

Introduction To The Epistle of Ephesians

1. CONTENT

A. The Saints' Exalted New Covenant Standing & Life "IN CHRIST"

Part 1 – The Saints' Call in Grace, Chapters 1-3 (The Foundation)

Part 2 – The Saints' Walk in Grace, Chapters 4-6 (The Building)

B. The Apostle Paul's Overall Purposes in Writing This Letter

1. To instruct and affirm the saints in their New Covenant possessions **In Christ**
2. To instruct the saints in how to walk in light of their NC possessions **In Christ**
3. How the New Covenant relationship was to be lived out in a mixed church
4. The apostle shared his heart and passion for them in word and in Prayer

2. BACKGROUND

- A. Written by the Apostle Paul while imprisoned at Rome (+/- AD 61-62)*
- B. The Apostle Paul had extended stays in Ephesus*
- C. Letter is to the saints in Ephesus and Asia area churches (circular, meant to be shared)*
- D. Ephesus was a well-grounded & informed church*
- E. Ephesus had a healthy Jewish influence in the church*
- F. Ephesus was an evangelical church & suffering church*
- G. Ephesus most likely was the leading church in Asia*
- H. The city of Ephesus had international trade, the Arts, education sciences and stadium amusement*
- I. Ephesus had numerous Greek and Roman cults; one being the famous temple of Diana*

3. UNIQUE FACTS

- A. Called the Grand Canyon of Scripture, the Switzerland of the NT. Great depth & height!
In African terms, the Great Rift Valley of Scripture, the Mount Kilimanjaro of the NT.*
- B. Contains the highest of church truth; the believer "In Christ" possesses all spiritual blessings in the heavenly places in Christ because of his adoption*
- C. "In Christ" or "in Him" is the connection to promised covenant blessings*
- D. Emphasis is on a "household" covenant family, not an organization*
- E. God's saving and eternal purposes and mysteries are revealed*
- F. The letter contains two rich & lengthy prayers*
- G. The marriage and family relationships are exalted*
- H. Paul used the Roman soldier as a pattern or a symbol of Christian warfare*
- I. Years later in Revelation 2, Ephesus is commended for their sound doctrine and practice, and yet rebuked for their lack of a personal relationship with Christ.*
- J. 1 & 2 Timothy, 1 Peter, & 1 John all are related to the church in Ephesus*
- K. Colossians is the sister book to Ephesians and will be referenced (See Appendix F)*

Class Preparation: **1.** Ponder the biblical text of the outline section (Colossians also). **2.** Form two vital questions pertaining to that text. **3.** Answer your own questions. Look for the **Q:** & **A:** below the section that you are examining. Your questions & answers are meant to be discussed with your fellow students.

The Church of Ephesus, Acts

1. THE CHURCH'S BEGINNINGS, CHS. 18 & 19

A. Prepared People, 18:19-21

1. Paul began by planting the seed of the word in the Jewish Synagogue
2. Paul promised to return and continue the work among them
3. Aquila & Priscilla may have continued in Ephesus

B. Blended People, 19:8-10

1. Paul returned to Ephesus and to the synagogue
2. Paul also preached to the many Gentiles for two years

C. Unashamed People, 19:11-27

1. Paul's witness increased among both the seen and unseen realm
2. Christ's name became magnified among all the people and the word spread
3. The witness of the church and the change in the community caused disputes

D. Persecuted People, 19:28-41

1. Many followed the selfish idolatrous leaders which caused an uproar
2. Many were confused and did not know what was happening
3. The city clerk spoke respectably & quieted, then dismissed the crowd

2. THE CHURCH'S DEVELOPMENT, CHS. 20-21, 28

A. Established People, 20:17-38

1. Paul reminded the elders of his Christ-like testimony among them
He was humble, honorable & helpful among Jew & Gentile alike
2. Paul warned the elders to be godly shepherds of God's church
3. Paul commended the elders to God's word & prayed for them

B. Helpful People, 21:28

Sent Trophimus the Ephesian along with Paul who also would endure persecution

C. Remembered People, 28:16

While under house arrest Paul wrote his glorious epistle to this beloved church

Q: _____

A: _____

Q: _____

A: _____

THE SAINTS' EXALTED NEW COVENANT STANDING & LIFE "IN CHRIST"

The Epistle of Ephesians, Lesson Outline

PART 1 – THE SAINTS' CALL IN GRACE, CHAPTERS. 1-3 (THE FOUNDATION)

A. The Supernatural Call, Ch. 1

1. The Greeting of Grace, 1-2

Apostle – Authority from God (important for hearers to know)

Holy & faithful people – Set apart for God

2. The Spiritual Blessings and Praise of the Saints, 3-14 (one sentence)

Spiritually blessed – In the heavenly realms in Christ

Chosen – In Christ before creation, to be God's unique people

Predestined – In love for the purpose of adoption into sonship through Christ

...In accordance with God's pleasure & predetermined will

Redeemed & forgiven – In Christ through His blood

...In accordance with God's immeasurable & generous grace

Opened our eyes – In Christ he made known to us the full mystery of His will

...In accordance with His good pleasure

...For the ultimate purpose of unity in & under Christ

Chosen & predestined – In Christ for God's purposes & will

...In accordance to God's eternal purposes & praise

Included – In Christ when you heard the gospel (good news)

Sealed – In Christ with the promised Holy Spirit when you believed

Redemption – In Christ is guaranteed by the sealing of the Holy Spirit

BEGINS WITH PRAISE, IS MIXED WITH PRAISE & ENDS WITH PRAISE! VSS. 3, 6, 12, 14

Q: _____

A: _____

Q: _____

A: _____

Note – The doctrine of predestination or divine election, which is God choosing you to be His own, is a blessed truth that recognizes and honors God's divine sovereignty. In the Old Testament God chose Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, Israel & David to have special covenant relationships with. God made it clear that He elected them on the

basis of His grace alone apart from any work they could do. God chose Isaac & Jacob to be heirs of the covenant even though they were the 2nd born of their fathers.

