

Ephesians Chapter 1 Continued

Ephesians 1:11 "In whom also we have obtained an inheritance, being predestinated according to the purpose of him who worketh all things after the counsel of his own will:"

In the last lesson, we were looking into the mystery of why God would even want to save us.

We found that He did not talk it over with anyone.

This was His decision and was not up for discussion.

Galatians 3:29: "And if ye [be] Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

In whom (this is speaking about Christ), also we have obtained an inheritance may be read, "by whom we were also made an inheritance."

That is, believers are God's treasure.

Why would Paul regard this as a blessing?

As God's treasure, Christians are the apple of His eye, the special objects of His love.

He is then determined to care and provide for His people who are His heritage.

"We have obtained an inheritance":

This translates a single compound word in the Greek (eklerothemen).

When something in the future was so certain that it could not possibly fail to happen.

The Greeks would often speak of it as if it had already occurred (as here, where Paul uses a similar Greek tense (aorist active indicative).

To speak of God's having "seated us with Him in the heavenly places" (verse 6), although the apostle and those to whom he wrote had not yet entered into that glorious experience.

Their dwelling eternally with the Lord was just as certain as if they were already in heaven.

In Malachi, we see from eternity past the Father planned and determined that every person who would trust in His Son for salvation would be given to His Son as a possession, a glorious inheritance.

Malachi 3:16-17 "Then they that feared the LORD spake often one to another: and the LORD hearkened, and heard *it*, and a book of remembrance was written before him for them that feared

the LORD, and that thought upon his name.” “And they shall be mine, saith the LORD of hosts, in that day when I make up my jewels; and I will spare them, as a man spareth his own son that serveth him”

“According to the purpose”:

Because we are identified with Christ, our lives should be identified with His life (1 John 2:6).

We are to love as He loved, help as He helped, care as He cared, share as He shared, and sacrifice our own interest and welfare for the sake of others just as He did.

Like our Lord, we are in the world to lose our lives for others.

As Paul makes clear in (verse 3), our inheritance includes “every spiritual blessing in the heavenly places in Christ.”

In Jesus Christ, believers inherit every promise God has ever made.

God bestows sunshine, rain, and many other good things on all men, the righteous and unrighteous alike (Matthew 5:45).

But His spiritual blessings are bestowed only on those who are in Him.

Apart from Jesus Christ, the only ultimate and eternal thing a person can receive from God is then condemnation.

Our inheritance is in Jesus.

We are heirs of the Father, because we are sons of the Father.

We are sons of the Father, because we have received Jesus Christ as our Savior and Lord.

We have obtained an inheritance.

Christ is the source of the believer’s divine inheritance, which is so certain that it is spoken of as if it has already been received (1 Cor. 3:22-23; 2 Peter 1:3-4).

“Being predestinated”:

Before the earth was formed, God sovereignly determined that every elect sinner, however vile, useless and deserving of death, by trusting in Christ would be made righteous.

Who worketh all things.

The word translated “works” is the same one from which “energy,” “energetic,” and “energize” are derived.

When God created the world, He gave it sufficient energy to begin immediately to operate as He had planned.

It was not simply ready to function, but was created functioning.

As God works out His plan according to “the counsel of His will,” He energizes every believer with the power necessary for his spiritual completion (Phil. 1:6; 2:13).

God works out what He plans.

He energizes every believer with all the power necessary for his spiritual completion.

It is not sufficient to think that God only makes the plan.

He also makes it work out.

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

This phrase begins (verse 12), in the Greek text, and that order fits logically with what Paul has been saying about God’s perspective on our inheritance.

The Lord’s perspective and working are seen in His predestination, in His power, and as we see here, in His preeminence.

The key is that we first trusted Christ.

We who first trusted in Christ should be to the praise of His glory.

The crucifixion of Jesus glorified the Father.

The purpose of being made God’s “inheritance” and having been “predestinated” (verse 11), is that we should be to the praise of His glory, that is, that we should glorify God.

Who first trusted in Christ refers to Jewish believers.

