

OVERVIEW OF BOOK OF EPHESIANS -- WALK WORTHY OF YOUR HIGH CALLING IN CHRIST JESUS

INTRODUCTION:

Wil Pounds: — “**Ephesians: Queen of the Epistles — The Mystical Body of Christ**”

Ephesians tarries largely among the heavenlies. It is characterized by dignity and serenity which is in harmony with the elevation of its thoughts. There is scarcely even an echo of the great controversies which ring so loudly in the Epistles to the Romans and Galatians.

It is ‘the divinest composition of man,’ wrote **Coleridge**. It has been called ‘the crown of St. Paul’s writings,’ ‘the Queen of the Epistles,’ and the ‘greatest and most relevant of his works.’ **W. O. Carver** said, ‘Ephesians is the greatest piece of writing in all of history.’ It may well be the ‘most influential document ever written.’

Expositors observes: ‘It is the grandest of all the Pauline letters. There is a peculiar and sustained loftiness in its teaching which has deeply impressed the greatest minds and has earned for it the title of the **Epistle of the Ascension**.’”

Authorship: Not disputed – Paul references himself in **1:1**

Intended Audience: Some debate here since the phrase “*to the Ephesians*” in **1:2** is not included in some of the older manuscripts. Many argue for more of a circular letter theory on that basis – [same churches addressed in **Rev. 2-3** – proponents of this view point to a number of supporting arguments:

- no particular problems addressed as might be expected in a specific church context;
- no terms of endearment expressed – remarkable because Paul spent 3 years there; Acts 20:31; knew them very well -- seems like a more general epistle
- no personal greetings – but the only letters with personal greetings are Romans and Colossians – two churches that Paul had not visited before writing to them – so not a strong argument]

Debate not really of much consequence:

- Either the letter was addressed specifically to the church at Ephesus and intended for relevance on a wider scope
- Or the phrase was added later because it ended up being primarily associated with that church which was the most prominent in Asia

Date and Setting:

It seems to have been written in Rome as one of the four prison epistles (the others were Colossians and Philemon written around the same time – 60-61 AD – and then Philippians written last right before his release from his first house arrest in Rome – about 62 AD). Paul sees himself as a Prisoner of the Lord for the cause of the gospel rather than as a prisoner of Rome.

Occasion for Writing:

- Epaphras has just arrived from Asia with some good news – **Col. 4:12** – things going well in Asia; but there are some serious dangers on the horizon = group of false teachers

= Gnostics (distinguished from Judaizers dealt with in Galatians) – Paul taking a proactive approach – Incipient form – Paul anticipating the dangers these false teachers would bring as this error became more pronounced later on

The core claim of Gnosticism was:

Salvation comes through secret spiritual knowledge available only to the enlightened.

Radical Dualism: Matter Is Evil, Spirit Is Good

Less direct of an emphasis in Ephesians, but Paul's teaching on the revealed "mystery" of the church and Christ's supremacy may have been intended to counter elitist hidden-knowledge systems.

BIG IDEA

SINCE GOD DESIGNED THE CHURCH OF JESUS CHRIST FOR HIS GLORY AND BLESSED IT WITH THE RICHES OF HIS GLORY, LET US WALK WORTHY OF OUR HIGH CALLING

Ephesians 3:21 *"to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus"*

Ephesians 4:1 *"walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called"*

OVERVIEW

God has revealed His glory in the church of Jesus Christ which unites both believing Jews and Gentiles into one body by His grace. The understanding of the riches of the blessings which all saints enjoy should motivate us to live a transformed life that conforms to our high calling. By the power of the Holy Spirit we can now walk in unity, in love, in wisdom, in holiness and in the light. But we need the full armor of God to protect us from the attacks of Satan.

STRUCTURE

Very easy to follow and very easy to remember.