Consider the Apostle Peter... He was Jewish, part of the chosen people Israel; he was chosen to be one of the 12 disciples; he was chosen to be one of the three to see the glorified Christ; and lastly, he was chosen to be the leader of the infant church. God chose and elected Peter apart from Peter's works. Peter understood election, that is why he confidently stated in his greeting, "To God's elect, strangers in the world... who have been chosen according to the foreknowledge of God the Father, through the sanctifying work of the Spirit, for obedience to Jesus Christ and sprinkling by his blood..." 1 Peter 1:1-2. (Read Romans 11:33-36; John 5:21-24, 6:35-44)

Divine election is not to be feared, but to be embraced; it is a guarantee of our eternal salvation.

Read and consider Romans 11:33-36; John 5:21-24, 6:35-44

3. The Reflective Prayer for Spiritual Wisdom, Understanding & Power, 15-23

Heard – Of your faith in Christ & love for God's people

Appeal – To God for you by always giving thanks & praying for you

Know the Father, Know His Calling, Know His Inheritance, Know His Power

COL CR - 1:9-14, AN INITIAL PRAYER FOR WISDOM, UNDERSTANDING, FRUITFULNESS & STRENGTH

Transition – To the glory & exaltation of the person of Jesus Christ

COL CR - 1:15-20, A MORE DETAILED EXPLANATION OF THE GLORY & PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST

*GOD'S IMAGE - FIRST IN ORDER - CREATOR OF ALL THINGS - HE IS GOD - HEAD OF THE CHURCH -
RESURRECTION - SUPREME OVER ALL THINGS - FULLY GOD - RECONCILER - PEACE MAKER - SACRIFICE*

Q: _____

A: _____

Q: _____

A: _____

Reality – We are fully blessed "In Christ," based on the NC sacrifice of His blood & body

Chosen – holy – blameless – adopted – redeemed – forgiven – enlightened – sealed – heirs!

The Father held nothing back from us! He gave us everything when He gave us Christ!

The Father is completely for His child! He freely gives to us because of His love for us!

Our standing today could not be better! We are given every spiritual blessing in Christ!

We are the Father's chosen possession! We completely belong to Him by adoption!

We were in His heart before creation! We are no mere accident as some would say!

He sees us as spotless in Jesus Christ! His NC blood has completely washed us clean!

We are called as heirs of God in Christ! Our inheritance is as sure as Christ's is sure!

We are the King's own sons in Christ! We will rule & reign in the future kingdom!

We have the full rights of inheritance! We can confidently approach our Father!

*I can live each day knowing that I am a saint, secure forever in Jesus Christ! Rather than hoping to be holy, I am holy. I am God's creation and His very own eternal possession!
No matter whom the accusers may be it does not matter, for I am "IN CHRIST!"*

B. The Supernatural Transactions, Ch. 2

1. The Saved Sinner's Past Life, 1-3

Dead – In transgressions (willfully deviate from truth) & sins (miss the mark)

Followed – The ways of Satan's world, as seen in those presently disobedient

Gratified – The lusts & cravings of your own flesh which controlled you

Destined – For God's wrath like the rest of the sinful world

2. The Saved Sinner's Present Life, 4-10

Made alive – With Christ because of God's immense love & abundant mercy

...Even when were lifeless & bound in sins He saved us by His grace

Raised & seated – With Christ in the heavenly realms because of His kindness

...That in the coming ages He would show us His immeasurable grace

Saved & humbled – By grace through faith in Christ apart from human effort

Created & prepared – By God's own handiwork through Jesus Christ

COL CR - 1:21-23, FROM ALIENS, ENEMIES & EVIL TO RECONCILED, HOLY & FREE IN THE GOSPEL

Q: _____

A: _____

Q: _____

A: _____

3. The Saved Gentiles' Previous Standing, 11-12

Unclean Gentiles – By natural birth & recognized by uncircumcision

Separate – From Christ & the blessing of His people Israel

Foreigners – To the God's (unconditional) covenants of promise

Without hope & without God – In this hopeless, sinful world

4. The Saved Gentiles' Present Standing, 13-19

Brought near – In Christ through His blood sacrifice

...Even when we were once far away from all the blessings in Christ

Our Peace – Is Christ Himself, the destroyer of the dividing wall (tore the veil)

...He removed the barriers contained in the old covenant law (App. A)

One humanity – Was created by Christ by destroying the hostility through the cross

...He has brought peace, reconciliation with each other & the Father by the Spirit

Fellow citizens & members of God's household – built on Jesus Christ
...No longer foreigners & outsiders to God's covenant people
Joined together – By Christ to be God's holy temple in which His Spirit dwells

Q: _____

A: _____

Q: _____

A: _____

C. The Supernatural Revealed, Ch. 3

1. The Apostle Paul's Revelatory Explanation, 1-13

Paul – A prisoner of Christ to be an Apostle to the Gentiles

Paul – A recipient of God's grace to understand the Gentile mystery

...The Gentile believers would have the same standing as Jewish believers

Paul – A servant called by God to proclaim God's boundless riches of Christ

...Truth which had been hidden in God from previous generations

Church – Would also make known the manifold wisdom of God in heavenly realms

...In accordance with His eternal purposes in Christ our Lord

Proclamation – That by faith alone in Christ we freely approach God Himself

COL CR - 1:24-29, PAUL'S SUFFERING, COMMISSION, PURPOSES, KNOWLEDGE & GOALS IN CHRIST

*** IN EPHS. THE EMPHASIS IS BEING "IN CHRIST," IN COLS. THE MYSTERY IS "CHRIST IN YOU!"**

2. The Apostle Paul's Reflective Prayer for Strength, Understanding & Fullness, 14-21

Prayer – Is for this very reason, that you would understand God's amazing riches

...That is for all of God's people both in heaven and on earth

Reality – We are rich "In Christ," based on His NC blood, body & work on the cross ...

Loved – awakened – saved – raised – seated – created – welcomed – unified – citizenized – indwelled

God invested His best for us! God continues to invest in us! God will forever invest in us! God included us in O.T. promises! God destroyed all barriers against us! Christ removed the curse of the Mosaic Law! Christ made us into one new humanity! Christ brought us into His household!

