



The Epistle of Paul to the Ephesians

Author: Paul

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Greetings

1 Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus through the will of God,

To the holy ones who are at Ephesus^a and faithful in Christ Jesus: **2** Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.

Spiritual Blessings

3 Blessed be the God and Father^b of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us with every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ, **4** even as he chose us in him before the foundation of the world, that we should be holy and blameless before him.^c In love **5** he foreordained us to adoption as sons through Jesus Christ to himself, according to the good pleasure of his will **6** to the praise of the glory of his grace, which he freely bestowed on us^d in the Beloved. **7** in whom we have our redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace **8** which he made abundant toward us in all wisdom and insight, **9** making known to us the mystery^e of his will, according to his good pleasure^f that he purposed in him¹⁰ for the administration of the fullness of times, to bring together all things in Christ, the things

in⁸ the heavens and the things on the earth. **11** In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, having been foreordained according to his purpose who works all things after the counsel of his will, **12** so that we who were the first to hope in Christ^h might be to the praise of his glory. **13** In whom also, you having heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, in whom also having trusted, were sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise, **14** who is a down payment of our inheritance for the redemption of the possession, to the praise of his glory.

Prayer for Spiritual Insight

15 For this reason I too, having heard of the faith in the Lord Jesus and your loveⁱ for all the holy ones, **16** I cease not giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers; **17** that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the accurate knowledge^j of him. **18** having the eyes of your heart enlightened, that you may know what is the hope to which he has called you, what are the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the holy ones, **19** and what the surpassing greatness of his power is toward us believers. It is according to the working of the strength of his might **20** which he brought about in Christ, when he raised him from the dead and seated him at his right hand in the heavenly places, **21** far above all rule and authority and power and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in the one to come. **22** And he put all things in subjection

^a Three early MSS (P⁴⁶ X⁸ B⁹) do not contain at Ephesus

^b Or God and the Father

^c Or him, having in love foreordained us

^d Or wherewith he endued us

^e I.e., secret plan

^f Or kind intention

^g Lit upon

^h I.e. the Messiah

ⁱ Three early mss do not contain your love

^j Epignosis is a strengthened or intensified form of gnosis (epi, meaning “additional”), meaning, “true,” “real,” “full,” “complete” or “accurate,” depending upon the context. Paul and Peter alone use epignosis.



under his feet, and gave him as head over all things to the congregation,^{a 23} which is his body, the fullness of him who fills up all things in all.

Made Alive in Christ

2 And you being dead in the trespasses and your sins,² in which you formerly walked according to the age of this world, according to the ruler of the authority of the air, the spirit now working in the sons of disobedience.³ Among whom also we all formerly lived in the desires of our flesh, doing the desires of the flesh and of the thoughts, and were by nature children of wrath, even as the rest.⁴ But God, being rich in mercy, because of his great love with which he loved us,⁵ even when we were dead in our trespasses, made us alive together with Christ^b (by grace you have been saved),⁶ and raised us up with him, and seated us with him in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus,⁷ so that in the ages to come he might show the surpassing riches of his grace in kindness toward us in Christ Jesus.⁸ For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God;⁹ not from works, so that no man may boast.¹⁰ For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand so that we would walk in them.

Unity in Christ

¹¹Therefore remember that formerly you, the Gentiles in the flesh, who are called “Uncircumcision” by the so-called “Circumcision,” which is performed in the flesh by human hands,¹² remember that you were at that time separated from Christ, alienated from the commonwealth of Israel and strangers to the covenants of promise, having no hope and without God in the

world.¹³ But now in Christ Jesus you who once were far off have been brought near by the blood of Christ.¹⁴ For he himself is our peace, who made both one and broke down the dividing wall of the barrier, the enmity, in his flesh,¹⁵ by abolishing the law of commandments expressed in ordinances, that he might create in himself one new man in place of the two, so making peace,¹⁶ and might reconcile them both in one body to God through the cross, having killed the enmity in himself.¹⁷ And he came and preached peace to you who were far off and peace to those who were near;¹⁸ for through him we both have our access in one Spirit to the Father.¹⁹ So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the holy ones and of the household of God,²⁰ having been built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the corner stone,²¹ in whom the whole building, being fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord,²² in whom you also are being built together into a dwelling place of God in the Spirit.

