THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN LIVING

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SECTION ONE

INTRODUCTION
AND
UNDERSTANDING
OUR WEALTH IN CHRIST

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OUR WEALTH IN CHRIST

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THE BOOK OF EPHESIANS

CHAPTER #1
VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN LIVING
Ephesians 1:-13

The Book of Ephesians is considered "the Alps" of the New Testament. It reveals great truths about believers which many Christians have never considered. It is the only book which Paul wrote where he made no mention of any problem in the church, nor in any of the members. The book teaches us both "doctrinal positions and deportment principles." The entire book is divided into three categories.

1. Our Wealth "**IN**" Christ. Ephesians 1:1-3:21 declares our doctrinal position and explains what it means to be IN Christ, which is OUR WEALTH!

2. Our Walk "**WITH**" Christ. Ephesians 3:1-6:9 describes our practical, daily practice and explains how we should live as Christians "WITH" Christ. OUR WALK!

3. Our Warfare "**FOR**" Christ. Ephesians 6:10-24 declares how we are to prepare for and to stand FOR Christ in our "WARFARE" for Him and the Gospel!

Just as the book of Joshua is a book of the Victorious Christian life in the Old Testament when God gave them victory when they crossed the Jordan River and they took possession of the Promised Land, so is the book of Ephesians. We have been given The Promised Land by our Lord Jesus.

OUR WEALTH IN CHRIST
Ephesians 1:1-2

"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: 2 Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ."

First: Who is the Author? The letter opens by giving us the name of Paul as the author. Thirteen of the epistles written by Paul open with his name. However, Paul was originally named "Saul." He was so named after the first king of Israel, King Saul. He was very proud and arrogant before he trusted Jesus Christ as his savior. After that, his name was changed to "Paul" which means "the little one or the humble one." His name, Paul, pictures how he changed after trusting Christ. He became humble and gave God ALL the glory for everything God used him to do through his entire life.

Second: Who is the Audience? This entire book is written to "the saints," meaning all saved people. The primary audience of the book is "Gentile believers." Ephesians 3:1 tells us this, *"For this cause I Paul, the prisoner of Jesus Christ **for you Gentiles…**"*

Our Wealth In Christ Gives Us Grace And Peace.
Ephesians 1:1-2

First: Grace Be To You. (Verse 2) The word "grace" in this context does not refer to "saving grace." This is grace that keeps us, preserves us, and strengthens us for our everyday life and the trials we may face. Christians go through storms and trials everyday of their life. Hebrews 4:15-16 tells us how to find grace in a time of need, *"For we have not an high priest which cannot be touched with the feeling of our infirmities; but was in all points tempted like as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly unto the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need."* We are invited to go to the throne of God's grace any time we need help, stay as long as we want to stay, and go back as often as we need to go. WOW! What a privilege!

Second: Peace Be To You! The word "Peace" in this context, does not mean "peace with God." According to Romans 5:1, we have "peace with God" at the time of our salvation. *"Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ:"* That means our sin debt has been paid, and our sins are GONE! In Hebrews 8:12 God said, *"For I will be merciful to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities will I remember no more."*

The word "peace" in this context, means we have the peace **OF** God. Philippians 4:7 says, *"And the **peace of God,** which passeth all understanding, shall keep your hearts and minds through Christ Jesus."* That means God gives us "peace of heart" regardless of the storm or trial we go through. A good illustration of that is found in Mark 4:35-39, *"And the same day, when the even was come, he saith unto them, Let us pass over unto the other side. 36 And when they had sent away the multitude, they took him even as he was in the ship. And there were also with him other little ships. 37 And there arose a great storm of wind, and the waves beat into the ship, so that it was now full. 38 And he was in the hinder part of the ship, asleep on a pillow: and they awake him, and say unto him, Master, carest thou not that we perish? 39 And he arose, and rebuked the wind, and said unto the sea, **Peace, be still.** And the wind ceased, and there was a great calm."* The peace OF God is ours every day of our life while we live here on earth. We can and should accept and avail ourselves of that peace as we go through trials of some sort every day of our life.

Our Wealth In Christ Gives Us All Spiritual Blessings In Heavenly Places.
Ephesians 1:3

"*3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who **hath** blessed us with **all** spiritual blessings in heavenly places in Christ:"*

Please note, these are not spiritual blessings we will receive when we get to heaven. The scripture says, *"…HATH blessed us…"* The word "hath" is past tense. Since the day of our salvation we HAVE all spiritual blessings, in Christ. They are ours NOW- TODAY! One group of churches asks people, "Have you received the second blessing?" If you have trusted Christ, you have also received the second blessing, the third blessing, AND ALL other spiritual blessings for the rest of your life on earth.

Following are twelve blessings that every Christian received when they trusted Christ as their Savior:

1. We are forgiven.	(Colossians 1:14)
2. We are Justified.	(Romans 3:24)
3. We are Sanctified.	(I Corinthians 12: 6-11 and Hebrews 2:11)
4. We are Righteous.	(I Corinthians 1:30)
5. We are Heavenly Citizens.	(Ephesians 1:3)
6. We are In Christ.	(Ephesians 1:1)
7. We are Heirs.	(Romans 8:17)
8. We have His Presences.	(Hebrews 13:5)
9. We have His Power.	(Acts 1:8 and Matthew 28:18 and Mark 10:27)
10. We have a Mansion.	(John 14:2)
11. We have His supplies.	(Romans 8:22 and Philippians 8:37)
12. We have His Protection.	(Exod. 14:13-14) (II Sam 22:2-4) (Psalms 34:19) (Isaiah 41:10) (Nahum 1:7) (I Corinthains 4:8-9) Why are we fearful???

All Spiritual Blessings are ours because we are "In Christ and are part of the Body of Christ" which is the church. (Verse 1) As believers, you are not "with Christ," but you are "IN" Christ. When you received Christ as your Savior, you were baptized into his body and continue to be a part of the Body of Christ for the rest of your life. I Corinthians 12:13 declares that truth. *"For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit.* In the book of I Corinthians 12:14." tells us, "*For the body is not one member, but many."*

Jesus gave testimony to this same important and almost unbelievable truth in John 17:21-23, *"That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, <u>that they also may be one in us</u>: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me. 22 And the glory which thou gavest me I have given them; that they may be one, even as we are one: 23 I in them, and thou in me, that they may be made perfect in one; and that the world may know that thou hast sent me, and hast loved them, as thou hast loved me."* Let me ask you a question. If you and your family are all IN CHRIST, what do you have to be fearful of?

Let me give you a simple example that we all understand. Your little finger is a very small part of your hand, which is a very small part of your body. If you smash one of your little fingers with a hammer, what happens? Immediately your ENTIRE body is affected. Your head says to every other part of your body, "Your little finger is hurt and needs help!" Your other hand grabs the little finger, squeezes it, puts it in your mouth and begins to kiss and suck on it! Every other part of your body says, "Let's do whatever we can to help our little finger! IT IS HURT! The head says, "Don't worry about it. We are going to fix it, and it will be okay!" That is the way our human body works. The Body of Christ works the same way. If we get hurt or are going through a storm, the head says, "A member of our body has been hurt and is going through a storm. Come

with me. We are going to fix the problem!" This is the manner in which the entire church should work, and every member of the church should feel the same and should get involved!

When you are "IN" Christ, all the Heavenly blessings are at your disposal. If you get in a storm, you need to obey Hebrews 4:16 which gives us this admonition, *"Let us therefore **come boldly unto the throne of grace,** that we may obtain mercy, and find grace to help in time of need.* For a Christian, a member of the Body of Christ, not to have faith in the promise of this truth, means he is extremely ungrateful for the promises of God. What we have, as being "IN" Christ, IS AMAZING. This is more amazing when we remember we do not deserve ANYTHING! It is all by the Grace of God, which allows us to be a part of His Body.

CHAPTER #2
MULTIPLE REASONS TO PRAISE AND GLORIFY GOD!
Ephesians 1:3-14

These verses take us back into "eternity past," and how God made us "AS SAINTS." This all took place before the foundation of the world. I feel sure you know this, but before God created the heaven and the earth HE KNEW everything that was going to happen from the creation unto eternity! Each of these "songs of praise" work together in the life of every believer and tell us of the amazing blessings God has given us. **Three times the phrase** *"To the praise of the glory of his grace"* is found in these verses.

The First: Ephesians 1:1 and 6: *"Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, to the saints which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus*: As Saints, we should be ***To the praise of the glory of his grace,*** *wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved….*

The Second: Ephesians 1:12: "***That we should be to the praise of his glory,*** *who first trusted in Christ."*

The Third: Ephesians 1:13- 14: *In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, **unto the praise of his glory**.*

THE FIRST REASON
TO PRAISE AND GLORIFY GOD FOR HIS GRACE
Ephesians 1:1-6

*"1. Paul, an apostle of Jesus Christ by the will of God, **to the saints** which are at Ephesus, and to the faithful in Christ Jesus: 2 Grace be to you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ. 3 Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who hath blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places **in Christ**: 4 According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love: 5 Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children by Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will, 6 **and** **To the praise of the glory of his grace,** wherein he hath made us accepted in the beloved."*

There are five reasons in these six verses for us to PRAISE THE LORD! We should daily praise Him because of these, but there is much more. For now, we will look at these five reasons:

(1) These verses tell us that God made all believers "saints." Before the foundation of the world, God knew every person who would receive His Son as their savior and go to heaven. He also knew every person who would reject His Son as savior and spend eternity in hell. He "predestinated" everyone whom He knew would receive His Son Jesus Christ as their Savior, **to be a saint**! It is AMAZING. I cannot think of myself as a saint. I imagine you feel the same way! If God had not said He made me a saint, I could not believe it. But GOD SAID IT AND THAT SETTLES IT! You and I are SAINTS!

(2) These verses tell us that God has blessed us with all spiritual blessings in heavenly places. God did not give us ANY further explanation about what those spiritual blessing are. Therefore, we cannot use our imagination concerning what they are. We can use our mind and our common sense and realize that they are far above anything we could imagine!

(3) These verses tell us that God put us "in Christ." In I Corinthians Chapter 12, it says that when a person puts their trust in Jesus Christ as their Savior the Holy Spirit of God baptizes that person into the "Body of Christ." Again, I cannot imagine that I am a member of the "Body of Jesus Christ!" That chapter also tells us that EVERY member, including you and me, is actually a part of the Body of Jesus Christ which is the true church, King of Kings and Lord of Lords! Unbelievable, but true. I stand amazed!

(4) These verses also tell us that God "*predestinated us unto the adoption of children…*" Adoption is a VERY misunderstood subject in the Bible. In our next section we will study how God gave every believer an inheritance. At that time, I will try to explain what "adoption" means in this verse. Let me make just one point. You are NOT adopted into the family of God. You are BORN into the family of God as a true son. Again, I will explain that in Ephesians 1:11 where it says, *"we have obtained an inheritance.*"

(5) God has made us "*accepted in the beloved*!" This statement is also amazing. It is difficult to think that God would make me acceptable to Him as I remember what a sinner I was before salvation, AND I am still acceptable even though I sin every day in some manner. I am blessed and amazed. God MADE us acceptable "*in the beloved*." I feel sure you know whom God is referring to when He said, "*in the beloved*." He was referring to His son, Jesus Christ, who was MADE sin for us that we might be made righteous in him. II Corinthians 5:21 says, *"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."* This is WHEN and WHY God MADE US ACCEPTABLE, even though we did not deserve it. If we got what we deserved we would be UNACCEPTABLE, and one day we would get what we deserve, which is to be cast into the burning lake of fire for ALL eternity!

These five great blessings came in only six verses and concludes with Verse 6, which closes with the admonition "***To the praise of the glory of his grace***!" Unbelievable!!! Let me close by asking a question. Are these five truths, which we received freely by the grace and the love of God, MORE than a good reason for us to "praise and glorify God for his grace?" YES! It is and I am

sure you agree with me. Therefore, LET'S **MAKE IT** A POINT TO DAILY PRAISE AND GLORIFY GOD!

THE SECOND REASON
TO PRAISE AND GLORIFY GOD FOR HIS GRACE
Ephesians 1:7-12

(1) *"In whom we have redemption through his blood,* ***(2)*** *the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace; 8 Wherein* ***(3)*** *he hath abounded toward us in all wisdom and prudence;* ***(4)*** *Having made known unto us the mystery of his will, according to his good pleasure which he hath purposed in himself: 10 That in the dispensation of the fulness of times he might gather together in one all things in Christ, both which are in heaven, and which are on earth; even in him: 11 In whom also* ***(5)*** *we have obtained an inheritance,* ***(6)*** *being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: 12 That* ***we should be to the praise of his glory****, who first trusted in Christ."* In these six verses there are four more reasons why "*we should be to the Praise of his Glory…"*! We should daily praise Him because,

(1) We have redemption through the blood of His Son, Jesus Christ. All of us know that Jesus died on the cross and shed his blood to redeem us from the penalty of sin. This verse clearly states this truth.

(2) We have had our sins forgiven. Everyone reading this book knows that God forgave us our sins, cast them behind as far as the east is from the west and remembers them no more. (Psalms 103:12)

(3) We have obtained an inheritance. This is where I will explain that we not only have, "*Having predestinated us unto the adoption of children",* but that we also have an inheritance. We have an inheritance, BECAUSE we have been adopted.

We have already studied how God redeemed us and how that redemption is through the blood of Jesus Christ. In this section we are going to share some thoughts concerning what our inheritance is. As pointed out in Ephesians 1:5, God has given "the spirit of adoption." Our adoption is yet future and is laid up for us in Heaven. Let's go to Romans 8:15-17 and see what our inheritance is.

"For ye have not received the spirit of bondage again to fear; ***but ye have received the Spirit of adoption****, whereby we cry, Abba, Father. 16 The Spirit itself beareth witness with our spirit, that we are the children of God: 17 And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."*

I will try to make this very clear and understandable. When the Bible talks about "adoption" it does not mean that we are "adopted into the family of God." Sorry to say, there are people who believe that and teach that, but that IS NOT TRUE. We are "born" into the family of

God. Jesus declared that truth clearly in John 3:3-7 while he was explaining salvation to Nicodemus:

*"Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man **be born again**, he cannot see the kingdom of God. 4 Nicodemus saith unto him, How can a man be born when he is old? can he enter the second time into his mother's womb, and be born? 5 Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto thee, Except a man be born of water and of the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God. 6 That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is born of the Spirit is spirit. 7 Marvel not that I said unto thee, **Ye must be born again**."*

You may be asking, "What then is adoption?" Romans 8:22-23 tells us what adoption is, *"For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now. 23 And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the firstfruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, **waiting for the adoption**, to wit, **the redemption of our body**."*

The word "adoption" in the early New Testament days was "a legal term." When a man had children, they were his children by birth. However, the children had no legal authority on the land and possessions of their father until they had reached a certain age. When they reached a certain age, they had the legal authority to all that their father left when he died, and they would inherit.

Today, we are waiting for the full blessings of the adoption. Christians are adopted when they are converted (Romans 8:15), but they have not yet been admitted the full privileges of their adoption into the family of God. Their adoption when they are converted is secret and may at the time be unknown to the world. When the fullness of their adoption came at a certain age, they had the full privileges of the sons of God. As you see in Verse 23, your full adoption will not come until the redemption of our body is complete.

On that day, we will be put on display in "God's Trophy Case" to show the universe the Glory of God. Galatians 4:4-7 gives a little more light on this subject, *"But when the fulness of the time was come, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the law, 5 To redeem them that were under the law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. 6 And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father. 7 Wherefore thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."*

I John 3:2 says it this way, *"Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, we shall be like him; for we shall see him as he is."*

We were "adopted" when we trusted Christ and were born again. Romans 8:17 assures us that we have an inheritance waiting for us in heaven, *"And if children, then heirs; heirs of God, and joint-heirs with Christ; if so be that we suffer with him, that we may be also glorified together."*

(4) We have been predestinated, by God, according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will: The purpose of God for us, as His children, is

given in the things listed thus far in the study of Ephesians. Now, let's move to the third reason we should be praising and glorifying God for His Grace.

THE THIRD REASON
TO PRAISE AND GLORIFY GOD FOR HIS GRACE
Ephesians 1:13-14

"In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, (1) ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, ***unto the praise of his glory."***

(1) We were sealed with that Holy Spirit of promise the second we received Christ as our Savior. Please note that this verse does not say "we are sealed **BY** the Holy Spirit." It says, "We are sealed **WITH** the Holy Spirit. John 14:16-17 clearly tells us that the Holy Spirit of God, a part of the trinity, is "with us" and dwells in us:

"And I will pray the Father, and he shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever; 17 Even the Spirit of truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him; for he dwelleth with you, and shall be in you." Hebrews 13:5 tells us He will never leave us nor forsake us, "*Let your conversation be without covetousness; and be content with such things as ye have: for he hath said, I will never leave thee, nor forsake thee."* A believer is safe and secure for all eternity! Thank You Lord!

Considering what we have studied in this chapter, how should we live, as saints adopted by God and have an inheritance waiting for us? Let me close this lesson by sharing with you four ways EVERY believer should live.

First: We should live a life of **holiness**. In I Peter 1:15-16 God said, *"But as he which hath called you is holy, so be ye holy in all manner of conversation: 16 Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."* No person of the world should ever see a Christian knowingly commit sin! If we "slip and sin" and we will, we should stop right where we are, confess that sin, ask God's forgiveness, and try not to repeat it again.

Second: We should live a life **without blemish.** Ephesians 5:25-27 says, *"Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and* ***without blemish****."*

Third: We should live a **life that is different**! I Peter 2:9 tells us how a saint should live, *"But ye are a chosen generation, a royal priesthood, an holy nation, a peculiar people; **that ye should shew forth the praises of him who hath called you out of darkness into his marvellous light:***"

Fourth: We should live a life **"zealous of good works."** Titus 2:14 tells us how to live as a saint of God, "*Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, **zealous of good works**.* "**We Should Live To the Praise of the Glory of his Grace!**"

CHAPTER #3
PAUL'S PRAYER FOR THE SAINTS AT EPHESUS
Ephesians 1:15-23

Introduction: There is a "KEY" word in Verse 15 where Paul was preparing the saints at Ephesus for his continued teaching in these verses and for the reason he was praying for them.

That word is "wherefore." Any time you find the word "wherefore" in the Bible, before continuing your study you need to go back and review the previous verses leading up to the word "wherefore" and determine what it is there for. In this case, Paul was referring back to all of Chapter 1 and all he had told the saints in Ephesus about what they had received from God and for their future inheritance.

Paul was reminding them of all the great wealth they have by being "in Christ" as a member of the body of Christ. He reminded them that their sins have been forgiven, they were justified by faith, they were sanctified, they had been made righteousness, they were citizens of heaven, they had the presence of God with them continually, they had a mansion in heaven waiting for them, they were heirs with the Lord Jesus Christ, they had the power of God dwelling in them, they had the promise of provision, they had the promise of protection, they had "the full love of God, and they had been sealed with the Holy Spirit for all eternity" (Ephesians 1:13). If you have believed in your heart, confessed your sins, and by faith trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior, you have ALL those things and even more.

THE OCCASION OF PAUL'S PRAYER
Ephesians 1:15-16

"Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saint, 16 Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers"

The occasion of Paul's prayer was because of the things **he had heard** about the church at Ephesus. Paul had been used of God to start the church at Ephesus but wrote the epistle while he was in prison in Rome and had not been back to Ephesus for a good while. He writes this letter to the church at Ephesus, because of what **he had heard** about the church since he left. Brief details of the church at Ephesus are in Acts Chapter 18.

First: Paul **heard of their faith in the Lord Jesus**! This should be a challenging thought to believers in churches today. In those days, there was no such thing as a telephone. Therefore, how did Paul hear about these things? He heard about their faith by "word of mouth" as people traveled back and forth to different counties to visit relatives and friends. Word of mouth is the only possible way Paul could have heard the things he heard. ALSO, word of mouth spreads quickly when people see great things. That tells us that the believers at Ephesus were living a godly life, witnessing and praising God, and people were seeing a great change in their lives. What they saw must have been a great blessing to them, as they were "passing along what they had seen" to other people by word of mouth. That should make us ask ourselves a question. Are people seeing a big change in your life? Are you living a CHANGED life as described above, a life of holiness, a life without blemish, a life very different, and a life of being zealous for good works. Are people seeing that great change in your life, and are so amazed that they are telling other people about what they saw in you and how you have changed after salvation?

The scriptures are clear concerning this truth. Let me share two scriptures with you. II Corinthians 5:17 tells us a person will be changed when they trust Christ and are saved, *"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."*

Also, James 2:14-18 tells us that if we have truly been born again, people will SEE our change of life and our good works for Christ, *"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, 16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? 17 Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. 18 Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works."*

Second, Paul not only heard of the great change in their lives after salvation, but he also heard of the love they had for all the saints! Again, the scriptures are clear that every believer should love all other believers. After all, we are all members of the body of Christ. Every member of our body loves and cares for every other member.

Jesus gave us the commandment in John 13:34-35, which says, *"A new commandment I give unto you, That ye love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another. 35 By this shall all men know that ye are my disciples, if ye have love one to another."*

What should a believer do to SHOW he has love for another believer? James 2:14-17 gives us an illustration of SHOWING love, *"What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, 16 And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit?"*

In closing let us notice that Paul, after hearing these things, said, *"I cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers."*

THE OBJECTIVE OF PAUL'S PRAYER
Ephesians 1:17-22

*"That the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give unto you the spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him: 18 The eyes of **your understanding being enlightened**; that ye may know what is the hope of his calling, and what the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints, 19 And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church,"*

Paul knew that the believers in the church at Ephesus were young and they needed to grow and be strengthened in their spiritual life. In Verse 18 Paul wanted them to **UNDERSTAND** two things. He began by saying *"The eyes of your **understanding** be enlightened.*" As I just said, Paul wanted them to understand and be enlightened to two things.

