote.)

⁴¹⁷ Eph. 6:16 - of faith: This translation, while not unwarranted, is a bit misleading. As it stands, it conveys the notion that we believers are to take up the shield of trusting (i.e. the quality of faith) in God and [Christ](#). If that is what Paul were intending, he would have exhorted us, “taking up *ton thureón pisteōs*,” which is an anarthrous construction (meaning that there is no article in front of the word “faith” – *pisteōs*). But that is not what he wrote. He wrote, “taking up *ton thureón tēs pisteōs*,” (notice the presence of the article “the,” *tēs*, which should be translated, “the faith.” This is not “faith in general,” the anarthrous, non-specific faith, but “the (articulated) specific faith,” which is “code” for the content of the faith that has been delivered by the [apostles](#). From today’s perspective, that faith would be the content of the New Testament. Of course, that content of faith must actually be believed, so “faith in general” cannot be eliminated from the equation. Specifically, this piece of armor is “the faith that is anchored in the content of the New Testament.” It is not “just any old faith.” This is the same “content of faith” to which Jude referred in his letter, in which he wrote, “I felt the necessity to write to you appealing that you contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all handed down to the saints” (Jude 1:3).

⁴¹⁸ Eph. 6:16 - with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows: the literal Greek word order is as follows: “with which you will be able – all the arrows of the evil one having been set on fire – to extinguish.”

“...with which” – “which” is the [Dative Masculine Singular](#) of the relative pronoun *hós* (3739). Its [masculine](#) gender links it backwards to the [masculine](#) gender *thureós* (2375), “shield,” further identified as “the shield of the faith.”

“...to extinguish” is the [Aorist Active Infinitive](#) of the verb *sbénnumi* (4570), used only here in this letter. It means, “literally *extinguish, quench, put out* something, as fire (Mark 9:48) or lamps (Matt. 25:8); metaphorically, of an activity *cause to cease, thwart, block* (Matt. 12:20; Eph. 6:16); figuratively *stifle, suppress, restrain* (1 Thess. 5:19)” ([Friberg](#)).

“...flaming” is the [Accusative Neuter Plural Perfect Passive Participle](#) of the verb *puróō* (4448), literally here referring to arrows “having been set afire.” This verb is used but 6X in the NT – metaphorically by Paul in 1 Cor. 7:9; 1 Cor. 11:29; literally by Paul here in Eph. 6:16; literally by Peter in 2 Pet. 3:12 (“the heavens will be destroyed by **burning**”); and figuratively by John of Jesus’ feet, which “were like burnished bronze when it has been **made to glow** in a furnace” (Rev. 1:15); and in Rev. 3:18, where Jesus urged the Laodiceans to buy from Him “gold **refined** by fire.”

“...arrows” is the [Accusative Neuter Plural](#) of the noun *bélos* (956), used only here in the NT. The term can refer to any kind of missile hurled, whether dart, javelin, or arrow ([Thayer](#)). After Homer it was used of anything “swift-darting,” as, for example, the bolts of Zeus, i.e. lightning bolts (Liddell-Scott). Here in Paul, it likely referred to arrows which had been set afire.

Of course, the whole idea of Satan shooting flaming arrows as believers is a metaphor, but it is very graphic one. It conveys the idea that Satan will use the very latest stratagem at his disposal to defeat Christians. He is diabolically sneaky, and he will stop at nothing to induce us to stray from God and the truth.

evil one.⁴¹⁹

E 5 Salvation: {17} And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION,⁴²⁰
6:17

⁴¹⁹ Eph. 6:16 - of the evil *one*: "...evil" is the [Genitive Masculine](#) Singular of the adjective *ponêros* ([4190](#)). Since this adjective is singular, and is preceded by the [Genitive](#) Singular of the definite article *ho* ([3588](#)), Paul is alluding to the specific evil person, the [devil](#) (*diábolos*, [1228](#)), the "slanderer" (that's what his name means), whom he identified specifically in Eph. 4:27; 6:11. The [devil](#) is evil personified, characterized by murder (John 8:44), deceit (John 8:44; Rev. 12:9; 20:10), temptation (Matt. 4:1), betrayal (John 13:2), oppression (Acts 10:38), inimical to righteousness (Acts 13:10), scheming (Eph. 6:11), snare-setting (1 Tim. 3:7; 2 Tim. 2:26), slanderous (2 Tim. 3:3; Tit. 2:3), possessing the power of death (Heb. 2:14), adversary of God and Christians (1 Pet. 5:8), the one who sinned from the beginning (1 John 3:8). In this passage (Eph. 6:16), the [devil](#), along with his demons, hurled the most advanced strategic weapon at individual Christians invented in that day – flaming arrows. Satan shows no mercy, and is always analyzing his victims to employ the temptation to which his victim will be most vulnerable. All you have to do is examine Satan's temptation of Christ to illustrate that fact (Matt. 4:1-11; Mark 1:12-13; Luke 4:1-13). If Paul were writing his letter today, he would use the most modern and deadly weaponry he could to describe the onslaughts of Satan.

⁴²⁰ Eph. 6:17 - And take THE HELMET OF SALVATION: Paul is quoting again from Isa. 59:17, which portrays Yahweh as the [Messianic](#) warrior entering into battle to defeat His and [Israel's](#) foes and provide salvation for the nation. He may also, but less likely, be alluding to Ps. 140:7. In context, the salvation to which Isaiah refers is [political salvation for Israel](#) (Isa. 59:11, 17; 60:18), albeit, political salvation with spiritual overtones. The Hebrew word for "salvation" in each of these three references is *yeshuah* ([3444](#)). Paul, however, applies the term "salvation" strictly to [spiritual salvation](#) for his largely Gentile audience. See an extensive Glossary entry on [Salvation](#).

I have always felt that Eph. 6:17 means more than "just being saved." The salvation in Christ God has for us who believe is more than a "hope-so" salvation. It is a "know-so" salvation. After all, the Apostle John wrote, "These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, so that you may know that you have eternal life" (1 John 5:13). See the Glossary entry on [Eternal Security](#). See more about the nature of "salvation" below in this same footnote.

"And take" is the 2nd Person Plural [Aorist Middle Deponent Imperative](#) of the verb *déchomai* ([1209](#)), used only here in Ephesians. It is used here in the sense of "taking something into one's hand, *take, grasp* (Eph. 6:17)" ([Friberg](#)). The action is presented as one that is taken at a point in time (in other words, whenever the evil one attacks).

