

Ephesians

Greeting

I Paul, an apostle of Christ Jesus by God's will:
To the faithful *saints in Christ Jesus at Ephesus.^a
² Grace to you and peace from God our Father and
the Lord Jesus Christ.

God's Rich Blessings

¹ Praise the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, who has blessed us in Christ with every spiritual blessing in the heavens. ⁴ For He chose us in Him, before the foundation of the world, to be holy and blameless in His sight.^b In love^c ⁵ He predestined us to be adopted through Jesus Christ for Himself, according to His favor and will, ⁶ to the praise of His glorious grace that He favored us with in the Beloved.

⁷ We have *redemption in Him through His blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of His grace ⁸ that He lavished on us with all wisdom and understanding. ⁹ He made known to us the *mystery of His will, according to His good pleasure that He planned in Him ¹⁰ for the administration^d of the days of fulfillment^e—to bring everything together in the *Messiah, both things in heaven and things on earth in Him.

¹¹ We have also received an inheritance^f in Him, predestined according to the purpose of the One who works out everything in agreement with the decision of His will, ¹² so that we who had already put our hope in the Messiah might bring praise to His glory.

¹³ When you heard the message of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and when you believed in Him, you were also sealed with the promised Holy Spirit. ¹⁴ He is the down

payment of our inheritance, for the redemption of the possession,^g to the praise of His glory.

Prayer for Spiritual Insight

¹⁵ This is why, since I heard about your faith in the Lord Jesus and your love for all the saints, ¹⁶ I never stop giving thanks for you as I remember you in my prayers. ¹⁷ (I pray) that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the glorious Father,^h would give you a spiritⁱ of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of Him. ¹⁸ (I pray) that the perception of your mind^j may be enlightened so you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the glorious riches of His inheritance among the saints, ¹⁹ and what is the immeasurable greatness of His power to us who believe, according to the working of His vast strength.

God's Power in Christ

²⁰ He demonstrated this (power) in the Messiah by raising Him from the dead and seating Him at His right hand in the heavens—²¹ far above every ruler and authority, power and dominion, and every title given,^k not only in this age but also in the one to come. ²² And He put everything under His feet^l and appointed Him as head over everything for the church, ²³ which is His body, the fullness of the One who fills all things in every way.

From Death to Life

2 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins ² in which you previously *walked according to the ways of this world, according to the ruler who exercises

^a 1:1 Other mss omit *at Ephesus*. ^b 1:4 Vv. 3-14 are 1 sentence in Gk. ^c 1:4 Or *in His sight in love*. ^d 1:10 Or *dispensation*, lit *house law* (Gk. *oikonomia*). ^e 1:10 Lit *the fulfillment of times*. ^f 1:11 Or *we also were chosen as an inheritance, or we were also made an inheritance*. ^g 1:14 The possession could be either man's or God's. ^h 1:17 Or *the Father of glory*. ⁱ 1:17 Or *you the Spirit*. ^j 1:18 Lit *the eyes of your heart*. ^k 1:21 Lit *every name named*. ^l 1:22 Ps 8:6

¹³ The phrase "in the heavens" occurs at vv. 3:20; 2:6; 3:10; 6:12. It appears to be the locale of believers in the first three instances but of malignant spiritual powers in the last two. Paul's metaphor refers to the realm where Christ reigns with the church that He has raised with Him (2:5-6). Yet, living in this age, the church wages war against its spiritual foes (6:12) in this same spiritual realm.

¹⁴ Debates over whether God has chosen specific individuals for salvation or whether they choose to believe in Christ may miss Paul's point here. He affirmed the corporate election of the church "in Him." Individuals are elect because they are in Christ.

1:11 Paul did not claim that humans have no self-determining free will. As Rm 9 indicates, God is able to use even sinful human choices for His purposes. But the point here is that whatever God does for those in Christ, He does according to a carefully orchestrated plan for their benefit.

1:19-20 In Asia Minor many lived in dread of malign spiritual beings and powers who dominated their lives. Paul prayed that His readers would have an experiential knowledge—the realization and confidence that as believers in Christ they possessed divine power. Christians need not cower in fear of any other spiritual powers.

1:22-23 Paul asserted that Christ fills the church, His very body, with His presence and power (3:19). No human institution has greater potential power to effect good than Christ's.