Our predestined salvation, including our attendant eternal and boundless blessings, are therefore designed that they should be to the praise of His glory.

The crucifixion of Jesus glorified the Father.

Even the healings and raising of the dead glorified the Father.

Over and over the Scriptures say, “and they glorified God.”

The very greatest glory of all was the fact that Jesus fulfilled the will of the Father to save all who believed.

The suffering on the cross glorified the Father and the Son.

John 13:31-32 "Therefore, when he was gone out, Jesus said, Now is the Son of man glorified, and God is glorified in him." "If God be glorified in him, God shall also glorify him in himself, and shall straightway glorify him."

The greatest victory mankind has ever known was the victory of Jesus on the cross.

Jesus defeated Satan and sin on the cross, and defeated death when He rose.

God's glory is the supreme purpose of redemption.

In the NASE edition the rendering of this verse (in verse 12a) is "To the end that we who were first to hope in Christ".

This is the first statement given here about the human side of our divine inheritance in Christ.

A more literal translation is "hope in the Christ".

A rich factor in man's believing the gospel is the hope He is given in His Savior and Lord.

Though Paul mentions hope before belief in the passage, the chronological as well as theological order is faith and then hope.

In this context, however, hope is used primarily as a synonym for faith.

The first to hope in Christ were the first to believe in Him.

Verses 13-14

Sealed ... Holy Spirit of Promise:

God's own Spirit comes to indwell the believer and secures and preserves his eternal salvation.

The sealing of which Paul speaks refers to an official mark of identification placed on a letter, contract, or other document.

That document was thereby officially under the authority of the person whose stamp was on the seal.

Four primary truths are signified by the seal:

1. Security – Dan. 6:17; Matthew 27:62-66;
2. Authenticity – 1 Kings 21:6-16;

3. Ownership – Jer. 32:10;
4. Authority – Esther 8:8-12.

The Holy Spirit is given as His pledge of the believer's future inheritance in glory, (2 Corinthians 1:21).

Ephesians 1:13 "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,"

Here we see the believer's divine inheritance in Jesus Christ from our own human perspective.

Throughout Scripture there is tension between God's sovereignty and man's will, a tension that, in his limited and imperfect knowledge, man is incapable of fully reconciling.

As with all the other antinomies and paradoxes in God's Word, our responsibility is to believe both sides of them without reservation, just as they are revealed.

We know the truths are in perfect accord in God's mind, and that knowledge should satisfy us.

Someone has pictured the divine and human sides of salvation in their way: When you look toward heaven you see a sign that read, "Whosoever will may come," and after you enter heaven you look back to that same sign and read on the other side, "Chosen in Him before the foundation of the world."

Whatever God's reasons for designing such humanly irreconcilable truths, we should thank and praise Him for them.

For the very reason that they are completely true, which seeming to be contradictory, we are humbled in His presence as we stand in awe of that which to us is incomprehensible.

To the trusting believer such truths are but further evidence that Scripture is God's doing, and not man's.

"Heard the word of truth ... ye believed":

The God revealed gospel of Jesus Christ must be heard (Rom. 10:17), and believed (John 1:12), to bring salvation.

"In whom ye also":

Or "by whom also you":

The first person plural (we, us), in (verses 3-12), refers to Jewish Christians.

The second person plural (you), refers to Gentile Christians.

This seems evident from (2:11-12), where the second person is explicitly applied to non-Jews: "Ye being in time past Gentiles ... ye were ...aliens from the commonwealth of Israel."

Compare that all those spiritual blessings God has bestowed upon "us" Jewish Christians.

He has also granted "you" Gentile brethren.

There is no difference.

In whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise may be read, "By whom also, when you believed, you were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit."

The Christian receives the Spirit, not "after," but when he believes in Christ as Savior.

The sealer is Jesus; the seal is the Holy Spirit.

In biblical times a seal denoted both identification of ownership and protection provided by the owner.

The victory for all mankind in this is that now, all who believe will be saved.

Salvation was not available to whosoever will, until the cross.