Q: _____

A: _____

Q: _____

A: _____

PART 2 – THE SAINTS’ WALK IN GRACE, CHAPTERS 4-6 (THE BUILDING)

Major Turning Point: Building on the established foundation

Most would agree that it is much easier to **hear** the word of God than to **walk** or **live** the word of God. It is easier to **talk** about the early apostles rather than to live like them; for most suffered severely for their faith and died a martyr’s death. This letter is now moving from hearing the glorious truths of who we are “In Christ,” to walking in the new life we now have “In Christ.” Paul is taking us from absorbing the truth like a sponge to being squeezed or drained like a sponge; from filling our minds with heavenly truth to testing our minds and bodies in this earthly world; from sitting and soaking to walking and spilling forth.

In many of our western (Europe & America) schools, we’re tested on knowledge not practical skills. In my PhD program I did not have one class on how to live out the graces of salvation! Not one class on church unity based on love! Not one! I began learning the practical Christian life years ago under very practical men who desired to **live out their faith**.

In the workplace it is skillfulness that is required to keep your job. Theory or knowledge in and of itself isn’t much help, if you don’t know how to use or apply it. How to get the job done is of greatest value! Many worldly leaders can get away with talk or theory, but a person suffering in this life needs more than just talk or theory. They need something tangible, something they can see, someone who can bring them hope! Jesus both clearly taught and lived out His teaching; His teaching was elevated to greater heights by a clear and practical demonstration of His good works for all to see! Jesus was tested in His knowledge by the lawyers, and was tested in His actions by the sick and hurting! Who was changed?

From the book, “Chief” Chapter, “The Village Blacksmith”

“Western education has replaced training with talking. Each blacksmith had a trainee who pumped the bellows and learned the trade by watching and helping the master craftsman. Nothing sophisticated. No classroom. No exams. No chalkboard or PP presentations. But in the end, a master craftsman emerged.” It is no wonder our Lord chose craftsmen to be his disciples, they could be trained in the field of harvest and train others to carry on the harvest. Not just hearers of the word but effective doers of the word!

This letter is now going about an abrupt change, “from hearing to doing.” This is the biggest challenge for Christians! We have been seduced to think that the classroom is all we need! That is why my desire for the MLI program is to disciple and train “Godly servant minded leaders!” Like Jesus, we must learn to be foot washers.

“Do not merely listen to the word, and so deceive yourselves. Do what it says. Anyone who listens to the word but does not do what it says is like someone who looks at his face in a mirror and, after looking at himself, goes away and immediately forgets what he looks like. But whoever looks intently into the perfect law that gives freedom, and continues in it---not forgetting what they have heard, but doing it---they will be blessed in what they do.” James 1:22-25 NIV

Know-it-all Christians have difficulty growing, they can remain babes for years. Talk is cheap, practice is priceless! Our words whisper, but our actions shout! Growth and experience comes through practice! Most people remember far better what you have done for them, more so than what you have said.

*2:2, Rescued from **walking** in disobedience*

*2:10, Created to **walk** in His good works*

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*4:1, Implored to **walk** worthy of our call*

*4:17, Told not to **walk** without purpose*

*5:2, Asked to **walk** in love just like Jesus*

*5:8, Urged to **walk** as children of light*

*5:15, Stirred to **walk** wisely among sinners*

A. The Spiritual Church, Ch. 4:1-16

1. The Necessity of Unity in the Church, 1-6 (Exhibiting God’s character & unity)

Paul – Appeal is from one who is suffering for the gospel

Request – Is for us to live worthy of who God has made us

Humble – gentle – patient – loving – Spirit unified – peaceful

Our Trinitarian Confession & Unity:

One God & Father of all; One Savior & Lord of all; One Holy Spirit in us all; One Faith for us all; One Baptism with the Spirit; One Hope of our calling; One Household in Christ!

2. The Necessity of Gifts in the Church, 7-13

Grace – Has been given to all saints according to Christ’s distribution

Gifts – Of leadership are given by Christ to build & equip His church

Order – In relationship to the gifts of leadership from Christ (App. B)

Goal – Of the church is to be a unified faith fully mature and whole in Christ

Apostles – sent ones; prophets – forthtellers; evangelists – heralds; pastor teachers – shepherds

3. The Necessity of Growth in the Church, 14-16

Immaturity & Instability – Are the characteristics of being an infant

Maturity & Stability – Are the objectives of Christ’s working in us

Love – Is the motivation and the binding truth of unity & maturity (1 Tim 1:5-7)

Q: _____

A: _____

Q: _____

A: _____

Biblical Warning:

“Watch out for false prophets.” Matt. 7:15, Outward innocence, inward savagery!

“...False apostles, deceitful...” 2 Cor. 11:13, Camouflaged (Satanic) as apostles of Christ!

“...Be false teachers among you...” 2 Pet. 2:1, Secretly teach destructive heresies!

“...Shepherds feeding themselves...” Jude 12, Covetous, empty, fruitless & twice dead!

COL CR - 2:1-23, PAUL’S PASSION, PLEA, ASSURANCE & WARNINGS FOR GOD’S PEOPLE

PASSION – COMFORT, ENCOURAGEMENT, UNITY, FULL UNDERSTANDING OF GOD’S TRUTH

PLEA – WALK & GROW BY SIMPLE FAITH ALONE, AND NOT BE DECEIVED BY MAN’S TEACHING

ASSURANCE - CHRIST IS COMPLETELY GOD & YOU ARE COMPLETE IN HIM – ALIVE & FORGIVEN

WARNINGS – AVOID PROUD, FAITHLESS, LEGALISTIC, WORKS BASED TEACHINGS OF MEN!

The Apostle Paul’s Model, Acts 19:8-12 & 20:17-38

Virtues – Humble, caring, honest, transparent, passionate & challenging.

Words – Taught, preached, prayed, declared & testified to all of God’s council.

Actions – Served, lived, ministered, modeled, labored & suffered for Christ among them.

Reality – God created us to be who we are! God placed us where we need to be!