Chaps. 1-3

Doctrine (always comes first as basis for conduct)

○ **2:10** Our Position = created for good works

○ **1:13** Sealed with God's ownership

(study emphasis on the Holy Spirit in book of Ephesians – mentioned 12 times)

High Calling of the Church of Jesus Christ

Wealth of Spiritual Riches in Christ

Privileges of the Christian

Chaps. 4-6

Practical Application

Our Practice – performing good works

4:30 Practical implications

Conduct in light of that High Calling

Walk Worthy of that High Calling

Responsibilities of the Christian

Emphasizes the doctrine of the **Universal Church**

- Remember the distinction between the local church and the Universal Church – you are either in or out; only 2 sets of people from God's perspective; no emphasis on denominations – even if these have come to have some practical value in today's world; helps to keep us focused on the Priority of the Gospel Message and the Cross of Christ
- Look at images used to describe the Universal Church

- The **body** of Christ – **1:22-23** – Head vs. Body – completing Christ and doing His will
- A **building** – **2:19-22** – growing; a temple in which Christ resides
- A **bride** – **Chap. 5** – loves the church and died for her

Some implications of this emphasis on the Universal Church:

- Our vision should not be limited to how God can grow just our local church
- We support so many missionaries and organizations that I feel we have diluted our sense of connectivity with specific missionaries where we sense our true partnership in ministry
- We should want to see leaders developed within our local church that could be part of a church planting team either here in the States or on the foreign mission field

Summary: Because believers belong to Christ's universal body, we should live with a kingdom-sized vision, pursue unity, serve sacrificially, and let our local churches visibly display the reality of God's overall redeemed people.

Significance of the Mystery Aspect of this Church

- **Definition:** Mystery not in the sense of something that was difficult to perceive; but something that was impossible to perceive apart from progressive revelation – hidden in the OT but now revealed as the Church only started on the Day of Pentecost
In Paul's usage, it means: A divine truth previously hidden in God's plan but now revealed through Christ and His apostles.
- **Substance** of the mystery: not just that God's redemptive plan included the Gentiles – that had been clearly prophesied; but that Jews and Gentiles would become **one equal body in Christ**, without ethnic distinction, equal spiritual standing, and direct access to God.
- **Purpose:** Displays God's wisdom, grace, and glory to the universe.
3:10 *"the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and authorities in the heavenly places."*

What is God's Sovereign Purpose for the Universal Church?

First, must understand what is meant by God's sovereign purpose and will -- the decree of God – what God has decided to do; His plan of action;

6 Key Features: (**Bill McRae**)

- That purpose is eternal – **3:11** – completed before time ever began
- Founded on God's wisdom – not arbitrary; not something He just happened on;
1:11 – works all things after the **counsel** (implies deliberation) of His own **will** – deliberated on a number of different options that were available to Him
His Will – implies His decision; His volition
- Designed *For His glory* – **1:12** –
- Nothing will thwart it – **Is. 46:10**
- It will not change – **Is. 46:10**
- It is all-inclusive – **1:11**

What is God's Sovereign Purpose for the Universal Church?

- Magnifies the Grace of God – addresses a major issue of our culture today = spirit of **entitlement** – aren't we entitled to favor with God – He created us – certainly He is responsible for us and for our destiny –
 - **1:2** and **6:24** – Opens and closes with reference to Grace
- Unites Jews and Gentiles on an equal basis in the united body of Christ
 - there can be no sense of elitism;
 - no attitude of being only a second class citizen of the kingdom of God
- Reveals to all the magnificence of the glory of God
 - 1:12** *“that we would be to the praise of His glory”*
 - (3:20-21) DOXOLOGY** — *“to Him be the glory in the Church”*

The book of Ephesians is all about the **glory of God**

Piper organizes the book:

- I. (1-3) The Glory of God in the Church**
 - A. (1) in Redemption
 - B. (2) in Reconciliation
 - C. (3) in the Revelation of the mystery of the church
- II. (4-6) The Glory and Pleasure of God through the Church**
 - A. (4) in the Unity and Growth of the Church
 - B. (5) in the imitation of Christ by the saints
 - C. (6) in the victory of Christ

(1:1-2) AUTHOR / RECIPIENTS / GREETING

I. (CHAPS 1-3) THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH — OUR WEALTH IN CHRIST – OUR POSITION

II. (CHAPS 4-6) THE DUTY OF THE CHURCH — OUR WALK IN CHRIST – OUR PRACTICE

(6:21-24) CLOSING REMARKS AND BENEDICTION

(1:1-2) AUTHOR / RECIPIENTS / GREETING – OUR MANDATE IN LIFE THE AUTHORITATIVE WORD FROM GOD DEFINES THE HIGH CALLING OF BELIEVERS WHO ENJOY HIS GRACE AND PEACE

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.