The gospel (good news), of salvation is that all who believe in the Lord Jesus will be saved.

It seems that there are two statements "after ye believed" and "sealed with the Holy Spirit of promise".

The Holy Spirit, we Christians receive, is called the earnest of the Spirit.

Look, with me, at a couple of Scriptures on this.

2 Corinthians 1:22 "Who hath also sealed us, and given the earnest of the Spirit in our hearts."

2 Corinthians 5:5 "Now he that hath wrought us for the selfsame thing [is] God, who also hath given unto us the earnest of the Spirit."

The sealing of the Holy Spirit guarantees the benefits of our salvation, as a person might seal an envelope to guarantee its enclosures.

The Holy Spirit is the seal to the believer and is also a "down payment" of His commitment to someday give him all other things God has promised.

Faith is man's response to God's elective purpose.

God's choice of men is election; men's choice of God is faith.

In election God gives His promises, and by faith men receive them.

As one means of guaranteeing His promises to those who have received Jesus Christ, God has sealed them in Him with the Holy Spirit of promise.

Every believer is given the very Holy Spirit of God the moment he trusts in Christ.

“You are not in the flesh but in the Spirit, if indeed the Spirit of God dwells in you,”

Paul declares (Romans 8:9a).

Conversely, he goes on to say, “If anyone does not have the Spirit of Christ, he does not belong to Him” (verse 9b).

Incredibly, the body of every true Christian is actually “a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in him” (1 Cor. 6:19).

When a person becomes a Christian, the Holy Spirit takes up residence in his life.

Life in Jesus Christ is different because the Spirit of God is now within.

He is there to empower us, equip us for ministry, and function through the gifts He has given us.

The Holy Spirit is our Helper and Advocate.

He protects and encourages us.

He also guarantees our inheritance in Jesus Christ.

“The Spirit Himself bears witness with our spirit that we are children of God, and if children, heirs also, heirs of God and fellow heirs with Christ” (Romans 8:16-17).

The Spirit of God is our securing force, our guarantee.

When the Holy Spirit seals believers, He marks them as God’s divine possessions, who from that moment on entirely and eternally belong to Him.

The Spirit’s seal declares the transaction of salvation as divinely official and final.

Ephesians 1:14 "Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

Which is the earnest of our inheritance means “who is the guarantee of our salvation.

The Holy Spirit is here called “the earnest of our inheritance.”

The word earnest means “down payment”; as such the gift of the Spirit is viewed as an installment or as part of our salvation.

The Holy Spirit not only guarantees our inheritance in Jesus Christ with His seal but also with His pledge.

An arrabon (meaning pledge), originally referred to a down payment or earnest money given to secure a purchase.

Later it came to represent any sort of pledge or earnest.

A form of the word even came to be used for engagement ring.

Believers are assured and guaranteed with an absolute certainty that only God could provide.

The Holy Spirit is the church’s irrevocable pledge, her divine engagement ring, as it were, that as Christ’s bride, she will never be neglected or forsaken.

God therefore assures the Christian that the realization of the rest of his salvation is forthcoming.

How long is the believer assured of his salvation?

Until the redemption of the purchased possession may be read, “until God glorifies and perfects the believer (the purchased possession), whom He has bought by Christ’s blood.”

The Spirit that we receive, gives us power to be able to live a victorious life here on the earth.

This strength that we receive within ourselves is the fact that the Spirit of the Risen Christ has taken up residence in us.

It is His strength that we draw from.

The Spirit not only verifies that we belong to Christ, but also helps us in our day to day walk.

When we allow the Spirit to be our teacher and our guide, we are then assured of the decisions we make.

It is a knowing that all is well with our soul.

It reassures us of our coming inheritance.

Notice we are the purchased possession.

Although our divine inheritance in Christ is a marvelous, awesome and guaranteed promise to us from the Lord, it is not the primary purpose of our salvation.

Our salvation and all of the promises, blessings and privileges that we gain through salvation are first of all bestowed with a view to the redemption of God's own possession, and to the praise of His glory.