"...THE HELMET" is the [Accusative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *perikephalaía* ([4030](#)). The word means, literally, "around head." The noun combines the preposition *peri* ([4012](#)) ("around") and the noun *kephalê* ([2776](#)) ("head"). It refers to a "head-covering," and, in the NT only a military head-covering, i.e. a *helmet*. It is used metaphorically, in the NT, "of the spiritual protection afforded by salvation (Eph. 6:17); putting on the helmet marked the beginning of battle" (adapted from [Friberg](#)). In Eph. 6:17 it is used of, literally, "the helmet of the salvation." It is used also, metaphorically, in a military context in 1 Thess. 5:8, "But since we are of the day, let us be sober, having put on the breastplate of faith and love, and as a **helmet**, the hope of salvation."

"...of salvation" is literally "of the salvation." "...salvation" is the [Genitive Neuter](#) Singular of the adjective *sōtê'rios* ([4992](#)). Surprisingly, this word is used very sparingly in the NT. According to [Friberg](#), it is used "of what is related to the means of salvation *rescuing, bringing salvation, delivering* (Tit. 2:11); neuter as a substantive to *sōtê'rión – the (messianic) salvation* (Luke 3:6); by metonymy, the [Messiah](#) himself as mediating *salvation* or *deliverance* (Luke 2:30)." With the article, and appearing in the [neuter](#), Paul's use here coincides with that of Luke 3:6 – the messianic salvation, that is, the salvation inhering in and brought about by the [Messiah](#), Jesus, the [Christ](#). Ultimately this salvation is all-encompassing, including political and spiritual salvation for the nation of [Israel](#), political and spiritual salvation for [Gentiles](#), oneness with God in [Christ](#), the resurrection of the human body, and the establishment of a perfect, new environment, [New Heaven](#), [New Earth](#) and [New Jerusalem](#), untainted by sin or sinful people. (See also the glossary entry on [Salvation](#), and its extensive links.)

In my own personal experience, and especially earlier in my Christian life, the [devil](#) had great success in engendering doubt in my salvation, especially as a teen-ager. As I sought counsel, and especially, later, as I have studied the Bible, by the grace of God, those doubts have fled. Even as I observe the steady erosion of the fabric of life and politics in America and in the world, I, for the most part, avoid depression. I know that only the return of Jesus Christ will bring about political salvation for this nation in which I live and which I love and for the world at large. The election of a new president will not save this country. Ultimately its only salvation, and the salvation of a sinner-afflicted, and sin-cursed earth, will come about through the God/Man, Jesus Christ. May He come back to earth quickly and set up His kingdom!

- E 6 The word of God: and the sword of the Spirit,⁴²¹ which is the word of God.⁴²²
- E 7 Prayer 6:18-20
- G 1 By what means? {18} With all prayer and petition⁴²³ 6:18a

⁴²¹ Eph. 6:17 - and the sword of the Spirit: “sword” is the [Accusative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *máchaira* (3162). The mob coming to arrest Jesus carried swords of this kind, along with clubs (Matt. 26:47). Herod had James the brother of John executed with this kind of sword (Acts 12:2). The Philippian jailer wielded a sword like this (Acts 16:27). Paul said the government did not bear this kind of sword for nothing (Rom. 13:4). The word of God is sharper than any two-edged sword of this kind (Heb. 11:34). The rider on the red horse was given a great sword of this kind (Rev. 6:4).

Paul, however, is not speaking of a literal *máchaira*, but of a figurative one, the *máchaira* of the [Spirit](#) (the [Genitive Neuter](#) Singular of the noun *pneûma* (4151), referring to the 3rd member of the Godhead, the [Spirit](#) of God. This sword is an infinitely more powerful sword than any that could be wielded by mere mortal man! Only this sword would be potent enough to defeat the onslaughts of the evil spirit world!

⁴²² Eph. 6:17 - which is the word of God: “...which” is the [Nominative Neuter](#) Singular of the relative pronoun *hós* (3739). The antecedent of this [neuter](#) pronoun is, interestingly enough, not “sword,” but “Spirit.” The implication of this is that, while “sword” is linked to Spirit (“sword of the Spirit”) by virtue of the Genitive case of Spirit, it is the [neuter](#) gender “**Spirit**” which is linked to the ([neuter](#) gender) **Word** of God by virtue of the [neuter](#) gender of the pronoun “**which**.” The [Holy Spirit](#) is the Person through whom God breathes out His words! While “the shield of the faith” emphasized trusting in the *content* of the faith that had been delivered to the [church](#) by Paul and his associates, “the word of God” encompasses the entire communication from God, including the entire OT and NT, and, in some cases, prophecies communicated by the Apostles or others that did not become canonized as Scripture. This would, for example, take into account Paul’s admonition to the Thessalonians, “do not despise prophetic utterances” (1 Thess. 5:20). Only the communication from the Spirit of God is powerful enough to defeat the combined forces of Satan and his demons.

“...word” is the [Nominative Neuter](#) Singular of the noun *hrêma* (4487), “word,” which here emphasizes the spoken Word of God, communicated through God’s [prophets](#) down through the ages under the guidance and control of the [Holy Spirit](#). I am reminded that Paul later wrote that all Scripture is “God-breathed” (2 Tim. 3:16), *theópneustos* (2315), coining a word that combined the noun “God” (*theós*, 2316) and a presumed derivative of the verb “to breathe,” or “to blow” (*pnéō*, 4154), a root word closely related to the noun “Spirit” or “breath” (*pneûma*, 4151). The noun *hrêma* appears here without the article. So Paul is not referring to any *specific* revelation from God, but rather to the *general fact* of God’s verbal communication.

“...of God” is the [Genitive Masculine](#) Singular of the (Proper) noun *theós* (2316), “God,” the First Member of the Triune Godhead. The [Genitive](#) case here alerts us to the fact that Paul is speaking of verbal communication (*hrêma*, 4487) that originates from God (*theós*, 2316).

⁴²³ Eph. 6:18 - With all prayer and petition: “With” is the [Genitive](#) case of the preposition *diá* (1223), which appears here to be used in [Friberg’s](#) meaning “I (with the genitive; ... (3) modal; ... (b) of accompanying circumstance *with, among, in spite of* (Acts 14:22).” In this particular context “with” is the preferred translation of the three possibilities [Friberg](#) has offered. A wordier, but perhaps more accurate possibility might be “Accompanied by.” The reader should be aware that the predominant verbal form in the first part of this clause is the [Present Participle](#) of the verb *proseúchomai* (4336), literally, “praying.” An accurate paraphrase would be, “Accompanied by all prayer and petition be praying at each moment”

“...all” – Paul used the [Genitive Feminine](#) Singular of the adjective *pás* (3956), which here means “all” or “every kind of” prayer and petition.