Paul’s Ministry to the Gentiles

3 For this reason I, Paul, the prisoner of Christ Jesus for the sake of you Gentiles,² if indeed you have heard of the stewardship of God’s grace which was given to me for you;³ that by revelation there was made known to me the mystery,^c as I wrote before in brief.⁴ When you read this, you can understand my insight into the mystery^d of Christ,⁵ which in other generations was not made known to the sons of men, as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets in the Spirit;⁶ that the Gentiles are fellow heirs and fellow members of the body, and fellow partakers of the promise in Christ Jesus through the gospel,⁷ of which I was made a minister, according to the gift of

^a Gr *ekklesia* (“assembly”)

^b Two early mss read *in Christ*

^c I.e., *secret plan*

^d I.e., *secret plan*



God's grace which was given to me according to the working of his power. ⁸To me, the very least of all holy ones, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unfathomable riches of Christ, ⁹and to bring to light for all men what is the administration of the mystery^a which for ages has been hidden in God who created all things; ¹⁰so that the manifold wisdom of God might now be made known through the church to the rulers and the authorities in the heavenly places. ¹¹This was according to the eternal purpose which he carried out in Christ Jesus our Lord, ¹²in whom we have boldness and access in confidence through our faith in him. ¹³Therefore I ask you not to lose heart at my tribulations on your behalf, which are your glory.

Prayer for Spiritual Strength

¹⁴For this reason I bow my knees before the Father, ¹⁵from whom every family in heaven and on earth is named, ¹⁶that he would grant you, according to the riches of his glory, to be strengthened with power through his Spirit in the inner man, ¹⁷so that Christ may dwell in your hearts through faith; that you, being rooted and grounded in love, ¹⁸may have strength to comprehend with all the holy ones what is the breadth and length and height and depth, ¹⁹and to know the love of Christ which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fullness of God.

²⁰Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us, ²¹to him be the glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations forever and ever. Amen.

Unity in the Body of Christ

4 Therefore I, the prisoner of the Lord, implore you to walk in a manner

^a I.e., *secret plan*

worthy of the calling with which you have been called, ²with all humility and gentleness, with patience, enduring one another in love, ³being diligent to preserve the oneness of the Spirit in the bond of peace. ⁴There is one body and one Spirit, just as also you were called in one hope of your calling; ⁵one Lord, one faith, one baptism, ⁶one God and Father of all, who is over all and through all and in all.

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

Gifts In Men

⁸Therefore it says,
 "When he ascended on high he led captivity captive,
 and he gave gifts to men."

⁹(Now the expression "he ascended," what does it mean but that he also descended to the lower regions of the earth? ¹⁰He who descended is the one who also ascended far above all the heavens, that he might fill all things.) ¹¹And he gave some as apostles, and some as prophets, and some as evangelists, and some as shepherds and teachers, ¹²for the equipping of the holy ones or the work of ministry, to the building up of the body of Christ; ¹³until we all attain to the unity of the faith, and of the accurate knowledge^b of the Son of God, to a mature man, to the measure of the stature which belongs to the fullness of Christ. ¹⁴So that we may no longer be children, tossed to and fro by the waves and carried about by every wind of teaching, by the trickery of men, by craftiness with regard to the scheming of deceit; ¹⁵but speaking the truth in love, we are to grow up in all aspects into him who is the head, Christ, ¹⁶from whom the whole body, joined together and held together by

^b *Epignosis* is a strengthened or intensified form of *gnosis* (*epi*, meaning "additional"), meaning, "true," "real," "full," "complete" or "accurate," depending upon the context. Paul and Peter alone use *epignosis*.



every supporting ligament, according to the working by measure of each individual part, causes the growth of the body for the building up of itself in love.