As Paul has already twice declared in verses 6 and 12, God's ultimate goal in redeeming men is the praise of His glory.

We are not saved and blessed for our own glory but for God's, Isaiah 43:20-21.

When we glorify ourselves, we rob God of that which is wholly His.

He saved us to serve Him and to praise Him.

We are saved to be restored to the intended divine purpose of creation, to bear the image of God and bring Him greater glory.

This is fully accomplished at the believer's glorification, when we receive full glory and redemption and are made the perfect possession of God.

Verses 3-14

Paul has set forth the amazing and unlimited blessings believers have in Jesus Christ.

Blessings that amount to our personal inheritance of all that belongs to Him.

In the remainder of the chapter (verses 15-23), Paul prays that the believers to whom he writes will come to fully understand and appreciate those blessings.

In this prayer, he focuses on believers' comprehension of their resources in their Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

In (verses 15-16), he praises them, and (in verses 17-23), he makes petitions to God for them.

Ephesians 1:15 "Wherefore I also, after I heard of your faith in the Lord Jesus, and love unto all the saints,"

In light of their marvelous inheritance in Jesus Christ, Paul now intercedes for the possessors of that treasure, (faith).

These initially included not only the believers in Ephesus but probably those in all the churches of Asia Minor.

It had been about four years since Paul ministered there, and he was now in prison.

From letters and reports from friends who visited him in prison, he had received considerable information from and about the churches.

From that he had heard two things that indicated the genuineness of their salvation, and for those two cardinal marks of a true Christian, faith in Christ and love for other Christians.

Those two dimensions of spiritual life are inseparable (1 John 2:9-11).

Now, we see the glorious report.

Love of the saints is automatic with faith in the Lord Jesus.

We cannot directly do anything for Christ.

The way we give to Him is through His saints.

Love for other believers' evidences saving faith (John 13:34-35; 1 John 4:16-18; 4:20; 5:1), and is a cause of thanksgiving (verse 16).

The emphasis (in verse 15b), is on true saving belief, with the lordship of Jesus as the object of that belief.

Some Christians, perhaps intending to protect the gospel from any taint of works righteousness, underplay Christ's lordship almost to the point of denying it.

Others would like to accept the term Lord only as a reference to deity, not sovereignty.

But such a separation is artificial, because deity implies sovereignty.

The One who alone is God rules alone.

The New Testament does not separate Jesus as Savior from Jesus as Lord.

He is both, or He is neither.

Jesus becomes Savior when He is accepted as Lord.

"For to this end," (Paul explains later in Romans, "Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord, both of the dead and of the living" (14:9).

Only believers can say "Jesus is Lord" because they possess the Holy Spirit (1 Cor. 12:3), who was given to them when they were saved (Rom 8:9).

In (verse 15c), we see a second mark of genuine salvation is love for all the saints, and because of such love Paul offers thanks for the Ephesian believers.

“We know that we have passed out of death into life,” John says, “because we love the brethren. He who does not love abides in death” (1 John 3:14).

True salvation produces true love and true love does “not love with word or with tongue, but in deed and truth” (1 John 3:18).

Always in the New Testament true spiritual love is defined as an attitude of selfless sacrifice that results in generous acts of kindness done to others.

It is far more than a feeling, and attraction or emotion.

Sadly, the love the Ephesians had for all the saints did not last.

In the letter to the churches of Asia Minor in Revelation, the Lord says of the church at Ephesus, “I have this against you, that you have left your first love” (Rev. 2:2-4).

They had lost within a few decades, the great love for Christ and their fellow believers, for which Paul had so warmly praised them.

It is unfortunate that some Christians have a loveless kind of faith.

Because it is loveless there is reason to doubt that such faith is even genuine.

True faith cannot exist apart from true love.

We cannot love the Lord Jesus without loving those whom He loves.

1 John 5:1 says: “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God; and whoever loves the Father loves the child born of Him”.

Ephesians 1:16 "Cease not to give thanks for you, making mention of you in my prayers;"

Paul immediately began to pray for them, when he realized they were believers.