I. (CHAPS 1-3) THE DOCTRINE OF THE CHURCH — OUR WEALTH —

OUR SPIRITUAL POSITION IN CHRIST — FOCUS ON OUR SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

(1:3) “Blessed be the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ”

(3:21) “to Him be the glory in the Church”

A. (1:3-14) THE FOUNDATION OF THE CHURCH — CHOSEN / PREDESTINED / REDEEMED – THANKSGIVING FOR OUR SPIRITUAL BLESSINGS

(:3) Introduction: God Deserves Our Blessing Because He Totally Blessed Us

Long run-on sentence in the Greek – difficult to diagram this one; you need a large piece of paper – we will break it up to consider the individual blessings mentioned

1. (:4) First Spiritual Blessing = **Election** —

God Is Sovereign in Both the Process and Goal of Election – Which Is Holiness

just as He chose us in Him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before Him.

Look at the **timing** of this election = *before the foundation of the world* – so obviously election is not dependent on man’s works or even man’s will – while not negating the necessity of man to repent and believe in Jesus Christ

What a blessing to have been chosen by God! What Security!

Our response needs to be a commitment to **Holiness** = the expressed purpose here of our election

2. (:5-6) Second Spiritual Blessing = Predestined to **Adoption as Sons** —

To Magnify His Grace, God Determined Those He Chose Would Be Authentic Sons with Full Rights and Privileges

Our relationship to God is pictured in several ways in the NT:

- We are servants = subjects of the kingdom of God in service of the King of Kings; quite a privilege
- We are friends – **John 15:15** – quite the special status – true companionship; God shares intimate knowledge with us
- But here the relationship is elevated to a wholly different level – we have been *adopted as sons* – a very special form of adoption because we partake of Christ’s nature and share in His inheritance as we shall see

Van Parunak: Application. -- We need to recognize our status as sons and daughters of God, (**2 Cor 6:18**), and act in keeping with it. We are not just his little children, whose immature behavior may be excused by our age. We are **adult** sons and daughters, full heirs to the household and representatives of our divine Parent, and we should conduct ourselves in the sense of this status.

3. (:7) Third Spiritual Blessing = Liberated by **Redemption** —

Redemption Frees Us from the Bondage of Captivity to Joyfully Serve Christ

In Him we have redemption through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace,

R.C. Sproul: The means of redemption is **the blood of Christ**. Nothing could speak louder about how seriously God views the problem of the alienation that exists between us and him because of our rebellion through our sin. An atonement was made, a blood sacrifice was offered, and that becomes the basis of the forgiveness of sin. So redemption is accomplished through the atonement of Christ.

We don't want to take for granted or in any way minimize the significance of this blessing of forgiveness of sins. So desperate was our condition, this could only be accomplished by the *riches of His grace*. Everywhere in Ephesians the language abounds with the magnificence, the overflowing **abundance** of God's blessings towards us.

Like a spiritual Christmas – unwrapping one precious present at a time

4. (:8-10) Fourth Spiritual Blessing = Insight into the Mystery of God's Will —
God Has Blessed Us with Insight into the Mystery of His Will = that Christ Should Have the Preeminence

This mystery involves God's control of human history to end evil and ultimately unify the redeemed cosmos under the preeminence of Jesus Christ. These verses have application to the end times – to the fulfillment of God's redemptive program.

John MacArthur: At the end of this world's history, God will gather believers together in the millennial kingdom, called here "*an administration suitable to the fullness of the times*," meaning the completion of history (**Rev 20:1-6**). After that, God will gather everything to Himself in eternity future, and the new heaven and the new earth will be created (**Rev 21:1ff**). The new universe will be totally unified under Christ (cf. **1Co 15:27-28; Php 2:10-11**).