First: Paul wanted them to UNDERSTAND and be enlightened concerning "*the riches of the glory of **his inheritance in the saints.**"* There is much misunderstanding about this verse. It is talking about HIS inheritance. NOT OURS! HIS! His inheritance is not in the endless universe which He created. His inheritance is not in the great substance of the earth which He owns. His inheritance is in "THE SAINTS," an inheritance which He purchased at a GREAT price. Ephesians 1:7 tells us the PRICE HE PAID for His inheritance, *"In whom we have redemption **through his blood**, the forgiveness of sins, according to the riches of his grace;"* We are His inheritance! He purchased us! He sealed us with the Holy Spirit for all eternity, because we belong to Him and He DOES NOT WANT TO LOSE US.

Romans 8:23 says, *"And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruits of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves, waiting for the adoption, to wit, the redemption of our body."* The redemption of our body is when we die and go to be with Him or when the rapture takes place and He calls us to be with Him for all eternity. HE IS WAITING FOR THAT DAY. I Thessalonians 4:16-17 tells us when and how that will happen, *"For the Lord himself shall descend from heaven with a shout, with the voice of the archangel, and with the trump of God: and the dead in Christ shall rise first: 17 Then we which are alive and remain shall be caught up together with them in the clouds, to meet the Lord in the air: **and so shall we ever be with the Lord**."*

If you are like I am, I CANNOT IMAGINE Jesus Christ looking forward to having me with Him as His inheritance for all eternity! Nevertheless, Psalms 116:15 says, *"Precious in the sight of the LORD is the death of his saints."* I am looking forward to that day and hope you are doing the same.

How do we get "more of the knowledge of God?" Romans 10:17 answers that question for us. *"So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God."* "Word" in that verse can

be translated from two different Greek words. The first Greek word is "Logo." The word "logo" refers to the written Word of God. The written word is necessary for us to get wisdom and revelation, but we only grow in the knowledge of God by applying the second Greek word. The second Greek word is "Rhema." That is the word used in Romans 10:17. The word "Rhema" means, “to read and study the Word of God UNTIL YOU GET SOMETHING FROM GOD!”

Before you sit down to read the Word of God you should always pray and ask God to "open your eyes and to anoint the ears of your heart" and give you some new truth which you have not seen before. You may be asking, "How many chapters should I read?" I cannot answer that question. At times I have sat down like that, and God gave me something in the first few verses I read. Sometimes I may read several chapters and then, SUDDENLY, God will give me something just for me. That is how we grow in the knowledge of God. In this case, Paul explains his objective in Verses 18 and 19.

Second: Paul wanted them to UNDERSTAND the “exceeding greatness of His power.” Ephesians 1:19 says, *"And what is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,"*

God also wants you and me to know the greatness of His power and that His power is available to us. Ephesians 1:20-21 is a picture of His power, *"Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come:"* You and I have that same power available for us to use to serve Him.

1. We have the same power that God used to raise Christ from the dead!
2. We have the same power that God used to sit Christ on His own right hand.
3. We have the same power that God used to sit Christ FAR ABOVE principalities.
4. We have the same power that God used to sit Christ above power, might, and dominion.
5. We have the same power that God used to set him above **every name that is named!**

That power comes through the Holy Spirit and has been given to you and to me. Acts 1:8 says, *"**But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you:** and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."* Why did God give you and me that same power? He gave us that power that we might be able to TELL every person we ever meet about our amazing Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ!

Matthew 28:18-19 tells us how much power you and I have and how God would have us use that power. *”And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 **Go ye therefore**, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost:"*

There is no power in the universe more powerful than God has given us as His children. If a Christian understands these things which Paul has taught and their faith in Jesus Christ is real,

they will be ZEALOUS OF GOOD WORKS! (Titus 2:14) One last word of encouragement. Putting all this together, we should have victory and serve Jesus with all our heart and life. We not only have all the things we have studied in this lesson, II Corinthians 5:20 tells us we hold a very high and holy office in the work of Christ, *"Now then **WE ARE AMBASSADORS** for Christ, as though God did beseech you by us: we pray you in Christ's stead, be ye reconciled to God."* Stop and think about that. God HAS APPOINTED YOU AND ME TO BE HIS AMBASSADORS TO THE WORLD! To me that is unbelievable, but God said it, and that settles it. Let's live for Him, praise Him, and serve Him faithfully as His ambassadors to the world! WHAT A PRIVILEGE!

CHAPTER #4
OUR PAST LIFE - OUR PRESENT LIFE- OUR FUTURE LIFE
Ephesians 2:1-7

Introduction: These verses are divided into three sections, (1) our past life, which means what we were before we trusted Christ, were born again, and became a new creature in Christ, (2) our present life which we have been living since we trusted Christ, and (3) our future life which will be after God calls us home to be with Him for all eternity. These verses also contain:

1. Three Raging Forces in Our Past Life: The world, the flesh, and the devil. (Verses 1-3)
2. Three Redeeming Facts in Our Present Life: The mercy of God, the love of God, and the grace of God.
3. Three Resulting Features in Our Future Life: God made us alive, God raised us up, and God sealed us with the Holy Spirit.

YOUR PAST LIFESTYLE
Ephesians 2:1-2

When I say your past lifestyle, I am referring to "your life before you trusted Jesus Christ as your Savior and you were saved."

*"And you hath he quickened, **who were** dead in trespasses and sins; Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:"*

First: We **were** (past tense) dead in trespasses in sin. Ephesians 2:1 says, *"And you hath he quickened, who were dead in trespasses and sins;"* Paul reminds us that even though today we are "alive and did not have eternal life" in the past, we WERE dead in our trespasses and sins. Since the days of Adam and Eve, every person born into this world has been condemned to die. Because of the sin of Adam and Eve, our "life-cord" was severed the day we were born. God put a curse on Adam and Eve in Genesis 2:17, *"But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: for in the day that thou eatest thereof thou shalt surely die."* On THAT day, when Adam and Eve ignored the warning, disobeyed God and ate of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, Adam and Eve died a spiritual death and were separated from God, their

"creator." We will not deal with that here, but this is referring to the " second death," which is for all eternity. This is not physical death!

That death penalty, according to Romans 5:12, was passed on to every person born since that day, *"Wherefore, as by one man* (Adam) *sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and **so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"*** The better we understand our past conditions that when we were born into this world we were a sinner and under the death penalty, the more appreciation we should have for where God has brought us to today. If we do not show great appreciation for God delivering us from the death penalty, that is the height of ingratitude!

Second: We **walked** (past tense!) according to **the course of the world.** Verse 2 says, *"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:"*

In the world you will find two very different lifestyles. In both lifestyles, regardless in which one a person may live, they are still lost and under the death penalty. (1) Many people of the world live a vile, wicked, and ungodly lifestyle. They drink, use vile language, smoke, party, and they are involved in all types of immoral activity, and daily live a life of known sin. (2) Other people of the world, lost people who live a clean cut, moral, upright lifestyle, and many are religious, but regardless of which lifestyle they live, they are still dead in trespasses and sins and under the death penalty.

The question has been asked, "What is the curse of the world." That question is answered in 1 John 2:15-17 which says, *"Love not the world, neither the things that are in the world. **If any man love the world, the love of the Father is not in him.** 16 For **all** that is in the world, the lust of the flesh, and the lust of the eyes, and the pride of life, **is not of the Father**, but is of the world. 17 And the world passeth away, and the lust thereof: but he that doeth the will of God abideth for ever."* Maybe the following will help you understand the "course of the world:"

1. The lust of the flesh is the carnal desire to do more things in the world. They desire the lifestyle explained above about people living a vile lifestyle.

2. The lust of the eyes is the carnal desire to "have more and more of the world." These people live to make money, money, and more money. They want bigger houses, bigger cars, etc.

3. The pride of life is the carnal desire to "be a somebody of the world." These people may be big businessmen. They may be politicians who want to rule the world. The main thing they want is to be known as a great person, a CEO of a great company, etc. They will do whatever it takes to "get in the spotlight of the world."

This type of worldly lifestyle will never bring happiness or contentment. Years ago, Mr. Rockefeller, who at the time was the richest man in the world, kept working to make more and more money. In the later years of his life, he was interviewed on national television and asked this

question. "Mr. Rockefeller, you have worked all of your life and made millions and millions of dollars. Today you are the richest man in the world and can buy anything you want to buy, do anything you want to do, and go anywhere you want to go, but you just keep working and working to make more money. How much money would it take for you to be satisfied?" He answered the question by saying, "Just a little bit more!" I said that to say this, the things of the world, no matter what they are, will never satisfy!

Third: We **walked** (past tense) according to the prince of the power of the air. Ephesians 2:2 says, *"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience.*" The prince of the power of the air is "the devil!" He is the master of the lost people in the world. John 34 and 44 tells about the devil, *"Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin…..Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it.*"

1. Lost people have their minds blinded. II Corinthains 4:4, *"In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."*

2. Lost people have become the servants of Satan. Romans 6:16, *"Know ye not, that to whom ye yield yourselves servants to obey, his servants ye are to whom ye obey; whether of sin unto death, or of obedience unto righteousness?"*

3. Lost people walk and live their lives according to the course of this ungodly world. Ephesians 2:2 *"Wherein in time past ye walked according to the course of this world, according to the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that now worketh in the children of disobedience:"*

The saints of God have been rescued from the power of darkness and have NO EXCUSE for not walking with Christ, living for Christ, and setting an example for the lost to see. Colossians 1:13-14 says, "*Who hath delivered us from the power of darkness, and hath translated us into the kingdom of his dear Son: 14 In whom we have redemption through his blood, even the forgiveness of sins:"*

Fourth: We walked (past tense) according to the lust of our flesh. Ephesians 2:3 says, *"Among whom also we all had our conversation in times past in the lusts of our flesh, fulfilling the desires of the flesh and of the mind; and were by nature the children of wrath, even as others."*

That means we knew what God wanted us to do and not to do, but we flatly refused to obey and do that which was right in God's sight. We had sensual appetites, and we wanted to fulfill the lust of our ungodly flesh and be immoral, KNOWING that God was not pleased with it. Let me sum this up by simply saying "the lust of the flesh" is sin. We should not PUT ANYTHING before what we know God is against..

Christians should remember that they WERE dead in trespasses and sin, but God delivered us from that darkness. We need to be VERY careful to keep our flesh under the control of God's

word and of the Holy Spirit, because we live in a body of flesh and it is just the same today as before we were saved. Paul said, "*In my flesh dwelt NO GOOD THING."* **Question:** How many times have you heard someone say, "Oh, if I could go back and do it over again." It is far better to obey God's word and the leading of the Holy Spirit, because WE CANNOT GO BACK AND DO IT AGAIN!

As a Christian who has been purchased by God, this is how we should live? Colossians 3:1-3 tells us this, *"If ye then be risen with Christ, seek those things which are above, where Christ sitteth on the right hand of God. 2 Set your affection on things above, **not on things on the earth.** 3 For ye are dead, and your life is hid with Christ in God."*

YOUR PRESENT LIFE
Ephesians 2:4

When I say you are in your present life, I am talking about from the day you trusted Jesus Christ and were saved, until today!

*"But God, who is **rich in mercy**, for **his great love wherewith he loved us**, 5 Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened us together with Christ **(by grace** ye are saved;)."*

In our past life, we were all dead in trespasses and sin … ***BUT GOD***! These two words, "But God" are the turning point in man's destiny. Your destiny! My destiny! We were doomed to the wrath of God, ***BUT GOD***! This has been the history of the world.

1. *The world was without form and void, BUT GOD…*	Genesis 1:1
2. *You met it for evil, BUT GOD…*	Genesis 50:20
3. *Scarcely for a righteous man will one die, BUT GOD…*	Romans 5:6-8
4. *For indeed he was sick nigh unto death, BUT GOD…*	Philippians 2:27
5. *Saul sought him every day, BUT GOD… delivered him*!	I Samuel 23:14

All through the scripture, you will find BUT GOD! It is ALWAYS something for our good, and for God's glory!

First: We are no longer dead in trespasses in sin, **because our God is rich in mercy.** Mercy is God's compassion on a sinner who DESERVES NOTHING but death! II Corinthians 1:3-4 says, *"Blessed be God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, **the Father of mercies**, and the God of all comfort. 4 Who comforteth us in all our tribulation, that we may be able to comfort them which are in any trouble, by the comfort wherewith we ourselves are comforted of God.*

Also, I Peter 1:3 tells us of God's abundant mercy, *"Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, which according to his abundant mercy **hath** begotten* (present tense) *us again unto a lively hope by the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead…"* God's mercy is pictured in Psalms 103:12, ***"As far as the east is from the west, so far hath he removed our transgressions from us."***

I am truly glad that God said, *"as far as the east is from the west"* and did not say as far as the north is from the south. If you leave the United States and start north and you travel far enough through Canada and the Artic Circle, you can find the north pole. However, if you cross the north pole, then you are going south. If you travel far enough south, you will find the south pole. However, if you leave the United States and start west, you will arrive in Japan, but you have not found the west. The west is then in Europe. So, you continue to travel west until you reach Europe, but you have not found the west. From Europe, where is the west? It is in the United States! When you reach the United States, where is the west: It is still in Japan. You see, the east and the west never meet. That is how far God removed our sins from us when we trusted Jesus Christ as our savior. Hebrews 8:12 brings all of this to a conclusion, *"For I will be **merciful** to their unrighteousness, and their sins and their iniquities **will I remember no more**."*

Second: We are no longer dead in trespasses in sin because of God's love for us. Ephesians 2:4 says, *"But God, who is rich in mercy, **for his great love wherewith he loved us,**"* When we were "dead in sins" God quickened us TOGETHER with Jesus Christ. Who can explain that or who can even fathom that? I cannot! It is difficult to believe. Nevertheless, I believe it because God said it! AMEN! Let me share three points and a poem, which speaks of God's love for us.

John 3:16: *"For God **so loved the world**, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*

Romans 5:8: *"But God **commendeth his love toward us**, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."*

I John 4:9-10: *"In this was **manifested the love of God toward us**, because that God sent his only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through him. 10 Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that he loved us, and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins."*

Could I with ink the ocean fill, Were the whole sky of parchment made,
Were every blade of grass a quill, And every man a scribe by trade.

To write the love of God above, Would drain the ocean dry.
Nor could the scroll contain the whole, Though spread from sky to sky.

THIS IS OUR PRESENT LIFE
We have God's Mercy, God's Love, and God's Grace!

OUR FUTURE LIFE
Ephesians 2:5-10
Three Great Benefits of Trusting Jesus as your Savior!

*"Even when we were dead in sins, **hath quickened us together with Christ,** (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And **hath raised us up together**, and **made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:** 7 That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his*

kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained that we should walk in them."

We will now see to a small degree, what the Mercy of God, the Love of God, and the Grace of God accomplished in our lives. There are three main and important results in the verses above.

First: Ephesians 2:5 above says, *"hath **quickened us** together with Christ."* The word "quickened" means "God made us alive." In the past we were spiritually dead, but now we are spiritually alive. You may be asking, "How did that happen?" According to II Corinthians 5:21, it happened when Jesus was made sin for us, died on the cross, and paid our sin debt, *For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him.*

In Galatians 2:20 the apostle Paul gave his testimony concerning the Bible truth, *"I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."*

Romans 6:4 tells you when this happened to you, *"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism* **into death:** ***that like as Christ was raised up from the dead*** *by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life"***.** This happened to you the second you received Christ. Your sin debt of death was paid, and you were "born again" into the family of God. From that second you had eternal life. That eternal life is NOW! It is not after you die physically, because Christ has ALREADY PAID YOUR SIN DEBT, and John 5:24: says, *"…is passed from death unto life*." Each of us should have the same testimony as Paul and be able to truthfully say, *"…I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth IN ME!"* You have been MADE ALIVE!

Second: Ephesians 2:6 says, "*And hath **raised us up** together,"* While on earth, Jesus raised Lazarus from the dead. John 11:43-44 tells us of that account, *"And when he thus had spoken, he cried with a loud voice, Lazarus, come forth. 44 And he that was dead came forth, bound hand and foot with graveclothes: and his face was bound about with a napkin. Jesus saith unto them, Loose him, and let him go.*" Please note, true Lazarus was resurrected from the grave, BUT Lazarus was bound in his graveclothes. That is not the type of being "raised up" we are talking about.

John 20:4-7 tells us about the "raising up" or resurrection of Jesus, *"So they ran both together: and the other disciple did outrun Peter, and came first to the sepulchre. 5 And he stooping down, and looking in, saw the linen clothes lying; yet went he not in. 6 Then cometh Simon Peter following him, and went into the sepulchre, and seeth the linen clothes lie, 7 And the napkin, that was about his head, not lying with the linen clothes, but wrapped together in a place by itself."* When we are "raised up" we will be in the likeness of Christ. Romans 6:5 tells us of our resurrection, *"For if we have been planted together in the likeness of his death,* ***we shall be also in the likeness of his resurrection****:*

Psalms 17:15 contains a prophecy of what we will be like, *"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."* I John 3:1-2 verifies

that prophecy: *"Behold, what manner of love the Father hath bestowed upon us, that we should be called the sons of God: therefore the world knoweth us not, because it knew him not. 2 Beloved, now are we the sons of God, and it doth not yet appear what we shall be: but we know that, when he shall appear, **we shall be like him;** for we shall see him as he is."*

Romans 6:4 tells us how we should be living now, as we look forward to His coming, *"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that <u>like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life</u>"*

Question: Are you walking in newness of life, as you wait for your resurrection?

As we learn these truths, the more appreciation we should have for where God has brought us from to where we are today. If we do not show great appreciation for God delivering us from the death penalty, giving us new life, and the promise of being like Him when he comes, that is the height of ingratitude!

<u>Third</u>: In Ephesians 2:6 the Bible tells us "*made us sit together in heavenly places in Christ Jesus."*

As for our Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of God, Philippians 2:9 says, *"Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name:"* Where is the Lord Jesus Christ today? The Bible tells us He is seated at the right hand of God in Heaven. I Peter 3:22, speaking of Jesus Christ, tells us that truth, *"Who is gone into heaven, and <u>is on the right hand of God</u>; angels and authorities and powers being made subject unto him."*

Yes, I realize that you and I are still in a body of flesh and living on earth. However, Ephesians 2:6 tells us that GOD sees us different. God sees us *"as sitting together, in heavenly places IN CHRIST!"*

THE CONCLUSION OF THE MATTER

One of the questions I have asked myself and others have asked me, is "Why has God bestowed the riches of His Mercy, Love, and Grace on a man like me and a person like you; one who in my past life was an ungodly sinner?" The answer seems to be found in Ephesians 2:7 which says, *"That in the ages to come **he might shew** the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus.*

One day, very possibly before the Great Throne of Judgment, God is going to place each and every one of his children in a beautiful case called GOD'S TROPHY CASE. He is going to show the world the wonders of His mercy, His love, and His grace! Also at that time, the world will know that everyone in His TROPHY CASE is there because of the mercy, love and grace of God. Ephesians 2:8-10 will be on display over that case:

*"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: **it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works**, lest any man should boast. 10 For **we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus unto good works, which God hath before ordained <u>that we should walk in them.</u>**"*

Before the foundation of the world, God ordained "good works" and "how we should walk in them!"

1. We should walk as He walked.
   Romans 6:4. " Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk in newness of life."

2. We should be holy as He is holy.
   I Peter 1:16. " Because it is written, Be ye holy; for I am holy."

3. We should be blameless as He was blameless.
   Ephesians 1:4. " According as he hath chosen us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and without blame before him in love:

4. We should do good works as He did good works.
   John 14:12. *"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father.*

5. We should please God in everything we do, just a Jesus did.
   Romans 8:29. " And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him.

THIS IS HOW WE LIVE A VICTORIOUS CHRISTIAN LIFE!

CHAPTER #5
JEWS AND GENTILES ARE RIGHTLY FITTED TOGETHER IN CHRIST.
Ephesians 2:11-22

The theme in Ephesians 2:11-22 differs very little from Verses 1-10. Verses 11-22 are directed particularly to the Gentiles. Many of the members in the church at Ephesus were Gentiles. In those days Gentiles had not been accepted to meet together by the Jews.

It is in these verses that Paul explains both the past condition of the Gentiles and then follows that with the present condition of the Gentiles, which is a great blessing because that condition continues until today and includes most, if not all, the people who are reading this commentary. Most of us are Gentiles!

First: In Ephesians 2:11-13, Paul tells us of the past condition of the Gentile nations. *"Wherefore remember, that ye being in time past Gentiles in the flesh, who are called Uncircumcision by that which is called the Circumcision in the flesh made by hands; 12 That at that time ye were without Christ, being aliens from the commonwealth of Israel, and strangers*

from the covenants of promise, having no hope, and without God in the world: 13 But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ."