All leaders in the church should pray for all of those who come to Christ.

The congregation should pray for their leader as well.

Pray ye, one for the other.

We Christians all need each other, and should give thanks for the believers.

The Christians to whom Paul wrote his Ephesians letter had the right balance, and it was for their great faith and their great love that the apostle assured them, “I do not cease giving thanks for you, while making mention of you in my prayers”.

Verses 17-18

The spirit of wisdom ... hope.

Paul was praying that believers will have the disposition of godly knowledge and insight of which the sanctified mind is capable (verse 8), so as to grasp the greatness of the hope (Romans 8:29; 1 John 3:2).

And the inheritance that is theirs in Christ (verses 3-14).

Ephesians 1:17 "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:"

The remainder of the chapter is a petition in which Paul prays for God to give believers true comprehension and appreciation of who they are in Jesus Christ.

In order that they might begin to have some idea of how magnificent and unlimited are the blessings that already belonged to them in their Lord and Savior.

In essence, Paul prayed that the Ephesians would be spared from frantically searching for what was already theirs.

But rather would see the great God who is their God and is the source of all they need and has it ready for them if they are open to receive it.

Such a receptive attitude requires that God Himself give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.

It is tragic that many believers become entangled in a quest for something more in the Christian life, for something special, something extra that the "ordinary" Christian does not possess.

They talk of getting more of Jesus Christ, more of the Holy Spirit, more power, more blessings, a higher life, a deeper life, as if the resources of God were divinely doled out one at a time like so many pharmaceutical prescriptions.

Or were unlocked by some spiritual combination that only an initiated few can know.

To say, "I want to get all of Jesus there is," implies that when we were saved Christ did not give us all of Himself, that He held some blessings in reserve to be parceled out to those who meet certain extra requirements.

Such searching undermines the essence of God's revealed truth about salvation which can be seen in Ecclesiastes 3:4.

God of our Lord Jesus Christ, this is a designation of God that links Father and Son in essential nature, as deity.

The Christian's primary need is for wisdom and obedience to appropriate the abundance of blessings the Lord has already given.

Our problem is not lack of blessings, but lack of insight and wisdom to understand and use them properly and faithfully.

Only the Holy Spirit Himself can search the deep things of the mind of God, and only the Spirit can bring them to our understanding.

God's deeper truths cannot be seen with our eyes, heard with our ears, or comprehended by our reason or intuition.

They are revealed only to those who love Him.

The spirit of wisdom and revelation in the knowledge of him means "a disposition consisting of wisdom and revelation in knowing Him."

"Wisdom" is a gift from God.

"Knowledge" is accumulated learning.

The Spirit of wisdom would be a gift through the Holy Spirit of God.

This would be above the natural ability of man.

Paul prays specifically that God may give the faculty of understanding so that we can know our resources, which he calls a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of Him.

The spirit of wisdom is given through the Holy Spirit, but this spirit does not refer to the Holy Spirit Himself, as some interpreters suggest.

Pneuma (spirit) is anarthrous here, meaning that it has no article before it.

In such cases the indefinite article is usually supplied in English, as in our text: a spirit.

Believers already possess the Holy Spirit (Romans 8:9), for whom their bodies are temples (1 Cor. 6:19).

Nor does it seem that Paul was speaking of the human spirit, which every person already possesses (1 Cor. 2:11).

Revelation, though used here as a synonym of wisdom, deals with God's imparting knowledge to us, whereas wisdom could emphasize our use of that knowledge.

We must know and understand our position in the Lord before we are capable of serving Him.

We must know what we have before we can satisfactorily use it.

This additional wisdom goes beyond intellectual knowledge.

It is far richer; and Paul desired that the Christians, like those in Colossae, would “keep seeking the things above, where Christ is” (Col. 3:1).

Verses 18-19

When the figurative terms are removed from “the eyes of your understanding being enlightened”, the clause means that “your mind’s understanding may be fully enlightened.”

This clause further explains (verse 17).