5. (:11-12) Fifth Spiritual Blessing = **Inheritance** —
Our Sovereign God Predestined Us to an Inheritance that Magnifies His Glory
This is an inheritance that comes to all believers on the basis of God's Grace –

also we have obtained an inheritance, having been predestined according to His purpose who works all things after the counsel of His will

Illustration: I was in a church in Baltimore (different context than what I shared last week) where the preacher got off track after reading a book by Joseph Dillow from Dallas Seminary – he started teaching that only the elite level of believers will receive the inheritance – only those believers who rise up to the status of true disciples ... so he taught a two-part stratified view of the community of believers.

I had to immediately write a position paper of refutation and go present it to the elders to shut down that heretical teaching. By God's grace this interaction ended up with a good outcome as the truth of God's Word shows clearly that Inheritance is a blessing possessed by all believers.

Thus God's purpose is realized that all is done *to the praise of His glory* (vs. 12) – we have no grounds for boasting in any of these spiritual blessings that come to us by His grace and sovereign purpose

6. (:13-14) Sixth Spiritual Blessing = **Sealed with the Holy Spirit** —
The Holy Spirit Secures the Saints' Future – Secures It for Us and for God

“you were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise”

- Seals us by protecting us from the future outpouring of God's wrath on the wicked
- Seals us as the divine downpayment guaranteeing our ultimate full redemption and glorification

Again all accomplished *to the praise of His glory*

Trinity at Work in Salvation:

- **1:3-6** work of God the Father in salvation
- **1:7-12** work of Christ in salvation
- **1:13-14** work of Holy Spirit in salvation

You can see the strong Trinitarian character to this passage – the Father is the main planner and initiator of redemption; Christ is the central figure of the execution of the Father's plan; the Spirit becomes the divine agent in this present church age that bestows the blessings on the people God has redeemed.

B. (1:15-23) THE HEAD OF THE CHURCH — WHICH IS HIS BODY

1. (:15-19a) Thanksgiving and Prayer for **Spiritual Enlightenment** —
We Need the Enlightening Work of the Holy Spirit to Fully Understand and Relate to God

Importance of **Prayer** in this epistle – another major prayer in **Chap. 3**

Vs. 17 *that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.*

His request is that God the Father would permit these believers to have deep knowledge and insight of Him.

2. (:19b-22a) God's Power Working for Us —
The Guarantee for Success Is God's Power Working for Us – the Same Power that Resurrected and Exalted Christ to His Position as Head Over All (Both in the Universe and in the Church Which Is His Body)

3. (:22b-23) The Gift of Christ to the Church as Head Over His Body –
The Living and Reigning Christ Rules Over All as Head of His Church

C. (2:1-10) THE SALVATION OF THE CHURCH — BY GRACE THROUGH FAITH – GOD'S POWER HAS CHANGED OUR POSITION AND OUR PRACTICE:

- **GOD'S POWER HAS CHANGED OUR OLD POSITION (DEATH)**

- TO OUR NEW POSITION (LIFE);**
- **GOD'S POWER HAS CHANGED OUR OLD PRACTICE (SIN)**
 - TO OUR NEW PRACTICE (HOLINESS: GOOD WORKS)**

In the previous prayer at the end of **Chap. 1** Paul had reflected on *the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe* – Now he explains very specifically in the context of God's redemptive work, how God has exerted that power for our benefit. He has rescued us from death and made us alive.

1. (:1-3) God's Power Dealt with Our **Old Position** = Death
 Death means **separation**. In this case, spiritual death is total, absolute, complete and full separation from God. We were absolutely powerless, helpless, unable, incapable to think, feel, or will anything to do with God or for God because we were dead in trespasses and sins.

Paul strives to clarify the fact that being fully dead, we were unable to come to God unless He provided everything -- including faith. We were capable in our old position to provide nothing toward God. We could not will to accept Christ because our natural will was inoperative. We were lost, undone, depraved, and unable to come to God.

John Piper: The reason we need a Savior is not just that we are in the dog house with God and need to be forgiven for offending his glory. We need a Savior because we are in the morgue. In the dog house you might whimper. You might say you are sorry. You might make some good resolutions. You might decide to cast yourself on the mercy of God. But what can you do if you are in the morgue?