In times past the Gentiles were:

1. "…*without Christ*."
2. "…*Aliens from the commonwealth of Israel."*
3. *"…Strangers from the covenants of promise*."
4. "…*having no hope."*
5. "…*without God in the world*."
6. "…*were far off."*

Second: In Ephesians 2:13-19, Paul explains the condition of the Gentiles at that present time, *"But now in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh by the blood of Christ. 14 For he is our peace, who hath made both one, and hath broken down the middle wall of partition between us; 15 Having abolished in his flesh the enmity, even the law of commandments contained in ordinances; for to make in himself of twain one new man, so making peace; 16 And that he might **reconcile both unto God in one body** by the cross, having slain the enmity thereby: 17 And came and preached peace to you which were afar off, and to them that were nigh. 18 For through him we both have access by one Spirit unto the Father. 19 Now therefore ye are no more strangers and foreigners, but fellow citizens with the saints, and of the household of God*. The Gentiles:

1. "…*are made nigh* (near)" (Verse 13)
2. "…*have peace with God"* (Verse 14)
3. "…*hath broken down the wall of partition*" (Verse 14)
4. "…*abolished in his flesh the enmity*" (Verse 15)
5. "…*have been made one with the Jews*" (Verse 16)
6. "…*no more strangers and foreigners*" (Verse 19)
7. "…*fellow citizens with the saints*" (Verse 19)
8. "…*of the household of God"* (Verse 19)

All this together means that the Gentile believers are included in the promises of Abraham. That is recorded in Galatians 3:14,*"That the blessing of Abraham might come on the Gentiles through Jesus Christ; that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith."* As I have said, in those days the Jews DID NOT ACCEPT the Gentiles. No where in the Old Testament do we find the Jews, who were "God's chosen people," inviting Gentiles to meet with them in the Tabernacle or at any other place or time. The Jews are still God's chosen people today, but the wall of partition was broken down. Let me share four verses which testify that the Gentiles are included in the church with the Jews. The first two are found in Ephesians 2:5-6:

*"Even when we were dead in sins, hath quickened **us together** with Christ, (by grace ye are saved;) 6 And hath raised us up together, and made us sit **together** in heavenly places in Christ Jesus:"*

Then in Ephesians 2:21-22 God pictures the church as a building being built, *"In whom all the building fitly **framed** together groweth unto an holy temple in the Lord: 22 In whom ye also are builded together for an habitation of God through the Spirit."*

Also one last but important point - Paul pointed out to the Gentiles that they, who had been dogs, are saved in the same manner the Jewish people were saved. In Ephesians 2:7-9 Paul revealed to the Gentiles how they were saved, *"That in the ages to come he might shew the exceeding riches of his grace in his kindness toward us through Christ Jesus. 8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast."*

Sad to say that today many Gentiles do not have full appreciation of God taking down that wall of partition and including us in THE BODY OF CHRIST by faith and by faith alone. This was ALL NEW to the Gentiles. They were now a part of "God's people," along with the Jews. We do not realize the EXTREME WEALTH we enjoy today by God making this move. Verse 13 tells us how that happened, ***"But now** in Christ Jesus ye who sometimes were far off are made nigh **by the blood of Christ."*** As you think about this, you should stop, have prayer, and thank God for taking down that partition between Gentiles and Jews, and allowing us to enter in and be a part of the body of Christ. AMEN and AMEN!

PAUL REVEALS THE MYSTERY OF THE CHURCH.
Ephesians 3:1-12

First: Let me explain what the word "mystery" means in the Bible. It is not like we think of today when we talk about a mystery. A mystery in the Bible is something that God has known in His heart before the foundation of the world but has kept secret until He was ready to reveal it. Ephesians 3:5 says, *"Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit;"* Ephesians 3:9 tells us that God is now revealing **the mystery of the church**. No one in the Old Testament, the writers or the apostles, had ever heard the word "church." That verse says, *"And to make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ:"*

This mystery was revealed to Paul clearly and directly by God, while he was in the desert in Arabia. That is found in Galatians 1:15-17, *"But when it pleased God, who separated me from my mother's womb, and called me by his grace, 16 To reveal his Son in me, that I might preach him among the heathen; immediately I conferred not with flesh and blood: 17 Neither went I up to Jerusalem to them which were apostles before me; but I went into Arabia, and returned again unto Damascus."*

This is amazing! Paul, in spite of being one of the greatest Christians we have any record of, God chose him and only him, to reveal this mystery. He was one of the most humble men in the Bible. Paul, speaking of himself in Ephesians 3:8 said, *"Unto me, who am less than the least of all saints, is this grace given, that I should preach among the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ;"*

Let me give you a further explanation of the phrase. This expression is peculiar to Paul, but this phrase does not fully explain what Paul wished to express to the saints at Ephesus. The Greek word used here for "… *who am less than the least*," is "elacistoterov." It is not used in any

other New Testament passage. This word in our language today means, "I am not worthy to be reckoned among the saints." Paul seems to always remember his past life and had GREAT, GREAT appreciation as he also remembered the GREAT, GREAT life he had after being saved and being IN CHRIST! Since that day Paul, according to the scriptures, "followed Christ."

What do you and I have in Christ? Verse 8 tells us that we have *"**The unsearchable riches of Christ."*** The Greek word rendered *"unsearchable"* is anexicniaston and occurs but one other place in the New Testament. That is found in Romans 11:33 where it is translated, *"past finding out."* It means that "unsearchable thing" cannot be totally understood. The meaning is this - there is a *sufficiency in Christ* which is incomprehensible and PAST US FINDING OUT! This is amazing!

Our riches in God cannot be fully appreciated. There is no more emphatic expression in the New Testament than this. It shows that the heart of the apostle was so full of admiration for the sufficiency and glory that he received from the Savior that **he had no words to express it.** AND he considered it **the highest honor in life** to be permitted to tell the world that there are such riches in Christ, the Redeemer, available to them. **(I would encourage you to reread Ephesians 3:9-12.** Also, Paul in I Corinthians 11:1 has admonished you and I to do as he did after his salvation, *"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ."*

After the "mystery of the church" was revealed to Paul, it was confirmed in Verse 5 by the Holy Apostles, and by the Prophets. Verse 5 also confirms that this mystery was revealed **by the Holy Spirit**, *"Which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles and prophets **by the Spirit;**"*

Now let's move to the main mystery which God gave Paul concerning the Gentiles. It was not that the Gentiles were members of "the church" along with the Jews. The word "church" is translated from the Greek word "Ekklesia" which means "an assembly or a called-out group." Ephesians 3:16 tells us that the Gentiles are not only members of the "church", but they are also members of the Body of Christ! *"That the Gentiles should be fellowheirs, and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel:"* This was unbelievable to both the Gentiles and also to the Jews. The Jews before Christ came, considered the Gentiles as "dogs." Now the Jews and Gentiles are fellow heirs and of the same body, and partakers of his promise in Christ by the gospel.

GOD'S PURPOSES FOR REVEALING THE MYSTERY
Ephesians 3:10-13

"To the intent that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, 11 According to the eternal purpose which he purposed in Christ Jesus our Lord: 12 In whom we have boldness and access with confidence by the faith of him. 13 Wherefore I desire that ye faint not at my tribulations for you, which is your glory."

CHRISTIANS HAVE AN EXALTED POSITION

1. EVERY Christian is a **Steward** of God's household	(Ephesians 3:2 and 7)
2. EVERY Christian is a **"Steward**" of the Dispensation of Grace	(I Peter 4:10)
3. EVERY Christian is **"Called"** - as Paul was.	(Romans 1:1 and 6)
4. EVERY Christian is an "**Ambassador"** for Christ.	(II Corinthians 5:20)
5. EVERY Christian is a "**King and a Priest.**"	(Revelation 5:10)
6. EVERY Christian will "**Reign with Christ**" for 1000 years.	(Revelation 20:6)
7. EVERY Christian will be a **"Display of God's Grace."**	(Ephesians 1:5-6)
8. EVERY Christian will be "**Viewed by the Universe."**	(Ephesians 3:10-12)

CHAPTER #6
PAUL'S PATTERN FOR PRAYING FOR THE SAINTS
Ephesians 3:13-21

Introduction: We will address Verses 13-21 as we go through this lesson on prayer. For now, we will lay a foundation. This is the "second" prayer which Paul prayed for the saints in Ephesus. We will compare the first prayer to the second prayer, as they both work together. When Paul prayed his first prayer, he was preparing those saints for this second prayer, plus the things he was going to teach and apply to their future.

1. In his first prayer, Paul prayed for them to grow in the **knowledge** of God.
   In his second prayer, Paul prayed their knowledge would help them **grow in love.**

2. In his first prayer, Paul prayed for them to have **revelation** of the knowledge.
   In his second prayer, Paul prayed for them to put revelation into **realization.**

3. In his first prayer, Paul prayed for them to have more **enlightenmen**t.
   In his second prayer, Paul prayed that the enlightenment would turn into **enablement.**

Paul knew that it is not enough to KNOW all these things, but that they needed to be "doers of the word and not hearers only." That is still true for us as saints today. That is commanded in James 1:22. However, we should not be a "doer of the Word" just because God commanded it. We should be "doers of God's Word" because of what He did to deliver us from our "past life." Even after salvation, think about ALL God has done for us. Paul's entire prayer is aimed at making the saints at Ephesus realize that God has given us unlimited power for Christ and His Word. That power is at our disposal every day of our life. Please stop and think about this. YOU have all the power that Jesus Christ has! Please put His power to work in YOUR life. You may be saying, "I can't do what Christ did!" Let me remind you of something Jesus said while He was here on earth in the form of a man. In John 14:12-14, talking to you and to me, He said:

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father. 13 And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son. 14 If ye shall "ask any thing in my name, I will do it."

Before moving to Paul's prayer, let's look at Paul's attitude for praying this prayer. Ephesians 3:14 begins by saying, ***"For this cause*** *I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ," For this cause…* **What cause?**

Because of his strong desire and interest in the saints at Ephesus will also include all the saints in all the world. Because of his strong desire that they fully enjoy their great privilege of being "in Christ!" Because of the great mystery which he had just revealed to them, that they are "a part of the body of Jesus Christ!" Because of the calling of God on his life, which is recorded in Romans 1:1 which says, *"Paul, **a servant of Jesus Christ, called** to be an apostle, separated unto the gospel of God,"* Because Paul knew that not only was HE CALLED, but every saint of God is called. That is found in Romans 1:6, *"Among whom are **ye also the called** of Jesus Christ:"*

If you are saved you need to realize that God has called you just as He called Paul. We may be called to different types or parts of the ministry, but every member of the Body of Christ is necessary and important. Please stop and say to yourself, "I AM CALLED OF GOD TO THE MINISTRY!" Last, but not least, Paul prayed for the saints because of his strong desire that they might live and enjoy the life which God has planned for them! In that day people prayed standing up. However, because of Paul's true heart felt burden, he said, ***"For the cause…I bow my knees unto the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ!"*** Because of the burden in his heart for the other saints, **Paul fell to his knees**! You and I, along with every believer in the world according to Galatians 3:26, were included in Paul's prayer, "*For ye are all the children of God by faith in Christ Jesus."*

CHAPTER #7
PAUL'S APPEAL TO THE SAINTS
Ephesians 3:6-21

First: In Ephesians 3:16 Paul prays for their **ENDOWMENT**. He prayed, *"That he would **grant** you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with might by his Spirit in the inner man;* To "endow" a person with something, is to provide them with something freely. Because God has "endowed" us according to His riches, we can go boldly to the Throne of Grace and ask for ANYTHING we need! We can go as often as we want and stay as long as we want. Notice also that it does not say "He grants us OUT of His riches," but it says "He grants us ACCORDING to His riches" and His riches are unlimited! The Bible tells us that He knows what we need before we ask. Therefore, He KNOWS what we need before we ask, so please do not feel you are imposing on your heavenly Father. The power cannot be purchased at ANY price! IT IS A GRANT! Paul prayed this for the saints in Ephesus and his prayer applies to you and me today, as well as to ALL believers!

Second: In Ephesians 3:6 Paul prays for their **ENDUEMENT,** "*That he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, **to be strengthened with might** by his Spirit in the inner man;"* The word "enduement" means to provide a special ability. In whatever kind of trial you may find yourself, God has "endued" us with inner strength sufficient to bare the trial. As you preform your daily duties as a child of God, God will give you more and more "enduement" to serve Him and to bring glory to his name! You and I as Christians should daily pray for more and

more enduement and power to bring more and more glory to His name! We already have that enduement, but many Christians fail to realize or fail to use the unlimited power for which God has endued us. Zechairah 4:6 tells us of the power we have dwelling in us, "*Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts."* Paul prayed this for the saints in Ephesus and his prayer applies to you and me today, as well as to ALL believers!

Third: In Ephesians 3:17 Paul prays for the **ENTHRONEMENT** of Christ in their hearts. *"That Christ may dwell **in your hearts** by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love."* This is not Paul praying for them to accept Christ in their hearts for salvation. These people are already "saved and are saints." Also, it is not about them reigning with Christ as it is in some scriptures. This is about them "Enthroning Jesus Christ to sit on the throne of their hearts, and King of Kings"! As you know, we are already "The Temple of God." I Corinthians 6:19 tells us that we are the Temple of God, *"What? know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own?"* Paul's prayer for the saints at Ephesus is that they would have Jesus Christ, sit on the throne of their heart every day of their life. This should begin the day we trust Christ as our Savior. We should "die to self" and give God complete authority of our life. Romans 12:1 tells us that we should die to self, *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."* Paul gives us his testimony that he died to self in Galatians *2:2O, "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."*

This should be the testimony of every Christian, and Paul is praying for the saints in Ephesus to let Jesus sit on the throne of their hearts and rule their life every day. God never settles for "second place." He is either Lord OF ALL, or He is not Lord AT ALL! Let me give you some advice on how to do that. In I Corinthians 15:31 Paul said, *"I die daily!"* As you know, we all live in a body of flesh. We can walk with God, obey God, and have Him sitting on the throne of our hearts all day that day. However, when we go to bed at night, while we sleep, our old flesh rises up and sits on the throne of our heart. This is what you should do. When you wake up EVERY morning BEFORE you get out of bed, have a short time of prayer, "die to self" and put Jesus back on the throne of your heart. If Paul had to "die daily", certainly you and I should die daily and be sure that Christ is ENTHRONED in our hearts and let HIM rule and reign in your life all day, every day.

Fourth: In Ephesians 3:17, Paul prays for their **ESTABLISHMENT**. Paul prayed, *"That Christ may dwell in your hearts by faith; that ye, being rooted and grounded in love,"* Rooted and grounded" is explained in Psalms 1:1-3. *"Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful 2 But his delight is in the law of the LORD; and in his law doth he meditate day and night. 3 And he shall be like a tree planted by the rivers of water, that bringeth forth his fruit in his season; his leaf also shall not wither; and whatsoever he doeth shall prosper."*

Grounded is like a foundation of a giant building. (II Timothy 2:19) Paul prays for them to be ESTABLISHED, rooted and grounded in love, for the Bible says God Is Love! I John 4:7-8 tells us about God being Love, *"Beloved, let us love one another: for love is of God; and every one that loveth is born of God, and knoweth God. 8 He that loveth not knoweth not God; for God is love."* If we are going to be LIKE CHRIST then we should be ESTABLISHED in our love for God, love for Christ, love for the Holy Spirit, and love for the brethren!

Fifth: In Ephesians 3:18-19, Paul prays for their **ENLIGHTENMENT**, *"May be able to **comprehend** with all saints what is the May be able to comprehend with all saints what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge, that ye might be filled with all the fulness of God.breadth, and length, and depth, and height;* I used the word "enlightenment" which has the same meaning as "comprehending" in Verse 18. Above, Paul prayed for the saints that they would be "rooted and grounded." Being "rooted and grounded" in the Word of God is the key to being enlightened, which means to understand the word of God more and more each day. No one will ever comprehend *"…what is the breadth, and length, and depth, and height; 19 And to know the love of Christ, which passeth knowledge …"*

Sixth: In Ephesians 3:19, Paul prays for their ENLARGEMENT, "…*And to know the love of Christ, **which passeth knowledge.**"* Paul is not only praying that the saints in Ephesus will be enlightened, but that they will ENLARGE knowledge every day of their life. The very youngest of saints knows something of the Word of God, but not much. For example, every young convert knows the following from John 3:16:

They know the breadth of the Love of God: For God so loved the world!
They know the depth of the Love of God: He gave His only begotten Son!
They know the length of the Love of God: That whosoever believeth in Him should not perish!
They know the height of the Love of God: But have everlasting life!

That is one of the key reasons that we need each other. That is the reason EVERY member of the church is vitally important! I comprehend something in the Scriptures, something God gives me, and it is my desire and responsibility to "share that with others in my church, or any other church." As you study your Bible, you will comprehend something you may never have seen before, so it is your responsibility to share, if you have the opportunity, with others. As I said, none of us will EVER comprehend All, or even near all, of the Word of God. However, that should be our goal, even though we know it is impossible! It should be our desire and our goal to be ENLIGHTENED in some way every day of our life!

Seventh: In Ephesians 3:20-21, Paul is praying for the ENRICHMENT, *"**Now** unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us, 21 Unto him be glory in the church by Christ Jesus throughout all ages, world without end."*

You see I both underlined and made bold the word, "NOW!" We have all these things NOW! Yes, when we are called home to be with Christ in Heaven, we will have all seven of the

following things and have total understanding of the Word of God. However, I Corinthians 12:27 says, *"NOW … ye are the body of Christ, and members in particular."* This means:

1. We have Endowment NOW!
2. We have Enduement NOW!
3. We have Enthronement NOW!
4. We have Establishment NOW!
5. We have Enlightenment NOW!
6. We have Enlargement NOW!
7. We have Enrichment NOW!

These are all available to us today and every day of our life. Please remember, when Paul prayed the prayer, he was praying for the saints! That includes you and me, plus every saint that has ever trusted Jesus Christ as their Savior! It is hard to imagine!

SECTION TWO

WALK WORTHY

BY
IMITATING CHRIST

WALKING WORTHY
AND
IMITATING CHRIST WHEN WALKING IN THE CHURCH
Ephesians 4:1–6

Introduction: Paul is now going to a completely different teaching style than when he began in Chapters 1 through 3. It will be good for us to do a quick review of the first three chapters and what Paul has taught. Paul has covered seven different subjects through the first three chapters.

First: In Ephesians 1:1-14 Paul taught the church at Ephesus four basic truths about how they had been blessed when they trusted Christ as their Savior. When we studied these, we called them "the Wealth we have In Christ!"

A. Paul taught that God had blessed them with all spiritual blessings in Christ!
B. Paul taught that God expects us to live "holy and without blame" in our Christian life!
C. Paul taught that God considers us as "trophies" in the Trophy Case of His Grace!
D. Paul taught that God sealed us WITH the Holy Spirit for all eternity!

Second: In Ephesians 1:15-23 Paul prayed for them to learn things that they needed to know and understand as they were new Christians.

A. Paul prayed God would give them the knowledge of Him.
B. Paul prayed God would enlighten them as to the wealth they had IN CHRIST!
C. Paul prayed God would help them understand that they were "saints" and "His inheritance!"
D. Paul prayed that God would help them understand that the same power He used to raise Christ from the grave – WAS THEIRS TO USE!

Third: In Ephesians 2:1-10 Paul taught them that as new Believers, they needed to know the following:

A. Paul taught them what they were in their "past life."
B. Paul taught them what they had in their "present life."
C. Paul taught them what they will have in their "future life."
D. Paul taught them that they were created in Christ Jesus UNTO GOOD WORKS.
E. Paul taught them that those "good works" were ordained by God.
F. Paul taught them that they should "walk as Christ walked."

Fourth: In Ephesians 2:11-22 Paul basically reviews again what he taught in Verses 1-10.

Fifth: In Ephesians 3:1-12 Paul taught that "the mystery" that had been hidden in Christ was that every member of the church was a "member of the literal body of Christ!" That is true just as Genesis 2:21-24 teaches us that the husband and wife are one body!

A. Paul taught them that he was a Steward of the Grace of God. (Ephesians 3:2,7,9)
B. Paul taught them that each one of them has the same calling that he had. (Romans 12:1 and 6)
1. Paul taught them that each of them was called to be a "Steward of God."
2. Paul taught them that each of them was a "King and Priest."
3. Paul taught them that each of them was an "Ambassador for Christ" (Ephesians 3:9-11).
C. Paul taught them about ALL THE WEALTH THEY HAD IN CHRIST!

Sixth: In Ephesians 3:13-21 Paul taught them what each of them AND US have:

A. We have an Endowment –	All we need, "according to His riches…"
B. We have an Enduement –	A special ability
C. We are to Enthrone -	Christ as the "Lord of our Life."
D. We are to be Established –	Rooted and grounded
E. We have an Enlightenment –	Comprehending more of God's grace.
F. We have Enlargement –	That passeth knowledge
G. We have been Enriched -	To glorify him throughout all ages.

Seventh: Paul concluded by teaching them and us the power that God has.

"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that <u>we ask or think</u>, according to the power that worketh in us! (Ephesians 3:20)

D. Paul concluded by teaching the "wealth and high calling we have in Christ and how that wealth and high calling should affect the way we live our life. In Ephesians Chapter 3 through Chapter 6, Verse 9 tells us how those things should affect the way we live. Where there is TRUE FAITH, there will be WORKS! (James 2:4-20 - Titus 2:14 - Ephesians 2:10)

CHAPTER #8
WALKING WORTHY

AND
IMITATING CHRIST IN OUR VOCATION
Ephesians 4:1-6

*"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye **walk worthy** **of the vocation** wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."*

The words "walk worthy" in Verse 1 are translated from two Greek words, **Peripateo** and **Axios.**

First: The word "peripateo" means to "deport one's self and to fulfil the duty of your high calling.

Second: The word, "Axios" means to "walk appropriately, and after a godly sort, worthy of your vocation." The word "vocation" is translated from the Greek word **"klesis**" and refers to our **high calling in Christ Jesus.** When we put these three together it means: "A Christian should walk in such a godly manner that our life will be seen by others and will show all God has done for us. Our walk should show we have GREAT appreciation for both the spiritual wealth He gave us at salvation, and our GREAT appreciation **for the high calling** He gave us as His children in Christ Jesus.