God gave us what we need to live! God gifted us for His Body’s/Church’s growth!

Q: _____

A: _____

Q: _____

A: _____

B. The Spiritual Saint, Ch. 4:17-5:21

1. Putting Off the Old You While Putting On the New You, 4:17-24

Don’t – Live like the lost, blind, hard-hearted, lustful gentiles

Do – Live with a new righteous attitude as taught in Jesus Christ

Don’t – Live like your old fleshly self, according to your old ways

Do – Live as the new creation/new self that you are in Christ

2. Putting Away Sins While Practicing Righteousness, 4:25-32

Don’t speak lies – Do speak truth

Don’t let anger rule – Do let peace rule

Don’t steal – Do the work

Don’t speak harm – Do speak blessing

Don’t – Grieve the Holy Spirit!!!

Don’t live abusively – Do live humbly

Forgive - As you have been forgiven!!! (App. C)

Q: _____

A: _____

Q: _____

A: _____

COL CR - 3:1-14, PAUL'S SIMILAR YET DIFFERENT COMMANDS FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

3. Walking in the Love & Light of Christ, 5:1-14

Follow – Our Father's example because we are His beloved children

Walk – In love just like our Savior who sacrificed Himself for us

Avoid – The sins of your old life because we are God's holy people (1:4)

Don't – Be partners with the unregenerate lost who are destined for God's wrath

Live – As children of light for we are no longer in darkness

Shun – The fruitless works of darkness and expose them with the truth

Q: _____

A: _____

Q: _____

A: _____

4. Rejoicing in the Truth of Christ, 5:15-21

Walk – In wisdom taking advantage of circumstances because of these evil days

Don't – Be influenced or dependent on mind-altering alcohol or drugs

Be – Filled, controlled & influenced by God's Spirit already in you

Filled = Imperative – command; Passive voice – done to me; Present tense – keep being filled

Speak – Uplifting words & songs to each other, words coming from the Spirit

Thank – God continually for everything in the name of our Lord & Savior

Submit – yourself to one another honoring Christ and His humble ways

COL CR - 3:15-17, PAUL'S SIMILAR ADMONISHMENT FOR GOD'S PEOPLE

Q: _____

A: _____

Q: _____

A: _____

C. The Spiritual Household, 5:22-6:9 (App. D)

1. Directives for Wives, 5:22-24

Submit – Yourself to your own husband for Christ’s sake

Head – Of the household is the husband, picturing Christ over the church

2. Directives for Husbands, 5:25-33

Love – Your wives unconditionally as Christ loves His church

Serve – Your wife as Christ serves you, in order to make you presentable

Care – For your wife as yourself in order to have a clear conscience

Note – The union of the husband & wife picture the mystical union of Christ & His church

3. Directives for Children, 6:1-4

Obey & honor your parents as the scripture honors such an attitude

4. Directives for Workers, 6:5-8

Obey – Those who are an authority over you with a pure heart for Christ’s sake

Serve – The Lord as you are actually doing the will of God for eternal reward

5. Directives for Managers, 6:9

Respect – Your employee in the same honorable way without threats

Remember – You have the same impartial Master in whom you submit

Q: _____

A: _____

Q: _____

A: _____

C. The Spiritual Warfare, 6:10-24

1. Be Strong in the LORD’S Power, 10-13

Be strong in the Lord’s might – Pray in confident faith

Be alert to Satan’s ways of deceit – Pray in honest humility

Be ready for the battles you will face - Pray in realistic alertness

2. Put On All of GOD’S Armor, 14-17

*Belt of **truth** – Salvation (1:13); Speech (4:15, 25); Living (4:21); A spiritual fruit (5:9)*

*Breastplate of **righteousness** – Created to be (4:24); A spiritual fruit (5:9)*

*Gospel of **peace** – Bookends (1:2 & 6:23) Jesus is (2:14 – 17); Spirit bond (4:3)*

*Shield of **faith** – Bookends & salvation (1:15, 2:8, 6:23); Access & abide (3:12 & 17)*

*Helmet of **salvation** – Complete wholeness in Christ (1:3, 13)*

*Sword of the **Spirit** – Preached for salvation (1:13), Revelation of God’s work (3:2-6),
Equips- matures- unifies- protects- & builds us (4:12-16), Revelation of Christ (4:21)*

Note: There is an order to putting on the spiritual armor reflecting the Roman soldier

Q: _____

A: _____

Q: _____

A: _____

3. Pray Continually in the SPIRIT, 18-20 (App. E)

Don’t – Let anything limit or hinder your prayers as we have a loving Father

Do – Be alert to the prayer needs & always pray for God’s people

Leaders – Especially need prayers to be bold & fearless to proclaim the truth

COL CR – 4:2-5, Paul’s similar encouragement to pray

Q: _____

A: _____

Q: _____

A: _____

Reflection of 1:17-20 Prayer

*Our glorious Father may give you the Spirit of wisdom and revelation
so that you may know him better...*

*That the eyes of your heart may be enlightened
in order that you may know the hope to which he has called you,
*the riches of his glorious inheritance in the saints...**

and his incomparably great power for us who believe

*That power is like the working of his mighty strength,
which he exerted in Christ when he raised him from the dead and seated him at
his right hand in the heavenly realms...*

Reflection of 3:16-21 Prayer

out of his (God's) glorious riches

he (God) may strengthen you with power

through his Spirit in your inner being

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

you, being rooted and established in love

may have power, together with all the saints

to grasp how wide and long and high and deep is the love of Christ,

and to know this love that surpasses knowledge...

that you may be filled to the measure of all the fullness of God

Reflection of Colossians 1:9-12 Prayer

Because of the gospel of grace (1:6)

continually asking God to fill you

with the knowledge of his will

through all spiritual wisdom and understanding

that you may live a life worthy of the Lord

and may please him in every way:

bearing fruit in every good work,

growing in the knowledge of God...

being strengthened with all power

according to his glorious might

so that you may have great endurance and patience,

and joyfully giving thanks to the Father,

who has qualified you to share in the inheritance of the saints

in the kingdom of light.