“prayer” is the [Genitive Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *proseuchê* (4335), which is, in the NT, a religious technical term for asking assistance from or communicating with God or Christ. It occurs 36X in the NT, of which 20 appear in the singular and 16 in the plural. In some instances it refers to a place of prayer, the place in or at which prayer is conducted (Mark 11:17; Luke 19:46; Acts 16:13, 16).

“...petition” is the [Genitive Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *déesis* (1162), “plea, entreaty; as addressed to God *prayer, request, petition*” ([Friberg](#)). It is typically translated as “prayer(s)” (12X); but occasionally as “petition” (3X) (Luke 1:13; Eph. 6:18 [X2]); as “entreaties” (2X) (1 Tim. 2:1; 5:5); and as “supplication” (1X) (Php. 4:6).

So in this context, “prayer” (*proseuchê*, 4335) is a more general communication with God, while “petition” (*déesis*, 1162) seems to be more specific, making particular requests of God for favor.

- G 2 When? pray at all times ⁴²⁴ 6:18b
- G 3 How? 6:18c
- H 1 Empowered by the Spirit: in the Spirit, ⁴²⁵
- H 2 Watching for the answer: and with this in

So in addition to all the different pieces of armor the Christian must use to protect himself from the onslaughts of the [devil](#), he must also resort to any and every sort of prayer or petition, communicating with God and Christ, asking for additional help and support and direction in the war against evil. Paul did not assign a military metaphor to “prayer and petition,” for he had none to use. Perhaps if he had written his letter today, he would have used a cell phone or a military-grade two-way radio to depict prayer. Certainly communication is key for a modern day soldier in battle, and communication with God is always critical for the Christian warrior, who is perpetually involved in spiritual warfare with the forces of evil. We absolutely need to have constant contact with our Commander-in-Chief!

⁴²⁴ Eph. 6:18 - pray at all times: “pray” is the 2nd Person Plural [Nominative Masculine Present Middle/Passive Deponent Participle](#) (with [Imperative](#) force) of the verb *proseúchomai* (4336), literally, “praying.” The reader should be aware that the predominant verbal form in the opening clause of Eph. 6:18 is the [Present Participle](#) of the verb *proseúchomai* (4336), literally, “praying.” An accurate paraphrase would be, “Accompanied by all prayer and petition be praying at each moment” *Proseúchomai* (4336) is used in the NT “...as a religious technical term for talking to a deity in order to ask for help, usually in the form of request, vow, or wish *pray, speak (to God), ask* (Matt. 6:6)” ([Friberg](#)).

“...at all times” is, more literally, “at every time,” or more colloquially, “at every moment.” That is true because the word translated by NASB as “all” is the [Dative Masculine](#) of the adjective *pás* (3956), and it appears in the Singular, not Plural. It is used in a distributive significance, in this context, in relation to time – so at *each* and *every* time Christians are to be praying “accompanied by all prayer and petition.”

“...times” is, more literally, “time” or even better, “moment.” The noun Paul used is the [Dative Masculine](#) Singular (not Plural) of the noun *kairós* (2540), here used as a point of time, translatable as “time” or “moment” (adapted from [Friberg](#)). What Paul is saying is that our warfare with Satanic forces is so constant and ongoing that at any given moment we need to be praying with all prayer and petition.

⁴²⁵ Eph. 6:18 - in the Spirit: literally, “in Spirit” or “in spirit.” The Greek words in this two-word phrase, *en pneúmati*, are, first, the [Dative](#) case of the preposition *en* (1722), “in,” followed immediately by the [Dative Neuter](#) Singular of the noun *pneûma* (4151), “spirit” or “wind.” What did Paul mean? Did he mean that we should pray with our human spirit, or pray by means of the [Holy Spirit](#)? The difficulty is, first of all, there is no article preceding the word noun *pneûma* (4151); second, the noun *pneûma* (4151) is never capitalized in Greek; third, there is no additional identifying feature, such as “Holy” (*hágios*, 40) modifying the noun *pneûma* (4151); and fourth, there is no qualifying object, such as *pneûma of God* or *of Christ*.

In short, it becomes an editorial decision as to what the writer meant. There are only a handful of occurrences where *en pneúmati* (in spirit) appears to refer to the human spirit. These include John 4:23, 24, where Jesus speaks of those who worship the Father in spirit and, in spirit and truth. In both verses “spirit” is uncapitalized by the NASB editors. 1 Cor. 14:16 speaks of blessing “in the spirit *only*.” Again, “spirit” is uncapitalized in the NASB. In Gal. 6:1 Paul spoke of the necessity of restoring an errant sinner “in spirit” – but he qualifies it by adding – “of gentleness.” “Spirit” is uncapitalized in the NASB.

Here is a list of references that contain the exact phrase *en pneúmati* in the Greek text (no article is present), and no qualifying designation such as “holy” or “of God” or “of Christ” appears in the text. Yet in the NASB “Spirit” is capitalized. And in every case the NASB editors added the article “the” where none appears in the Greek text. These references include Rom. 2:29; Eph. 2:22; 3:5; 5:18; 6:18; Col. 1:8; 1 Tim. 3:16; Rev. 1:10; 4:2; 17:3; 21:10. In each case the Greek text was translated “in the Spirit.” The two exceptions are Rom. 2:29, “by the Spirit” and Eph. 5:18, “with the Spirit.” I cite these references to demonstrate that there is precedent in the NASB for translating *en pneúmati* as “in the Spirit” in cases in which the context warrants that translation.

The view of every English version I have checked is that the [Holy Spirit](#), not the human spirit is in view here in Eph. 6:18. I believe the context warrants that conclusion. Praying merely in the power of one’s human spirit will be inadequate to combat the wiles and the power of the [devil](#) and his demons. Praying in the power of the [Holy Spirit](#) is most likely what Paul meant in this text. Praying by means of the [Holy Spirit](#), and relying upon Him is the only way that prayers can be effective.