As Christians, you and I "SHOULD BE A PICTURE TO THE WORLD of what Jesus Christ is like." Let me give you something to think about. **Where did the word "Christian" come from?** The very first time the word Christian is used is in Acts 11:26 which says, *"And when he had found him, he brought him unto Antioch. And it came to pass, that a whole year they assembled themselves with the church, and taught much people. And the disciples were called Christians first in Antioch."* At that time, the disciples of Christ had been in the city of Antioch for about a year, and people of the city had seen them. The name "Christian" was given to the disciples by the people of Antioch **because what they saw** in the lives of the disciples was a "picture of them being the likeness of Jesus Christ." When the people of Antioch called them Christians, they were saying those disciples look like, act like, talk like, and walked like Jesus Christ! Wow! What a testimony!

Let me point out another thing that we, as God's children, should think about and take seriously. God, through the pen of Paul, could have COMMANDED us to walk like Jesus Christ. However, He did not. In Verse 1 Paul said, *"…I therefore, a prisoner of the Lord, **beseech you** that ye walk worthy of your vocation…"* As an apostle, Paul had every right to command us how to walk, but he did not. To command us would require us to obey because of the law. However, Paul said, ***"…I beseech you…."*** that you should walk like Jesus walked, **because of our love for God out of true appreciation for all he has done for us.** "*I beseech you*" is saying "I beg you" to walk worthy and walk as Christ walked.

Paul continued by saying *"…walk worthy of the vocation wherewith ye are called."* **First**: Our vocation as Christians is a "**high calling**. Philippians 3:14 says, *"I press toward the mark for the prize of the **high calling** of God in Christ Jesus."* **Second**, our vocation is a **holy calling**. II Timothy 1:9 says, "*Who hath saved us, and called us with an **holy calling**, not according*

to our works, but according to his own purpose and grace, which was given us in Christ Jesus before the world began. **Third**: Our vocation is a **heavenly calling**. Hebrews 3:1 says, *"Wherefore, holy brethren, partakers of the* ***heavenly calling****, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our profession, Christ Jesus;"*

Question: Considering all Paul taught us in Ephesians Chapters 1, 2 and 3, do you not agree that we should "walk as Jesus walked!"

FIVE CHARACTERISTICS OF WALKING WORTHY Ephesians 4:1-3

"*"I therefore, the prisoner of the Lord, beseech you that ye* ***walk worthy*** *of the vocation wherewith ye are called, 2 With all lowliness and meekness, with longsuffering, forbearing one another in love; 3 Endeavouring* ***to*** *keep the unity* ***of the Spirit*** *in the bond of peace."*

Before we begin this step in our study of "walking like Christ," let's look at Philippians 2:5-7, which is a picture of our Lord Jesus Christ, God in the flesh, when He took on the form of a man, and "how He walked" here on earth. This is the pattern Paul is following, and a pattern every Christian should follow.

"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: 6 Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: 7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men: 8 And being found in fashion as a man, ***he humbled himself,*** *and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross."*

Once more before we study this section, IF JESUS CHRIST, WHO WAS GOD IN THE FLESH LIVED LIKE THIS, YOU AND I SHOULD PATTERN OUR LIVES AFTER CHRIST AND WALK AS HE WALKED!!

First: The first characteristic is "lowliness of mind." I am sure everyone is familiar with the word, "lowliness." In this setting and context, it means "complete humility." Jesus humbled Himself and made of Himself "no reputation." I remind you, Jesus as God created the heavens and the earth and has EVERY reason to take credit for it. John 1:1-3 tells of this truth, *"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God 2 The same was in the beginning with God. 3 All things were made by him; and without him was not any thing made that was made."* Jesus walked humbly while He was here on earth and did not think highly of Himself and did not try to "draw attention to Himself." If Jesus walked that way, every Christian should walk like Jesus walked, HUMBLY!

Be careful not to pretend you are walking in "lowliness of mind" if you are thinking pretty highly of yourself in your own mind. If that is true, you do not have a true "lowliness of mind." Lowliness is despised by the people of the world, but very highly esteemed by God! John 8:29 says, *"And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those*

things that please him." If you want to please God and truly want to keep unity in your church, "walk like Jesus walked," in lowliness of mind.

Second: The second characteristic is "meekness." Meekness suggests gentleness and esteeming our brother better than ourselves. Matthew 11:29 tells us Jesus was meek, *"Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls."* You already know this, but I will remind you of it. We should always try our best to imitate Jesus and walk as He walked. Question: Are you trying to walk as He walked? Do you esteem your brother better than yourself?

Third: The third characteristic is we should be "long suffering." Long suffering suggests that we graciously tolerate difficulties in our life. The only way I know that we are able to practice longsuffering, is to believe the promise of God in Romans 8:28 which says, *"And we know that all things work together for good to them that love God, to them who are the called according to his purpose."* At times through the years and still today, I struggle with being long suffering and waiting on God to work together for good what I am going through. You would think I would get over handling difficult things. I have been in full-time ministry for over 60 years and also memorized Romans 8:28 years before that. However, struggle as I do I have in EVERY case seen God make it work together for my good and His glory. To God be the Glory! Thank you Lord! You have never left me and never forsaken me!

Fourth: The fourth characteristic is that we should be "forbearing." This is one of the five characteristics that God said, "*forbearing on one another in love*…". Forbearing can only be done by love. You ask why? Because forbearing means "putting up with things we do not like in other people." However, if we will seek to have the love of God, we can disagree but forbear one another. If you are having a difficult time with this, I suggest you begin tonight by praying sincerely for the person you are having to "put up with!" If you will do that from your heart, you will not only be able to forbear that person, but you will begin to love that person as God loves you! The choice is yours. Walk as Jesus walked or walk as your flesh wants you to walk. If you walk in your flesh, it will cause disunity in the church.

Fifth: The fifth characteristic is that we should be "endeavoring," meaning **to keep the unity** in your church. Look quickly at what we ARE NOT being asked to do. We are not being asked to MAKE unity in the church. We are being told to KEEP unity in the church!! When God MADE the church He MADE IT IN UNITY. In our closing section of this lesson, we will clearly cover that God created the church in unity. You and I should be dedicated and committed to KEEPING the unity that God established when He created the church.

SEVEN CHARACTERISTICS
OF
WALKING WORTHY IN CHURCH UNITY
Ephesians 4:4-6

"There is one body, and one Spirit, even as ye are called in one hope of your calling; 5 One Lord, one faith, one baptism, 6 One God and Father of all, who is above all, and through all, and in you all."

You will see in these verses that God put the word "one" in these three verses seven different times. That might sound a little strange, but God had a reason. As you most likely know, the number "seven" in the Bible is the number of "perfection and completion" which means nothing can be added to it and nothing can be taken away from it. Let's quickly look at those seven "ones" and see the importance of them.

First: God said there is **ONE BODY.** God begins by using the body of Christ to show us that the church is ONE body, complete and prefect, when He established the church. In John 17:21 our Lord, talking to His Father, clearly expressed that His will for the church is that they be ONE! "*That they all may be one; as thou, Father, art in me, and I in thee, that they also may be one in us: that the world may believe that thou hast sent me."* There can be NO disunity between Christ and his Father. There should be no disunity in the Body of Christ. Therefore, without question, there should be no disunity within the church which is the Body of Christ.

Second: God said there is **ONE SPIRIT**. Ephesians 4:3 says, *"Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace."* The Holy Spirit of God ALWAYS guides us to truth and to God's will. He never changes! He never guides one member of the church to be different from another member. For example, when the church meets together to vote on a matter, there should be 100% unity in the vote. If it is not, there is disunity within the church; some members have not truly sought the leadership of the Holy Spirit and they have sinned against the BODY OF CHRIST. The Holy Spirit NEVER leads one member to vote one way and another member to vote another way.

Third: God said there is **ONE HOPE**! In Ephesians 1:18 Paul shared that they would be enlightened; that they may know what the hope of his calling is, and what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints. Now, in Ephesians 4:4 he says, " *even as ye are called in one hope of your calling;"* He had made them understand that their hope will be fulfilled in our final glorification when we see Christ. Psalms 17:15 tells us of that glorification, *"As for me, I will behold thy face in righteousness: I shall be satisfied, when I awake, with thy likeness."* The three work together; One Body, One Spirit, and One Hope. The word "hope" does not mean “I hope it is going to happen.” In this context it means “a sure thing,” but it has not happened as of today. This is a powerful incentive to keep unity in any church. There is only ONE hope!

Fourth: God said there is **ONE LORD**. Jesus Christ is far more than our Savior. HE IS OUR LORD. When each member of the local church makes Him Lord of their life, there will BE NO schism in the church. The church will be in perfect unity! However, sad to say there are some Christians who "**profess**" him as their Lord, but **do not "possess"** Him as their Lord. In Matthew 7:21-23 Jesus told us this truth, *"Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? 23 And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity."* Jesus is LORD **of all**, or He is **not Lord at all!**

Fifth: God says there is **ONE FAITH**. Jude 1:3 tells us there is one faith, *"Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write*

*unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for **THE** faith which was **once** delivered unto the saints*. In Galatians 1:23 Paul preached about THE FAITH! *"But they had heard only, That he which persecuted us in times past now preacheth **THE faith** which once he destroyed."* Anyone who embraces THE FAITH immediately becomes a part of the Body of Christ. Therefore, from that time forward they are a part of "keeping the unity" in the church, which is the Body of Christ.

Sixth: God said there is **ONE BAPTISM**. When a person trusts Christ as their Savior, they are baptized by the Holy Spirit and placed in the Body of Christ. I Corinthians 12:12-13 gives us this truth, *"For as the body is one, and hath many members, and all the members of that one body, being many, are one body: so also is Christ. 13 For by one Spirit are we all baptized into one body, whether we be Jews or Gentiles, whether we be bond or free; and have been all made to drink into one Spirit*. Every member of your church is a member of the Body of Christ. Every member of your church should work together and co-operate with every other member of the church, just like every member of your body co-operates together with EVERY other member of your body - NOT JUST SOME PARTS!

Seventh: God said there is **ONE GOD AND FATHER** who is above all, and through all, and in all! God is (1) The Father of all. (2) He is above all. (3) He is through all. (4) He is in all. If every member of every church will embrace these truths, there will be perfect unity in the church.

Philippians 2:5 tells us how we can truly have unity in our church. That verse says, *"Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:"* To have the mind of Christ, we need to do our very best to do four things:

1. Think like Christ thinks.
2. Want what Christ wants.
3. Ask for what Christ wants us to ask for.
4. Do what Christ wants us to do.

The Holy Spirit will ALWAYS lead every member to be in unity with every other member. If we have the mind of Christ, we will have perfect unity in our church. Now please stop and ask yourself these questions. Do you want perfect unity in the church? Are you willing to ask God to help you have the mind of Christ? Will you truly seek the leadership of the Holy Spirit in EVERY decision you make. Are you willing to follow the leadership of the Holy Spirit, regardless if you personally think He is wrong? The Holy Spirit is NEVER wrong.

CHAPTER #9
WALKING WORTHY
AND
IMITATING CHRIST AS A LEADER IN THE CHURCH
Ephesians 4:7-16

In the first three chapters of Ephesians, we have seen that God planned the church before the foundation of the world. We have seen how Jesus purchased the church by His blood. We have

seen how the Holy Spirit sealed the church until the day of redemption. We have seen how God set the church up in unity. We have seen the abundant wealth which we have "in" Christ. Now, Paul begins to explain HOW we are to walk in the church.

"But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ. 8 Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men. 9 (Now that he ascended, what is it but that he also descended first into the lower parts of the earth? 10 He that descended is the same also that ascended up far above all heavens, that he might fill all things.) 11 And he gave some, apostles; and some, prophets; and some, evangelists; and some, pastors and teachers; 12 For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ: 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

First: God assigned a goal for the church to reach. When the church was established God set His Son, Jesus, as the "Head of the church." The church is to preach the Gospel to every creature. Jesus began this ministry while He was here on earth. Shortly before He ascended back to heaven, Acts 1:8 tells us that He handed that work and goal over to the church, *"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."* PLEASE NOTICE that in the phrase "*uttermost part*," the word "part" is singular. It is not "part**S**!" That means to preach the Gospel to the "very last spot on the earth!" Our Lord Jesus could have taken us to heaven the second we were saved and became a part of his body, but He did not. In Phillipians 1:23-24 Paul tells us why, *"For I am in a strait betwixt two, having a desire to depart, and to be with Christ; which is far better: 24 Nevertheless to abide in the flesh is more needful for you."*

Second: God equipped the church to reach the goal He set for it. Ephesians 4:8 tells us that the equipment He gave us is "spiritual gifts" for us to use to carry on that work, *"Wherefore he saith, When he ascended up on high, he led captivity captive, and gave gifts unto men."* Verse 7 also tells us that God gave us grace to use those gifts, *"But unto every one of us is given grace according to the measure of the gift of Christ."*

Third: God appointed leaders to lead the church in the work which Jesus turned over to the church when He ascended back to heaven. God delegated the responsibility of the church to these leaders.

A. God gave some Apostles. There are no apostles today. That position ceased after the death of the apostles who served with Jesus. In Acts 1:21-22 the apostles were appointing an apostle to replace Judas. One of the qualifications to be an apostle was that the man had to have seen Jesus from His baptism to His resurrection, *"Wherefore of these men which have companied*

with us all the time that the Lord Jesus went in and out among us, 22 Beginning from the baptism of John, unto that same day that he was taken up from us, must one be ordained to be a witness with us of his resurrection."

B. God Gave some Prophets. There are no prophets today. The position of prophets ceased when the Scriptures were complete. Prophets were men God used to "write in the scriptures" all things that would happen in the future. They were "fore-tellers." God made that clear in Revelation 22:18-20, *"For I testify unto every man that heareth the words of the prophecy of this book, If any man shall add unto these things, God shall add unto him the plagues that are written in this book: And if any man shall take away from the words of the book of this prophecy, God shall take away his part out of the book of life, and out of the holy city, and from the things which are written in this book. 20 He which testifieth these things saith, Surely I come quickly. Amen. Even so, come, Lord Jesus."*

C. God gave some Evangelists. The New Testament evangelist is not like what many people in churches think about today. Today, almost everyone thinks of an evangelist as "a traveling preacher" that goes from church to church and preaches messages, most of which are salvation messages. That type of "evangelist" is not found in the Bible. The position of the "evangelist" referred to in these verses is what today we refer to as "a missionary." The word missionary is not found in the Bible. However, you will see many true evangelists in the New Testament. The biggest and best New Testament example is Paul. True, he was a traveling preacher, but EVERYWHERE he traveled was to "preach the gospel, lead people to Christ, and THEN to disciple them and start a New Testament church." Following that, Paul would return to the church occasionally and continue to build and strengthen the church. Paul was used by God as an evangelist/missionary to plant and develop at least thirteen New Testament churches. Paul DID NOT travel around preaching a "one week meeting" and then move on. Evangelists today are missionaries sent out by their home churches to plant another church on behalf of their sending church.

D. God gave some Pastors and teachers. Please note that the text does not say that God gave "some pastors and some teachers." The text says, He gave "some pastors and teachers." This indicates that the position of a pastor is a combined position of "pastor-teacher." Every pastor is certainly a teacher. God gives a pastor “the mind to teach his people,” and gives him “a heart to shepherd His people.” This gift is given by God, and ONLY by God. The position of pastor cannot be earned by study at any Bible college in the entire world. It cannot be gained by education only. A pastor needs FAR more than education. It must be put in his heart by God. Let me share one quick primary responsibility for a pastor/teacher. A pastor will study all week and be well prepared. However, that is not enough. When a pastor is sitting on the platform of his church, the last thought he should think before going to the pulpit is “What is my primary purpose of going to the pulpit this morning - or tonight?” That last thought should be, “My primary purpose of going to the pulpit is for me to be USED OF GOD TO CHANGE THE LIVES OF THE PEOPLE SITTING IN FRONT OF ME!” That is the primary responsibility of a pastor/teacher! To be used of God to change lives!

WALKING WORTHY
AND
IMITATING CHRIST AS A LEADER IN THE CHURCH

PART #2
Ephesians 4:12-16

"For the perfecting of the saints, for the work of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ. 13 Till we all come in the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the stature of the fulness of Christ: 14 That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive; 15 But speaking the truth in love, may grow up into him in all things, which is the head, even Christ: 16 From whom the whole body fitly joined together and compacted by that which every joint supplieth, according to the effectual working in the measure of every part, maketh increase of the body unto the edifying of itself in love."

We will not go into detail to explain how these things will be done, but the reason for God giving the church these leaders is (1) For the perfecting of the saints, (2) For the work of the ministry, and (3) For the edifying of the body of Christ. Therefore, it is a responsibility that is passed on to EVERY member of the church, as every member is a part of the Body of Christ, and every member should follow the leadership of the pastor and get involved.. They are being edified and prepared for the things following in the next section.

First: God states the extended purpose which he expects to be done by the leaders in the church in Ephesians 4:14, which says, "*That we henceforth be no more children, tossed to and fro, and carried about with every wind of doctrine, by the sleight of men, and cunning craftiness, whereby they lie in wait to deceive;"* According to Jude 1:3-4, false teachers of false doctrine was a MAJOR problem in those days. Yes! False teachers and false doctrine are still a MAJOR problem in churches today. Young Christians can be tossed to and fro and carried about with every wind of doctrine, which will lead to their destruction.

God gave the different leaders to the church to train the members of the church in sound doctrine. The verse says, "…*That we henceforth be no more children,"* That is not referring to "children" like those 8-10-12 years old. It is referring to "people who are new converts and have never been taught and ground in the faith." Even when "new converts" sit and read and study their Bible, until they are grounded they can be easily led astray by false teachers. Keep in mind that in those days the churches did not have big, beautiful buildings like we have today to "come apart and worship." They met in homes and many times in the open air, so it was much easier for false teachers to mix in with these young Christians.

The church today needs to prepare the congregation for such false teachers as Jehovah Witnesses, Mormons, people from the Catholic churches, and many others, especially those who are out "door knocking" and want to be invited into their home to talk. II Timothy 1:13 tells us what needs to be taught. *"Hold fast the form of sound words, which thou hast heard of me, in faith and love which is in Christ Jesus."* That is God's purpose and goal for the leaders He has set in the church.

Second: God has enabled the church leaders to reach ALL the goals and purposes he has given them. That truth is declared in Ephesians 1:19-23, *"And what is the exceeding greatness of*

his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power, 20 Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set him at his own right hand in the heavenly places, 21 Far above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this world, but also in that which is to come: 22 And hath put all things under his feet, and gave him to be the head over all things to the church," Let me give you one more verse that assures us that we can reach every goal God has given the church. Ephesians 3:20. *"Now unto him that is able to do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think, according to the power that worketh in us,"*

Let me close this section by sharing the "end results" if the leaders will lead and build the church. Before we add these verses, let me ask you. What is the goal of the church? The answer is found in Matthew 28:18-20, *"And Jesus came and spake unto them, saying, All power is given unto me in heaven and in earth. 19 Go ye therefore, and teach all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost: 20 Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you: and, lo, I am with you alway, even unto the end of the world. Amen."*

CHAPTER #10
WALKING WORTHY
AND
IMITATING CHRIST AS WE WALK IN THE WORLD
Ephesians 4:17-32

In the first three chapters of Ephesians, we saw how abundantly wealthy we are in Christ, and how we should walk worthy of our calling because God made us a part of the church, which is His Body. In the last chapter Paul taught us how we should imitate Christ in the church. Now Paul is going to explain how we should imitate Christ outside the church, walking in the world.

*"This I say **therefore**, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind, 18 Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart: 19 Who being past feeling have given themselves over unto lasciviousness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. 20 But ye have not so learned Christ; 21 If so be that ye have heard him, and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: 22 That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; 23 And be renewed in the spirit of your mind; 24 And that ye put on the new man, which after God is created **in righteousness** and **true holiness**."*

First: Imitating Christ walking in the world is a picture that PROCLAIMS THAT WE SHOULD PRACTICE TOTAL SEPARATION FROM THE WORLD. Jesus did! Ephesians 4:17-24 lays the foundation for that walk. Paul begins this study by saying, "*This I say therefore…"*

Again, when we see the word "therefore" we need to always go back and learn why he said "therefore." In this text, Paul is referring back to all he had taught us in the earlier part of the book of Ephesians and all we have in Christ. That includes:

1. We have been chosen by him to be holy and blameless.
2. We have been predestinated to adoption as HIS children.
3. We have been redeemed by His blood.
4. We have been forgiven of sin according to His grace.
5. We have been made members of HIS body – bone of His bone – flesh of His flesh.
6. We have been made "acceptable in the Beloved."

"…henceforth, we are to walk not as other Gentile walk…", This clearly tells us that we are separate from the world.

Second: In Verse 22, Paul tells us that we are to PUT OFF THE OLD MAN! Then Paul tells us it is NOT ENOUGH to just **put off** the old man. In Verse 24 Paul said, "*that ye **put on** the new man,"* A Christian must replace what he "put off" and "put on" something new. That same verse, Verse 24, concludes by saying, "…*which after God is created in **righteousness** and true **holiness**."* This is called "the law of replacement." The danger of not "putting on the new" after you put off the old, is very dangerous! The Bible makes that very clear in Matthew 12:43-45, *"When the unclean spirit is gone out of a man, he walketh through dry places, seeking rest, and findeth none. 44 Then he saith, I will return into my house from whence I came out; and when he is come, he findeth it empty, swept, and garnished. 45 Then goeth he, and taketh with himself seven other spirits more wicked than himself, and they enter in and dwell there: and the last state of that man is worse than the first. Even so shall it be also unto this wicked generation."*

The apostle Paul is a good example. All of us know what he was BEFORE he trusted Christ. In Acts Chapter 9, Paul greatly persecuted the church. After Paul received Jesus as his savior, he "put off the old man." Then in Romans 1:1, we find that he replaced the old man with a new man.. *"Paul, a **servant of Jesus Christ**, called to be an apostle, s**eparated unto the gospel of God."*** Paul "separated from the old man" and he replaced his old life by being a "servant of Jesus." He declared that he was now "SEPARATED UNTO THE GOSPEL. Every person reading this commentary should be (1) A servant of Jesus Christ AND be (2) Separated **UNTO** the Gospel.