That ye may know signifies that the believer comes to know three things upon being enlightened:

1. ***What is the hope of his calling;*** That is, he realizes how sure and certain is his heavenly destiny;
2. ***What the riches of the glory of his inheritance in the saints;*** That is, the illuminated Christian recognizes more and more both the priceless value of his salvation, and what a priceless treasure he is to God; and
3. ***What is the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe:*** Perceiving how God’s power has changed him since conversion, he experiences to a greater extent, this divine strength in daily living.

Ephesians 1:18 "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,"

In the NASE bible version, the scripture states: “I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened”.

In most modern cultures, the heart is thought of as the seat of emotions and feeling.

But most ancients such as Hebrews, Greeks, and many others, considered the heart (Greek Kardia), to be the center of knowledge, understanding, thinking and wisdom.

The New Testament also uses it that way.

Pray therefore prays for the minds of the Ephesians to be enlightened.

Emotions have a significant place in the Christian life, but they are reliable only as they are guided and controlled by God's truth, which we then come to know and understand through our own minds.

That is why we are to "Let the Lord of Christ richly dwell within us" (Col. 3:16).

When the Holy Spirit works in the believer's mind, He enriches it to understand divine truth that is deep and profound, and then relates that truth to life, including those aspects of life that involve our emotions.

The eyes of your understanding enlightened, would mean that God has allowed your innermost being to understand.

The Light has shined on you from within and revealed the meaning to you.

This is approximately what had happened to Paul on the road to Damascus.

It is a revealing from within.

Also, the two disciples on the Emmaus road, their hearts (that is their minds), burned within them; but it was not until "their eyes were opened that they recognized Him" (Luke 24:31-32).

A spiritually enlightened mind is the only means of truly understanding and appreciating the hope and inheritance in Christ and of living obediently for Him.

"The hope of His calling":

Paul prays for God to enlighten them about the magnificent truths that summarize God's master plan for the redemption of mankind which is His eternal plan that will bring men back to Himself through His own Son, thereby making them His children.

Jesus is the Light, so this means that His light has shone brightly within you revealing secrets.

When the Light of Jesus shines within, there are no hidden corners left.

His Light does away with darkness.

Then you can see clearly what your calling is.

You also can see clearly what your inheritance in Him is.

This "knowing" is not with your mind, but with your heart.

"Inheritance of the saints":

It is truth too magnificent for words to describe.

Our being glorious children of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ of all that God possesses is the consummation and end of salvation promised from eternity past and held in hope until the future manifestation of Christ.

There is nothing more to seek, nothing more to be given or received.

We have it all now, and we will have it throughout eternity.

Verses 19-20

“Exceeding greatness of His power”:

God’s great power, that very power which raised Jesus from the dead and lifted Him by ascension back to glory to take His seat at God’s right hand.

This is given to every believer at the time of salvation and is always available (see Acts 1:8; Colossians 1:29).

Paul therefore did not pray that God’s power be given to believers but that they be aware of the power they already possessed in Christ and use it (3:20).

Ephesians 1:19 "And what [is] the exceeding greatness of his power to us-ward who believe, according to the working of his mighty power,"

This second request of Paul is for the Lord to give the Ephesian believers understanding of His great power that will bring them to their inheritance in glory.

Paul uses four different Greek synonyms to emphasize the greatness of that power.

1. “Dunamis” (power), from which we get dynamite and dynamo. This power is only for Christians, for those who believe. It is all the power we are ever offered or could ever have.
2. “Energeia” (working), the energizing force of the Spirit that empowers believers to live for the Lord.
3. “Kratos (strength), which may also be translated “dominion” (1 Tim. 6:16), or “power” (Heb. 2:14).
4. “Ischus” (might), which carries the idea of endowed power or ability. In all those ways, the Holy Spirit empowers God’s children.

Paul did not pray for power to be given to believers.

How could they have more than what they had?

He prayed first, that they be given a divine awareness of the power they possessed in Christ.

Later in the letter (chapters 4-6), he admonished them to employ that power in faithful living for their Lord.