- view, be on the alert ⁴²⁶
- H 3 With perseverance: with all perseverance ⁴²⁷
- H 4 With petition: and petition ⁴²⁸
- G 4 For whom? 6:18d-20
- H 1 for all the saints, ⁴²⁹ 6:18d
- H 2 On behalf of Paul: {19} and *pray* on my behalf, ⁴³⁰ (6:19a) 6:19-20

⁴²⁶ Eph. 6:18 - be on the alert: more literally, “being on the alert,” or, more simply, “watching,” either of which translate the 2nd Person Plural [Nominative Masculine Present Active Participle](#) (with [Imperative](#) force) of the verb *agrupnéō* (69), used only 4X in the NT. It is used in Mark 13:33; Luke 21:36 (both translated “keep on the alert”); Eph. 6:18 (“be on the alert”); and Heb. 13:17 (“they keep watch”). The two verb forms in this verse are both [present participles](#) – “praying” and “being on the alert.” In our ongoing war against the [Devil](#) and his [demons](#), we must be vigilant all the time.

⁴²⁷ Eph. 6:18 - with all perseverance: “perseverance” translates the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of *proskartérésis* (4343), “perseverance, unremitting persistence (Eph. 6:18)” ([Friberg](#)), used only here in the NT. As Christian infantrymen in our ongoing war against [Satan](#) and his [demons](#), we need perseverance. We cannot ever forget that we are in an unrelenting war that will last our entire lives. We need to pray ceaselessly with every ounce of relentlessness in our beings.

By way of negative illustration, President George W. Bush began a war against Islamic terror. President Barack Obama, for reasons we will not explore here, did not have the stomach for that war. He declined to call Islamic terrorist events Islamic terrorist events. On one occasion, he labeled it “workplace violence.” With a porous Southern border deliberately left porous, America refused to exercise perseverance. And Americans have died *in America* as a result. Christians cannot be so lax. We are in an ongoing war against demonic terrorism. [Satan](#) and his [demons](#) will never give up, and neither can we.

⁴²⁸ Eph. 6:18 - and petition: the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *déesis* (1162), evidently referring to a specific request addressed to God. Paul used it previously in this same verse. Look at the footnote earlier in this verse for additional information on this word.

Perseverance and petition in our praying are two important elements in our spiritual warfare. I liken the “prayer” aspect of our defense to a good military-grade radio used by military personnel to communicate with one another on the battlefield. But our “radio” is not used to communicate with other soldiers, but rather, directly with our Commander-in-Chief. We all possess the capability of communicating directly with the Top for emotional fortitude, for wisdom, and for assistance. Why are we so prone to neglect our vital communication capability?

⁴²⁹ Eph. 6:18 - for all the saints: Paul wants his readers to be in prayer and render petition not only for themselves, but for all the saints, i.e. for all believers in Christ everywhere.

“...for” is the [Genitive](#) of the preposition *peri* (4012), which conveys “...a basic meaning *around, on all sides*; I. with the genitive to denote the purpose, object, or person to which an action relates ... (4) in intercessory prayer, to denote in whose interest the petition is being made *for, on account of* (Luke 4:38)” ([Friberg](#)).

“...saints” is the [Genitive Masculine](#) Plural of the adjective *hágios* (40), here denoting “the holy ones” or “the set apart ones. This means they are set apart *from sin to God* for His use. This adjective refers to all believers in Christ everywhere. This word is used 15X in this epistle, beginning at Eph. 1:1. See the appropriate footnote there for more information about this word.

⁴³⁰ Eph. 6:19 - and *pray* on my behalf: Paul here continues with the topic of prayer in spiritual warfare, designating it now for his own benefit. He wishes his audience in Ephesus to “pray” not only for the benefit of all saints everywhere, but also specifically for his own personal benefit. Paul declines to employ the verb here (it appears in italics), but he is borrowing the understood meaning of the 2nd Person Plural [Nominative Masculine Present Middle/Passive Deponent Participle](#) (with [Imperative](#) force) of the verb *proseúchomai* (4336), literally, “praying” from Eph. 6:18. The verb is understood. Paul’s point is that he wants the Ephesians continually to be

- J 1 that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth, ⁴³¹ 6:19b
- J 2 to make known with boldness the [mystery](#) of the gospel, ⁴³² {20} for

praying specifically for him.

“...on my behalf” translates the phrase *hupér emoû*, where *hupér*, “on behalf of,” is the [Genitive](#) of the preposition *hupér* ([5228](#)), which means, “literally, *over, above*; [but is] used only in a nonliteral sense in the NT; (1) with the genitive; (a) with a component of protection and concern *on behalf of, for the sake of, for* (Php. 4:10; Col. 1:7; (b) after expressions relating to prayer *for, in behalf of* (Matt. 5:44)” ([Friberg](#)). Here, both instances (a) and (b) are applicable.

emoû, literally, “of me” (translated here, “my”) is the 1st Person [Genitive](#) Singular of the personal pronoun *egō*’ ([1473](#)), “*I, me, we, us*” ([Friberg](#)). Literally, the phrase is to be rendered, “on behalf of me.” But idiomatically, “on my behalf.” Paul has a specific prayer request for himself, which he will momentarily reveal.

⁴³¹ Eph. 6:19 - that utterance may be given to me in the opening of my mouth: A more literal and less awkward translation of the entirety of Eph. 6:19 might read, “And on behalf of me, in order that to me might be given a message in opening my mouth with boldness to make known the mystery of the good news.”

The word (in NASB) translated “utterance” is the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular of the very common noun *lógos* ([3056](#)), which can convey a wide variety of nuances depending on the context. It is used 330X in the NT. Some of its more common translations in the NASB include “word(s)” 240X; “statement” 18X; some variation of “account(s), accounting” 12X; “message” 10X; “speech” 10X. There are a number of translations that appear only once or twice, “utterance” (2X) being one of them. Paul used this noun 4X in this letter – referring to “the *message of truth*” (Eph. 1:13); to “no unwholesome *word*” (Eph. 4:29); to “empty *words*” (Eph. 5:6); to Paul’s prayer request “that *utterance* may be given to me” (Eph. 6:19).

As a side note, this same word is used by the Apostle John to describe the pre-incarnate second Person of the Trinity in John 1:1-14. There He is called “the Word” 4X, as follows: “In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God” (John 1:14). “And the Word became flesh and dwelt among us ...” (John 1:18). In my opinion, it would be quite appropriate to translate *lógos* there as “Message.” Jesus was the ultimate Message of God who created everything and subsequently became flesh and lived among us. That would be quite in keeping with the fact that in the OT the pre-incarnate Second Person appeared frequently as “the [Angel of the Lord](#),” or more transparently, “the Messenger of the Lord.” So, the **Messenger** of the Lord in the OT became the **Message** of the Lord in the NT when He became man permanently.