In the beginning, man was made in the image of God. After you trust Christ as your Savior, every Christian should greatly desire to be restored to that image. In Ephesians 4:24 the scripture tells us in two words what Christ was like. (1) Jesus Christ was **RIGHTEOUS**! Righteousness has to do with our **outward walk**, meaning "what people see in our life." This is what people should see in a child of God. We should seek to have the mind of Christ. Philippians 2:5 tells this, *Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus:*. We should think like Christ thinks. We should want what Christ wants. We should walk like Christ walked. We should dress like Christ would have us dress. We should ask for what we know God would have us ask for, and we should seek to do things like Christ would do them.

Jesus Christ was true **Holiness.** Holiness is different from Righteousness. Holiness has to do with our **inward walk**. Holiness is to control even the thoughts of your mind. We find that in Psalms 19:14, *"Let the words of my mouth, and the meditation of my heart, be acceptable in thy sight, O LORD, my strength, and my redeemer."* This is our integrity toward God. We should have a strong desire in our heart to do everything we do to please and glorify God. We find in John 8:29 that this is what Jesus did! We should follow the pattern Jesus set for us, *"And he that sent me is with me: the Father hath not left me alone; for I do always those things that please him."*

God Commands us to be TOTALLY separated from the world. Let's go to II Corinthians 6:17 and see just how far God extends this command. *"Wherefore come out from among them, and be ye separate, saith the Lord, and touch not the unclean thing; and I will receive you,"* There are two clear commandments in this one verse. **First:** God tells us to "*come out from among them*". This means we are not to have any type of personal relationship with anyone who is not a Christian. A good example of keeping bad company is found in Peter, an apostle of Christ. In Matthew 26: 31-33 we find Peter boasting that he would never deny Christ, *"Then saith Jesus unto them, All ye shall be offended because of me this night: for it is written, I will smite the shepherd, and the sheep of the flock shall be scattered abroad. 32 But after I am risen again, I will go before you into Galilee. 33 Peter answered and said unto him, Though all men shall be offended because of thee, yet will I never be offended."*

Now, let's go to Luke 22:54 and see if Peter kept his promise, and why he did not keep that promise. *"Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house.* And Peter followed afar off. *55 And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, **Peter sat down among them.** 56 But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him. 57 And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not. 58 And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not. 59 And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilaean. 60 And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew."* Peter fell because he was in bad company. You say, "That won't happen to me!" If it can happen to Peter, it can happen to you and to me! If you go back and carefully read these verses you will find that Peter failed because he was keeping bad company!

God extended this command even further by saying, not only should we "*come out from among them*," but God said, *"TOUCH NOT the unclean thing."* As a Christian, we are not to touch cigarettes, filthy videos, alcohol. worldly music, things on television, gambling - ANYTHING that could lead us to sin. We are NOT TO EVEN TOUCH IT!

Back in Ephesians 4:25-29 we see that God takes separation even one step further. Because this is strong language, I am reminding you that God is speaking through the pen of Paul, and it is written to Christians! *"Wherefore putting away lying, speak every man truth with his neighbour: for we are members one of another 26 Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27 Neither give place to the devil. 28 Let him that stole steal no more: but rather let him labour, working with his hands the thing which is good, that he may have to give to him that needeth. 29 Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers."* Paul points out at least

four things in these verses that you would not think Christians are guilty of, but as I said this is written to members of the church at Corinth!

First: A Christian is to "put away lying!" It is not recorded, but it is indicated that some of the members of the church at Corinth were lying about something. Very possibly there were some misrepresentations, half-truths, or something said in pretense.

Second: We are not to be angry, meaning we are to have no bitterness toward any other member of the church or Christian.

Third: Let him that stole steal no more. Again, these were people who were recently converted from heathenism who practiced stealing. They may have been stealing from their employer or gambling, which is the same as stealing since it is taking money they did not earn.

Fourth: They were commanded to *"Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth."* Unholy speech is not to be used. Colossians 4:6 clearly tells us how we should communicate, *"Let your speech be always with grace, seasoned with salt, that ye may know how ye ought to answer every man."*

Last, but not least, if you are not walking with Christ you will grieve the Holy Spirit! Again, this is written to Christians. Yes, Christians can grieve the Holy Spirit. When one member of the church grieves the Holy Spirit, the entire church will be affected. See Verse 30 in Ephesians Chapter 4 to read that truth.

The positive side of walking with Christ is found in Ephesians 4:32, *"Let all bitterness, and wrath, and anger, and clamour, and evil speaking, be put away from you, with all malice: 32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you."* To what extent should we forgive one another? Peter asked that same question in Matthew 18:21-22 which says, *"Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord, how oft shall my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? till seven times? 22 Jesus saith unto him, I say not unto thee, Until seven times: but, Until seventy times seven.*" Jesus did not mean 490 times when he answered Peter. He meant to continue forgiving another brother like Christ forgives us which, thank God, has no limits! God forgives, forgets and never brings our sin up again.

Question: Are you walking as you used to walk, as sinful Gentiles walked? I hope not! Verse 17 says, *"This I say therefore, and testify in the Lord, that ye henceforth walk not as other Gentiles walk, in the vanity of their mind."* If you are doing that - YOU SHOULD CHANGE and walk like Christ walked.

CHAPTER #11
WALKING WORTHY
AND
IMITATING CHRIST IN THE HUSBAND-AND-WIFE RELATIONSHIP??
Ephesians 5:22-33

The translation of the 1611 Bible is no doubt the translation which God declares as the Preserved Word of God. However, it is misleading that the translators make a "chapter division" at this point. In Ephesians 5:1-18 Paul continues where he left off in Ephesians 4:32. Ephesians 5:1 says, *"Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children."* which as I have shared before, when the word of God says "*therefore*" it always refers back to what he had taught in the chapter before. In this case it is Ephesians 4 where Paul continues to challenge the church to "*Be ye therefore followers of God, as dear children."* The word "followers" means that we should be "imitators" of Christ. Ephesians 5 continues to teach that we should be imitators of Christ and should "walk worthy" of our high calling. Therefore, we are going forward to Ephesians 5:21 and pick up with how Christians should walk in their "Married Life."

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. 22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord. 23 For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24 Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing. 25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones. 31 For this cause shall a man leave his father and mother, and shall be joined unto his wife, and they two shall be one flesh. 32 This is a great mystery: but I speak concerning Christ and the church. 33 Nevertheless let every one of you in particular so love his wife even as himself; and the wife see that she reverence her husband."

The Wife's Part in Submitting to her Husband
Ephesians 5:21-22

"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God. 22 Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as unto the Lord."

Let's look at one very important item before we move forward. In Verse 1 above, God commanded us and said, *"Submitting yourselves one to another in the fear of God."* I titled this first section "The Wife's Part in Submitting to her Husband," because that is where God started in Verse 2. However, a husband and wife are to submit to each other, just in a differ manner. There is NOTHING in these verses that says or implies that the husband is superior to his wife. Also, there is nothing in the verses that says or implies that the wife is inferior to her husband. A husband is extremely superior to his wife at **"being a husband**" as God made him. However, a wife is extremely superior to her husband at **"being a wife**" as God made her. God made man for a special reason. I Corinthains 11:1-3 gives us what is called "God's Chain of Command." *"Be ye followers of me, even as I also am of Christ. 2 Now I praise you, brethren, that ye remember me in all things, and keep the ordinances, as I delivered them to you. 3 But I would have you know, that the head of every man is Christ; and the head of the woman is the man; and the head of Christ is God."* This is God's "Chain of Command." Wives, PLEASE make a note of this. You are to be submissive to your husband. That DOES NOT mean you are inferior to him. The verse above tells us that the head

of Christ is God. Christ, according to John 8:29, is submissive to His Father, but He is not inferior to His Father. Wives you are not inferior to your husband, but you should be submissive to him, BECAUSE God commanded you to follow Christ.

First: God is the head of all things, including His Son, Jesus Christ!
Second: Jesus Christ, God's Son, is the head of the man!
Third: The man is the head of the woman!

As we study through this section, we will see God's plan for marriage. Let's start here. There is nothing in these verses that says the "wife is to be in submission to her husband, in ALL THINGS." The verse says, " *Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, **as unto the Lord.**"* The wife is to be submitted to her husband when her husband is obeying God, acting like Christ acts when making decisions, and when her husband is doing what he is doing for the glory of God! Yes, I know, there is a "woman's liberation movement" that is viciously opposed to this Bible principle. However, THOSE WOMEN ARE WRONG. WHY are they wrong? Because God said they are wrong. Again, God said it. It does not matter if we believe it or not. God said it - THAT SETTLES IT!

Ephesians 5:23 tells us how and why the wife is to be submissive to her husband, *"For the husband is the head of the wife, even as Christ is the head of the church: and he is the saviour of the body. 24 Therefore **as the church is subject unto Christ**, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."*

God set the husband over the woman in Genesis 3:16, *"Unto the woman he said, I will greatly multiply thy sorrow and thy conception; in sorrow thou shalt bring forth children; and thy desire shall be to thy husband, and he shall rule over thee."* He did that because He made man and woman different. A man makes decisions based on FACTS which come for his head. A woman makes decisions based on feelings and emotions which come from her heart. Women are far more tendered hearted than a man. Let me give you an example of how tender-hearted a wife is. Shortly after my wife and I were married I took her trout fishing. She had never been fishing before. We were fishing with worms. When she caught her first fish she swung her pole around toward me and I took the fish off the hook. Then, I got a worm out of the worm box and started to put it on the hook. She said, "Oh! Honey, Be careful! You are going to hurt that poor little baby!"

This is a picture of Eve, who committed the first sin in the world in Genesis 3:1-6, *"Now the serpent was more subtil than any beast of the field which the LORD God had made. And he said unto the woman, Yea, hath God said, Ye shall not eat of every tree of the garden? 2 And the woman said unto the serpent, We may eat of the fruit of the trees of the garden: 3 But of the fruit of the tree which is in the midst of the garden, God hath said, Ye shall not eat of it, neither shall ye touch it, lest ye die. 4 And the serpent said unto the woman, Ye shall not surely die: 5 For God doth know that in the day ye eat thereof, then your eyes shall be opened, and ye shall be as gods, knowing good and evil. 6 And when the woman saw that (1) the tree was good for food, and that (2) it was pleasant to the eyes, and (3) a tree to be desired to make one wise, she took of the fruit thereof, and did eat, and gave also unto her husband with her; and he did eat.*

If you will read those verses carefully, you will see that Satan played on Eve's emotions and deceived her. That caused her to sin. Satin started by lying to Eve. He deceived her and look what happened. "Eve was deceived and made her decision based on three things:"

First: She saw that the tree was GOOD TO LOOK AT.
Second: She saw the fruit of the tree was GOOD FOR FOOD.
Third: She saw the fruit of the tree was TO MAKE ONE WISE.

I Timothy 2:11-14 tells us that Eve was DECEIVED and ate the fruit of the tree from which God had forbidden them to eat and then gave it to her husband, and he ate of the same tree, *"Let the woman learn in silence with all subjection. 12 But I suffer not a woman to teach, nor to usurp authority over the man, but to be in silence. 13 For Adam was first formed, then Eve. 14 And Adam was not deceived, but **the woman being deceived** was in the transgression."* Eve was deceived and disobeyed God, but her husband, Adam, ate the forbidden fruit of the tree OF HIS OWN CHOICE.

As you just read, Eve was deceived but Adam was not deceived. That is because God made the man and the woman different. It is for that reason that you find no place in the Bible where a woman was put in a place of complete leadership, such a King. Women need to be very aware that God made them different from a man. If they are aware of how they are made and understand why God made them the way they are, they will not be as easily deceived. Now, let me say this again. God made women different. But God made them for a very important reason. Again, ladies need to understand that God did not create them to be in government, BUT they are to be good keepers at home and love their husband and love and raise their children and have a great influence on the world. Titus 2:4-5 clearly tells us this truth, *"That they may teach the young women to be sober, to love their husbands, to love their children, 5 To be discreet, chaste, keepers at home, good, obedient to their own husbands, **that the word of God be not blasphemed**."*

I am sure you have heard this before, but wives please understand this, and you will understand HOW IMPORTANT you are to the home and to the nation. **The hand that rocks the cradle rules the world.** Wives, you should be very thankful not only for that reason, but you are also made different by God to "balance your husbands!" Men make decisions based on "cold hard facts" and generally make them very quickly. The wife is to balance her "hard-headed husband." - - You're welcome ladies!- - Husbands, you should also understand the truth, and you should be VERY thankful for a sweet, tender-hearted wife to balance you in your life and in making decisions! Let me give you some last thoughts. When a wife is in submission to her husband, she is in submission to the Lord. Colossians 3:18 says, *"Wives, submit yourselves unto your own husbands, as it is fit in the Lord." Also, a wife's submission is compared to "the church's submission to Christ*. Ephesians 5:24 says, *"Therefore as the church is subject unto Christ, so let the wives be to their own husbands in every thing."* The sacred "marriage relationship" is so important that it is compared to the relationship of Christ and the church. (Ephesians 5:25-27). Wives, honor the Lord, and submit to your husband!

The Husband's Part in Submitting to His Wife
Ephesians 5:25-30

I am repeating this verse because it is a key verse in the marriage relationship, *"Submitting yourselves **one to another** in the fear of God."* This verse demands mutual submission. There should always be a "reciprocal" submission between husband and wife. In this section Jesus Christ gives a pattern for husbands to follow in building a marriage,

"25 Husbands, love your wives, even as Christ also loved the church, and gave himself for it; 26 That he might sanctify and cleanse it with the washing of water by the word, 27 That he might present it to himself a glorious church, not having spot, or wrinkle, or any such thing; but that it should be holy and without blemish. 28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church: 30 For we are members of his body, of his flesh, and of his bones."

Jesus Christ and the church is a perfect picture of how the husband is to love his wife. Jesus Christ loved the church enough to die for it. A husband should follow the pattern Christ set about how He loved the church. Christ loved the church and "gave himself for it." A husband should love his wife and should be willing to die for her, if it becomes necessary. That is “Christ Like Love!” I once heard a man talking to a couple of other men about marriage. He said, "You men need to be careful about how much you love your wife. You can love her too much and she will take advantage of you." That statement is untrue and is also TOTALLY impossible. It is impossible for any man to love his wife more than Christ loved the church.

The husband is the leader in the home, and if he is to be a successful leader in his home, he must start where Jesus started and lead in love. In Colossians 3:19 God told us how we should lead, "*Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them."* A Christian wife will always submit to a Christian husband, if he leads and loves her like "Christ loves the church."

The husband's place in the home is one of GREAT responsibility. The wife's place is simply to submit to his leadership. The husband's responsibility is to follow the pattern that Jesus Christ set for him to follow. That pattern is found in Ephesians 5:25-33. The husband is TO LEAD not force. Verses 28 and 29 above give another pattern concerning how he is to love his wife, "*28 So ought men to love their wives as their own bodies. He that loveth his wife loveth himself. 29 For no man ever yet hated his own flesh; but nourisheth and cherisheth it, even as the Lord the church.*

A husband should have a goal for himself, concerning his wife, just as Christ had a goal for Himself regarding the church. A husband's goals should be:

l. Give himself to her in any and every manner needed to show his love for her.
2. Do anything and everything he can possibly do to help her grow in the grace and knowledge of the Scriptures in order for her to become more glorious every day of his life.
3. He should nourish and cherish her as the Lord nourished and cherished the church and make her happier than she has ever been before.

4. A husband should intervene for his wife whenever needed, just as Jesus Christ sat at the right hand of his Father and makes intercession for us every day all day.
5. A husband should always remember that "he and his wife are one body," and treat her accordingly. Ephesians 5:30 clearly declares this truth concerning the Lord Jesus and the church. Genesis 2:23 declares this truth concerning a husband and his wife, *"And Adam said, This is now bone of my bones, and flesh of my flesh: she shall be called Woman, because she was taken out of Man."*
6. Christ did these very same things with the goal of making "His bride" (every Christian) happier every day, and we should follow His pattern.

A husband should NEVER make critical remarks about his wife or make her the brunt of a joke, in private or in public. A husband should "lift his wife up and put her on a pedestal every time he has an opportunity. He should make her feel pleased and proud by his remarks.

I will share an example. I know a man who graduated with me and my wife in 1953 from Messick High School here in Memphis. They had one date in high school, and she said, "one and done." They both got married and went different ways and did not even know the other one was still alive. However, God brought them back together after 65 years and they got married at 80 years old. Our class still gets together for lunch occasionally and almost every time we get together, or run into someone they know, they will be asked "how are they doing?" At every opportunity her husband says, "Oh, we are doing pretty good. However, I'm not sure how much longer our marriage will last because I have a really serious problem living with her." The people they are talking to will look shocked and say, "What! What is the problem?" Her husband will say, "Oh! It's a big problem. She is so sweet, so beautiful, and so lovable that I am not sure how much longer I can live with her!" Everyone looks funny and then laughs. AND - - - his wife loves it!

A husband should never do anything to injure their relationship. He should always show her tender love. He should always provide her with happiness, and he should always treat and love her like Christ loves the church! Let me share a couple of "pictures" of how both a husband and wife should react when they get married.

GOD'S PICTURE BOOK
Ephesians 5:32

Here is man who has made his own way in the world. He is what the world calls "a bachelor." He has made his own money and could say what he would do with it, what he would buy or what he would not buy. He has made all decisions about how he will use his time and his money. He can say anything he wants to say, go anywhere he wants to go, and do anything he wants to do – and has not had to consider anyone besides himself. **BUT – he meets a girl!** His heart goes out to her, and he says, **"For her sake I am willing to work, labor, and adjust my lifestyle, even if it means that I must do without some things I have had in the past, I will gladly do that. I will care for her to the very best of my ability. I am willing to consider her in everything we do. Whatever it takes, I will love her and cherish her. If I need to change my pattern of life and give up some things that I used to do, for her - I will gladly do it."**

Here is a beautiful young woman. She has largely had her own way. She has made her own way through the world. She has made decisions, worked and paid her own way. Or perhaps she may have come from a home where she has been carefully nurtured and cared for. By-and-by she meets a man, no blood relation to her whatever. Yet somehow or another her heart goes out to him, and she says, **"For his sake, I would be willing to go to the ends of the world, face all kinds of problems in life, keep house for him, cook, clean, care for our children, and stand by his side no matter the difficulties that may come our way. I love him so much I am willing to live my life with him in loving submission."**

CHRIST AND THE CHURCH

Here is one going on in his own way – completely independent of God. But one day he comes face to face with Christ. He is convicted of his sin and asks forgiveness and says, "For His sake I will resign my own ways, the life I have lived in the past: I will yield myself to Him and I will give him control of my life. I will trust my entire self to Him! I am willing, for His sake, to go anywhere and do anything He wants me to do! (Galatians 2:20)

Christ, the Bridegroom, laid down his life to purchase the "one He loves – His bride!" Now, He delights in providing for her/us. He guides us, protects us, works for our happiness, bestowing upon us great blessings. He is very careful to be sure that we are "safe and secure" in His arms. He is very careful to be sure we have "grace sufficient" for any trial that comes our way (II Corinthians 12:9). "*He giveth us; His beloved, peace at night and a good night's sleep"* (Psalms 127:2). He delights in us, and He looks forward to **that day** that He will come for us and take us to the "marriage supper" which He has been preparing for us since the day we became part of His Bride! (John 14:1-6)

THE PERFECT PICTURE

There is a story told and recorded by the Jewish historians concerning King Cyrus and one of his generals. The general's wife had been apprehended for treason, found guilty, and was condemned to die. When the general discovered what had happened, he rushed into the presence of King Cyrus, prostrated himself at the feet of the King and said, "O Sire, take my life instead of hers. Let me die in her place!" Cyrus was so touched that he said, "love like that must not be spoiled by death." He pardoned her and gave them back to one another. As the husband and wife left the throne room and the presence of the King, the husband turned to his wife and said, "Did you notice how kindly the King looked upon us when he gave you a free pardon? The wife turned to her husband and said, "I had no eyes for the King. I only had eyes for the man who was willing to die for me." He won his wife with his sacrificial love.

This is a **perfect picture** from God's "Picture Book" of how Christ loved His bride! It is a PERFECT PICTURE of how God expects a husband to love his wife. God's design for a "Husband – Wife" relationship is that every Christian home should be exactly like the relationship that Christ has with the Church.

Following this, I am adding a "four-point outline" that some may want to use. It is titled:

MARRIAGE AND HOW TO MAKE IT LAST A LIFETIME

Genesis 2:21-25

Three words out of Verse 24:

Leave - The Priority of marriage (Ephesians 5:31) (Matthew 19:4-5)
Cleave - The Permanence of Marriage (Verse 23 - One Flesh) (Bonded)
Be (Become) - The Purpose of Marriage
Leave the single way of life and become united.
"I do." - Meaning: I accept the responsibilities, heartaches, joys, sorrows, problems and disagreements which will come with being married.

Problems in a marriage generally begin before a couple are married. When a young man, after "dating" a young lady for a period of time asks her to marry him and she agrees, the problems have already begun. You are asking, "Why have the problems begun at that point?" Problems begin because of the difference in their thinking. The young lady is thinking, "After I marry him, I will change him." The young man is thinking, "I will marry her, and she will never change!" It has been all hugs and kisses up to that point. The young man is used to being pampered. Then, bingo, the young lady gets pregnant, and a baby comes along. Suddenly all the hugs and kisses are going to the baby! You know the rest of the story! Those problems can be resolved, but you must "work" on resolving them.