(:4) **Transition** – Mercy Instead of Wrath – “*BUT GOD*”
*“But God, being rich in mercy,
 because of His great love with which He loved us,”*
 Remember: everything is by **God's initiation** – We love Him because He first loved us

2. (:5-7) God's Power Provides a **New Position** = Life
made us alive together with Christ

3. God's Power Has Changed Our **Old Practice** = Sinful Behavior
 The Old Practice Characterized by the Ungodly Principles of:

- A. Bondage of Sin and Death:
 - 1. Trespasses: active rebellion, sins of commission.
 - 2. Sins: Missing the mark; passive sins, sins of omission.
- B. Friendship with the World:
 - Materialism, sensuality, independence, greed, lust, etc.
- C. Deceitfulness of the Devil:
 - hate, fear, lying, evil acts
- D. Lusts of the Flesh:
 - Abuse of eating, drinking, sex, etc.
- E. Pride of the Mind:

Selfish Ambition, arrogance, independence, etc.

4. (:8-10) God's Power and Grace Have Given Us New Life Leading to **New Practice** = Good Works

For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God; 9 not as a result of works, that no one should boast. 10 For we are His workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand, that we should walk in them.

Homer Kent: Paul's thought is that the Christian is completely without grounds for boasting even in the good works which follow regeneration, for they too are God's handiwork. It was God who long ago planned the good works He wanted us to perform. Our responsibility is to follow His blueprint for our lives, responding to the impulses of His Spirit as He prompts us to perform His will.

D. (2:11-22) THE COMPOSITION OF THE CHURCH — ITS UNIVERSAL SCOPE – GENTILES ARE NOW UNITED WITH JEWS IN THE HOUSEHOLD OF GOD ON THE BASIS OF THE RECONCILING WORK OF CHRIST

1. (:11-13) The Inclusion of the Gentiles Is a Big Deal
 - a. Remember the **Pain of Exclusion**
 - 1) Excluded by Derisive Designation
 - Gentiles in the flesh
 - Who are called Uncircumcision
 - 2) Excluded by lack of theological Privilege – 5 theological disadvantages of the Gentiles
 - Separate from Christ
 - Excluded from the commonwealth of Israel
 - Strangers to the covenants of promise
 - Having no hope
 - Without God in the world
 - b. Remember the **Price of Inclusion = the blood of Christ**
Our heart's desire should be to draw nearer and nearer to Christ
2. (:14-18) The Reconciling Work of Christ Made It Happen
 - Horizontal – between Jew and Gentile
 - Vertical – between man and GodEssence of Reconciliation is Peace
3. (:19-22) The Church (Believing Gentiles United with Believing Jews) Continues to be Built Together and Indwelt by the Holy Spirit

- a. (:19) New Position of Privilege and Inclusion for the Gentiles
 - 1) Old Position
 - "you are no longer"
 - "strangers"
 - "aliens"

- 2) New Position
 - "fellow citizens with the saints"*
 - "of God's household"*

b. (:20) New Structure for the Church -- different than the OT patriarchs

- 1) *Cornerstone = Christ Jesus*
- 2) *Foundation = apostles and prophets*

c. (:21-22) Mutual Growth -- Jew and Gentile need one another

- 1) *"in whom the whole building, being fitted together is growing"*
- 2) *"in whom you also are being built together"*

d. (:21-22) Ultimate Goal

the church = God's holy dwelling place, indwelt by the Holy Spirit

- 1) *"into a holy temple in the Lord"*
- 2) *"into a dwelling of God in the Spirit"*

E. (3:1-13) THE REVELATION OF THE CHURCH – GRANTING THE GENTILES EQUAL ACCESS AND PRIVILEGES IN THE BODY OF CHRIST MANIFESTS THE MANIFOLD WISDOM AND ETERNAL PURPOSE OF GOD

Clinton Arnold: God has revealed a new and definitive stage in his eternal plan that involves creating a people for himself consisting of Jews and Gentiles united to Christ and joined to one another. All who have faith in Jesus Christ become a part of this new community and have direct and immediate access to the Father. This new plan, which Paul calls a *"mystery,"* reflects the infinite wisdom of God and is a message of defeat to the evil supernatural realm. Paul explains that God has given him the ministry of proclaiming and explaining this marvelous plan.