Back to Eph. 6:19. In English idiom, we might paraphrase Paul’s request as follows: “And pray for me, that freedom of speech might be given me, so that I might boldly tell others the mystery of the good news.” This was not a frivolous request, for Paul was presently a prisoner of Rome, probably under house arrest during his first Roman imprisonment (Eph. 3:1; 4:1; 6:20). He likely also wrote the other three “Prison Epistles” during this imprisonment – Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians (see [Constable](#)).

⁴³² Eph. 6:19 - to make known with boldness the mystery of the gospel: “to make known” is the [Aorist Active Infinitive](#) of the verb *gnōrízō* ([1107](#)), “as a causative *make known, reveal, declare*” ([Friberg](#)); used by Paul in this letter in Eph. 1:9; 3:3, 5, 10; 6:19, 21.

“boldness” is the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *parrēsía* ([3954](#)), which has here the idea of “an attitude of openness that stems from freedom and lack of fear; (1) in speech *boldness, plainness, outspokenness* (Acts 2:29)” (excerpted from [Friberg](#)). Paul used this word twice in this letter – in Eph. 3:12; 6:19.

“mystery” is the [Accusative Neuter](#) Singular of the noun *mustērion* ([3466](#)), which, in the NT, refers to truths unrevealed in the OT, but freshly revealed in the NT. Paul used this word in this letter in Eph. 1:9; 3:3, 4, 9; 5:32; 6:19. See the appropriate footnotes at those references for more information. See also the Glossary entry on [Mystery](#).

“gospel” is the [Genitive Neuter](#) Singular of the noun *euaggélion* ([2098](#)), which means, simply, “good news.” In my opinion, NT translators would do us all a great favor if they were to translate this noun consistently as “good news” rather than as “gospel,” a term that, for most English speakers, is shrouded in mystery. The closest Scriptural definition of “Good News” is to be found in 1 Cor. 15:1-8, that Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, and that He was buried, and that He was raised on the third day according to the Scriptures, and that He appeared to Cephas, then to the twelve”, etc. We must understand that Paul inevitably, on his missionary journeys, stopped first at the local Jewish synagogue to announce the Good News about the [Messiah](#). Both [Jewish](#) and [Gentile](#) attenders had an understanding from the OT Scriptures of what the term “[Christ](#)” means.

Most Christians today, not to mention the unchurched, have little understanding of the meaning of the term “[Christ](#).” Consequently, here is my recommendation for a brief presentation of the Need for the Good News,

which I am an ambassador in chains,⁴³³ 6:19c-20a

J 3 that in proclaiming it I may speak boldly,⁴³⁴ as I ought to speak. 6:20b

B 7 Closing Comments 6:21-24

C 1 Information: Paul's sending of Tychicus 6:21-22

D 1 Information about himself: {21} But that you also may know about my circumstances, how I am doing, 6:21a

followed by the Good News itself. (1) God created man to be the King of the Earth (Gen. 1-2). (2) Man rebelled against God and could no longer be a good ruler (Gen. 3). (a) He and the earth were contaminated by rebellion (sin). (b) Man and the earth were ruined because of death. (3) God sent Jesus to be the God / Man King of [Israel](#) and King of the Earth. (a) He died for all mankind and God raised Him to life exactly as predicted in the OT Scriptures. (b) He is coming back to rule the Earth in justice and peace. (4) You must trust King Jesus (John 3:16-18, 33) in order to be forgiven and to live forever in peace with God, serving King Jesus in His Kingdom upon this present earth (Rev. 20:1-6) on upon New Earth (Rev. 21:1-22:5).

⁴³³ Eph. 6:20 - for which I am an ambassador in chains: “for which” translates *hupèr oū*, “on behalf of which.” *hupèr* is the [Genitive](#) case of the preposition *hupèr* ([5228](#)), and is used with the same meaning, “on behalf of” as in Eph. 6:19 (see the footnote there); *oū* is the [Genitive Neuter](#) Singular of the relative pronoun *hós* ([3739](#)), “which.” Since this relative pronoun appears in the [Neuter](#) gender, it refers back to the [Neuter](#) gender of *euaggélion* ([2098](#)), “good news,” typically translated “[gospel](#)” in Eph. 6:19.

“I am an ambassador” translates the 1st Person Singular [Present Indicative Active](#) of the verb *presbeúō* ([4243](#)), “literally *be an ambassador* or *envoy*; figuratively in the NT, of apostolic ministry *be an ambassador*, *be a representative* sent by Christ” ([Friberg](#)). Etymologically, the verb is related to the noun *presbuteros* ([4245](#)), which means, “elder” or “older.” Its primary meaning is “to be older, prior by birth or in age” ([Thayer](#)). It is used only by Paul and only twice. In both instances he uses it in its derived sense of “serving as an ambassador” – on behalf of Christ in 2 Cor. 5:20, and on behalf of “the [gospel](#)” or “the good news” here in Eph. 6:20.

“...in chains” translates the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of *hálusis* ([254](#)), literally, “chain.” Paul was bound by a single chain. This fact further demonstrates the theory that Paul was under house arrest in Rome during his first imprisonment, awaiting his trial before Caesar. Thus Ephesians is one of the four prison epistles, the other three being Colossians, Philemon, and Philippians ([Constable](#)). Paul also referred to his being restrained by a (single) chain in 2 Tim. 1:16. This was evidently during his second imprisonment in Rome, at the conclusion of which he was executed under Nero ([Constable](#)).

It is because Paul was serving as an ambassador on behalf of the good news about Jesus, but restrained by a chain, that he asked for boldness in speaking his message. He asked for boldness twice, in both Eph. 6:19 and in Eph. 6:20. We Christians need to pray for one another for boldness in proclaiming the Good News about Jesus!

⁴³⁴ Eph. 6:20 - that in *proclaiming* it I might speak boldly: The reader will observe that the verb “proclaiming” does not appear in the Greek text. A more literal rendering: “...in order that in it I might speak boldly.” “...it” translates the 3rd Person Singular [Dative Neuter](#) of the pronoun *autós* ([846](#)), which refers back to its antecedent, the [Genitive](#) Singular [Neuter](#) of the noun *euaggélion* ([2098](#)) “[gospel](#),” or better, “good news” in Eph. 6:19.