I. Lifetime Commitment

A. When you say, "I do," you say, I guarantee you that I will make it work.....
1. Today, "If it doesn't work, I'll look for someone else."

B. Why do people divorce? Problems! (People have always had problems!)
1. Reason is, "I want my way and if I don't get it, I'll leave."

C. What makes a marriage last?
1. Commitment - Not love
a. Many have said, "I love him, but I can't live with him."
2. A pastor stays at a church because he is committed. He could love and leave!
3. Christ and the church - He has problems with us, but He is committed (Hebrews 13:5)
4. He deals with the problems but doesn't leave us! (Ephesians 5:26)

D. What is a good husband and a good wife?
1. A good husband does not expect his wife to be perfect.
2. A good wife does not expect her husband to be perfect.

E. Marriage is a lifetime commitment - “Until death do we part”

F. Have you made that commitment (To her, to God, to yourself)?

1. If you did not realize what you were saying when you said,i“I do,” you know now!
2. Make the commitment!!!!

II. Loving Communication (This is how problems are resolved between partners.**)**

A. People don’t believe communication will work! (They don’t try it!!!)

1. Christ communicates with us through every day.

B. Most failures between husband and wife are communication failures.

1. Husbands and wives communicate in five ways:
   a. Small talk level - The weather, etc.
   b. Factual level - What each one did that day.
      (Most couples end their communication at this point)
   c. Ideas and opinions level - Dreams, visions, desires, goals.
      If husband or wife responds negatively, the other will never share again - Why? The risk of rejection is too great.
      Especially true with wives - Wives are made to be helpmeets.
   d. Emotional level - Sharing how you feel. Your sorrows, your disappointments.
      If your mate says, “What’s wrong?” and you respond, “Nothing” or, “I don’t want to talk about it,” you are saying to your mate,
      “I DON’T TRUST YOU” with my problems.
      She would give anything if she could help you!

   e. Openness level - Genesis 2:25 - Not ashamed to share everything with you.

   Illustration: God gave each man and woman 50,000 words.
   Husbands spend 48,000 at work, but the wife has not had anyone to talk with all day. When he gets home, she has 30,000 words left and is dying to spend them! TALK TO HER!

III. Likely Confrontations (The four most common failures.)

Introduction: You are going to have confrontations.

A lady said to D. L. Moody, “I’ve been saved 25 years and have never doubted my salvation.” Mr. Moody responded, “I doubt you’re saved!”

If you say that you and your spouse have never had a problem, I doubt you're married.

A. Selfish problems (Self - centered) - Immaturity
    1. Men want to work 8 hours, come home, and flop.
        a. They expect the wife to keep working.
    2. If you are a man who won't fix anything around the house.....
        a. You are saying to your wife, "You are not important."
    3. Many husbands want to do anything they want to do, and the wife must like it.

B. Financial problems - Not lack of money, but mismanagement or selfishness of money.
    1. Money is not the answer. Ask Johnny Carson, Prince Charles, Elizabeth Taylor.
    2. Most marriages need surgery. (Plastic)
    3. Learn to live with what God has given you. (Contentment)
    4. Share the finances equally with your wife.
    5. You can live without everything **except** your spouse.

C. Nagging problems (Fault finding)
    1. Proverbs 21:19
    2. Proverbs 27:15
    3. Men can aggravate their wives with little things.

D. In-Law problems
    1. You are to leave your parents and cleave to each other. (Women also Ps 45:10)
    2. Always a problem when two women love one man or vice versa.

IV. How to Have A Good Fight. (Rules)

A. Pinpoint the problem. (Know who your enemy is.)
    1. Your mate is not your enemy – Satan is "the accuser of the brethren."
        a. Satan is always neutral – provides ammunition for both sides.
    2. Know what you are fighting about.
    3. It could be simply because you are too tired or too hungry.

B. Learn to attack the problem.
    1. Generally, it is Ego vs Ego.
    2. One or the other is trying to prove himself right.
    3. No problem is too big to solve - People are just too little to solve them.

C. Deal with one problem at a time.
    1. Don't collect them like "Green Stamps."
    2. When it hurts bad enough, you will cash them in.
    3. Don't get <u>historical</u>!!!! Don't bring up things from the past.

D. Learn to negotiate
    1. Never feel you must win, or you will find yourself in a "no win" situation.

2. Never belittle your wife, call her names, or **make her be the loser.**

E. Learn to pray about the problem.

1. My wife and I have a disagreement, and she says, "You're wrong."
2. I say, "Prove it". (She says, "I can't. You're a preacher and talk faster than me.")
3. I pray about it, and God says, "You're wrong."
4. God will always show you who is wrong - Go and apologize!!!!!

CHAPTER #12
WALKING WORTHY
AND
IMITATING CHRIST AS WE TEACH OUR CHILDREN.

To *"bring them up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord"* is something many people take very lightly when they get married and have children. Why do they take it so lightly? When babies are born into the world they look "so cute!" That is true from their day of birth. They are adorable. They look so sweet and innocent! We play with them, talk to them, they respond with a smile, they grin, they gurgle, and they try to laugh. However, every parent should remember that regardless of how innocent they look, they are born with a sin nature. It is hard to imagine, but every villain, law-breaking, vile, wicked, criminal was once a small, newborn baby that looked so sweet. Unless those "sweet little darlings" are "brought up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord," they will end up breaking the heart of the mother who brought them into the world, and the father "who did not raise them right!" PLEASE remember when you look at that "cute, adorable baby" they are born with the "Adamic nature" to commit sin and end up a wicked person.

This command is clearly given <u>to the father</u>. It is not the mother's "responsibility" to bring up their children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. I thank God for two things, (1) A woman who will be a helpmate to her husband and, while her husband is "out working" to provide for the home, she will "back her husband" and teach their children. Also, (2) I thank God for the woman that when her husband fails, she will "step up and give her best to raise their children." However, in that case the husband is "the head of the home" and therefore he remains responsible for the raising of their children.

In this one verse, Ephesians 6:4, Paul has given fathers instructions that completely cover their responsibility of "raising children."

First, in raising children the father is "*<u>not to provoke them to wrath</u>*." In raising children, the father is to give commands to his children that "<u>match their age and understanding.</u>" Those commands should be given in a manner that is easily understood, reasonable, and can be easily obeyed. Those commands are to <u>be explained</u> in a manner that the children can clearly understand and will "know that you love them and that you are giving them instruction in order to help them grow and be a better person." Never give a child a command that is "unreasonable" or cannot be easily obeyed, nor one that is not "for their good." Children need to "understand" that <u>you are training them for their life ahead</u>. Fathers, you are not to give your child orders that will make them

angry. If you do, they will become angry at you, be discouraged by the way you are treating them, and it will lead them to be rebellious. **(Colossians 3:21).**

Second, the verse says, *"fathers, bring them up in the nurture … of the Lord."* The Greek word for nurture is "paideia", and it means, educate and train, but it includes the words, "discipline, correction, and chastisement."

I have heard parents, especially mothers, say "I just can't bear to spank my child. I love him/her too much!" Mothers say things of that nature because they are women and were created to be emotional. I am sure mothers "think" they are doing the best thing for their child, but they are not. Mothers who say that and practice that are going contrary to God's word. The problem in such a case is not that the mother loves the child too much to discipline them, the problem is that the mother is emotional and **loves herself** too much to discipline them. It hurts a mother and a father to spank or discipline their child. However, the Bible is clear beyond a doubt that God intends for children to be disciplined when they do not obey their parents and when they refuse to do what they are told to do. As a matter of fact, withholding discipline from a child is not only failing in preparing him for his future life, but it contributes to the child turning out to be a "problem child" that will continue to disobey instructions from their employers, disobey the laws of the land, and possibly end up in serious trouble. Let's look at some scriptures in God's Word that instruct us to "discipline" our children.

Let's start with a verse that refers to what we just covered, "I just can't spank my children because I love them too much." If we truly love our children, we will discipline them.

> *"He that spareth his rod hateth his son: but he that loveth him chasteneth him betimes."*
> (Proverbs 13:24).

The next two verses teach us that discipline is "good for a child."

> *Withhold not correction from the child: for if thou beatest him with the rod, he shall not die. Thou shalt beat him with the rod, and shalt deliver his soul from hell.*
> (Proverbs 23:13-14).

Foolishness is bound in the heart of a child; but the rod of correction shall drive it far from him. (Proverbs 22:15).

The fourth verse teaches us that if we withhold discipline from our child, we will regret it!

The rod and reproof give wisdom: but a child left to himself bringeth his mother to shame. **(Proverbs 29:15**).

The next six verses teach us that (1) God believes in chastisement of children, and that chastisement is (2) for a child's good, and (3) the results of chastisement of a child will bring rejoicing to the child and to the parents.

For <u>whom the Lord loveth he chasteneth, and scourgeth</u> every son whom he receiveth. If ye endure chastening, God dealeth with you as with sons; for what son is he whom the father chasteneth not? But if ye be without chastisement, whereof all are partakers, then are ye bastards, and not sons. Furthermore we have had fathers of our flesh which corrected us, and we gave them reverence: shall we not much rather be in subjection unto the Father of spirits, and live? For they verily for a few days chastened us after their own pleasure; but he for our profit, that we might be partakers of his holiness. Now no chastening for the present seemeth to be joyous, but grievous: nevertheless afterward it yieldeth the peaceable fruit of righteousness unto them which are exercised thereby." (**Hebrews 12:6-11**).

Third, *"fathers, bring them up in the…<u>admonition</u> of the Lord."* The word <u>admonition</u> comes from the Greek word, "nouthesia" and means "to educate, call attention to, and to mildly rebuke and warn." The definition means exactly that. Educate them, not intellectually, but educate them in the teachings and principles of God's Word. It means to call their attention to and teach them the Word of the Lord. It means to mildly rebuke and warn them of the results of them choosing to make their own decision and NOT making their decision based on the Word of the Lord!

While children are living at home and being raised, the father is to make decisions about the children attending Sunday School and church, where the children go, who they go with, what they watch on television, how they use their phones, how they dress, when and how they are disciplined, among other things. He should not only "teach" his children these things, but as long as the children live at home, he should require them to obey and practice those things. The husband can delegate authority to the children's mother to participate, but he cannot delegate responsibility and cannot delegate accountability.

The father should thoroughly teach his children the following principles. Every family should have an organized plan of study for teaching their children. Also, as you teach apply the teaching to your children's life, which is according to Scripture in II Corinthians 3:18, *"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."*

This is also vitally important. Proverbs 22:6 tells us how important it is that we teach our children, *"Train up a child in the way he should go: and when he is old, he will not depart from it."* To look at the "other side" of that promise, it promises that "if we do not train up a child in the way he should go, they will most often go in the exact opposite direction. I am going to list seven areas in which children need to be taught. This certainly is not a complete list, but there are seven basics that EVERY child needs to learn.

<u>FIRST</u>
Teach your children "why and how" they can be saved.

I am assuming that everyone who is reading this book knows God's plan of salvation. Regardless, I will include that plan in a brief and hopefully clear way from A to Z. However, one of the first questions a child will ask is, "**What do you mean saved?**" That question is where parents need to begin. You need to make sure that your children understand why Jesus died. The

following is brief, but I think it makes it clear in such a way that it will help a child understand "why they need to be saved, and how they can be saved."

The answer to that question is "saved from the penalty of sin." The penalty for sin was explained in Genesis 2:16-17, *"And the LORD God commanded the man, saying, Of every tree of the garden thou mayest freely eat: But of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil, thou shalt not eat of it: For in the day that thou eatest thereof* ***thou shalt surely die****."*

When the Bible speaks on death, in the context of these verses, it is not referring to "physical death." We will all one day "die physically." Death in these verses refers to ***"the second death."*** Revelation 20:6 explains that truth, *"Blessed and holy is he that hath part in the first resurrection: on such the second death hath no power..."*

The "Second Death" is explained in Revelation 20:14-15, *"And death and hell were cast into the lake of fire. This is the second death. And whosoever was not found written in the book of life was cast into the lake of fire."* The "second death" is separation from God for all eternity.

Adam and Eve disobeyed God's command and ate of the tree. Every person who has been born since that day has been born with a "sin nature." Romans 5:12 tells us that the "penalty of death" was passed on to you and to me. *"Wherefore, as by one man* (Adam) *sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned."* We are sinners by birth, and sinners by choice. Romans 3:23 states, *"For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God."*

Are you saved? Saved from what? Are you saved from the **penalty of sin, which is eternal death**? You say, "No, I am not." Please let me explain from the Bible how you can be saved. John 3:16 is a very common verse. This verse tells us not only **how** God provided salvation for us, but **why** He did it. He did it because He loves YOU! *"For God so loved the world that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."*

God sent his Son to earth for the purpose of making a way for every person "to be saved from the penalty of sin, death!" His name is Jesus. Jesus was crucified, nailed to a cross, and died. Why? Jesus never committed a sin!

Romans 5:8 states it this way: *"God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us."*

II Corinthians 5:21 answers that question: *"For he hath* ***made him to be sin for us****, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."*

All your sins, my sins, and the sins of the world were put on Jesus Christ when He died on the cross of calvary. In your case, He died in your place to pay YOUR sin debt! Romans 6:23 says, *"For the wages of sin is death; but the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord."* (PLEASE NOTE: The verse states that "eternal life through Jesus Christ," is a **gift** of God! A "gift" is free! You can't buy it, you cannot earn it, you can only "accept it!" It is YOURS if you want it.

Jesus Christ was **made to be sin in our place.** When he died on the cross, he died in our place – He paid the penalty of sin for all men. I John 2:2 states that truth, *"And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for our's only, but also for the sins **of the whole world.**"*

Therefore, the choice is ours. Will you choose to "accept God's gift of eternal life?" "Will you choose to accept the death that Jesus died on the cross in your place?" If so, your debt will be "paid in full." Romans 10:9 states: *"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."*

If you would like to accept Jesus Christ as your Savior, have your sins forgiven, and have your "penalty of sin" paid in full, you can do that, wherever you are. You can do it now, even as you read this! Start by admitting you are a sinner. Then ask Jesus Christ to forgive your sins and come into your heart as your Savior. You can pray a prayer after this pattern but pray it from your heart.

"Dear God, I come to you admitting I am a sinner and lost. I realize that your Son, Jesus Christ, died on the cross in MY place. I am confessing and repenting of my sins. I ask you to please forgive me of my sins and I receive your Son, Jesus Christ, into my heart as my Savior and my Lord."

When you pray this prayer and mean it from your heart, I remind you of the verse in Romans 10:13, *"For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord **shall be saved.**"* AMEN!

SECOND
Teach your children to make Jesus the "Lord of their Life."

In Matthew 22:36 and 37 Jesus was asked this question: *"Master, which is the great commandment in the law?"* Without hesitation, Jesus responded and said, *"Jesus said unto him, Thou shalt love the Lord thy God with all thy heart, and with all thy soul, and with all thy mind."* Matthew 22:38, *"This is the first and great commandment."*

The importance of your children making Jesus Christ the Lord of their life is found in Matthew 6:24, which states a very important truth!

"No man can serve two masters: for either he will hate the one, and love the other; or else he will hold to the one, and despise the other. Ye cannot serve God and mammon."

In everyday language, that says that if you do not teach your children to make Jesus Christ the Lord of their life, they will end up hating the Lord and loving another master, which would be the world which is controlled by Satan. Fathers and Mothers, you do not want to run that risk. The Bible is clear THEY WILL FOLLOW ONE OR THE OTHER. There are no "in-betweens and no other alternatives!" Therefore, Teach Your Children!

The Bible says that even the success of a nation is decided by the people of the nation and whether they make Christ the Lord of the nation. Psalms 33:12 states: *"Blessed is the nation whose*

God is the LORD; and the people whom he hath chosen for his own inheritance." That can be paraphrased as, "Blessed is the child whose God is the Lord…"

<u>THIRD</u>
Teach your children the Word of God
(Proverbs 4:1-2).

"Hear, ye children, the instruction of a father, and attend to know understanding. For I give you good doctrine, forsake ye not my law."

The commandment of God to "teach your children the Word of God" can be traced to the Old Testament. Look at Deuteronomy 6:6-9:

"And these words, which I command thee this day, shall be in thine heart: And ***thou shalt teach them diligently unto thy children,*** *and shalt talk of them when thou sittest in thine house, and when thou walkest by the way, and when thou liest down, and when thou risest up. And thou shalt bind them for a sign upon thine hand, and they shall be as frontlets between thine eyes. And thou shalt write them upon the posts of thy house, and on thy gates."*

That commandment is followed up in the New Testament in I Timothy 4:5-11: *"For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer. If thou put the brethren in remembrance of these things, thou shalt be a good minister of Jesus Christ, nourished up in the words of faith and of good doctrine, whereunto thou hast attained. But refuse profane and old wives' fables, and exercise thyself rather unto godliness. For bodily exercise profiteth little: but godliness is profitable unto all things, having promise of the life that now is, and of that which is to come. This is a faithful saying and worthy of all acceptation. For therefore we both labour and suffer reproach, because we trust in the living God, who is the Saviour of all men, specially of those that believe. <u>These things command and teach</u>***."*** **<u>Teaching begins "at home," not in schools or in churches</u>.**

Every family should have an organized plan of study for teaching their children. Also, as you teach your children, apply the teaching to your children's life, which is according to Scripture in II Corinthians 3:18: *"But we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."*

<u>FOURTH</u>
Teach your children to stay away from bad company.
(Proverbs 1:10-16)

"My son, if sinners entice thee, consent thou not. If they say, Come with us, let us lay wait for blood, let us lurk privily for the innocent without cause: Let us swallow them up alive as the grave; and whole, as those that go down into the pit: We shall find all precious substance, we shall fill our houses with spoil:"

I have heard people say concerning bad company, even some in the ministry, "Oh, that is not a problem. I mix with them and get to know them so I can win them to Christ. Me fall? Not a chance! I'm in the ministry and spiritual enough that I won't fall just by mixing with them. It's

just another chance to witness." Peter was far along, and much more "in the ministry and spiritual" than anyone reading in this book. Peter was a preacher and an apostle. BUT Peter fell by mixing with bad company. I call your attention to Luke 22, beginning in Verse 54. Judas had betrayed Jesus and Jesus had been arrested. Those that arrested Jesus took him before the high priest. Read the following carefully:

*"Then took they him, and led him, and brought him into the high priest's house. **And Peter followed afar off**. And when they had kindled a fire in the midst of the hall, and were set down together, **Peter sat down among them.** But a certain maid beheld him as he sat by the fire, and earnestly looked upon him, and said, This man was also with him. And he denied him, saying, Woman, I know him not. And after a little while another saw him, and said, Thou art also of them. And Peter said, Man, I am not. And about the space of one hour after another confidently affirmed, saying, Of a truth this fellow also was with him: for he is a Galilaean. And Peter said, Man, I know not what thou sayest. And immediately, while he yet spake, the cock crew. And the Lord turned, and looked upon Peter. And Peter remembered the word of the Lord, how he had said unto him, Before the cock crow, thou shalt deny me thrice. And Peter went out, and wept bitterly."*

As you see in the scripture above, Peter sat down "*among them*," among bad company. The results were that Peter failed in his testimony. First, "he followed afar off (Verse 54). Then Peter "*sat down among them*" (Verse 55). Then Peter denied Christ three times (Verses 57, 58, 60), and according to the account in Matthew, the third time Peter denied Christ he used a curse word (Matthew 26:72). Peter fell! Why? Because he "*sat down among*" bad company. Dads and Moms, teach your children to STAY AWAY FROM BAD COMPANY!

FIFTH
Teach your children to stay away from wine.
(Proverbs 20:1).

"Wine is a mocker, strong drink is raging: and whosoever is deceived thereby is not wise."

I recall something happening concerning a company which made wine that tells the following story. There was a company that made and sold beer. They had a slogan that said, "The Finished Product of the Brewers Art." They posted that on large billboards across the country showing a large picture of a couple, smiling, happy, laughing, dancing, drinking their beer, and having a good time. A pastor, who was a friend of mine but has since gone to be with the Lord, put up a large billboard in midtown Memphis on his church's property that had the same slogan, "The Finished Product of the Brewers Art." However, the picture was different. He put a picture of a drunk lying in the gutter face down, with an empty can of beer rolling from his hand. The brewing company who used that slogan called and threatened to take the pastor to court and sue him if he did not take the billboard down. The pastor responded, "I hope you do! I would love to go to court against you." They were a little shocked and said, "Why would you want to do that?" He responded to them, "Because you cannot prove that the picture on your billboard "is the finished product of the brewer's art," and I can prove that a drunk lying in the gutter with his face down IS the finished product of the brewer's art." They excused themselves, hung up, and the pastor never heard from them again.

"Wine is a mocker…" Dads and Moms, teach your children to stay away from wine!

SIXTH
Teach your children good work ethics.
(Proverbs 6:9-11).

Proverbs 6:9-11: *"How long wilt thou sleep, O sluggard? when wilt thou arise out of thy sleep? Yet a little sleep, a little slumber, a little folding of the hands to sleep: So shall thy poverty come as one that travelleth, and thy want as an armed man."*

In America, there has been a great failure in this area of fathers not teaching their children to work. **For example:** "The Social Security Act was signed into law by President Roosevelt on August 14, 1935. In addition to several provisions for general welfare, the new Act created a social insurance program designed to pay retired workers aged 65 or older a continuing income after retirement."

Also in 1935, the Congress established the "unemployment insurance program which was incorporated in the legislative package enacted as the Social Security Act of 1935."

"In the same year, President Franklin D. Roosevelt backed the idea of federal aid for poor children and other dependent persons. Later in that same year, 1935, a national welfare system had been established for the first time in American history."

