

- I) **V1-6 INTRO: Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God to the saints who are**
- II) **Ephesians is a letter that intends to encourage believers to know who they are in Jesus**
It is a book that is filled with promises that God has given to His children
- III) **In this book, Paul reveals his shepherd's heart for these people**
He begins this letter by calling to their memories that they have been blessed by God
Eph 1:3 Jesus has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places
- IV) **He begins in this way because he is concerned for them**
These people were spiritually rich yet living as if they were spiritually bankrupt
- V) **This is because they did not yet understand how blessed they were in Jesus**
They had not yet understood that God had provided for them in every way
- VI) **Several years ago, the LA Times reported the story of an elderly man and wife who were found dead in their apartment. Autopsies revealed that both had died of severe malnutrition, although investigators found a total of \$40,000.00 stored in paper bags in a closet.**
- VII) **Today there are many Christians who are spiritually living below where they could be**
Ephesians reveals our riches in Christ, and teaches us who we are in Him
- VIII) **Pastor Paul wants all believers for all time to know they are rich in Christ.**
The church (including us) should know that we are rich beyond measure in Jesus
- IX) **In Ephesians the word riches is used 5 times, grace is used 12 times, glory 8 times, and in Christ, or its equivalent around 35 times**
- X) **Paul obviously intends to instruct the church on how to understand the work that God has performed on our behalf, when He gave His Son to die on the cross for us**
- XI) **This kind of understanding takes place through the teaching and applying of the word**

In our day, such a discipline is not attractive to every Christian

XII) A growing number actually resist bible teaching because it isn't interesting to them

Some of the things that they may hear can disturb them, making them uncomfortable

2 Ti 4:3 A time will come when people will not listen to accurate teachings. Instead, they will follow their own desires and surround themselves with teachers who tell *them what they want to hear*

Literally, to satisfy their own desires and to support the errors that they hold

Sadly, many churches have discarded teaching the word and promote other things

I) This has given rise to what has been called cafeteria Christians

Many have turned away from the riches of God's Word and are instead in a constant search for contentment in shallow human teachings.

II) This reveals that they have yet understood what Jesus promised to His followers

Jn 4:13-14 Whoever drinks of this water will thirst again: But whoever drinks of the water that I will give him will never thirst; but the water that I will give him will be in him a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

Jn 6:35 Jesus said to them, I am the bread of life: he who comes to me will never hunger; and he who believes in me shall never thirst.

III) The Ephesians needed to be reminded of what they have in Jesus, as we do

IV) **BACKGROUND:** Jesus commanded His ministers to take the gospel throughout the world

In obedience, Paul came to Ephesus on his 2nd Missionary Journey (Ac 18:18-21)

V) Ephesus was one of the most beautiful cities of the ancient world

It was on the SW coast of Turkey and was the commercial center of ancient Asia Minor

VI) **During the Roman occupation (129 BC-262 AD), the city swelled to over 250,000 people. It was the 2nd largest city and cultural center in the Roman Empire, next to Rome itself**

Ephesus was famous for magic, its harbor and one of the 7 wonders of the ancient world, the Temple of Diana.

VII) **It is estimated that the temple measured**

approximately 377 feet long by 180 feet wide. Using an American football field for perspective, the layout of the Temple was longer and wider than a standard sized field.

It was considered the first Greek Style Temple to made completely of marble and was built with more than 100 marble columns standing 40 feet high. The entire project took over 120 years to complete.

VIII) Ephesus had the Library of Celsus, one of the largest libraries of the ancient world, containing between 12,000 and 15,000 scrolls. It also had an amphitheater that seated 25,000 as well as the most advanced aqueduct systems in the world.

IX) When Paul entered a city, one of the first things he did was to go into the synagogue

**Ac 18:19-21 reports how Paul first came to the city of Ephesus
In that passage Luke reveals he reasoned in the Jewish synagogue
about Jesus**

X) Paul received a welcome by the people and was asked to stay longer, but he did not

Instead of staying, he left Aquila and his wife Priscilla to minister there

**I) On his 3rd Mission he returned, stayed 3 years and laid a strong foundation
(Ac 20:31)**

II) Paul's preaching of the gospel had a great impact on the city but it was not all favorable

III) He left Ephesus after igniting a near riot over the practice of idolatry (Ac 19:23-41)

Ac 19:26 (Demetrius the silversmith said) Moreover you see and hear that not only at Ephesus, but throughout almost all Asia, this Paul has persuaded and turned away many people, saying that they are not gods which are made with hands!