“I might speak boldly” translates the 1st Person Singular [Aorist Subjunctive Middle Deponent](#) of the verb *parrésiazomai* ([3955](#)), “as acting with an attitude of openness that comes from freedom and lack of fear; (1) of openness in speech *speak freely, openly, boldly* (Acts 9:27) ...” ([Friberg](#)). This verb is used 7X in Acts, once here in Ephesians, and in 1 Thess. 2:2.

Paul is requesting that the Ephesian Christians pray for him so that he might speak out boldly the “Good News about Jesus” even though he is hampered by a chain imposed by the Roman army. We should continually be praying for ourselves and for one another so that we don’t allow ourselves to be muzzled out of fear, but instead, speak freely and openly concerning the Good News about Jesus.

D 2 Information about Tychicus: Tychicus,⁴³⁵ 6:21bE 1 the beloved brother⁴³⁶E 2 and faithful minister in the Lord,⁴³⁷

⁴³⁵ Eph. 6:21 - Tychicus: This name is the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular of the proper noun *Tuchikós* ([5190](#)), meaning “fateful,” “an Asiatic Christian, friend and companion of the apostle Paul” ([Thayer](#)). We first meet Tychicus on Paul’s 3rd Missionary Journey. Paul is on the way to Jerusalem to deliver a gift to the church there (Rom. 15:25-26) and Tychicus from Asia is one of Paul’s assistants (Acts 20:4). Here in Paul’s letter to the Ephesians (Eph. 6:21), Paul identifies Tychicus as “the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord” who would tell the Ephesians all they needed to know about Paul, confined with a chain under house arrest in Rome. Tychicus has a similar assignment when Paul writes to the church in Colosse. In that letter Paul identifies Tychicus as “our beloved brother and faithful servant and fellow bond-servant in the Lord” (Col. 4:7). Paul sent him to Colosse to inform the church there of Paul’s circumstances and to encourage their hearts (Col. 4:7-8). Evidently Tychicus served as the letter-carrier for both the epistle to the Ephesians and the one to the Colossians. Paul later hoped to send Tychicus or Artemis to visit Titus in Crete (Tit. 3:12). Still later, Paul sent Tychicus to Ephesus, perhaps to assist Timothy and allow the latter to come visit Paul in prison (2 Tim. 4:12-13). This explanation I have adapted from the off-site article “[Who was Tychicus in the Bible?](#)”, Got Questions Ministries, attributable to S Michael Houdmann, accessed Dec. 8, 2016.

⁴³⁶ Eph. 6:21 - the beloved brother: “beloved” is the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular of the adjective *agapêtós* ([27](#)), “(1) *beloved, dear, very much loved* (Acts 15:25; possibly 1 Tim. 6:2); (2) of one not only greatly beloved but also unique, the only one of a class *only beloved, one dear* (Matt. 3:17); (3) *worthy of love* (probably 1 Tim. 6:2)” (Friberg). Paul identified Tychicus as a beloved co-worker in serving the Lord. This may well have been Tychicus’ first visit to the Ephesian Christians, and Paul felt he needed this endorsement since Tychicus was probably the bearer of this letter.

“brother” translates the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular of the noun *adelphós* ([80](#)), which stands here in [apposition](#) to the proper noun “Tychicus.” This noun means “(1) literally, male sibling with at least one parent in common (John 1:41); figuratively, members of the Christian community, and of associates in religious work (*spiritual brother*), *fellow Christian, fellow believer* (Rom. 8:29)” (excerpted from [Friberg](#)). Paul uses the term “brother” in a figurative way to describe Tychicus as a fellow-Christian and fellow-worker (Eph. 6:21) of the male sex.

⁴³⁷ Eph. 6:21 - faithful minister in the Lord: “faithful” is the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular of the adjective *pistós* ([4103](#)). In the NT this adjective typically identifies someone who is “faithful” or “trustworthy” or “reliable” or “dependable,” whether in the secular or business realm (Matt. 24:45) or in the spiritual realm (Eph. 1:1). God, of course, is termed “faithful” (1 Cor. 1:9; 10:13; 2 Cor. 1:18; 1 Thess. 5:24; Heb. 10:23; 11:11; 1 Pet. 4:19; 1 John 1:9), as is “the Lord” (2 Thess. 3:3) and Christ (2 Tim. 2:13; Heb. 2:17; Rev. 1:5; 3:14; 19:11). Occasionally this adjective appears to have the function of identifying one who is characterized as believing (John 20:27) or is a believer in God (Gal. 3:9; 1 Pet. 1:21) or in Jesus Christ (Acts 10:45; 16:1; 2 Cor. 6:15; 1 Tim. 4:3, 10, 12; 5:16; 6:2; Tit. 1:6). The word is used 67X in the NT, and most of those occurrences are translated “faithful” in the NASB.

“minister” is the [Nominative Masculine](#) Singular of the noun *diákonos* ([1249](#)), which means, at its most basic level, a common household servant. It is used in this sense, for example, in Matt. 22:13; John 2:5, 9. Upon occasion Jesus used this word in a metaphorical sense to describe the way in which His followers should be careful to be of service to one another (Matt. 20:26; 23:11; Mark 9:35; 10:43) and to serve Him (John 12:26). The church at Corinth assigned celebrity status to Apollos and to Paul. Paul wrote that the church should view them rather as mere servants of the Lord (1 Cor. 3:5). Paul described himself and his associates as “servants of a new covenant” (2 Cor. 3:6), as “servants of God” (2 Cor. 6:4), and himself, by inference, a servant “of Christ” (2 Cor. 11:23). He described Epaphras as “a faithful servant of Christ on our behalf” (Col. 1:17) and Tychicus as “our beloved brother and faithful servant and ‘fellow bond-servant’ (more literally, fellow slave, *súndoulos*, [4889](#)) in the Lord” (Col. 4:7).

For reasons unclear to me, editors of the NASB have, too frequently in my opinion, employed the word “minister” to translate *diákonos*. (See, for example, Eph. 3:7; 6:21; Col. 1:23, 25.) They mean it as a synonym to “servant,” but unfortunately, the word “minister” in our language today carries with it the meaning of a professional clergyman. Again, in my opinion, in Paul’s letter to the Ephesians, we would have been better served if the NASB had described Paul as a “servant” of the Good News (gospel) (Eph. 3:26-27) and Tychicus as a “faithful servant in the Lord” (Eph. 6:21).