"In 1939, the original Food Stamp Program began and later the pilot programs of the early 1960s. The 1939 program was initiated to align growing food surpluses with, they said, a concern for the needs of the poor as the country emerged from the Great Depression." My father went through those years, worked for a small salary, and never took the offer of food stamps.

Nowhere in the Bible does it say or indicate that the government of any country is responsible for providing things for people who won't work and won't plan ahead. America is now reaping the results of Social Security, food stamps, welfare, unemployment, free school lunches, the news media raising millions of dollars to purchase food and then gives it away free at a "drive through" to people who drive up to the "food giveaways" in $25,000 automobiles. I have seen people in places like Walmart, buy a large basket full of groceries and pay for them with "food stamps." Then I have followed them to the parking lot and watched them unload those groceries into the trunk of a $35,000 to $50,000 automobile!

Today, in the 21st century, people in Memphis stand on corners at intersections with a piece of cardboard asking for money, saying "Please help me feed my family." Being a former Memphis Police officer, I often have conversations with police officers I meet in various places. One officer told me that they did an "investigation" into people standing on corners, begging. The officer I was talking with said that the investigation showed that almost 100% of those people were taking in $200 or more a day. When they were "offered a job" by plain-clothes officers, they responded, "Why should I work when I can make at least $200 a day, and some days more, standing here on the corner with a piece of cardboard!"

All the above are the results of the failure of "the head of the home" in not raising his children correctly and according to the Word of God and not working and providing for his family. The "head of the home" has FAILED in not taking HIS God-given responsibility to "work to provide for his family." He did not train his children "to take that responsibility and to work."

Proverbs 6:6-8 gives us a "pattern" which we should follow concerning work, *"Go to the ant, thou sluggard; consider her ways, and be wise: Which having no guide, overseer, or ruler, Provideth her meat in the summer, and gathereth her food in the harvest.*

Dads and Moms, teach your children to work! I repeat the words found in II Thessalonians 3:10, *"For even when we were with you, this we commanded you that if any would not work, neither should he eat."*

SEVENTH

Teach your children to Seek the Will of God for their lives.
(Proverbs 3:5-6).

The father cannot tell any of his children what God's will is for their lives. Such things like, will they be in the ministry, will they be a pastor, a song director, a missionary, or many other things. He can teach them "how to find God's will" for their daily living, and how God and His word can lead them to "what God's will is for their life" as they grow and daily walk with Him. I will give four principles which every human on earth should follow. I will give those in the next chapter after concluding the seven responsibilities a father has to teach his children. Before starting, let me give you something to remember. You find God's will by keeping these basic principles in the order in which they are given.

Conclusion: Teach your children some "practical and basic truths that they need to know." **For example,** I have never forgotten the day at Thrifthaven Baptist Church, which was my home and sending church when I went to the mission field in 1970, that during the service that day on Christmas morning our pastor made a statement something like this, "Tell your kids there is no such person as "Santa Claus!" I must admit, I was somewhat shocked. We had talked to our kids about "Santa Claus," but we looked at it as just a "fun time" they got out of that part of celebrating Christmas. However, the more I thought about it, the more I realized how serious it is to even acknowledge some creature of man's imagination like "Santa Claus" as opposed to teaching my children how to celebrate the birth of Jesus Christ, who came to die for our sins.

This, so called, "Santa Claus" is a mythical character created about the early 1600s by men. There has NEVER been a real "Santa Claus" of any type for them to pattern after. Since his creation, he has used about five "alias names" such as Father of Christmas, Saint Nicholas, Saint Nick, Kris Kringle, or just simply "Santa." Along with the alias names, the story led children to believe that Santa Claus wore a red coat with a white collar, red trousers, delivering a bag full of gifts to children by flying in from the north pole in a sled pulled by reindeer and coming down their chimney! How stupid can man get? What has that got to do with celebrating the birth of the Savior? I feel sure whoever came up with "Santa Claus" thought it was a "good thing." They made it "look good" and it was something that would excite people, especially children. Parents got fooled into promoting Santa Claus because of the excitement of their children. However, whoever came up with this "lie" was no doubt deceived, just as Eve was deceived in Genesis Chapter 3. In

my opinion, there is no doubt that Satan, the arch enemy of Christ, was/is behind the creation of this mythical character to take the attention and emphasis off the birth of Jesus Christ and His coming to “die for the sins of the world” and substituted "Santa Claus." Now, without going into endless details, let’s fast forward to 2025. Today, “Santa Claus” has taken all reference to Jesus Christ out of the world. The world uses Santa Claus to promote “buying and selling” and TOTALLY leaves Christ out of Christmas. Some major retailers refuse to allow their employees to say “Merry Christmas” to customers. There are very seldom any signs saying “Merry Christmas” posted in those stores. On television, and many other places apart from the church, there is very little IF ANY MENTION of Christ. I imagine you can remember when retailers began removing “Christ” out of Christmas. They began by using “Xmas!”

Parents, please teach your children that Christmas is about Christ. Teach them that anything which opposes and takes away from Christ is WRONG! Jesus - is the Reason - for the Season!!

WALKING WORTHY
AND
IMITATING CHRIST ON OUR JOB
Ephesians 6:5-9

"Servants, be obedient to them that are your masters according to the flesh, with fear and trembling, in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; 6 Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart; 7 With good will doing service, as to the Lord, and not to men: 8 Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free. 9 And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons wit

First: Let's deal with a Christian who is employed by a company and works under a boss. When a Christian 'takes a job" with a company of the world, they are entering into an agreement with the owner or employer to 'do a certain type of work for a certain amount of pay.' When doing so, a Christian should daily remind himself that he is to serve that company or employer, AS HE IS SERVING THE LORD. That is according to Verse 4. His primary responsibility is to do his job just as if he is serving the Lord, which according to these verses, HE IS! If we do not serve the company to the very best of our ability, as unto the Lord, we will grieve the Holy Spirit. (See Ephesians 4:30.)

You may already know this but let me remind you of it. Someone may ask you the question, “Who do you work for?” You may respond, "I work for AT&T." No Christian works FOR a business or company. You may work at AT&T or a company like AT&T, but you work FOR the LORD.

Most people reading this commentary will know the name William Carey. He was the first Baptist missionary to leave England and serve in the country of India. He was well-known by name in England, as word had spread that Carey was going to India as a missionary. At that time no one had ever heard of a Baptist foreign missionary. One day a couple of men in England,

walking down one of the city streets looked up and recognized Mr. Carey. Out of interest, they stopped and began to talk to Mr. Carey. During the conversation, one of them asked him this question, "Mr. Carey we have heard a lot about you. What is your business?" He responded, "My business is serving the Lord!" The man said again, "Yes, we know you are going to be a missionary, but what is your business" Again, Mr. Carey responded and said, "My business is serving the Lord." The man started again, but Carey politely said, "Do you want to know how I make money?" The man said, "Yes sir. That is what I was asking." Mr. Carey responded again and said, "I cobble shoes to make money." He pointed down the street to his cobbler shop and said, "That is where I work to make money, but I only work to make money to finance my business, which is serving the Lord Jesus!" That should be the attitude of every Christian! We should wake up every morning and remember that we as Christians, work AT a job somewhere, but we work FOR the Lord!

A man's God given responsibility is to work AT a job, and we should serve the company which employs us as we are working for the Lord. Ephesians 6:5-6 says, "*in singleness of your heart, as unto Christ; 6 Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers; but as the servants of Christ, doing the will of God from the heart,"* We should have one thing on our mind when we go to work. We should remember that we are serving the Lord at our job, and that we should keep our mind on the things we have been assigned to do, doing the very best of our ability. Also, the verse says, *"Not with eyeservice, as menpleasers."* We are to work hard and do our very best when the boss is watching us, AND we should be working hard and do our very best when the boss is not around and not watching us. We should not work to be *"menpleasers*," but be a God pleaser. If you work for "eye approval" you are seeking approval which you do not deserve. You are "cheating" your company and boss if you only work when the boss is watching. You are a *"menpleaser*" and that should not be said of any Christian. If you work as hard as you can when your boss is watching and work as hard as you can when your boss is not watching, Verse 8 says you will be well rewarded, " *Knowing that whatsoever good thing any man doeth, the same shall he receive of the Lord, whether he be bond or free."* REMEMBER, we must all appear before the Judgment Seat of Christ and give an account. (II Corinthians 5:10)

Second: Now, let's look at what God expects of the company and the boss! Ephesians 6:9 tells us what God requires of them also. "*And, ye masters, do the same things unto them, forbearing threatening: knowing that your Master also is in heaven; neither is there respect of persons wit."*

The word "master" applies to anyone who is in authority. The verse says they also are to do the same and for the SAME REASON, *"…ye masters, do the same things unto them…"* The master and the servant should do all they do "unto the Lord," and not to please man. The Lord will one day condemn the unkind master and equally deal with the disloyal servant.

SECTION THREE

OUR WARFARE FOR THE LORD

CHAPTER #13
THE ADMONISHMENT TO PREPARE FOR WAR

Up to this point we have studied the "Wealth We Have in Christ," which includes our past position in the world, our present position with Christ, and our prospective place in heaven. After our Wealth in Christ, we studied our Walk With Christ. That was a move into the practical Christian life and how we are to imitate Jesus Christ in the world, in the church, and in the home. We now move to an entirely different area of our Christian life.

OUR COMING ENCOUNTER
Ephesians 6:10-11

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. 11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil.

We always expect Paul to admonish us to serve Christ in the church, in the world and in the home. Now, Paul gives us a "call to arms." We are saved, we are servants, and now we are going to become soldiers. This means as a Christian we wear three different caps. We are walkers, we are workers, and we are warriors! We have moved from the quiet peaceful life at our church and in our home with our mates and our children, and in our employment. Every Christian needs to fully understand that the day you were saved you entered a battlefield! Many young Christians, when they trust Christ as their Savior, they think all is well and they are going to move forward with no problems. Just the opposite is true. Before you were saved you had no enemy other than the body of flesh you live in. After you were saved you need to realize that you have an enemy.

OUR ENEMY
Ephesians 6:12

"For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but <u>against principalities</u>, <u>against powers</u>, <u>against the rulers of the darkness</u> of this world, <u>against spiritual wickedness</u> in high places."

<u>First</u>: We wrestle not against flesh and blood. The word "wrestle" is translated from the Greek word, "Pale." It means "we struggle against." Paul is not telling us that we do not have people, men in the flesh, who are against us as Christians. Paul was opposed by men of the world on every hand, especially those of a false religion. Those men arrested Paul and put him in prison where he was beaten. John was put on the Isle of Patmos by men of a false religion as punishment because they did not like him. Many men of the world hate us because they hate Christ and His Word. John 15:18-19 tells us that is true, *"If the world hate you, ye know that it hated me before it hated you. 19 If ye were of the world, the world would love his own: but because ye are not of the world, but I have chosen you out of the world, therefore the world hateth you."* These men are driven by Satan, but that is not our real enemy.

Second: We wrestle against principalities, against powers, against rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places.

1. "<u>Principalities</u>" refers to the rank and order of fallen angels. Let me point out an important truth that I do not want you to miss. Fallen angels are REAL beings which God created, but they followed Satan and fell. They are not just an evil influence!

2. "<u>Powers</u>" refers to "thrones, dominions, kingdoms, and world governments." All of these are evil men who hate God and hate his word. I am sure everyone can see that in our world today.

3. "<u>Rulers of the darkness.</u>" Notice that "rulers" is plural. It refers to individual men in high places of the political world. There is no doubt that Satan is behind all the enemies. II Thessalonians says, *"Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders, 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved."*

4. “Spiritual wickedness in high places.” This is not referring to men. It is referring to "wicked spiritual and demons" in high places who have been assigned by Satan to torment Christians, especially those who are dedicated to serving Christ. These forces attack us in our mind and try to torment us.

All these four categories, Principalities, Powers, Ruler, and Spiritual wickedness are present EVERY day of our life! This IS NOT warfare with our flesh or some evil influence. Ephesians 6:12 makes that clear beyond doubt. The warfare Christians are involved in is against Satan and satanic controlled people. Now, knowing you are in a warfare with the Devil and his henchmen, let me give you a very strong word of advice. Every Christian needs to admit that they are no match for the enemy. We are deficient and we need to embrace God. This is the ONLY place you will find sufficiency to win the war.

We do not need to have "the mastery over the devil." We need the Master of the devil. Romans 8:31-39 tells us how we can win the war and have victory in our Christ life:

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."

CHAPTER # 14
THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD
Ephesians 6:11-18

"11 Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. 12 For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. 13 Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having done all, to stand. 14 Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; 15 And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; 16 Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. 17 And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which

is the word of God: 18 Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;"

Preparation for Putting on the Whole Armour of God
Ephesians 6:11-13

When God gives us an admonition twice, we need to realize that it is vitally important. We are told to put on "*the whole armour of God*" in Verse 11 and again in Verse 13. God said this for a reason. We must begin by putting off the flesh. We cannot fight this war with spiritual wickedness in high places by our flesh. II Corinthians 10:4 says, *"(For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;*)"

We must start by dying to self and mortify all the deeds of the flesh. PLEASE do not try to fight this war with Satan in your flesh. Romans 12:1-2 tells what God expects us to do, *"I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. 2 And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."* Presenting our bodies as a living sacrifice means we have put our flesh to death.! Our flesh has NO POSSIBILITY AT ALL of winning a war against the rulers of darkness or spiritual wickedness in high places. Or enemy, Satan and his fallen angels (demons), have supernatural powers. II Thessalonians 2:8-10 tells us of their power, *"Even him, whose coming is after the working of Satan with all power and signs and lying wonders. 10 And with all deceivableness of unrighteousness in them that perish; because they received not the love of the truth, that they might be saved.*" Michael, the archangel, could not do battle with Satan. Jude 1:9 declares, *"Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee."* If Michael, the archangel, could not do war with Satan but had to turn it over to the Lord 100%, that tells us WE CANNOT go to war against him. No Christian is strong enough to do battle with super-natural powers. We MUST put on the WHOLE armour of God! One quick point - God said, "PUT ON…. !" God DOES NOT PUT ARMOUR ON US. We must take the armour and PUT IT on. After we have PUT IT on, we can be assured by God that He will USE IT to protect us from the attacks of Satan.

OUR WEAPONS OF WAR

First: The Girdle of Truth. Ephesians 6:14 says**, "…***having your loins girt about with truth."* This was a common expression to the people in those days. The daily dress in those days was a long flowing, comfortable robe. When men went out to work or any other type of activity, including going to war, they would put on a "girdle". A "girdle" in those years was more like a strong belt today. They would pull the girdle up very tight around their waist. The girdle would keep all the other parts of the garment in their proper place. The girdle of truth, in this context, is referring to "the Word of God." This means that you "wrap yourself" and especially your mind, with the "truths from the Word of God." Its purpose is to protect you from falling. I Peter 1:13 tells us to "*gird*" up our minds, *"Wherefore **gird up the loins of your mind,** be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;"* This means that when Satan attacks us we should, as the Holy Spirit who dwells in us, bring promises from

the Word of God to our mind and use them to win the victory over Satan. (II Corinthians 10:5) The girdle of truth wrapped around us will prevent us from being "blown away by the wind."

To "girt ourselves about with truth" requires us to spend much time in the Word of God and try to learn one more truth daily or find one more promise God has given us. That protects us from the fiery darts and LIES of the Devil. Don't just read books and commentaries but study THE WORD OF GOD. Other books may be good, but the Bible is THE TRUTH, and it will protect us from falling for some type of "counterfeit" religion and lie that Satan may bring our way. Let me share with you a good illustration I experienced in my life, and I learned from it.

I served in the Memphis Police Department in the late 1950s and early 1960s. I was working with an agent with the FBI for a few days who dealt with "counterfeit money." I was curious about how they studied and prepared to identify a counterfeit bill. I thought they would spend weeks and weeks studying counterfeit bill after counterfeit bill to learn how to identify one. I asked the FBI agent how they prepared. I was surprised at his answer, but today I understand. The agent said, "We are not allowed to look at one counterfeit bill through the entire course we study!" I said, "What?? You can't even look at one?" I asked him, "Then how do you know if a bill is counterfeit or not?" He said, “We spend hours and hours studying "the real money," all their marks and how to identify a real dollar bill. When we have studied the REAL THING long enough, you can pick up any bill that is counterfeit and know it is not real in one glance! We know it is counterfeit because it is not like the real money we studied!” The same is true concerning the "Word of God." If you truly study the Word of God day after day, night after night, when we see or hear anything that is NOT TRUE to the Word, we will know there is something wrong IMMEDIATELY! You will know it is false and comes from Satan trying to trip you up and make you fall. The second that happens, claim and quote a Promise of God to him and he will leave you.

This principle was used by our Lord Jesus when Satan tried to get him to fall in Matthew 4:4, 7, and 10. Jesus was in the wilderness being tempted by Satan. Verse 4: *But he answered and said, **It is written**, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God.*" Verse 7: *"Jesus said unto him, **It is written again,** Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God."* Verse 10*: "Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: **for it is written**, Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve."*

Jesus DID NOT even discuss any of the temptations Satan used to try to trick Him. He simply quoted the truth, won the spiritual war, and Satan left! If it worked for the Lord Jesus, it will work for you and me. Study your Bible! Girt your heart and mind with the truth and nothing but the truth! God will take care of the rest!

Second: **The Breastplate of Righteousness.** Ephesians 6:14 also says, "*having on the breastplate of righteousness.* The word righteousness means: Integrity, holiness, purity of life, and sincerity of piety. The Breastplate of Righteousness covers from the neck down to the thighs. The breastplate of righteousness was designed to protect the heart and anything close to the heart. Romans 10:9 says, *"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved."* Later in this lesson we will study "feet shod with the Gospel of Peace" because the feet and the heart work together. They

complement each other. The feet must be put into action according to the truth. If the heart and the feet do not match, then there is a major problem in your life. It basically means that what a person "claims they believe in their heart," they do not REALLY believe. It is just talk and not walk. This "breastplate of righteousness" IS NOT the righteousness God imputed to us when we trusted Jesus as our Savior. That righteousness is IMPUTED to us by God. That righteousness is found in Philippians 3:8-9, *"Yea doubtless, and I count all things but loss for the excellency of the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord: for whom I have suffered the loss of all things, and do count them but dung, that I may win Christ, 9 And be found in him, not having mine own righteousness, which is of the law, but that which is through the faith of Christ, the righteousness which is of God by faith:" We are never told to "put on that righteousness,"* In this context, Ephesians 6:11 tells us to "PUT ON THE WHOLE ARMOUR OF GOD." It means we are to "put on our beliefs concerning righteousness **and LIVE according to our beliefs, which is to DO RIGHT**! I did not attend Bob Jones University, but I well remember Dr. Bob Jones, Sr. who founded BJU, saying "DO RIGHT! **IF THE STARS FALL**, DO RIGHT!!!"

The breastplate of righteousness means you have a good conscience. I Peter 3:21 tells us about a good conscience, *"The like figure whereunto even baptism doth also now save us (not the putting away of the filth of the flesh, **but the answer of a good conscience toward God,**) by the resurrection of Jesus Christ:"* When a Christian falls, many people will say "That is so sad, he was such a good man, and it happened SO SUDDENLY." When a person falls, it does not happen suddenly. The sin has been hidden in the person's heart for a long time, maybe weeks, months or years. What happened? Satan knew what was in his heart and knew his thought and desire of the flesh. He was just waiting for the right time and right place, and Satan came after him with temptation, and BANG… it happened. He fell. That is one of Satan's devices. He wants to find a weak spot in a person's heart in order to attack that person. Christians open the door of disaster by hiding sin in their heart.

On the other side, the Christian whose convictions concerning the truth in the Word of God are strongly embedded in his heart is not likely that he will EVER fall. Our beliefs, convictions, and conscience need to be based on righteousness and on the promises of God, and God will always give us victory. Also, that type Christian can STAND, and stand, and stand, without fear in their hearts. **DO RIGHT! IF THE STARS FALL! DO RIGHT!**

Third: Have your feet shod with the preparation of the Gospel of Peace. Ephesians 6:15 says, *And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace"* This phrase has a two-fold meaning. **First**, a good pair of shoes or boots are worn by every soldier who fought a war, regardless of if it was today, or in that day. A soldier needs to have firm footing when he is preparing to fight. **Second**, a soldier must be READY to move suddenly when an enemy comes close. Those two meanings can be applied to a Christian warrior. Every Christian should have his feet shod with the Gospel of Peace and with every possible Bible truth and promise of God, in order to stand firm for the Word of God. Also, every Christian warrior needs to be prepared by having the Gospel ready to share, either by witnessing face to face with a person who is lost, or by giving them a Gospel tract.