IV) Eventually Paul was arrested for preaching the gospel (AD 60-62)

In prison he wrote the prison epistles: Ephesians, Philippians, Colossians, Philemon

V) Over her history, Ephesus had great teachers and leaders

Paul ministered here, as did Aquila and Priscilla. John may have, as did Timothy

VI) One of the more significant mentions is found in Acts 20:17-38

It is in that passage that Paul lovingly warned the elders of the church

but they failed

As a significant church, it also received a letter by Jesus in Revelation

VII) Finally, it can be divided into three sections, using three words: Sit, Walk, Stand

VIII) We will now begin to look at the book of Ephesians

IX) V1-2 Paul an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God to the saints who are in Ephesus

Paul begins by identifying himself as an Apostle: He does this in nine of his letters

Apostle: One sent out, delegated with authority

X) Originally: Jesus chose 12 men and called them apostles

Judas fell through treachery, and a disciple named Matthias replaced him (Ac 1:26)

Paul became the 13th Apostle and was uniquely chosen by God (by the will of God)

XI) V1 Paul's calling to this position was not from man but by the will of God

Man only recognizes God's call: it is God who appoints

Jn 15:16 You did not choose Me, but I chose you and appointed you that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain, that whatever you ask the Father in My name He may give you.

XII) V1 To the *saints* who are in Ephesus and *faithful* in Christ Jesus

Saints: GOD'S PART: Set apart, used 96 times as a common designation of believers

Faithful: MAN'S PART: Those who have personally trusted Jesus

Either you are a saint, or you're an ain't

I) V1 In Christ Jesus: When we are saved, we enter into a living relationship with Jesus

It is not a religion, but living relationship with the Lord

II) This is what makes us Christians

Jn 15:5 I am the vine, you are the branches. He who abides in Me, and I in him, bears much fruit; for without Me you can do nothing.

1 Co 12:13 For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body--whether Jews or Greeks, whether slaves or free--and have all been made to drink into one Spirit.

III) When we forget that we have a living relationship with Jesus, we become religious

Our lives begin to be filled with things we need to do and we lose the joy

of grace

Ro 14:17 For the Kingdom of God is not a matter of what we eat or drink, but of living a life of goodness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

IV) V2 Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ

Grace always precedes peace and both come from God to those who believe in Him

Ro 5:1 Having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ

V) V3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ who has blessed us with

He opens with praise to God because God has been good to us

Ps 68:19 Blessed be the Lord Who daily loads us with benefits the God of our salvation!

VI) V3 God has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places

VII) This is what Jesus promised His followers, which includes all of us, both Jew and Gentile

Jn 10:10 The thief comes not, but for to steal, and to kill, and to destroy: I am come that they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly.

VIII) V3 In Jesus we have *every spiritual blessing* made available to man

The gospel reveals these blessings are for those who receive Christ as Savior

IX) *Spiritual* is the Greek word *pneumatikos*, and refers to the work of the Holy Spirit

It is speaking of the origin of the blessings that believers receive: God the Spirit

X) If people desire the Spiritual blessings of God, they need to first come to Jesus

To those who by faith come to trust in Jesus, spiritual rest and blessings are theirs

Mt 11:28-30 Come unto me, all you who labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find rest unto your souls; for my yoke is easy and my burden is light.

This is what Paul is reminding the Ephesians of

I) Paul is telling the church that God has *already provided for* them what they need

He is saying they need to make use of what they *already have* in Him
He now begins to share with them what they already have in Jesus

II) **WHEN YOU RECEIVED JESUS: You were made heir to tremendous spiritual blessings**

The Bible says that in Jesus, believers have been abundantly blessed

III) **The blessings that we have are spiritual blessings originating in heavenly places**

IV) **This isn't the only place that we are told of our spiritual blessings in Christ**
1 Co 1:5-7 **That in every thing you are enriched by him, in all utterance, and in all knowledge; Even as the testimony of Christ was confirmed in you: So that you come behind in no gift; waiting for the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ:**

2 Co 5:21 **For he has made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him**

Col 2:10 **You have been given fullness in Christ, who is the head over every power and authority**

2 Pe 1:3 **His divine power has given us everything we need for life and godliness through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness.**

V) **V3 We have been blessed with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ**

Though we live presently on earth, we are blessed to be citizens of heaven

Phil 3:20 **For our citizenship is in heaven, from which we also eagerly wait for the Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ**

VI) **As heavenly citizens, sojourners and pilgrims, we hold a dual citizenship**
We are yet to reach our heavenly home, but we still receive the blessings from heaven

While in Spain I still received finances from the US

VII) **V4 Just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world**

The concept of God choosing is deeply rooted in scripture

It is the taking of a smaller number out of a larger number

We are the called out ones, taken out of the World to serve God

VIII) **It is seen in God choosing Israel, His choosing of His servants, and choosing Apostles**

ISRAEL: Dt 7:7-8 **The Lord did not set his love upon you, nor choose you, because ye were more in number than any people; for ye were the fewest of all people: But because the Lord loved you and because he would keep the oath which he had sworn unto your fathers has the Lord brought you out with a mighty hand,**

and redeemed you out of the house of bondmen, from the hand of Pharaoh king of Egypt.