The Old and the New Person

¹⁷ This, therefore, I say and bear witness to in the Lord, that you no longer walk as the Gentiles also walk, in the futility of their mind, ¹⁸ being darkened in their understanding, alienated from the life of God, because of the ignorance that is in them, because of the hardness of their heart; ¹⁹ who being past feeling gave themselves up to shameless conduct,^a for the practice of every uncleanness with greediness. ²⁰ But you did not learn Christ in this way, ²¹ if indeed you have heard him and have been taught in him, just as truth is in Jesus, ²² that you take off, according to your former way of life, the old man, who is being destroyed according to deceitful desires, ²³ and to be renewed in the spirit of your minds, ²⁴ and put on the new man,^b the one created according to the likeness of God in righteousness and loyalty of the truth.

²⁵ Therefore, having put away falsehood, let each one of you speak the truth with his neighbor, for we are members one of another. ²⁶ Be angry, and yet do not sin;^c do not let the sun go down on your anger, ²⁷ nor give place^d to the devil. ²⁸ Let the one who steals steal no more; but rather, let him labor, working with his own hands what is

good, so that he may have something to share with the one who has need. ²⁹ Let no corrupting talk come out of your mouths, but only such as is good for building up, as the need may be, that it may give grace to those who hear. ³⁰ And do not grieve the Holy Spirit of God, by^e whom you were sealed for the day of redemption. ³¹ Let all bitterness and wrath and anger and clamor and slander be put away from you, along with all malice. ³² Be kind to one another, tender-hearted, forgiving each other, just as God in Christ also has forgiven you.^f

Be Imitators of God

5 Therefore be imitators of God, as beloved children; ² and walk in love, just as Christ also loved you^g and gave himself up for us, an offering and a sacrifice as a sweet fragrance to God.

³ But sexual immorality, and all uncleanness, or greediness, must not even be named among you, as is proper among holy ones; ⁴ And there must be no filthiness nor foolish talk nor crude joking, which are not fitting, but rather giving of thanks. ⁵ For this you know with certainty, that no sexually immoral or impure person or covetous man, who is an idolater, has an inheritance in the kingdom of Christ and God.

Walk as Children of Light

⁶ Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience. ⁷ Therefore do not be partakers with them; ⁸ for you were formerly darkness, but now you are light in the Lord; walk as children of light

⁹ (for the fruit of the light is in all goodness and righteousness and truth), ¹⁰ proving what is well-pleasing to the

^a Or "loose conduct," "sensuality," "licentiousness" "promiscuity" Greek, *aselgeia*. This phrase refers to acts of conduct that are serious sins. It reveals a shameless condescending arrogance; i.e., disregard or even disdain for authority, laws, and standards.

^b An interpretive translation would have, "put on the new person," because it does mean male or female.

^c A reference to Ps 4:4

^d Or an opportunity to the devil

^e Lit in

^f Two early mss read us

^g One early ms reads us



Lord.¹¹ Do not participate in the unfruitful deeds of darkness, but instead even expose them; ¹²for it is shameful even to speak of the things which are done by them in secret. ¹³But all the things that are being reprov- ed are exposed by the light, for everything that becomes visible is light.

¹⁴For this reason it says,
 “Awake, O sleeper,
 and arise from the dead,
 and Christ will shine on you.”

Be Filled with Spirit

¹⁵Therefore be careful how you walk, not as unwise men but as wise, ¹⁶buying out^a the time, because the days are evil. ¹⁷Therefore do not be foolish, but understand what the will of the Lord is. ¹⁸And do not get drunk with wine, for that is^b dissipation,^c but be filled with the Spirit, ¹⁹speaking to one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing and making melody with your heart to the Lord; ²⁰giving thanks always for all things in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to the God, even the Father; ²¹being subject to one another in the fear of^d Christ.

Counsel to Husbands and Wives

²²Wives, be in subjection to your own husbands, as to the Lord. ²³For the husband is the head of the wife, as Christ also is the head of the congregation,^e he himself being the Savior of the body. ²⁴But as the

congregation^f is subject to Christ, so also the wives should be to their husbands in everything.