“Epaphras, who is one of you and a servant of Christ Jesus, sends greetings. He is always wrestling in prayer for you, that you may stand firm in all the will of God, mature and fully assured.” Colossians 4:12

4. Communicate With One Another, 21-24

Tychicus – A fellow servant of Paul will carry out Paul's desires among them

Peace – May it be always be a fruit among God's people

Love & Faith – May it be the binding factors among God's people

Grace – May it grow among us as we abide in our Lord Jesus Christ

Q: _____

A: _____

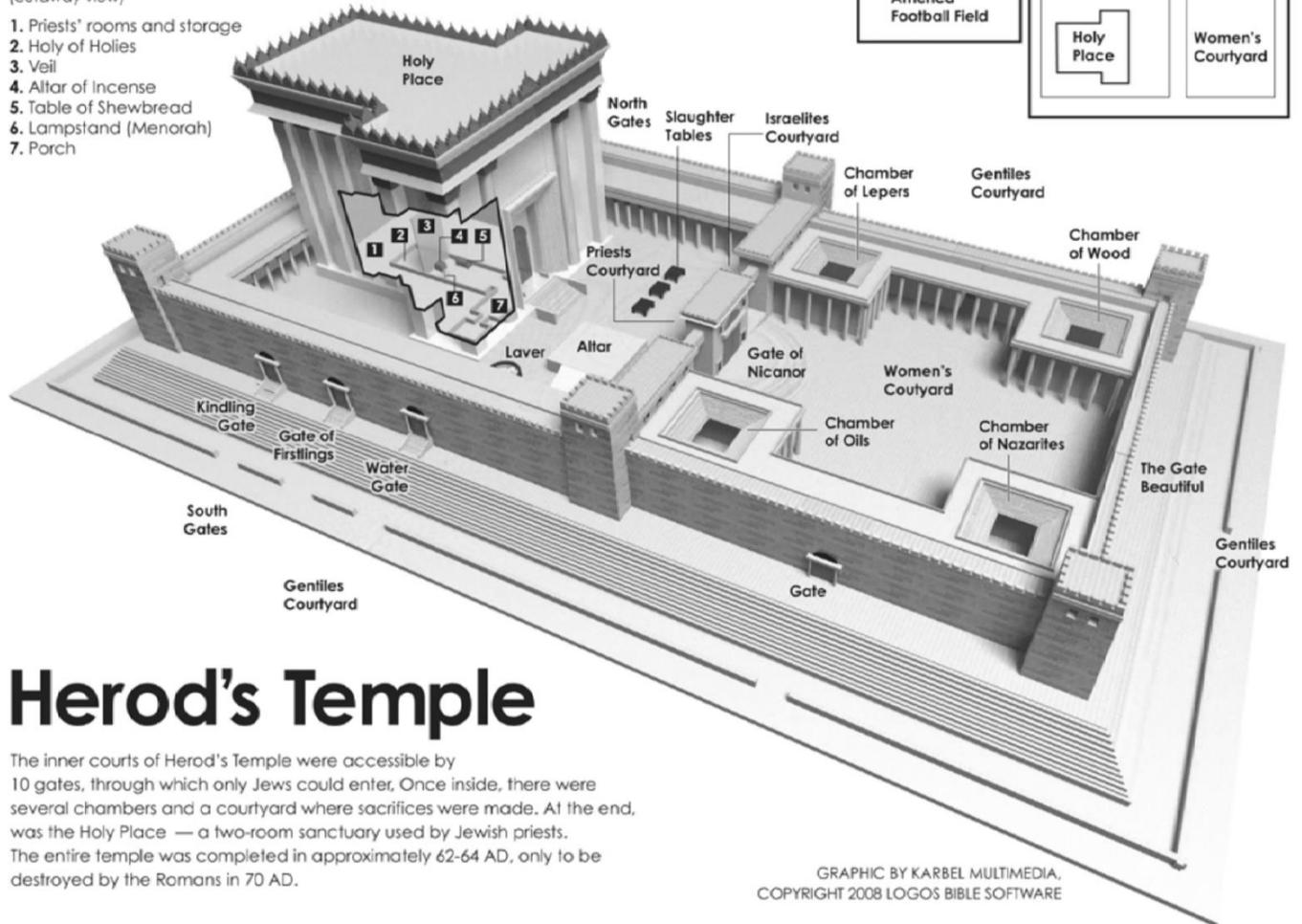
Q: _____

A: _____

Appendix A

INSIDE THE HOLY PLACE (cutaway view)

1. Priests' rooms and storage
2. Holy of Holies
3. Veil
4. Altar of Incense
5. Table of Shewbread
6. Lampstand (Menorah)
7. Porch



Herod's Temple

The inner courts of Herod's Temple were accessible by 10 gates, through which only Jews could enter. Once inside, there were several chambers and a courtyard where sacrifices were made. At the end, was the Holy Place — a two-room sanctuary used by Jewish priests. The entire temple was completed in approximately 62-64 AD, only to be destroyed by the Romans in 70 AD.

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NO FOREIGNER
IS TO GO BEYOND THE BALUSTRADE
AND THE PLAZA OF THE TEMPLE ZONE
WHOEVER IS CAUGHT DOING SO
WILL HAVE HIMSELF TO BLAME
FOR HIS DEATH
WHICH WILL FOLLOW



Appendix B

THE FOUNDATION & BUILDING OF THE NEW TESTAMENT (NT) CHURCH

We know from the NT that the foundation of the church is Jesus Christ Himself (1 Corinthians 3:11). But there are those who have questioned the mandates to the church, confusing us by mixing Old Covenant teaching with New Covenant teaching. So we must ask the questions, who were the original church planters and teachers; and what were the foundational teachings of these original church builders?

After Jesus fulfilled the Old Testament Law, Psalms and Prophets by His finished work at Calvary, He called the 11 disciples to be His ambassadors of the church for they were the foremost witnesses of His life, death, resurrection and teaching. He gave them NEW Covenant (NC) commands based on HIS authority as the head of His church that would shortly begin at Pentecost! The old was on its way out as the new would be ushered in by the Holy Spirit.