I) **SERVANTS:** Jer. 1:5 Before I formed thee in the belly I knew you and before thou came forth out of the womb I sanctified you, and I ordained you a prophet to the nations.

APOSTLES: Jn 15:16 You have not chosen me, but I have chosen you, and ordained you, that you should go and bring forth fruit, and that your fruit should remain

II) **V4 God determined all who believed on Jesus would**
He did not choose some to be saved while others to be lost forever

III) **Scripture clearly portrays God's desire is for all men to be saved: Jn 3:16-17, 2 Pe 3:9**

1 Ti 2:4 (God) will have all men to be saved, and to come to the knowledge of the truth

Is. 45:22 Look to me and be saved all the ends of the earth

IV) **His choosing is not based on man's logic but His foreknowledge**
He knows all possible plans and has selected the best
CHAFER: Having a plan and knowing all of its details, God could then foreknow all who would be saved or elected and also all the facts that relate to their salvation.

V) **This plan would include giving man freedom of choice, for which he was responsible**

He does not violate man's ability to make moral choices he is responsible for

OBVIOUSLY: Pontius Pilate made a willing choice as did Judas

VI) **His foreknowledge is like a delayed telecast of an event that has already taken place**

Is 46:9-10 Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:

VII) **God, through His Spirit, the Word, and the preacher calls people to faith in Him**
Ps 34:8 O taste and see that the Lord is good: blessed is the man that trusts Him

Is 2:5 O house of Jacob, come and let us walk in the light of the Lord
Rev 22:17 And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him who hears say, Come. And let him who thirsts, come. Whoever desires, let him take the water of life freely

VIII) God does not violate your will, He appeals to it by the gospel and conviction of the Spirit

He sovereignly calls us, desires to bless us, and has a purpose in choosing us

IX) V4 The purpose of Him choosing us is that we should be holy, without blame before Him

HOLY: We should be separated to Him and not part of world's system

BLAMELESS: Unblemished, spotless because we have His nature

He chose us that we might be acceptable, suitable, or fit for Himself

Phil. 2:15 That you may be blameless and harmless, the sons of God, without rebuke, in the midst of a crooked and perverse nation, among whom you shine as lights in the world

I) V5 Having predestined us to adoption as sons by Jesus Christ to Himself, according to

From the very beginning God intended to send Jesus to die on the cross for us

Rev 13:8 speaks of Jesus as the Lamb slain from the foundation of the world.

II) V5 We now become *adopted* children of God

According to Roman law, The person who had been adopted had all the rights of a legitimate son in his new family and completely lost all rights in his old family. In the eyes of the law he was a new person. So new was he that even all debts and obligations connected with his previous family were abolished as if they had never existed.

III) This is what we have received through Jesus

Ro 8:14-16 For as many as are led by the Spirit of God, these are the sons of God. You did not receive the spirit of bondage again to fear, but you received the Spirit of adoption by whom we cry out, "Abba, Father." The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God

IV) The blessed fact is, when we receive Jesus we have God's life in our soul

His Spirit gives life to our spirit, and we now are partakers of the divine nature

2 Pe 1:3-4 His divine power has given us everything we need for a godly life through our knowledge of him who called us by his own glory and goodness. Through these he has given us his very great and precious promises, so that through them you may participate (joint partner) *in the divine nature*, having escaped the corruption in the world caused by evil desires.

V) Human parents can adopt a child and love them as their own child

God has imparted to His children His own nature

MacArthur: To be saved is to have the very life of God in our souls

VI) Alexander Maclaren: The very purpose of Christianity, for which God has sent His Son, and His Son has come, is that we, poor, sinful, weak, limited, ignorant creatures as we are, may be lifted up into that solemn and awful elevation, and receive in our trembling and yet strengthened souls a spark of God? 'That ye may be partakers of the Divine nature' means more than 'that you may share in the blessings which that nature bestows.' It means that into us may come the very God Himself.

**VII) This is all according to the good pleasure of His will
Salvation and its blessings accompanying it is what pleases God
Ps 115:3 Our God is in heaven; he does whatever pleases Him.**

VIII) V6 To the praise of the glory of His grace, by which He has made us accepted in the

**Him
The reason God has saved us is because in the end, it brings glory to**

**I) His salvation is of grace and because it is, it eliminates all human boasting
Man cannot save himself, so when he is saved the glory goes to the God who saved him**

1 Co 1:27-29 But God chose the foolish things of the world to shame the wise; God chose the weak things of the world to shame the strong. God chose the lowly things of this world and the despised things—and the things that are not (important)—to nullify the things that are, so that no one may boast before him.

II) We are made acceptable by God's grace through Jesus Christ (His unmerited favor)

This gives us the heart to rejoice and praise Him for eternity