²⁵Husbands, love your wives, just as Christ also loved the congregation^g and gave himself up for her, ²⁶so that He might sanctify her, having cleansed her by the washing of water with the word, ²⁷that he might present the congregation^h to himself in splendor, having no spot or wrinkle or any such thing; but that she might be holy and blameless. ²⁸In the same way husbands should love their wives as their own bodies. He who loves his wife loves himself; ²⁹For no one ever hated his own flesh, but nourishes and cherishes it, just as Christ does the congregation,ⁱ ³⁰because we are members of his body. ³¹For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and shall be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh. ³²This mystery^j is great; but I am speaking with reference to Christ and the congregation.^k ³³However, let each one of you love his wife as himself, and let the wife see that she fear^l her husband.

Counsel to Children and Parents

6 Children, obey your parents in the Lord, for this is right. ²Honor your father and mother (which is the first commandment with a promise), ³that it may go well with you and that you may live long in the land.

⁴Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord.

^a (an idiom, literally ‘to redeem the time’) to do something with intensity and urgency (used absolutely)—‘to work urgently, to redeem the time.’—GELNTBSD

^b Lit *in which is*
^c behavior which shows lack of concern or thought for the consequences of an action—‘senseless deeds, reckless deeds, recklessness.’—GELNTBSD

^d Or *reverence*
^e Gr *ekklesia* (“assembly”)

^f Gr *ekklesia* (“assembly”)
^g Gr *ekklesia* (“assembly”)
^h Gr *ekklesia* (“assembly”)
ⁱ Gr *ekklesia* (“assembly”)
^j I.e., *secret plan*
^k Gr *ekklesia* (“assembly”)
^l to have such awe or respect for a person as to involve a measure of fear—‘to fear, to show great reverence for, to show great respect for.’



Counsel to Slaves and Masters

⁵ Slaves, be obedient to those who are your masters according to the flesh,^a with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as to Christ; ⁶ not by way of^b eyeservice, as men-pleasers, but as slaves of Christ, doing the will of God from the soul.^c ⁷ With good will rendering service, as to the Lord, and not to men, ⁸ knowing that whatever good thing each one does, this he will receive back from the Lord, whether slave or free.

⁹ Masters, do the same things to them, and give up threatening, knowing that he who is both their Master and yours is in heaven, and that there is no partiality with him.

The Whole Armor of God

¹⁰ Finally, be strong in the Lord and in the strength of his might. ¹¹ Put on the full armor of God, so that you will be able to stand firm against the schemes of the devil. ¹² For our wrestling^d is not against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the powers, against the world-rulers of this darkness, against the wicked spirit forces in the heavenly places.

¹³ Therefore, take up the whole armor of God, so that you will be able to resist in the evil day, and having done everything, to stand firm. ¹⁴ Stand firm, therefore, with your loins girded^e about with truth, and having put on the breastplate of righteousness,¹⁵ and with your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace;

^a I.e. human or earthly masters, with fear

^b Lit *according to*

^c the essence of life in terms of thinking, willing, and feeling—'inner self, mind, thoughts, feelings, heart, being.'

^d Or struggle

^e (an idiom, literally 'to gird up the loins') to cause oneself to be in a state of readiness—to get ready, to prepare oneself.

¹⁶ in all things, taking up the shield of faith with which you will be able to extinguish all the flaming arrows of the evil one. ¹⁷ And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God.

¹⁸ Through all prayer and petition praying at all times in the Spirit, and with this in view, keep awake with all perseverance and making supplication for all the holy ones. ¹⁹ Pray also for me, that the words may be given to me when I open my mouth, so that I may be able to speak boldly in making known the mystery^f of the gospel, ²⁰ for which I am an ambassador in chains;^g that in it I may speak boldly, as I ought to speak.

Final Greetings

²¹ But that you also may know about my the things with me, what I am doing, Tychicus, the beloved brother and faithful minister in the Lord, will make everything known to you. ²² whom I have sent to you for this very purpose, that you may know the things about us, and he may encourage your hearts.

²³ Peace be to the brothers, and love with faith, from God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. ²⁴ Grace be with all those loving our Lord Jesus Christ in incorruptness.

^f I.e., *secret plan*

^g Lit *a chain*