The issue becomes clouded further when editors fail even to translate the word *diákonos*. So we have an office of “deacon” in the church (1 Tim. 3:8, 12; Php. 1:1). They should be identified simply as “servants.” If we wish to

D 3 The task of Tychicus 6:21c-22

E 1 To report on Paul's activities to the Ephesians 6:21c-22

G 1 will make everything known to you.⁴³⁸ 6:21cG 2 {22} I have sent him to you for this very purpose,
6:22aG 3 so that you may know about us,⁴³⁹ 6:22bE 2 To comfort their hearts: and that he may comfort your
hearts.⁴⁴⁰ 6:22c

C 2 Benediction 6:23-24

D 1 To the brothers 6:23

E 1 Peace: {23} Peace be to the brethren,⁴⁴¹

differentiate between a worker in the church and an official officer of the church, we should designate the former as a “servant” and the latter as “Servant.” I am strongly of the opinion that Phoebe was not a Servant of the church, but rather, a servant of the church at Cenchrea. See the Glossary entry for more information on the [office of Deacon](#).

Paul’s point here was that Tychicus, whom the Ephesian Christians had likely never met before, was to be trusted as a representative from Paul. This was true because, in Paul’s experience, Tychicus was “the beloved brother and faithful servant in the Lord” (Eph. 6:21). By that he meant that Tychicus was a faithful servant in the area of performing the work of the Lord Jesus Christ.

⁴³⁸ Eph. 6:21 - Tychicus ... will make everything known to you: In other words, presumably, Tychicus would give the Ephesian Christians a full report on Paul’s circumstances in his imprisonment in Rome. He goes on to explain this very fact in Eph. 6:22.

⁴³⁹ Eph. 6:22 - so that you may know about us: Primarily, Paul wanted Tychicus to inform the Ephesians of Paul’s circumstances in prison. The plural “us” suggests that there were others of whom he was also thinking. Assuming Paul wrote Ephesians in prison some time between A.D. 60-62 during his first imprisonment, it appears that Colossians, which in many respects closely resembles Ephesians, was written about the same time. We learn from Col. 4:10 that Aristarchus was a fellow prisoner. Paul also in that letter mentions contact with Barnabas’ cousin Mark (Col. 4:10), and Jesus who is also called Justus (Col. 4:11). He passes on greetings from Epaphras (Col. 4:12-13), and from Luke and Demas (Col. 4:14). So when Paul wrote, “so that you may know about us” in Eph. 6:22, he was anticipating that Tychicus would inform them not only about Paul himself, but about other brothers in Christ and their ministries and circumstances.

⁴⁴⁰ Eph. 6:22 - and that he may comfort your hearts: Paul’s second motive in sending Tychicus, presumably the letter-bearer, was that he would comfort the Ephesians in any difficulties in which they might find themselves.

“...may comfort” is the 3rd Person Singular [Present Subjunctive Active](#) of the verb *parakalēō* (3870), which has a basic meaning of “call someone alongside oneself.” It can refer to a summons or request (Acts 28:20) or to an invitation (Acts 28:14). It may refer to a request for help (Matt. 26:53). It may amount to a more forceful begging or pleading (Acts 16:9). It may be used in the sense of an authoritative exhorting, encouraging, urging (Acts 27:33, 34). Finally, the verb may be used in the sense of urging the person to be comforted or consoled (2 Cor. 1:4) (adapted from [Friberg](#)). In this context, the translation “comfort” is entirely suitable.

“...hearts” is the [Accusative Feminine](#) Plural of the noun *kardia* (2888), here referring to the emotional and spiritual sensitivities of the inner self. Paul used this noun in this letter in Eph. 1:18; 3:17; 4:18; 5:19; 6:5, 22.

⁴⁴¹ Eph. 6:23 - Peace be to the brethren: Paul is giving a final farewell to his readers. This sort of farewell is somewhat typical in Paul’s letters. “Peace” is the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *eirē nē* (1515), used here “as a ... farewell corresponding to the Hebrew *shalom*: *health, welfare, peace* (to you) 1 Tim. 1:2)” (excerpted

- E 2 Love: and love ⁴⁴²
- E 3 Faith: with faith,
- E 4 From

from [Friberg](#) . “Peace” is to be interpreted as a tranquility of soul and of life characteristic of one who is relying on God for protection, blessing, guidance, and ministry. This peace transcends circumstances, and it includes relationships. Paul frequently in his letters closed with some sort of benediction of peace upon his readers (Rom. 15:13, 33; 16:20; 2 Cor. 13:11; Gal. 6:16; Eph. 6:23; Php. 4:9; 1 Thess. 5:23; 2 Thess. 3:16). Invariably, he began each of his letters with a salutation of peace, usually accompanied by grace, and sometimes by mercy (Rom. 1:7; 1 Cor. 1:3; 2 Cor. 1:2; Gal. 1:3; Eph. 1:2; Php. 1:2; Col. 1:2; 1 Thess. 1:1; 2 Thess. 1:2; 1 Tim. 1:2; 2 Tim. 1:2; Tit. 1:4; Phm. 1:3).

“...brethren” is the [Dative Masculine](#) Plural of the noun *adelphós* (80), which, properly translated in modern English is “brothers.” The translation “brethren” by the NASB is archaic, and should be changed to the simple “brothers.” Unfortunately many modern English translations are driven by the dogma of feminism and its twin, demasculinization, not the policy of accurately translating the Biblical text as it was written to the readers of its day. It ought to be the job of translators to be faithful to the original text. It is the task of preachers and teachers to explain how that text is to be applied in a specific culture.