1. (:1-5) The Revelation of the Church (a Precious Treasure) Has Been Entrusted to Faithful Stewards (the Example of Paul – Stewardship of the Grace of God)

2. (:6) The Content of the Revelation Emphasizes the Equal Access and Privileges Afforded to the Gentiles in the Body of Christ

"Gentiles are":

- *"fellow-heirs"* – Future Inheritance

Van Parunak: It is a remarkable claim, when we consider how important inheritance rights were to Israel. Even within Israel, one family could not take over the inheritance of another in perpetuity (e.g., the restoration of land to the original family in the year of Jubilee, **Lev 25**). But now we Gentiles are made fellow-heirs with Israel.

- *"fellow-members of the body"* – Present Fellowship / Total Inclusion
no second class citizens

- “*fellow-partakers of the promises*” – All Guaranteed by a Faithful God

3. (:7-11) The Purpose of the Revelation Is to Make Known the Riches of Christ –
Unfolding the Wisdom and Purpose of God’s Plan for the Church
(with Special Emphasis on the Role of the Gentiles)

(:12-13) Conclusion: Two Applications

- Be Bold towards God – in light of our confident access
- Be Encouraged regarding the circumstances of Paul – his imprisonment in his role as apostle to the Gentiles

F. (3:14-19) THE ENABLEMENT OF THE CHURCH — THE POWER OF THE HOLY SPIRIT CAN CONNECT US TO THE LOVE OF CHRIST SO THAT WE CAN EXPERIENCE ALL THAT GOD HAS FOR US

(:14-15) Prelude – The Desire for Spiritual Growth Should Motivate Us to Pray to
Our Spiritual Father

1. (:16) The Request: Holy Spirit Power

Remember the earlier prayer in **Chap. 1** for spiritual enlightenment regarding God’s great power – Now he appeals to God to actually apply that power via the Holy Spirit in the inner life of believers to strengthen them – recognizing that one of the blessings of the new covenant is the empowering by the Spirit to a much greater measure

2. (:17-19a) The Reason: Connection to the Love of Christ

Paul has already prayed that their hearts might become enlightened

(1:18). Now he prays that Christ will dwell in their hearts in a fuller measure.

"so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith"

"may be able to comprehend with all the saints

what is the breadth and length and height and depth,

and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge"

Deepened comprehension of Christ’s love for us

3. (:19b) The Result: Experiencing All that God Has for You

(3:20-21) DOXOLOGY

1. (:20) Reason for Hope and Optimism –

Praising the God who exceeds all of our expectations

"Now to Him who is able to do exceeding abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us"

2. (:21) Ultimate Goal –

Praising the God who deserves eternal glory

"to Him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen."

II. (CHAPS 4-6) THE DUTY OF THE CHURCH — HOW WE SHOULD WALK IN CHRIST— YOUR LIFE SHOULD MATCH YOUR CALLING

A. (4:1-16) WALK IN UNITY, DIVERSITY AND MATURITY — IN HUMILITY AND LOVE, PROMOTE UNITY IN A CONTEXT OF DIVERSITY WITH THE GOAL OF MATURITY

(:1) **Major Transition** – Theme Verse of Chaps 4-6 – The Duty of the Church – How We Should Walk in Christ

“walk in a manner worthy of the calling with which you have been called”

Grant Osborne: Now Paul turns to the **ethical exhortation** of his letter. This section comprises **chapters 4–6** and includes a series of **challenges** for his readers to live the Christian life God’s way. This opening section is brilliantly conceived, stressing first that the unity of the church reflects the **unity** of the Godhead (**4:1–6**) and then that this unity must be lived out in **diversity**, with every member of the body taking their place and working together to enable the church to grow (**vv. 7–16**). As stated in **Ephesians 2:11–18**, the conflict among cultures in the church is insufficient to fracture it, for as each believer is united with Christ they are also united with each other. Christ’s reconciliation via the cross has broken down racial and ethnic divisions, and all the diverse peoples form a new humanity in Christ.