Luke noted, *“Until the day when he was taken up, after he had given commands through the Holy Spirit to the apostles whom he had chosen. He presented himself alive to them after his suffering by many proofs, appearing to them during forty days and speaking about the kingdom of God.”*

One circumstance... the eleven disciples went to Galilee... And when they saw him they worshiped him, but some doubted. Then he said to them, *“These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you, that everything written about me in the Law of Moses and the Prophets and the Psalms must be fulfilled.”* Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures, and said to them, *“Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer and on the third day rise from the dead, and that repentance for the forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem. You are witnesses of these things. And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high.”*

And while staying with them he ordered them not to depart from Jerusalem, but to wait for the promise of the Father, which, he said, *“...you heard from me; for John baptized with water, but you will be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days from now.”*

And Jesus came and said to them, *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you. And behold, I am with you always, to the end of the age.”* Luke 24:44–49; Matthew 28:16–20; Acts 1:1–5

What were the 11 disciples, now called apostles (sent ones) commanded and authorized to do? Make followers, more disciples of the Messiah. They were to... 1) Preach in Jesus name the GOSPEL of Grace for the forgiveness of sins to all peoples. 2) Baptize them in God’s name as a witness to their salvation. 3) Pass along and teach them all of Jesus’s sayings which they had been taught, both by word and example. The promise was that Jesus would always be with them, and that they were to wait in Jerusalem for the NC fulfillment of the promised Holy Spirit!

The apostles waited as instructed, and on Pentecost, they received the **grand trophy** of the NC, the promised Holy Spirit! And my, did they preach the gospel of the resurrection! And my, with such power! Jerusalem was rocked, Judaism was shaken! As many hearers repented and placed their faith in Christ, the infant church was planted and it began to grow under the leading and teaching of the apostles. And as the early church grew together... *“... they devoted themselves to the apostles’ teaching and the fellowship, to the breaking of bread and the prayers. And awe came upon every soul, and many wonders and signs were being done through the apostles. ...And with great power the apostles were giving their testimony to the resurrection of the Lord Jesus, and great grace was upon them all.”* Acts 2:42–43, 4:33

Again, the questions: Who were the first builders and teachers of the infant church? No doubt it was the eyewitnesses and chosen apostles of Christ. To this the author of Hebrews agrees. *“It was declared at first by the Lord, and it was attested to us by those who heard [Him]...”* To this Apostle Paul also agrees. *“And God has appointed in the church first apostles...”* Hebrews 2:2–3; 1 Corinthians 12:28.

He Paul, being one of the chosen apostles, an eyewitness of Christ was born again after the resurrection, as he stated... *“Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me. For I am the least of the apostles, unworthy to be called an apostle, because I persecuted the church of God.”* 1 Corinthians 15:8–9

Jesus Christ used these 12 apostles to establish His infant church, and to set a NC biblical standard that was to be carried out until His return. The importance of these 12 chosen godly apostles in God’s eyes was great enough that they would be eternally remembered in the Eternal New Jerusalem. *“And the wall of the city had twelve foundations, and on them were the twelve names of the twelve apostles of the Lamb.”* Revelation 21:14

Lastly, we must recall from the letter to the mainly gentile Ephesian church the importance of this mystery that was revealed to the Apostle Paul. It is the revealing of the glorious NC mystery of Gentile inclusion into God’s own family, with no regard of race or earthly stature, or LAW keeping, or any religious works of any kind or sort, for it has been by *“grace through faith you were saved!”* *“So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow citizens with the saints and members of the household of God, built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus himself being the cornerstone.”* Ephesians 2:19–20

Dear readers, we must embrace the apostolic teachings, especially those of Paul; it was he who was divinely called by Christ Himself as an apostle to the gentiles, which is us; and who was given the revelation of the mystery teachings of this NC grace that we read in His epistles! Remember, Paul gave his own life for us, that we might be fellow heirs of Christ!

“When you read this, you can perceive my insight into the mystery of Christ, which was not made known to the sons of men in other generations as it has now been revealed to his holy apostles and prophets by the Spirit.” Ephesians 3:4–5

Don’t forget, Jesus promised to equip us for ministry... And Jesus said to them, *“Follow Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.”* Mark 1:17

And that He would accomplish His work for this time in which we live... *“and upon this rock I will build My church; and the gates of Hades will not overpower it.”* Matthew 16:18

When Jesus made these promises, it was yet in the future. We are now living these promises out in His church, it is no longer future, it is now! Let’s live as free men, filled with God’s Holy Spirit, not as ones living under the Law of the Old Covenant.

Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we have access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God. Romans 5:1–2

Appendix C

EMBRACING FORGIVENESS

The necessary reason lost sinners put their faith in Jesus Christ and His finished work at Calvary is because they realize they need to have their offenses (their personal sins) against God forgiven. They trust it is by the blood of Christ alone that was shed on Calvary's cross that enabled a Holy God to truly forgive them for all of their trespasses! So by faith alone in Christ, salvation & sin was settled!

But oftentimes, we as believers (now saints) can be the biggest doubters when it comes to the forgiveness of our sins. We easily look at ourselves, our flaws, our weaknesses, our struggles in our marriages and families, and at times our own personal sins and poor attitudes toward life. And since we look at ourselves with perplexity and doubt, we can project that same perplexity and doubt toward our gracious forgiving God, whom we think must feel the same way about me as I do about myself! But God is not surprised by us, for He long ago made provision for us!