The main thing it reveals is the fact that it is not our own power that's working within us, but it is His power.

Philippians 4:13 "I can do all things through Christ which strengtheneth me."

Zechariah 4:6 "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."

His power works in us, and through us, if we believe.

We do not need to pray for power to do God's will.

"It is God who is at work in you," Paul assures us, "both to will and to work for His good pleasure" (Phil. 2:13).

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."

He has given us power of attorney to use His name.

John 14:13-14 "And whatsoever ye shall ask in my name, that will I do, that the Father may be glorified in the Son." "If ye shall ask any thing in my name, I will do [it]."

The greatness is His power working in us and through us, as I said.

Just before His ascension Jesus assured the disciples, "You shall receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you" (Acts 1:8).

A gift every believer receives at the time he is saved.

God can do exceedingly abundantly beyond all that we ask or think, according to the power that works within us (Eph. 3:20).

To ask God for more power is an affront to His gracious love which already has provided us everything.

Ephesians 1:20 "Which he wrought in Christ, when he raised him from the dead, and set [him] at his own right hand in the heavenly [places],"

That very same power that was shown at the resurrection of Jesus is the same power that we have when we pray for the sick, or do mighty miracles in His name.

The power is in Christ.

It is in His name.

He healed in His own name when He was on the earth.

We can now use that powerful name.

Paul's prayer here is that we understand the power of His keeping, His securing us and His fulfilling the marvelous hope which is ours in Christ.

The resurrection and ascension power, the divine energy that lifted Christ from the grave to the earth, and from the earth to heaven, is the power that will lift us to glory.

At times, all of us are tempted to doubt, to wonder if God can do a certain thing for us or through us or ultimately bring us into His presence.

But when we look at what He brought about in Christ, at what He faithfully accomplished on behalf of His son, and at His assurance that He will just as faithfully accomplish His work on our behalf, what ground do we have for doubting?

Jesus is seated at the right hand of the Father because the work is finished.

He is also, the Right Hand of God.

In a spiritual way, we believers are seated in heavenly places with Christ Jesus.

In light of such assurance, how can a Christian feel insecure, forsaken, or powerless?

The same unlimited divine power that had raised Him from the dead will raise us from the dead, and the same power that seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places will seat us there with Him.

In the meanwhile, that resurrection power which is at our disposal for living to His glory (see Ephesians 1:19-20; 3:20).

It is so certain that this power will bring us to glory that Paul spoke as if it has already occurred, because it has already occurred in God's eternal plan. (Eph. 2:6).

Ephesians 1:21 "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:"

Moving from Christ's might to His majesty, Paul's third request is for the Lord to give believers understanding of the greatness of His Person who secures and empowers them.

Principality, power, and might, and dominion refer to various classes of angelic beings.

God's power has exalted Jesus far above all these spiritual creatures.

Paul wanted believers to comprehend the greatness of God compared to other heavenly beings.

“Above all principality, and power, and might, and dominion”:

These were traditional Jewish terms that designated angelic beings having a high rank among God's hosts.

God is above them all (Rev. 20:10-15).

Once when Timothy was intimidated by criticism from fellow Christians, he understandably became discouraged.

Paul wrote to him:

2 Tim. 2:8-10 “Remember that Jesus Christ of the seed of David was raised from the dead according to my gospel” “Wherein I suffer trouble, as an evil doer, even unto bonds; but the word of God is not bound.” “Therefore I endure all things for the elect's sakes, that they may also obtain the salvation which is in Christ Jesus with eternal glory”.

Paul says, “He was raised from the dead and seated at God's right hand.

He was born of the seed of David, as a man just like us.

He identifies with us, understands us, and sympathizes with us.”

Every Christian should continually have that focus.

When we look at Him, our physical problems, psychological problems, and even spiritual problems will not loom so all important before us.

What great blessing we can have when we take time to set our own concerns and needs aside and simply focus on the Lord of glory.

Allowing the Holy Spirit to do in us what Paul asked Him to do in the Ephesians.

Give us deep understanding of the truth that our Lord is 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.