Here are links to “politically correct” English translations that mis-translate the word “brothers” (*adelphós*, 80) into “brothers and sisters:” [List 1](#), [List 2](#). I dub these translations “Feminist Mistranslations. This alteration is totally unwarranted by the original text, because the word “sisters” (*adelphê*, 79) appears nowhere in the entire letter to the Ephesians. Following are links to “politically correct” English translations that make no attempt even to employ the word “brothers.” I call these mis-translations “Anti-Masculine Mis-translations. They mis-translate the word “brothers” (*adelphós*, 80) into various genderless, amorphous phrases such as “all Christians,” “every follower,” “whole community,” “you,” “friends,” or “whole family:” [List 1](#), [List 2](#). I am confident that the translators of these versions would emphatically deny that they are motivated by “political correctness.” They would argue that they are simply reflecting the language of the culture for which they are translating. I would counter that by saying that the culture at large has *become* politically correct, driven by the twin dogmas of feminism and anti-masculinity. Once a Bible version alters its translation of the original Greek (or Hebrew) text to adjust to the prevailing beliefs of a culture which is antagonistic towards Biblical Christianity, where will it stop? Will we modify references to homosexuality in the Bible to accommodate the culture, which believes that homosexuality and lesbianism are to be celebrated? In case you think I am making this up, [compare the way](#) an accurate translation (NASB) translates 1 Cor. 6:9-11 in contrast to the inexcusable, politically correct mis-translation of The Message.

By way of contrast, here are [five versions](#) that translate Eph. 6:23 correctly and accurately. More versions could be added. I would encourage readers to purchase and use Bibles that *accurately* translate God’s Word, not versions that *pervert* the original text in order to conform to the current secular standards of political correctness. See also the article, [“Why I Cannot Recommend the NIV 2011.”](#)

Why did Paul not wish “peace” upon the sisters as well as the brothers? The answer is that both the Jewish community in which Paul was raised, and the Roman/Greek culture in which he lived out among the [Gentiles](#), were patriarchal societies. Contrary to what many believe today, whether inside the church or outside it, “patriarchal” is not a dirty word. It is an expression of the way things are because of the way God is. Even in this letter, God is seen as “Father” multiple times (Eph. 1:2, 3, 17; 2:18; 3:14; 4:6; 5:20; 6:23). In fact, the word “family” (*patriá*, 3965), used for example, in Eph. 3:15, is based on the same stem as is the word “father” (*patêr*, 3962), in Eph. 3:14. In fact, we learn in Eph. 3:15 that every family in heaven and upon earth derives its name from God the Father. To put it bluntly, you can’t have family without father. Paul used “brothers” here (and not “sisters”) because it was not necessary. That culture understood, correctly, that men run families, and that men run the church. God could have had the New Testament written in a matriarchal culture as opposed to a patriarchal culture. The reason He did not is that society is fundamentally ordered in a patriarchal way. To deny that is to deny reality from God’s viewpoint. The teacher or preacher of this passage must help his listeners understand that women (sisters) were automatically included in this blessing, since they are part of the Christian family. But I do not endorse any Bible translation that is afflicted with an unbiblical feminist or anti-masculine bias. Paul did, upon occasion, refer to “sisters.” See, for example, Rom. 16:1, 15; 1 Cor. 7:15; 9:5 (the reader should be aware that the word translated by the NASB as “believing” is actually the word “sister”); 1 Tim. 5:2; Phm. 1:2.

⁴⁴² Eph. 6:23 - and love with faith: In addition to his benediction of peace upon the Christian brothers, he also wishes them love (the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *agápê*, 26) mixed with (the [Genitive](#) of the preposition *metá*, 3326) faith (the [Genitive Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *pístis*, 4102). The love of which Paul speaks is a self-sacrificial quality that seeks the good of the one loved. “Faith” is the quality of trusting in God and His sovereign control in the life of a believer regardless of how dire the circumstances might be.

G 1 from God the Father ⁴⁴³

G 2 and the Lord Jesus Christ.

D 2 To all who love Jesus – grace: {24} Grace ⁴⁴⁴ be with all those who love ⁴⁴⁵ our Lord Jesus Christ with incorruptible *love*. ⁴⁴⁶ 6:24

⁴⁴³ Eph. 6:23 - from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ: Paul is blessing his readers, the brothers, with the triad of peace, love and faith. These qualities are seen here as gifts from God the Father (note the family aspect here) and from the Lord Jesus Christ. Each of these three qualities appear as “the fruit of the Spirit” in Gal. 5:22. (“Faith” is a better translation in Gal. 5:22 than “faithfulness,” which appears in the NASB, in my opinion.)

⁴⁴⁴ Eph. 6:24 - Grace: Along with the triad of peace, love, and faith, Paul now at last blesses a group of people with “the grace,” the [Nominative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *cháris* ([5485](#)). “The grace” (Paul uses the article in front of “grace”) is to be defined as that benevolent disposition of God toward all those who love “our Master, Jesus Christ in incorruptibility.” I believe this benevolent stance is supremely defined in Romans 8:28, in which Paul declares “that God causes all things to work together for good to those who love God, to those who are called according to *His* purpose.” This grace, which is unmerited favor, is further described in Rom. 8:32, “He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him over for us all, how will He not also with Him freely give us all things?”

⁴⁴⁵ Eph. 6:24 - who love: Literally, “The grace [be] with all the ones loving ...” (The verb “be” does not appear in the Greek text, but must be supplied in order to make sense in English.) “...who love” translates the [Genitive Masculine](#) Plural [Present Active Participle](#) of the verb *agapáō* ([25](#)). The object of the participle is, literally, “the Master of us, Jesus, Anointed One.” This love here is an ongoing, self-sacrificial loyalty to the Lord, acting in His best interests. This verb is used in this letter 10X – in Eph. 1:6; 2:4; 5:2; 5:25; 5:25; 5:28; 5:28; 5:28; 5:33; 6:24.

⁴⁴⁶ Eph. 6:24 - with incorruptible *love*: As the italics indicate, the word “love” does not appear in the Greek text. The entire last verse reads, literally, as follows: “The grace with all the ones loving the Master of us, Jesus, Anointed One, in incorruptibility.” The word translated in the NASB as “incorruptible” is the [Dative Feminine](#) Singular of the noun *aphtharsía* ([861](#)), meaning, “a state of not being subject to decay or death *immortality, incorruptibility* (Rom. 2:7); *en aphtharsía* (Eph. 6:24) has three possible alternatives: (1) as qualifying love *unceasing, undying*; (2) as qualifying grace *with incorruptibility, eternally*; (3) as qualifying Christ and Christians *in immortal life*” ([Friberg](#)).

In my judgment, the most logical antecedent of “incorruptibility” is the participle “loving.” Thus, I agree strongly with the NASB translation. It is clear, for example, that the disciple Judas did not love Jesus with an undying love. He was never a true believer because he was never among the [elect](#). Peter, on the other hand, even though he denied Christ three times, was nevertheless among the [elect](#) and loved Christ with an undying love.

EXPANDED ANALYSIS OF EPHESIANS

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