I Peter 3:15 gives us that commandment, *"But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you*

with meekness and fear:" This means that every Christian should "be prepared" and have tracts in their shirt pocket or a lady should have tracts in her purse, when they leave the house and go out into the world. We should NEVER leave home without the Gospel! Our feet should be prepared to share the Gospel of peace anytime and anywhere. There are going to be people who will reject the tracts, but if you are prepared and give them a tract, you have "your feet shod with the Gospel of Peace and have obeyed God!" To sum it up, we should always be prepared to share the Gospel. Luke 4:18 repeats the commandment to be prepared, *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because* ***he hath anointed me to preach the gospel t****o the poor; he hath s****ent me to heal the brokenhearted****, to* ***preach deliverance to the captives****, and* ***recovering of sight to the blind****, to* ***set at liberty them that are bruised****."*

The apostle Paul testified about this two-fold meaning. In Romans 1:16 Paul said, *"For* ***I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ:*** *for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek."* Paul said, I HAVE MY SHOES ON AND I AM READY TO STAND FIRM for the Gospel and for the truth of the Word of God. I AM NOT ASHAMED! Then we go back to Romans 1:14-15 and Paul said, *"****I am debtor*** *both to the Greeks, and to the Barbarians; both to the wise, and to the unwise. 15 So, as much as in me is,* ***I am ready to preach the gospel*** *to you that are at Rome also."*

I think of the Israelites who were eating the first Passover while they were under attack by a man named Pharoah, who was an enemy of God and a man being used by Satan to try to destroy the people of God! They were facing the most fierce and deadly enemy recorded in the Bible. However, God's people sat down and ate with their shoes on and ready to go. They were at perfect peace because they knew the "blood was on the door post" and they were without fear because of the promise of God to deliver them, saying, "*when I see the blood, I will pass over you..!"*

Exodus 12:11-13 says, *"And thus shall ye eat it; with your loins girded,* ***your shoes on your feet,*** *and your staff in your hand; and ye shall eat it in haste: it is the LORD'S passover. 12 For I will pass through the land of Egypt this night, and will smite all the firstborn in the land of Egypt, both man and beast; and against all the gods of Egypt I will execute judgment: I am the LORD. 13 And the blood shall be to you for a token upon the houses where ye are: and* ***when I see the blood, I will pass over you, and the plague shall not be upon you to destroy you, when I smite the land of Egypt****."*

I close this section by asking a question. Do you have your "shoes on your feet and no fear in your heart?" Do you have Gospel tracts in your pocket or purse? Can you say, "I am not ashamed of the Gospel of Jesus Christ?" Can you say, "I AM READY" as Paul was, "to preach the Gospel?" If you are not, please search your heart and see **why you are not ready**. Remember what Romans 10:14-15 says about the feet of them that preach the Gospel, *"How then shall they call on him in whom they have not believed? and how shall they believe in him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they hear without a preacher? 15 And how shall they preach, except they be sent? as it is written,* ***How beautiful are the feet of them that preach the gospel of peace****, and bring glad tidings of good things!"*

Fourth: Above all, taking the shield of faith, Ephesians 6;16 says, "*16* ***Above all****, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."*

The girdle of truth, the breastplate of righteousness, and shoes shod with the Gospel of peace are all necessary. However, please note that the verse above says, "ABOVE ALL…" No doubt God led Paul to write this and then gave the reason for saying "*above all"* when he added *"wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked."* Satan throws fiery darts at Christians EVERY DAY. He throws fiery darts of pride, envy, jealousy, covetousness, worry, unbelief, doubts, and thoughts of all types of impurity and immoral activities. Many other types of darts are thrown at Christians almost daily.

Ephesians 6:16 is the only time in the New Testament where the phrase "*shield of faith,"* is used. Paul says, *"taking the shield of faith…"* The word "taking" literally means "to take hold of it" and be prepared to use that shield when you are under attack. Paul, especially in Chapter 27 of the book of Acts had fiery dart after fiery dart thrown at him. However, Paul "took the shield of faith" and God delivered him. Acts 27:23-25 says, *"For there stood by me this night the angel of God, whose I am, and whom I serve, 24 Saying, Fear not, Paul; thou must be brought before Caesar: and, lo, God hath given thee all them that sail with thee. 25 Wherefore, sirs, be of good cheer: **for I believe God,** that it shall be even as it was told me."* The "shield of faith" IS BELIEVING all the promises of God and bringing them to your mind the minute you are attacked!

Let me list just a few of the promises God made to Christians which you can use when fiery darts are thrown at you. There are other promises, but these are five very strong promises:

Psalms 34:7: *"The angel of the LORD encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."*

Psalms 91:11: "*For he shall give his angels charge over thee, to keep thee in all thy ways*."

Luke 4:18: *"The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the gospel to the poor; he hath sent me to heal the brokenhearted, to preach deliverance to the captives, and recovering of sight to the blind, to set at liberty them that are bruised,"*

Hebrews 1:13-14: "*But to which of the angels said he at any time, Sit on my right hand, until I make thine enemies thy footstool? 14 Are they not all ministering spirits, sent forth to minister for them who shall be heirs of salvation?"*

Exodus 23:20: *"Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared."*

Christians today should "take the shield of faith" and use it just as young Timothy did in II Timothy 1:12 which says, "*For the which cause I also suffer these things: nevertheless I am not ashamed: for **I know whom I have believed**, and am persuaded that he is able to keep that which I have committed unto him against that day."*

A good Old Testament illustration of believing in the protecting promises of God is found in II Kings 6:15-17, *"And when the servant of the man of God was risen early, and gone forth, behold, an host compassed the city both with horses and chariots. And his servant said unto him, Alas, my master! how shall we do? 16 And he answered, Fear not: for they that be with us are more than they that be with them. 17 And Elisha prayed, and said, LORD, I pray thee, open his eyes, that he may see. And the LORD opened the eyes of the young man; and he saw: and, behold, the mountain was full of horses and chariots of fire round about Elisha."*

You say, the "shield of faith." **Faith in who and faith in what**? Our faith is in God, who shall be able to quench ALL the fiery darts of the wicked one, and faith IN the promises of God. Again, let's ask ourselves a question. Have you TAKEN unto you all the promises of God and are you therefore living without fear? If not, please pray and ask God to help you "take hold of the shield, claim all his promises, live by faith in those promises, and have perfect peace in your heart."

Romans 8:31-39 should give you perfect peace, regardless of the fiery dart of Satan, *"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? 32 He that spared not his own Son, but delivered him up for us all, how shall he not with him also freely give us all things? 33 Who shall lay any thing to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. 34 Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us. 35 Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? 36 As it is written, For thy sake we are killed all the day long; we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter. 37 Nay, in all these things we are more than conquerors through him that loved us. 38 For I am persuaded, that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor powers, nor things present, nor things to come, 39 Nor height, nor depth, nor any other creature, shall be able to separate us from the love of God, which is in Christ Jesus our Lord."* AMEN and AMEN!

Fifth: And take the helmet of salvation. The word "take" in this context, is totally different from the word "taking" in Verse 16. In Verse 16 the Greek word is "analambano" which means: "Reaching out and taking hold of…". The Greek word in Verse 17 is "dechomi" which means: "To reach out and accept as a free gift." In this case it means you and I reaching out and accepting the "free gift of salvation" from our Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 6:23 tells us to "take" the free gift from Jesus, *"For the wages of sin is death; but **the gift of God is eternal life through Jesus Christ our Lord.**"*

As you know, our "head" is the most vulnerable part of our body. In this "spiritual warfare" it is referring to our mind. Wearing a helmet dates back to ancient Egypt, a world power, and first started using "helmets" in war. When Satan attacks us, he ALWAYS begins by attacking our mind! I Peter 1:13 instructs us, *"Wherefore **gird up the loins of your mind,** be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;"* The meaning here is to ALWAYS have our minds prepared. Be prepared to endure attacks on your mind as you go through times when Satan is throwing fiery darts at you mentally. Knowing the fact that you are assured of salvation, and your sins are all forgiven, is a mighty fortress against mental attacks. In John 9:26 the blind man said, *"One thing I know, that whereas I was blind, now I see."* I would encourage every Christian reading this book to memorize the verses I quoted above, Psalms 34:7,

Psalms 91:11, Luke 4:18, Hebrews 1:13-14 and Exodus 23:20, for when you are under attack. Quote those verses to Satan, and claim the victory based on the promises in those verses which God has promised us

Also, remind yourself continually that the victory has already been won. Your past, present and future sins are forgiven and gone. Ephesians 2:8 tells us that the death of Christ saved us from the penalty of sin. Philippians 1:6 tells us that the resurrection of Christ will keep us saved, day by day, until the end of our life.

Psalms 103:12 assures us OUR SINS ARE GONE. If Satan tries to torment you by bringing up past or present sins, you can say to him, "WHAT SINS? My sins are GONE." God has cast our sins away, as FAR AS THE EAST IS FROM THE WEST. As you know, the east and the west never meet! Praise the Lord! This truth makes us, "*more than conquerors through Him that loves us.*" (Romans 8:37).

Sixth: We have the Sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God. Ephesians 6:17 says, **"***And take the helmet of salvation, and* ***the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God****:"*

I am sure most of you know that the Word of God is referred to as the "Sword of the Spirit" several times. One of the main places is found in Hebrews 4:12, *"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."* It is also referred to in the Old Testament in Isaiah 49:2 speaking of Jesus, "*And he hath made my mouth like a sharp sword; in the shadow of his hand hath he hid me, and made me a polished shaft; in his quiver hath he hid me;"*

Also, I am sure most of you know that a sword was the ONLY weapon that any country had in those days. They had never heard of a rifle or cannon. The word "sword" is mentioned 354 times in the Bible, both Old and New Testament. A "two edged" sword was a very special weapon in those days. This is a picture of how powerful the Word of God is. As you read in Hebrews 4:12 it tells us that the Word of God is **"*quick and powerful, and SHARPER THAN ANY twoedged sword****."* That means the Word of God was the most powerful weapon on the face of the earth. You may disagree with this, but the Word of God is STILL THE MOST POWERFUL WEAPON in the world today. The Word of God is so powerful that Matthew 16:18 says, *"And I say also unto thee, That thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build my church; and the gates of hell shall not prevail against it."* The church was built on the "rock" which is Christ, the written and living Word! It is EXTREMELY POWERFUL if the gates of Hell will not prevail over it!!! Think of this, you and I hold the most powerful weapon in the world in our hands daily!

Even our Lord Jesus Christ who is God in the flesh, while here on earth did not try to fight Satan in his own flesh but fought and won the battle with the Word of God. I am repeating this, but it is worth repeating. Christ used this same offensive weapon when Satan attacked him. That is recorded in Matthew 4:4-11.

"Then was Jesus led up of the Spirit into the wilderness to be tempted of the devil. 2 And when he had fasted forty days and forty nights, he was afterward an hungred. 3 And when the

*tempter came to him, he said, If thou be the Son of God, command that these stones be made bread. 4 But he answered and said, **It is written**, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God. 5 Then the devil taketh him up into the holy city, and setteth him on a pinnacle of the temple, 6 And saith unto him, If thou be the Son of God, cast thyself down: for **it is written**, He shall give his angels charge concerning thee: and in their hands they shall bear thee up, lest at any time thou dash thy foot against a stone. 7 Jesus said unto him, It is written again, Thou shalt not tempt the Lord thy God. 8 Again, the devil taketh him up into an exceeding high mountain, and sheweth him all the kingdoms of the world, and the glory of them; 9 And saith unto him, All these things will I give thee, if thou wilt fall down and worship me. 10 Then saith Jesus unto him, Get thee hence, Satan: for **it is written,** Thou shalt worship the Lord thy God, and him only shalt thou serve. 11 Then the devil leaveth him, and, behold, angels came and ministered unto him."*

If the written Word worked for our Lord Jesus, it will work for you and me. Anytime Satan tries to tempt you, come up with a scripture and quote it back to him - and "the devil will leave you!"

Seventh: Our final weapon is Prayer. Ephesians 6:18 says, "*Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit.*"

You must remember that the battle is not our battle. The devil hates you because he hated Jesus Christ first. 1 Samuel 17:47 tells us the battle is the Lords, *"And all this assembly shall know that the Lord saveth not with sword and spear: **for the battle is the Lord's, and he will give you into our hands.**"* If we depart from Jesus, we are departing from the ONLY one who can deliver us and empower us to use these weapons when Satan attacks us. Let me give you a couple of illustrations from the Old Testament.

In Genesis 14:1-14 the Bible tells us that Abraham took 318 men and conquered a coalition of seven or eight kings. The battle is the Lords! Please go back and read this if you have any questions.

In Judges Chapters 6-8 we find that God called Gideon to war against the Midianites on behalf of Israel. Judges 7:6 tells us that God narrowed Gideon's army down to 300 men. The Midianite army numbered 135,000 men. (See Judges 8:10) God gave them a total victory. The battle is the Lord's!

Acts 12:5 tells us that we, Christians and the church, should pray and it tells us how to pray.,"*… but prayer was made without ceasing of the church unto God for him."* There is a "five-point" outline concerning a pattern to follow for us to pray:

1. Prayer was made
2. Without ceasing
3. By the Church
4. To God
5. For Peter (Be specific when you pray.)

Every Christian should walk with Christ in prayer at all times. God has never asked us to do the impossible. He asked us to let Him do the impossible through Him. Ephesians 6:18 says, "…*with ALL prayer - supplication.*" We should have private prayer with Him. We should have silent prayer with Him. We should have audible prayer with Him. We should have prayer at mealtime. We should have prayer to Him at church. We should have a scheduled prayer with Him each day. We should stop and have prayer with Him in an emergency. I Thessalonians 5:17 says we should, *"Pray without ceasing.*" We should walk with Jesus in prayer every day, all day. Romans 12:12 says, *"Rejoicing in hope; patient in tribulation; continuing instant in prayer;"*

Eight: Supplication for all saints. Paul closes this section on " the whole armour of God" by challenging us to pray for all saints. That admonition is in Ephesians 6:18 where Paul said, *"Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto* ***with all perseverance and supplication for all saints; And for me,*** *that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel, 20 For which I am an ambassador in bonds: that therein I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak."*

The word "perseverance" means to pray continually and without stopping. I feel sure you understand that the word "supplication" means naming special requests, and in this case Paul said, *"for ALL saints*." I personally feel that we should begin our prayer time, praying for our pastor, his family, and his ministry. Pastors have a heavy load every day of every week. Also, we should include "all saints in our church." We should name the sick or those who have special needs but end up praying for every member of our church. Also, we should pray for any missionary sent out from the church and we should pray for every missionary supported by the church. Each of those are A PART OF THE CHURCH MINISTRY.

If you and I could think of any man in the ministry as a church planting missionary who did not need our prayers, it would most likely be the apostle Paul. Paul, if not the greatest church planting missionary and possibly THE BEST missionary church planter, said in Ephesians 6:19, ***"…AND FOR ME,*** *that utterance may be given unto me, that I may open my mouth boldly, to make known the mystery of the gospel,"* If Paul needed prayers from the church at Ephesus, then EVERY missionary around the world needs our prayers.

Most Baptist churches have sent and are supporting missionaries in countries around the world. They are serving and preaching the Gospel in such countries as Mexico, Europe, Africa, South and Central America, China and many, many other countries. I served as a missionary in Mexico for a number of years. I ASSURE you that missionaries in any and every country in the world **need our prayers.** They are there on behalf of the church as God gave the Great Commission to the local church, not to individual missionaries. The devil is always looking for a missionary to attack on a foreign field. Our ministry should not end when we send or support them. We should be burdened to continue to pray for them individually and as a church.

Let me ask another question. How often do you go to a church on a Wednesday Prayer Meeting night and hear the missionaries they support prayed for, especially by name? We should be praying EVERY day for our missionaries. Let me make a brief suggestion you might use in praying for missionaries. (1) Pray that God will hedge up around them and keep them safe. (2) Pray that God will supply their every need according to His riches in heaven. (3) Pray that many

doors will be opened for them to share the Gospel message. (4) Pray for them to have wisdom to train disciples and prepare them for the ministry of the church, including sending some of them to other parts of the country they are in to plant other churches. These are the four most important areas for which they need OUR prayers.

As Paul brings his letter to the church at Ephesus to a close, he does not forget one of his co-laborers, a man named Tychicus. Ephesians 6:21 says, *"But that ye also may know my affairs, and how I do, Tychicus, a beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, shall make known to you all things:"* At the time Paul was writing this letter he was in prison in Rome. If Tychicus had not been there with Paul and had not been willing to deliver this letter to the church in Ephesus, think about the great loss to the church in Ephesus, as well as to us today! We may never have known these great truths about the Wealth in Christ, or the Walk we have with Christ, and the armour to fight and win the Warfare we have with Satan. AMEN! Paul was giving honor to whom honor is due! Please note, Paul made no complaint to the church in Ephesus. His heart's desire was to be a blessing and some help to the church, and other churches down through the years until our church today!

Before closing this section on our Warfare for Christ, I am going to include the outline of a message titled KNOW YOUR ENEMY. At some later time, some of you might be able to use it to help your people.

CHAPTER #15
KNOW YOUR ENEMY
Job 1:1-22

The book of Job was written with a "two-fold purpose." First, it was written to answer the question found in Job 1:9 "How can a man be right with God?" Second, it was written to answer the question, "Why do the righteous suffer?" To begin our study:

I. Let's Look at the Man Named Job. Let's look at "The ….

A. Piety of Job (Vs 1) Devoted - Loyal - Upright - Ethical - Transparent - Eschewed Evil (Verses 1 and 8)

1. Not many like Job - - - No Fear of God - (Romans 3:18) – **Run smooth.**

2. When there is a man like Job – you and I need to determine to "Do right if the stars fall."
    a. Why? Because Satan attacks and opposes every believer who is standing right.

B. Prosperity of Job: He had everything (Verse 3) - more than anyone here today.

1. Major problem today - People seek riches – the church is rich and increased.

2. Job knew how to handle prosperity.
    a. Can't say, "*Silver and gold have I none…*" (Acts 3:1-6).

II. Let's Look at Satan, who came in and was "*Among them*…." (Verse 6).

A. A Pretender

1. Looks respectful.
2. **Called:** (Angel of Light) - Satan, Devil, Lion, Lucifer, Deceiver, Destroyer, Serpent, Tempter, Behiel, Beelzebub, Wicked one, Prince of World, Father of lies.
3. Anyone with that many aliases -**Watch out and Expect trouble.**

B. A Personal Devil – God had a conversation with him – a person – Not influence!

1. Consider *"my servant Job"* (Verse 8).
    a. Consider - Stalking him.
2. Satan is a real person.
3. The Problem? We do not live like we have an enemy - We blame things on whatever.

C. Hangs Out.

1. AMONG them – (Job 1:6).
2. Against Christ – (Isaiah 14:12-14).

D. Go back to the text. (Conversation) – (Verse 7)

1. Where have you been?"
2. Where have you been stopping?
3. Who is he after? --- YOU! – **BE WATCHFUL!**

III. Satan's Plan of attack.

NOTE: Marine Corp has a plan to defeat the enemy.
If plan "A" doesn't work - He has a plan B and C and D.... NEVER stops!

A. He will ACCUSE you!

1. You live and do right, Satan will accuse you... (Job 1:9).
    a. Eliphaz accused Job of having sin in his life (Job 4:1-8).
    b. Bildad accused Job of being a hypocrite (Job 8:1-6).
    c. Zophar accused Job of being a liar (Job 11:1-5).
    d. His wife accused him of it not being worth it to live right (Job 2:9).

2. "Sanballat accused Nehemiah of not being real" (Nehemiah 6:5-7).

3. Who is BEHIND accusations?
    a. Angel of light, who was PRETENDING" to want to help them.
    b. Revelation 12:10 "*...day and night*."

4. Why did Satan accuse him?
    Please the Lord – doesn't matter who you displease.
    Don't please the Lord – doesn't matter who you do please.
    If accusing you does not work:

B. He will ATTACK you.

1. Satan will attack your substance (Job 1:10-19). - Nobody here lost that much!
   a. Tomorrow - your savings could be gone - your house could be gone,
   b. Question? – Where are your affections? (Colossians 3:1)
   c. **Job's Answer – (Job 1:20-22).**
      YOU AND ME –

2. I'll give you everything.
   Answer (Romans 8:32) – 1. "I already have everything".
   2. I'll take everything you have away from you.
   Answer (Phil 3:8) I don't have anything! – given to God.

3. Satan will attack your children (Verses 18-19).
   a. Major problem - (Children can keep you from serving God.)
      Blame God?
      (**Verse 22 – 2:10)**

4. Satan will attack your body (Job 2:5-10).
   a. Afflict you physically - Get tired – Not much good.
      1. Need to take care of your body. (Read I Kings 19:1-7.)
         a. Rest (Verse 5).
         b. Physical food (Verse 6).
         c. Spiritual food (Verse 7). -Get a Touch from God!

5. Satan will attack your mind (I Peter 1:13).
   a. Tell you that you are a **failure – Hypocrite – Not Qualified -Sinful**
      Don't listen - God did not make any failures.

Thomas Edison Example: He worked in the back room of his house, worked at a table with a window behind him. Backed up to an alley. He made hundreds of light bulbs that did not work. He would toss them out the window. The stack reached the window ledge. One day he made one, plugged it in and it did not work. He threw it out the window on the pile. His wife said, "Thomas, why don't you admit you are a failure and just quit?" He responded, "I'm not a failure. I found one more way it won't work!"

C. He will ALARM you by "Roaring!" – Lions intimidate their prey!
He ALWAYS makes us think the WORSE!

1. God told Paul, "*Fear not"* in the midst of the storm (Acts 27:23-24)!
2. Found 48 times in OT and 15 times in the NT.
3. If we are fearful - where does that fear come from (II Timothy 1:7)?
   (Fear is a "no-no!")
4. *"What time I am afraid, in will trust I the Lord."* (Psalms 56:3).
5. Why should we not fear – There is nothing to fear (Romans 8:35-39)!
6. *"Trust in the Lord with all thine heart – Lean not to thy own understanding. In all thy ways acknowledge him and he will direct thy path!"*

Question! <u>IS IT WORTH IT TO SERVE JESUS? NO! Not unless God is who He says He is!!!!!</u>

IV. How Should We Respond?

A. Job responded: (Verses 1:20-22 and 2:10).
B. Paul responded: (Acts 16).
C. Why? Understand (Philippians 1:12-18).
D. Claim the promise of God, who cannot lie (Romans 8:28)!

V. <u>Ask Job</u>, "Was it worth it to trust in the Lord with all your heart?"

A. (Job 42:12-16)

Started with:	7000 sheep	14,000
	3000 camels	6000
	500 Yoke Ox	1000
	500 She asses	1000
	7 sons	
	3 daughters	

Job saw four generations of children!