God spoke through the Old Testament (OT) prophet Jeremiah that God was going to do something new. God declared an amazing promise in Jeremiah 31:34, "For I will forgive their iniquity, and I will remember their sin no more." Sins forgiven and forgotten?! Unheard of and never experienced in the OT under the Law! It would be a new covenant (NC), very different from the old covenant (OC) Law of Moses which was based on obedient law keeping, but this new promise would be based entirely on God's work alone! In time, the New Testament writer of Hebrews affirmed this truth when he wrote, "And every [OC] priest stands daily at his [temple] service, offering repeatedly the same sacrifices, which can never take away sins. But when Christ had offered for all time a single [NC] sacrifice for sins, he sat down at the right hand of God... For by a single [NC] offering he has perfected for all time those who are being sanctified." (Hebrews 10:11, 12, 14)

And then this same author notes that Jesus' blood was the fulfillment of this promise, where God said, "I will remember their sins and their lawless deeds no more." And then rightly states, "Where there is forgiveness of these, there is no longer any offering for sin." (Hebrews 10:17-18)

Dear believer in Christ, our sin was forgiven long ago at Calvary by Jesus' own blood, and our forgiveness became a reality when we put our faith in Christ! Our sins were forgiven and forgotten by God for Jesus' sake! As Paul taught in Ephesians 1:7-8, "In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace, which he lavished upon us..." He also confirmed this in Colossians 2:13-14, where he confidently affirms that "God made [us] alive together with him [Christ], having forgiven us all our trespasses, by canceling the record of debt that stood against us with its legal demands. This he set aside, nailing it to the cross."

We have redemption, we have complete forgiveness, we are saints, we are God's holy NC temple! We are His children, His adopted sons, and now God asks us to be just like Him (Ephesians 5:1-2), and to demonstrate His grace that He has lavished on us, to others! And one of the greatest examples of exhibiting God's grace is to fully forgive those who have offended us, and like God, to forget the offense. Just like God has with us! Pray, pray and pray for those you struggle with! Love and forgiveness will win out by His grace working in our lives. He forgave the unforgivable when He forgave me! Grace won!

The filling (being full of and under the power) of the Holy Spirit in our lives leaves no room for embracing grudges, unforgiveness or ill thought or harm to my brother or sister!

The Holy Spirit fills our lives with the graces of love, joy and peace... If we are harboring unforgiveness in our hearts, the key is to repent (admit the wrong, change our minds and pursue forgiveness) and thank God that He has already forgiven us for Jesus' sake alone! A lack of repentance and change of heart leads to the grieving of the Holy Spirit (Ephesians 4:30-32), allowing Satan a foothold in our hearts (Ephesians 4:27), which he is more than happy to obtain.

Dear brothers and sisters, as we consider our walk with Christ, let's pray that like Jesus our lives would be a sweet aroma to God (Ephesians 5:2), thus causing great rejoicing in heaven, in our homes and in His church on earth! The Holy Spirit is easily capable of cleansing us, changing us and comforting us! Let's let Him! (Ephesians 5:18)

Appendix D

CULTIVATING YOUR RELATIONSHIPS!

Dear brothers & sisters, take time to nurture your relationships! First and foremost is with your God, and then in your marriage and family. If you can, find a quiet place of rest, and turn off the noises of this world!

Take special time with Your God who has wooed you to Himself! It is He who first loved you! It is He who has called you to Himself and made you His child. He chose you in Christ to be his own, even before the creation of this world! You are elect, chosen, precious and forgiven by His loving grace and for His purposes, not your own. And the greatest of these purposes is to grow in your love for Him! Cultivate your life as he cultivates your heart! Spend time in His word and in prayer. Be at rest, read, listen, and pray while sitting at His feet learning His ways. Don't run from God pursuing the cares of this life, run to the One who truly cares for your life! He will never stop pursuing you and wooing you! You are worth too much to Him! He has already purchased you by His blood! While we cared nothing for him, he cared everything for us, and now that we are in a new covenant relationship with him, we know his love will never fail us! For nothing in all creation can separate us from His everlasting love!

Husbands sit together in the quiet with your wife, listening to her is what she needs from you. Not talking, but listening and hearing as she shares her life with you, both the trials and the graces. Listening, loving, caring, nurturing, praying and wooing her, just as the Lord does with you!

Wives, listen to your husbands also, he needs your understanding and respect. Both of you, because you are one, need to pray together, love together, embrace each other for who you are. Let your loving relationship be fanned into flames continually.

Invite the Holy Spirit to stir your first love for each other!

Remember, your time with your spouse is far more important than the demands and pleasures of the day! And those demands and pleasures can be your enemy, which cause you to live separate lives, which will pull you further apart. If the soil of your heart's love is not cultivated, it becomes hard and the weeds of busy-ness take over! Let the Lord of the harvest rid your heart of the weeds of this life and till the hardness of your heart, until it is ripe with love. Cultivate love! Let the time with your spouse be far more than a mere moment set aside on your calendar! Fully enjoy and nurture the greatest grace on this side of heaven and that is your marriage covenant.

Fall deeper and deeper in love! Model it, let your children see it and experience it in your family!

Fathers and mothers take time with your little children; don't let the American dream fool you! To be in love with this world's treasures is to ignore your greatest treasures of all, your children. Hold them while you can! Read to them the amazing stories of Jesus! Let them grow in grace as you lead and nurture them. Nourish them; teach them to fall in love with you, just as you are falling in love with Christ! Take them with you on your walks, go at their pace, as God goes at yours, let them enjoy the wonders of creation! Let them experience God's graces of life.

Do not hinder them from falling deeper in love with you! Woo them as Christ woos you! Display to them the greatest command of all, to love the Lord your God with everything you have; that is your whole being!

All of this is a reflection of our God who is ALL about covenant relationships.

My brothers and sisters, continue to fall in love with your Gracious God! He has created and placed you in the heavenly places in Christ, this environment or field as you could call it, is cultivated and ripe for harvest!

We love Him, because he first loved us! His Love will never fail, so all that matters in our lives is

faith expressing itself through love! The love of God be with you all!!! Amen!

Appendix E

PRAYING IN FAITH

“When the devil sees a man or woman who really believes in prayer, who knows how to pray, and who really does pray, and, above all, when he sees a whole church on its face before God in prayer, he trembles as much as he ever did, for he knows that his day in that church or community is at an end.” RA Torrey

The prayer of faith is a deep heart felt confident plea, in it there is a beautiful transfer of trust from oneself to the very One who is sitting upon His throne. In bold confidence with a heart full of faith we share our smallest needs to our greatest needs, we unload the burdens of our heart and mind, as we also lift up the burdens of those we love.