1. (:2-6) **Unity** – Promote and Preserve the Unity of the One Body of Christ
2. (:7-12) **Diversity** – Promote and Appreciate the Diversity of the Varying Spiritual Gifts for the Equipping of the Body

Vs. 7 *"But to each one of us grace was given according to the measure of Christ's gift"*

Vs. 12 *"for the equipping of the saints for the work of service"*
The vision is Not for the leaders to do the bulk of the ministry

3. (:13-16) **Maturity** – Keep Focused on the Goal of the Maturity of the Entire Body (Which Requires Mutual Love in Word and Deed Throughout the Entire Process)

- a. (:13) 3 Marks of Maturity -- *"to a mature man"*

- 1) Unity

"until we all attain to the unity of the faith"

- 2) Knowing Christ

"and of the knowledge of the Son of God"

- 3) Christ-likeness

"to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fulness of Christ"

- b. (:14) Resulting Doctrinal Stability

- c. (:15-16) Mutual Love Centered In Christ Makes for a Healthy, Growing Body
but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into Him, who is the head, even Christ, ¹⁶ from whom the whole body, being fitted and held together by that which every joint supplies, according to the proper working of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

**B. (4:17-24) WALK DIFFERENTLY —
THE CHRISTIAN WALK MUST BE RADICALLY DIFFERENT:**
– **THAN THE UNSAVED**
– **THAN OUR OLD SELF**

“walk no longer just as the Gentiles also walk”

“But you did not learn Christ in this way, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus” – good definition of Discipleship – learning Christ – learning to walk and live as He did – following Christ

**C. (4:25 – 5:2) WALK IN LOVE AS A NEW PERSON IN CHRIST —
– THE CHRISTIAN MUST REJECT HARMFUL BEHAVIOR
(WHICH DESTROYS COMMUNITY)
– AND IMITATE THE LOVE OF GOD
(WHICH BUILDS COMMUNITY)**

1. (4:25-27) REJECT LYING AND SINFUL ANGER
2. (4:28-32) REJECT STEALING AND HARMING OTHERS
3. (5:1-2) IMITATE GOD’S LOVE

**D. (5:3-14) WALK AS CHILDREN OF LIGHT – ABSTAINING FROM IMPURITY —
KEEP YOURSELF PURE AS YOU WALK IN THE LIGHT AND EXPOSE DEEDS OF
DARKNESS
(ESPECIALLY SEXUAL IMPURITY, GREED AND SHAMEFUL SPEECH)**

Once again the argument moves from Position to Practice – Walk Worthy of your High Calling
*for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord;
walk as children of light*

E. (5:15 – 6:9) WALK WISELY

1. (5:15-21) Boundaries for Walking Wisely Defined:
– In the Will of the Lord
– Under the Control of the Holy Spirit
2. (5:22 – 6:9) Behavior for Walking Wisely Defined –

Walking Wisely Involves Fulfilling Your Role in Relationships of Submission and Consideration

- a. (5:22-23) Wives to Husbands
- b. (6:1-4) Children to Parents
- c. (6:5-9) Servants to Masters (Application: Employees to Employers)

F. (6:10-20) WALK STRONG IN THE ARMOR OF GOD

- 1. (:10-17) Spiritual Warfare
 - a. (:10-13) Spiritual Warfare Requires God's Strength and God's Armor
 - b. (:14-17) Put on the Whole Armor of God and Stand Firm
- 2. (:18-20) Supporting Prayer = the Foundation and Essence of Spiritual Warfare

(6:21-24) CLOSING REMARKS AND BENEDICTION

A. (6:21-22) CLOSING REMARKS — MISSIONARY REPORTS FROM THE FIELD ENCOURAGE THOSE WHO ARE PARTNERS IN THE GOSPEL

B. (6:23-24) BENEDICTION — GOD'S BEST FOR THOSE WHO LOVE THE LORD

Frank Thielman: Paul concludes the letter with a double prayer-wish that succinctly reminds his readers of four important themes within the letter. He prays that all believers (not simply the letter's readers) might experience both peace and love, and he connects love with faith. He then offers a separate prayer-wish that those who love the Lord Jesus Christ "*incorruptibly*" might experience God's grace.