The following Scripture says it all.

Philippians 2:10 "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of [things] in heaven, and [things] in earth, and [things] under the earth;"

His name is exalted above all others.

Ephesians 1:22 "And hath put all [things] under his feet, and gave him [to be] the head over all [things] to the church,"

It should be noted that the matter of the cosmic war between God and His angelic hosts and Satan and his demons is a matter of great importance in Scripture.

Redemption is a demonstration of God's power before the angels (3:10).

Satan and his hosts have endeavored to thwart the plan of God from the beginning and are the constant enemy of the work of the kingdom.

But they are destined to be overthrown and eternally banished (Rev. 20:10-15).

And gave Him to be the head over all things to the church means God appointed Him head (ruler), over all things for the benefit of the church.

Jesus is the divinely appointed ruler over the entire universe for the church's benefit.

"Feet ... head":

This is (a quote from Psalm 8:6), indicating that God has exalted Christ over everything (Heb. 2:8), including His church (Col. 1:18).

Christ is clearly the authoritative Head (not "source), because all things have been placed under His feet.

He is our exalted Leader.

He is our Lord, He is our Savior, He is our King, He is our High Priest, He is our Life.

Acts 17:28 "For in him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also his offspring."

He is the head of the church, who we are.

He is the Creator of everything and everyone, and we are His creation.

There is no limit on time, as Paul said Christ will be supreme not only in this age, but also in the one to come, that is in the eternal kingdom of the Lord Jesus Christ (2:7).

Ephesians 1:23 "Which is his body, the fullness of him that filleth all in all."

Most importantly, as far as believers are concerned, God gave Him as head over all things to the church, which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.

Christ not only is the head of the church but its fullness.

Since He has such a unique and intimate relationship with the redeemed whom He loves, all His power will be used in their behalf to fulfill His loving purpose for them.

He is completely over us and completely in us, our supreme Lord and supreme power.

His body is a metaphor for God's redeemed people, used exclusively in the New Testament of the church (4:12-16; 1 Cor. 12:12-27).

Paraphrased, this verse reads, "For the church is His body.

It is the fullness belonging to Him who fills the universe with all things."

That is, Jesus, who so wisely and skillfully fills the universe with all material elements necessary for its existence, also wisely and skillfully infuse His people (the church), with His own life and character.

This verse then, explains why (in 1:22), God made Him head over all things for the benefit of the church: the church is in such an intimate relationship with Him, and is of such character, that she is considered His own body.

So, it is for her good that Christ is the divinely appointed ruler of the universe.

Since He "filleth" the church with His own life and character, she is a receptacle containing the graces and virtues of God Himself.

We Christians, are the church of the Lord Jesus Christ.

We are His bride; we are His habitation.

He is the vine, and we are His branches.

He is the Tree of Life and the Water of Life.

He is the spiritual and the physical Light of the world.

The point of this great petition is that we might comprehend how secure we are in Christ and how unwavering and immutable is our hope of eternal inheritance.

The power of glorification is invincible and is presently operative to bring us to glory.

Ephesians Chapter 1 Continued Questions

1. Our inheritance is in _____.
2. He bought us and paid for us with His _____.
3. What is the key to verse 12?
4. What were some of the things Jesus did that glorified the Father?
5. What was the greatest victory mankind has ever known?
6. Christians are sealed with that _____ of promise.
7. When did salvation become available to whosoever will?
8. What is the Holy Spirit that Christians receive called?
9. What within us bears witness of our salvation?
10. What strength can the Christian draw from?
11. What is the glorious report?
12. When did Paul begin to pray for them?
13. Wisdom is a _____ from God.
14. Knowledge is _____.
15. In verse 17, how does the revealing take place?
16. What does "the eyes of your understanding enlightened" mean?
17. The "knowing", in verse 18, is how?
18. Where do we find the statement, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the Lord?
19. When we pray for the sick, what causes it to happen?
20. Where is Christ seated?
21. At the name of Jesus, who will bow?
22. Name several things that Jesus is to us?
23. What are the Christians?