As Charles Spurgeon said, "True prayer is neither a mere mental exercise nor a vocal performance. It is far deeper than that - it is spiritual transaction with the Creator of Heaven and Earth."

E.M. Bounds noted, "Prayer is an appeal from the lowness, from the emptiness, from the need of earth, to the highness, the fullness and to the all-sufficiency of heaven."

As we pray in true faith, the easing of life's struggles dissipate like a vapor in an arid land. As we praise our loving God for His amazing salvation and release our anxieties through prayer we are being freed from the bondage of our twin enemies of doubt and fear.

Praying in faith to the One who moves mountains, who raises the dead, who calls things that are not as though they are, is the key!

Samuel Rutherford stressed, "Believe God's love and power more than you believe your own feelings and experiences. Your rock is Christ, and it is not the rock that ebbs and flows but the sea."

As I walk away from being on my knees before my almighty maker and my gracious savior and I am not changed, there is a good chance that my prayers were not bathed in unwavering faith. For I should walk away refreshed, experiencing the peace of God which transcends all human understanding.

Abraham Lincoln humbly affirmed, "I have been driven many times upon my knees by the overwhelming conviction that I had nowhere else to go. My own wisdom and that of all about me seemed insufficient for that day."

Dear saint, There must be a transfer of trust! A confident hope in prayers yet to be answered, and in reality, considered answered already, because we believe with all our hearts the One who can do exceeding abundantly above all that we ask or think!

May our prayers be more than mere words, may they be spoken in the Spirit with expectant faith in our Great God Almighty, maker of heaven and earth!

My dear brothers and sisters, pray in faith! Open your hearts and hands and release your cares, because what you will find is that when you release you will actually be receiving with those same hands; receiving more grace than you expected, from the **One who will never let you go!**

JESUS AND PRAYER

Luke 5:16, *So He Himself **often withdrew** into the wilderness and prayed.*

Matthew 6:5, *...the hypocrites. For they **love to pray standing** in the synagogues and on the corners of the streets, that they may be seen by men...*

Matthew 6:7, *And when you pray, **do not use vain repetitions** as the heathen do. For they think that they will be **heard for their many words**.*

Our prayers, may we keep them simple, honest, humble, loving and full of faith and expectation!

Appendix F

Introduction To The Epistle of Colossians

1. CONTENT

A. The Supremacy of Jesus Christ Our Lord

1. Chapter One: **The Supreme Person of Jesus Christ**
2. Chapter Two: **The Supreme Standing in Jesus Christ**
3. Chapters Three & Four: **The Supreme Service in Jesus Christ**

B. The Apostle Paul's Overall Purposes in Writing This Letter (See detailed note below)

1. To confront false teaching by establishing the supreme truth of Jesus Christ
2. Paul takes an offensive approach to destroy the false teaching
3. Key phrases: "Christ in you," "in him all things hold together"
4. Key words: fullness, mystery, knowledge, wisdom, love, perfect, all
5. Tone of letter is forthright, positive, & bold with compassion

2. BACKGROUND

- A. Written by Paul from a Roman prison, with Timothy at his side*
- B. A latter book of Paul's - 61 AD, ~ 11th book written*
- C. Written to the church at Colosse, to be shared with Laodiceans*
- D. Delivered by Tychicus along with letters to Philemon & Ephesus*
- E. Possibly met in the home of Philemon, assembly appears small*
- F. Archippus was possibly Pastor, with Epaphras their minister*
- G. Colosse was one of the tri-cities of the Lycus valley*
- H. City was mainly Greeks and Phrygians; and a philosophical hotbed*
- I. Area was rich with mineral deposits and known for its soft wool*
- J. In the 5th century BC it was a great city; in Paul's day a small town*

3. UNIQUE FACTS

- A. Twin book to Ephesians*
 - B. Influences: Judaism, Greek Philosophy (Platonism, Stoicism, Gnosticism & Mysticism)*
 - C. Magnifies the person and work of the Lord Jesus Christ*
 - D. The person of Christ is presented, not a system nor a philosophy*
 - E. Stresses Christ's Deity, efficacy of the cross, & supreme lordship*
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4. THE APOSTLE'S CONCERN

Although he had never met this assembly of believers, Paul had a tremendous concern for them. They were on his heart, for they had fallen prey to a mixture of Greek philosophy, Jewish tradition & mysticism. In reality, the Colossians misunderstood the nature and work of Jesus Christ; the nature and source of sin, the Law and ordinances, and asceticism; all of which led to a law/works mentality. It seems they also had a fascination with mysticism, angel worship, and special knowledge. These blended teachings (Syncretism , the blending and acceptance of various beliefs, was the mode of the day, and highly respected) were doing great harm to the person & doctrine of Jesus Christ. The temptation among the Colossians was to seek another form of doctrine & experience outside of the blessed Creator and Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ.

Paul immediately and willingly unleashed the sword of the Spirit and struck at the very heart of these brutal heresies. Yet as Paul dismantled these false teachings, he knew questions would arise. These questions would simply be solved by the person and doctrine of the Lord Jesus Christ.

5. WHO IS CHRIST IN THE BOOK OF COLOSSIANS?

He is: Jehovah, possessor of a kingdom, redeemer of man through His blood, revealer of God, God & Creator, sustainer of all, head of the church, the resurrection, the fullness of God, the one who presents us blameless, the one who indwells us, the one who works in us mightily, the one who holds the mystery with the Father; all knowledge and wisdom, the one in whom we walk, the one in whom we are built up, the one in whom we are complete, the one in whom we are alive, the one who took away and defeated our enemies, the reality of the old covenant, the one in whom we are hidden, the one in whom we will appear in glory with, the one whose word is to indwell us, the one in whom we sing to and through, the one in whom we serve wholeheartedly, the rewarder of the saints, the believers' master, the one in whom we are all fellow servants and equals.

Consider: Jesus Christ is referred to +/- 73 times. Interspersed 28 times among the letter are references to the Heavenly Father. The Holy Spirit is mentioned once (1:8).

What we think concerning the doctrine of Christ, affects how we view ourselves, in turn affecting our walk.
